GIVE AND TAKE:

Our Government Through Compromise
How did the delegates to the Constitutional Convention balance competing interests?

What compromises needed to be made?
Key Leaders: George Washington

- Washington presided at the Convention and, although seldom participating in the debates, lent his enormous prestige to the proceedings.
Key Leaders: James Madison

“Father of the Constitution”

- Virginian and a brilliant political philosopher, often led the debate and kept copious notes of the proceedings—the best record historians have of what transpired at the Constitutional Convention.
James Madison:

- At the Convention, Madison authored the “Virginia Plan”, which proposed a federal government of three separate branches (legislative, executive, judicial) and became the foundation for the structure of the new government.

- He later authored much of the Bill of Rights.

“Father of the Constitution”
The Constitution of the United States of America established a government that shared power between the national government and state governments, protected the rights of states, and provided a system for orderly change through amendments to the Constitution itself.

The first words of the Preamble to the Constitution prove our belief that the power to govern comes from the people!
Key Issues and Resolutions:

- Made federal law the supreme law of the land (*Supremacy Clause*), but otherwise gave the states considerable leeway to govern themselves.

- Balanced power between large and small states by creating a Senate - where each state gets two senators, and a House of Representatives - with membership based on population (the "Great Compromise").
Key Issues and Resolutions:

- Placated the Southern states by counting the slaves as three-fifths of the population when determining representation in the U.S. House of Representatives (Three-fifths Compromise)
### Key Issues and Resolutions:

Avoided a too-powerful central government by establishing three co-equal branches (separation of powers).

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<th>Legislative Branch</th>
<th>Executive Branch</th>
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<td>Makes the laws</td>
<td>Enforces the laws</td>
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This table shows the division of governmental responsibilities.

*Numerous Checks and Balances are the rules that prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful!*
The Constitution limited the powers of the federal government to those identified in the Constitution.

So that the government could adjust to changing times, an orderly method of changing the Constitution by adding amendments has been included.