



“Proclaim Liberty” Discussion Guide Lesson Fourteen

Lesson Fourteen: Blanks

Throughout Lesson Fourteen, there are places to fill in the blanks. Here are the answers.

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|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. 55 | 14. life | 27. style |
| 2. Rogue | 15. 3 | 28. Morris |
| 3. 81 | 16. federal | 29. center |
| 4. John Adams | 17. none | 30. vertical |
| 5. Thomas Jefferson | 18. Madison | 31. horizontal |
| 6. 8 | 19. crisis | 32. few |
| 7. able | 20. 60 | 33. numerous |
| 8. Rhode Island | 21. representation | 34. horizontal |
| 9. slavery | 22. one | 35. 41 |
| 10. population | 23. population | 36. bill of rights |
| 11. commerce | 24. equal | 37. wept |
| 12. Hamilton | 25. detail | 38. New York |
| 13. life | 26. 11 | 39. people |

Lesson 14: “The Miracle at Philadelphia”

Read: Introduction and list of participants (through page 97)

Activity: Choose one of the delegates to the Constitutional Convention. Tell why their description is impressive to you.

Activity: Write a description of each member of your study group highlighting their individual strengths.

Read: The descriptions we read were written by William Pierce. This is the description he wrote about himself: “I am conscious of having discharged

my duty as a soldier through the course of the late Revolution with honor and propriety; and my services in Congress and the convention were bestowed with the best intention towards the interest of Georgia, and towards the general welfare of the Confederacy. The...flattering opinion which some of my friends had of me...gave me a seat in the wisest council in the world.”

Discuss: What impresses you about William Pierce’s description of himself?

Section 1, The Constitutional Convention, the Most Important Convocation of Political Leaders in the History of the World

Read: PL, Section 1, Parts A-D

Discuss: Why do you think the case is often made that without George Washington, the Constitutional Convention would have failed?

Read: PL, Section 1, Parts E-F

Discuss: What impact do you think James Madison’s preparations had on the Constitutional Convention? How might the Convention have been different if he did not come with a plan?

Read: PL, Section 1, Parts G-I

Discuss: Thomas Jefferson knew he would not be able to attend the Constitutional Convention and he went to great lengths to help James Madison prepare. How do you think things might have played out differently if Thomas Jefferson had been able to attend personally?

Section 2, Convention Officially Opens

Read: PL, Section 2

Discuss: Why do you think slavery, representation, and interstate commerce were the three most difficult issues to resolve?

Section 3, Highlights of the Constitutional Convention

Read: PL, Section 3, Part A

Discuss: What are the strengths and weakness of the Virginia Plan versus the New Jersey plan?

Read: PL, Section 3, Part B-D

Discuss: George Washington said, “I almost despair of seeing a favorable issue to the proceedings of the Convention, and do therefore repent having had any agency in the business.” Why do you think George Washington felt like trying and failing in this case would be even worse than not trying at all?

Discuss: What was the final compromise on representation? What dynamics did this create in Congress? In what ways did this compromise effect the balance of power between the national government, state governments, and individuals?

Read: PL, Section 3, Parts E-G

Section 4, Unveiling the Founders’ Great New Success Formula for Freedom and Prosperity

Read: PL, Section 4, Parts A-B

Discuss: Why is it important to have separation of powers in government?

Document Study:

“The powers delegated by the proposed Constitution to the federal government are few and defined. Those which are to remain in the state governments are numerous and indefinite. The former will be exercised primarily on external objects as war, peace, negotiation, and foreign commerce; with which last the power of taxation will, for the most part, be connected. The powers reserved to the several states will extend to all the objects which, in the ordinary course of affairs, concern the lives, liberties, and prosperity of the state.”

Choose at least 3 words to look up and define:

Word 1:

Word 2:

Word 3:

Now, write James Madison’s quote in your own words:

Read: PL, Section 4, Part C

Section 5, Signing the New Constitution

Read: PL, Section 5, Introduction and Part A

Discuss: Why do you think Benjamin Franklin felt it was so important that the Constitution be put forth by the “unanimous consent” of the “states”?

Discuss: Why do you think there were delegates who felt that the omission of a bill of rights was a strong enough reason for them to not sign the Constitution?

Read: PL, Section 5, Parts B-C

Section 6, The Constitution Goes to Congress and then to the People: Battle Had Just Begun

Read: PL, Section 6

Discuss: What would be the questions you would want to ask the delegates to the Constitutional Convention while considering ratifying the Constitution?

Section 7, The Constitution Goes to Congress and then to the People

Read: PL, Section 7, Parts A-E

Activity: Divide into 2 groups. Give one group the assignment to argue against the Constitution and one group the assignment to argue in favor of the Constitution. Then hold a ratification debate. After the debate, switch sides and hold another debate.

Commitments

Each week, we make commitments to act on what we have learned and share our learning with others.

Act

From your individual pondering and group discussion, choose one thing you will do this week to act on what you learned.

Ideas

- Watch the movie “A More Perfect Union”. Write down at least 3 things you learn.
- Imagine you were living during the ratification period. Write a letter to the editor stating why you think the Constitution should or should not be ratified.

Share

Share what you learned today with someone else.

Ideas

- Share a quote from this lesson, along with your thoughts, on social media.
- Invite someone to watch “A More Perfect Union” with you.
- Talk about the 3 significant areas of compromise in the Constitution.