Struggle for Ratification:

Final approval needed 9 states to approve before the new constitution would go into effect!
What were the arguments for and against the ratification of the Constitution?

Who were the leading Federalists and Anti-Federalists in the pivotal ratification debate in Virginia?
Elements of Federalist and Anti-Federalist thought are reflected in contemporary political debate on issues such as the size and role of government, federalism, and the protection of individual rights.
The Federalist Position: (pro-ratification)

- The Federalists favored a strong national government that shared some power with the states.

- A strong central government could promote economic development and public improvements.

- Today those who see a primary role for the federal government in solving national problems are heirs to this tradition!
Key Federalists Were:

George Washington- “The Man”!

James Madison- Father of the Constitution

John Jay- First Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

Alexander Hamilton- Financial wiz and first Secretary of Treasury

The *Federalist Papers* were a series of essays written by Madison, Jay and Hamilton to explain the Constitution and urge ratification.
Anti-Federalists: (opposed ratification)

- The Anti-Federalists feared an overly powerful central government destructive of the rights of individuals and the prerogatives of the states.
- They demanded a bill of rights be added to the Constitution.
- Today more conservative thinkers echo these concerns and champion liberty, individual initiative, and free markets.
The Key Anti-Federalists:

Richard Henry Lee-
He proposed the resolution to declare Independence at the Second Continental Congress!

Patrick Henry-
“Give me liberty, or give me death!”

George Mason-
Authored the Virginia Declaration of Rights
A NEW GOVERNMENT

- The Constitution was ratified in 1788.
- The Federalists promised to add a bill of rights as their first order of business.

Elections were held and the government was inaugurated in 1789 in the new capital, New York.
Legacies:

- Ratification of the Constitution did not end debate on governmental power or how to create “a more perfect union.”
- Economic, regional, social, ideological, religious, and political tensions spawned continuing debates over the meaning of the Constitution for generations—a debate that continues today.
- The Constitution and the Bill of Rights gave Americans a blueprint for successful self-government that has become a model for the rest of the world!