

Matrix for Analyzing Features of the Articles of Confederation

Directions: Each placard you will receive explains one of the features of the Articles of Confederation. Carefully examine the drawing on the placard, read the information, and discuss the question(s). Then complete the information in the appropriate space on the matrix below.

Placard	Feature	Why This Was Included in the Articles of Confederation	Possible Problems with This Feature
A	No Chief Executive.	<i>Did not want to have another powerful executive like King George III.</i>	Lack of leadership from central government. No single leader for the government.
B	Laws needed approval by nine of the thirteen states.	Wanted to protect individual states' power. Fear of a strong central government.	<i>Difficult to get nine states to agree on a new law. Central government unable to do very much.</i>
C	Congress did not have the power to tax citizens. It could only request tax money from states.	<i>Fear of being unfairly taxed by the central government, as they had been under British rule.</i>	States often chose not to pay taxes, and the federal government didn't have the funds to operate effectively.
D	Congress did not have the power to draft an army. It could only request states to send men for military services.	Fear of a central government with a strong army that might take away citizens' rights.	<i>Left country vulnerable without a dependable military force.</i>

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E	No national court system.	Fear of a central government with a court system that might be unfair to the rights of states.	<i>Disputes between states often could not be settled fairly.</i>
F	Any amendments (changes) to the Articles must be approved by all 13 states.	<i>Wanted to make sure states had a strong say in the shaping of the government.</i>	Nearly impossible to make changes to Articles. Any one state could stop an amendment that all the other states wanted.
G	Congress did not have the power to collect state debts owed to the federal government.	Fear of a strong central government that could force states to pay for things they didn't want.	<i>Federal government often didn't have the funds necessary to operate effectively.</i>
H	Congress did not have the power to settle disputes among states.	<i>Wanted states to have the ultimate authority in resolving disputes.</i>	Disputes among states often could not be resolved. Created disunity among states.