



## Synopsis

The thirteen ORIGINAL colonies! Together again! One night only! The children of Forest Lake Elementary School trod the boards in a dramatic reenactment of how the United States Constitution came to be. After the Revolution, the young United States was anything but united. The states acted like thirteen separate countries, with their own governments, laws, and currencies. It took bravery, smarts, and a lot of compromises to create a workable system of government under the new constitution. Full of facts about our fledgling democracy, the call for a national government, and the Constitutional Convention, this book presents American history with personality, good humor, and energy. This show is not to be missed. Jef Czekaj's™ exuberant illustrations capture the excitement of opening night and the elation of the birth of a nation.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 540L (What's this?)

Paperback: 48 pages

Publisher: Charlesbridge (February 1, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 158089190X

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Product Dimensions: 8.6 x 0.2 x 11 inches

Shipping Weight: 9.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars See all reviews (6 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #136,492 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #93 in Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > Colonial & Revolutionary #100 in Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Historical Fiction > United States > Colonial #123 in Books > Children's Books > Holidays & Celebrations > Non-religious

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 2 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Fun & humorous book used to celebrate Constitution Day. Follow up with the reader's theater (available online) to make more interactive. 5th graders love to act it out!

Fun, fun fun. Sure we have heard of the Articles of Confederation and the Virginia Compromise and the New Jersey Plan, but who really remembers much about them? This book could help lots of kids

(and adults, on occasion) better understand how our system of government came about. After the war for independence, there really wasn't much of a United States of America. There were just thirteen separate states. Problems. One big problem was money. Each state printed its own. States wouldn't accept the money of other states. And who would fight for these thirteen separate states? Finally, fifty-five men came together from twelve states (no Rhode Island) to figure things out and the result was the amazing Constitution of the United States. It still works today because of the brilliance and cooperation of those who met together to create this document. Cold hard facts are the text of this book, but it is the fun illustrations that really explain and expound upon the the subject. It is the illustrations that kept me reading along. Very kid friendly. And for a subject that can be way over the heads of many ten year olds. An afterword explains the process of the Constitution in detail as does a notes section that expands upon the most complicated parts of the book in a clever question-answer format. The book also includes a web link to the Constitution with an invitation to read the document for oneself and a lengthy bibliography.

This book is a playful comic book style introduction to the political process that resulted in the development of the Constitution of the United States. It adeptly explains how the state delegates met to discuss the problems created when thirteen separate state governments, each with their own rules and monetary system try to trade with one another. Representatives of five states agree to convene another meeting to discuss creating a form of federalized government to enable them to trade more easily. Dialog balloons enable the interjection of amusing fictionalized comments expressed during the process. Created within the framework of a class play with a multicultural cast enables a process that was actually taken on by 55 white men to seem more inclusive. Children wear costumes that identify their state by their abbreviations; it would have been helpful if the map of the states had included these abbreviations.

Great to use for students to help them understand Articles of Confederation and writing of the Constitution. Students enjoy the Reader's Theater

And ... is it head lice? Maryland, New Jersey, and Virginia keep scratching their heads. I'm not a big fan of the illustrations in this book, but I love the idea of acting out American History. This book is great on why the Articles of Confederation could not work. It is ok on separation of powers and the Connecticut compromise. It is silent on specific regional differences and the slavery headcounts in the 3/5 compromise. It claims the Constitution is a "living document" - bah. The illustrations are a

combination of GREAT (backdrops/historical buildings/creative scenery) and WRETCHED (the horrid people). All in all, after you have taught about the Articles of Confederation, this modern-cartoonish book might be just the thing to help your kids get creative.

Thinking about introducing the Constitution in a classroom? This is the book for you! Students are captivated by title alone! "Unite or Die" ... sounds ominous, students want to know more! The book doesn't disappoint as you dive into the pages. It's a fun to read, book with illustrations that aptly support the "story". The premise, a school play about how our Framers came together to write the Constitution and what their concerns were that shaped that document. From this book, students are able to grasp the historical context and appreciate the significance of the Constitution in shaping America. It is simple in approach but strong in impact! There's a readers' theater script available online at the author's website which further extends the value of this book in the classroom. It's a simple 4 page script incorporating 18 parts. Students find delight in this fresh approach! Watch students "get it" as they assume the various roles and re-enact the Convention! Bravo! An additional praise ... the author has put together a story that embraces our multicultural population and demonstrates that our constitution is for "We the people!" Love the book! (And the readers' theater that goes with it!) A treasure!

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Unite or Die: How Thirteen States Became a Nation  
13: Thirteen Stories That Capture the Agony and Ecstasy of Being Thirteen  
The Nation's Health (Nation's Health (PT of J&b Ser in Health Sci)  
Nation's Health)  
Nifty Plates from the Fifty States: Take a Ride Across Our Great Nation\*  
Learn About the States from Their License Plates!  
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Gamers Unite!: The Video Game Revolution (Pop Culture Revolutions)  
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