Chapter 7 Section 1
The First American Government

Objectives:
1) Define and give an example of a Constitution
2) Give one reason government is needed and two reasons why Americans wanted a written Constitution.
3) Give the three parts of the state governments
4) Give one reason people wanted a weak government
5) Give the structure of the National government under the Articles of Confederation and why they were so ineffective.
6) Name two of three problems that the national government had and the one success.

I. Specific Term you need to know
A. Constitution
   1. Is a set of rules that tells government what it can and can not do
   2. This is not specific but gives general directions
   3. Most constitutions are now written
   4. At no time does it tell people what they must do
B. Government is needed
   1. To keep order
   2. To allow all people to have the same rules

II. The first constitutions in the new nation of the United States were found in the states
A. Reasons States had Constitutions were
   1. Follow English Traditions
   2. Most states made minor changes to their charters
B. Americans demanded to have written Constitutions
   1. To spell out what rights people had
   2. It would limit government power
C. Why did most Americans feel this way
   1. Many Americans felt that the English created laws as they went
   2. Most Americans felt that government could not be trusted
   3. Once a person had power he would abuse it
D. General structure of state governments is generally as it is today
   1. There is an executive or governor who
      a. Carries out the law
   2. There is a Legislature
      a. Most are bicameral or
      b. This part of government creates the laws
   3. There is a Judiciary
      a. This makes sure all laws are fair

III. Article of Confederation (1777-1787)
A. Americans wanted a Republic
B. People wanted a weak national government
   1. Reasons
      a. Tired of being told what to do by a strong government
      b. Wanted the government to be run by the people
   2. Structure
      a. Congress was to be Unicameral
1) Each state has **one vote**
2) Each state sent **2 to 7 delegates** to decide how to vote
3) To pass any law **9 of 13** states had to agree
   b. Executive **NONE**
   b. Judiciary **NONE**
C. Most People saw themselves as citizens of their **states not the US**
   1. States were allowed to
      a. Print their own **money**
      b. Place **taxes or tariffs** on other states goods
      c. Start their **own army**
      d. Signed treaties with **foreign nations**
D. The Articles of Confederation had **little power**
   1. Congress had to **ask** for money from the **states** to pay bills
   2. Congress had to **ask** states for **soldiers**
   3. Allowed to establish a **postal system**
   4. Borrow **money**
   5. Were to settle disputes **between states**
      a. Could **not enforce** any decision that they came up with
IV. Troubles under the Articles of Confederation
   A. Smaller states **feared larger states**
      1. The large states claimed most of the **western land**
      2. Most of the large states also controlled **trade**
      3. Large states had the largest **armies**
   B. States had **conflicting** land claims
      1. New York and New Hampshire both claim **Vermont**
      2. Virginia and Massachusetts both claimed modern day **Tennessee**
   C. Foreign nations dealt with the **states** not the **Congress**
V. Some Success
   A. The Northwest Territory
      1. **Northwest Ordinance of 1785**
         a. Cut the land into townships that were **36 square miles**
         b. Each section square mile section contained **640 acres**
         c. One of these sections was set aside for a **public school**
      2. Northwest Ordinance of **1787**
         a. Set up a **government** for the Northwest Territory
         b. Outlawed **slavery**
         c. Stated that once there was **60,000 free citizens**
            it could become a **state**