

Can you solve the Nation's problems during the Critical Period? Name: _____

Introduction: Shortly after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the thirteen original states realized that they must unite in order to win the Revolution. At the time, each state acted as its own country. All thirteen states wrote a plan of government or a state constitution and maintained a state militia to fight the British. Because of their experience with the English King trampling on their rights, the states all feared giving too much power to a strong federal government for the "United States". The Continental Congress came up with a plan of government known as the "Articles of Confederation". Under the Articles, each of the separate states maintained the majority of the government's power. The federal government of the "United States" was weak and had little power over the individual states. This arrangement caused many problems for the young nation and by 1787 the "United States" was on the verge of collapse. This time period is known as the "Critical Period".

How do the Articles of Confederation Work?

1. No chief executive or one person in charge of carrying out the laws
2. No Judicial or court system (each state has their own system)
3. "Committee of 13 States" (Congress) – a unicameral house where a 2/3rds vote needed to pass laws
4. Congress may tax, but not collect the money
5. Congress may not draft men for the army
6. Congress cannot regulate trade (each state controls its own trade)
7. No national currency (each state has their own money)
8. All 13 states needed to agree on any changes amendments to the Articles.

Part I: What are the Problems?

Directions: Complete the chart below by indicating what problems the United States faced during the "Critical Period". You may use your text book or class notes to complete the chart.

<p style="text-align: center;">Foreign & Domestic Problems During the Critical Period</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Details and Historical Facts</p>
<p>National Security: defending the country from outside or foreign threats</p>	
<p>Economic (Instability): a nation whose system of production, distribution, and consumption of goods is unstable – Who has or controls trade, wealth, goods, and services?</p>	
<p>War Debt: money owed to banks and nations for the cost of the war</p>	
<p>Collecting Revenue: How does the government collect taxes?</p>	
<p>Civil Unrest: people becoming upset with the government or lack of resources – sometimes angry riots can occur</p>	

Part II: What would you do to solve the nation's problems?

Directions: Imagine that you have the power to solve the problems discussed above. Rank the problems the United States faced during the Critical Period on the chart below. Place the problems in descending order with the most important problem in the top box. After ranking the issues, write a short explanation discussing how you would solve the problems if you were in charge.

Rank the Foreign & Domestic Problems below:	If you were in charge, how would you solve or fix the nation's problems?
<i>(Biggest Problem)</i>	
<i>(least important problem)</i>	

Part III: What are the major issues facing the United States Today?

Directions: Create a list of the FIVE most important issues facing the United States today. Place the problems in descending order with #1 being the biggest problem you think the nation faces. Next to each number, explain what you think the problem is and how you might solve the problem if you were in charge.

Issue facing America	What is the problem?	How would you solve the problem?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		