

Module 3: Building a Government - The 1780s  
Topic 2 Content: Two Plans and Two Compromises Notes

Introduction



When the Continental Convention began, the delegates entered Independence Hall and shut all of the windows. They did not want anyone to overhear their important and sometimes controversial discussions concerning the new plan for government. In this interactivity you will learn about two important plans and two crucial compromises of the Constitutional Conventions. Click **START** to begin.

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**Instructions**

Select a plan or compromise from the menu on the right

Virginia Plan

New Jersey Plan

Connecticut Compromise


Three-Fifths Compromise

Select a plan or compromise from the menu on the right.

## Module 3: Building a Government - The 1780s

### Topic 2 Content: Two Plans and Two Compromises Notes

#### Virginia Plan



- James Madison, a political philosopher introduced the Virginia Plan.
- The Virginia Plan suggested the creation of a legislative branch of government with two houses.
- Voters would elect delegates to the lower house. Delegates would elect members of the upper house.

Virginia Plan

New Jersey Plan

Connecticut Compromise

Three-Fifths Compromise

The Constitutional Convention had to determine how states with varying populations would be represented in the national government. Virginia delegate and political philosopher James Madison proposed a solution to the issue. His solution is known as the Virginia Plan


The Virginia Plan suggested a legislative branch of government containing two houses, where the number of representatives depended on the state's population. States with larger populations would have more representatives in the legislative branch than states with smaller populations.

Madison's Plan included a lower house and an upper house. Voters would elect the delegates to the lower house. The delegates would elect the members of the upper house.

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#### New Jersey Plan



- Delegates from states with lower populations were opposed to the Virginia Plan.
- The smaller states wanted to adopt William Patterson's New Jersey Plan.
- The New Jersey Plan proposed a legislative branch with one house and each state having one vote regardless of population.

Virginia Plan

New Jersey Plan

Connecticut Compromise

Three-Fifths Compromise

Delegates from states with lower populations were opposed to the Virginia Plan because it granted larger states more power in the government. Representatives from smaller states wished to adopt the New Jersey plan, proposed by New Jersey delegate William Patterson. Patterson's Plan proposed a legislative branch containing a single house. In this house, each state would have one representative, regardless of the state's population.

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#### The Connecticut Compromise



- The Connecticut Compromise was also called The Great Compromise.
- The legislative branch contained two houses: a Senate and House of Representatives.
- The Senate is made up of two senators from each state regardless of population.
- The House of Representatives would have membership based on population.

Virginia Plan

New Jersey Plan

Connecticut Compromise

Three-Fifths Compromise

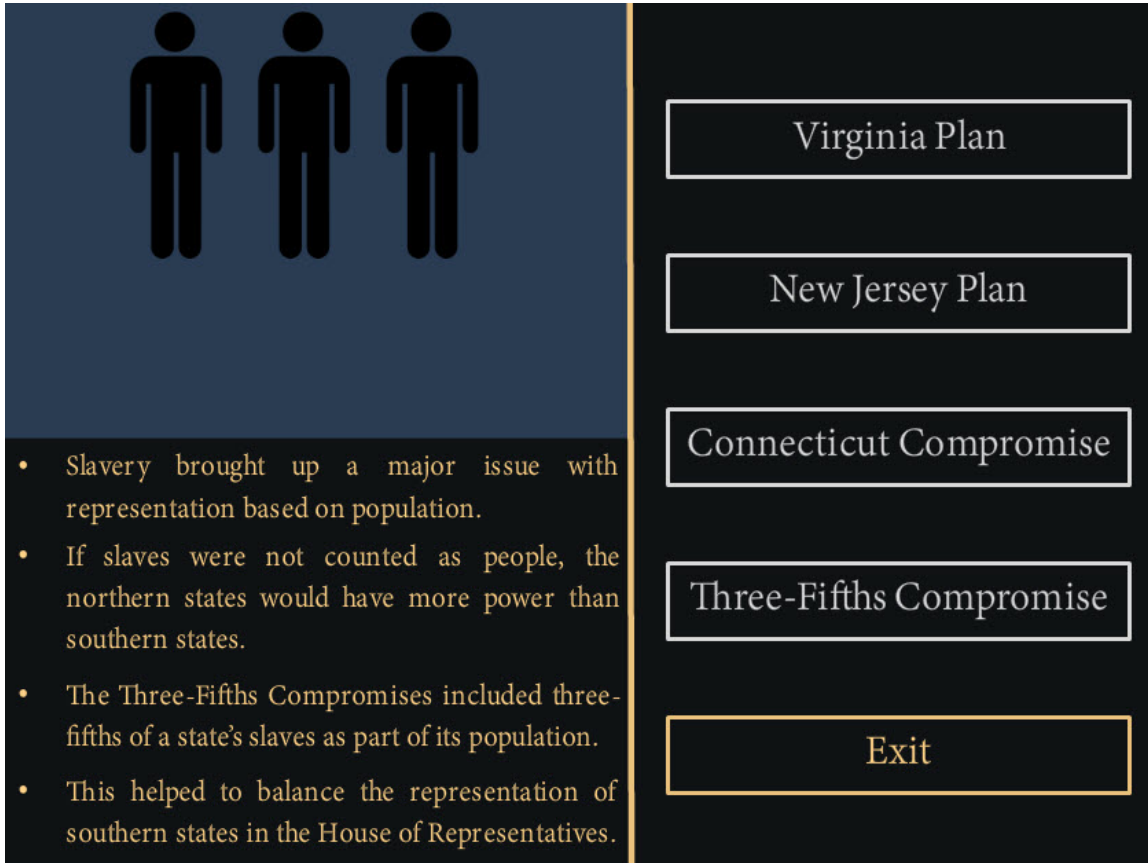
Connecticut delegate Roger Sherman, proposed the Great Compromise. Also known as the Connecticut Compromise, Sherman's plan combined aspects of both the Virginia and New Jersey Plans. It balanced the power among the higher population and lower population states.

The Connecticut Compromise proposed a legislative branch consisting of two houses, a Senate and a House of Representatives. The Senate would consist of two representatives from each state, regardless of the state's size or population. Membership to the House of Representatives would depend on the population of each state. The delegates accepted the Connecticut Compromise.

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#### Three-Fifths Compromise

A graphic with a dark blue background. On the left, three black human silhouettes are arranged horizontally. Below them is a list of four bullet points in orange text. On the right, a vertical stack of five white-bordered boxes contains the text: Virginia Plan, New Jersey Plan, Connecticut Compromise, Three-Fifths Compromise, and Exit. The 'Exit' box has a thin orange border.

- Slavery brought up a major issue with representation based on population.
- If slaves were not counted as people, the northern states would have more power than southern states.
- The Three-Fifths Compromise included three-fifths of a state's slaves as part of its population.
- This helped to balance the representation of southern states in the House of Representatives.

Virginia Plan

New Jersey Plan

Connecticut Compromise

Three-Fifths Compromise

Exit

Representation based on state population brought the issue of slavery to the forefront of the debates. Southern states wanted to include slaves as part of their population. By doing so, these states would increase their membership in the House of Representatives, and have greater influence in national government. Naturally, northern states disagreed. Northern states would have more representation if slaves were not counted. Again, the delegates came to a compromise.

The Three-Fifths Compromise proposed a solution to the issue of whether to count slaves as part of a state's population. For every five slaves, three slaves would be included in the population count. The delegates agreed that the Compromise would allow southern states more representation in the House of Representatives.