

SECTION  
**2**

# Reading for Understanding

## ▶ Key Ideas

### BEFORE, YOU LEARNED

The Articles of Confederation created a weak national government.

### NOW YOU WILL LEARN

The Constitution created a new, stronger government that replaced the Confederation.

## ▶ Vocabulary

### TERMS & NAMES

**Constitutional Convention** 1787 meeting at which the U.S. Constitution was created

**Founders** people who helped create the U.S. Constitution

**James Madison** prominent adviser to the Constitutional Convention

**Virginia Plan** proposal for a two-house legislature with representation according to each state's population or wealth

**New Jersey Plan** proposal for a legislature in which each state would have one vote

**Great Compromise** agreement to establish a two-house national legislature, with all states having equal representation in one

house and each state having representation based on its population in the other house.

**Three-Fifths Compromise** agreement that three-fifths of a state's slave population would be counted for representation and taxation

**executive branch** government department that enforces laws

**judicial branch** government department that interprets laws

**legislative branch** government department that makes laws

**checks and balances** the ability of each branch of government to exercise checks, or controls, over the other branches

## ▶ Reading Strategy

Re-create the diagram shown at right. As you read and respond to the **KEY QUESTIONS**, use the ovals to show why there was a need for a Constitutional Convention.



See Skillbuilder Handbook, page R3.

**SUMMARIZE**

promote trade among the states

Creating the Constitution

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