

Name KEY

Date _____

Period _____

When did Americans realize that the Articles of Confederation did not work?

After the American Revolution the United States found itself in an economic depression. An **economic depression** is a period when business slows, prices and wages fall, and unemployment rises. The economic depression hit farmers very hard after the American Revolution for a few reasons. During the war, farm products were in high demand to feed soldiers and provide supplies. Many farmers borrowed money to buy seed, animals, and tools in order to meet the high demand for goods during the American Revolution. Once the war was over, the demand for goods produced by farmers went down. As a result, the prices of farmed goods fell and many farmers could not pay back the money they borrowed.

1. What is an economic depression?

It is a period when business slows, prices and wages fall, and unemployment rises.

2. Why did many farmers borrow money during the American Revolution?

To buy seed, animals, and tools in order to meet the high demand for goods during the American Revolution

3. What happened to many farmers after the American Revolution?

The prices of farmed goods fell and many farmers could not pay back the money they borrowed

The United States was in massive amounts of debt after the American Revolution and, the state of Massachusetts decided to raise taxes. Unfortunately, the farmers in Massachusetts could not pay the taxes and they lost their land and farms to the Massachusetts state government. These farmers in Massachusetts felt as if they were being treated very unfairly, and that something needed to be done.

1. Why did Massachusetts decide to raise state taxes?

The United States was in massive amounts of debt after the American Revolution

2. What happened to farmers that could not pay the increased taxes in Massachusetts?

They lost their land and farms to the Massachusetts state government

3. How would you react to this situation if you were a farmer in Massachusetts? What would you do to correct this situation?

Answers Will Vary

I. Shays' Rebellion: August 29, 1786 to February 3, 1787

A. Daniel Shays' was a Massachusetts farmer who had fought at the battles of Bunker Hill and Saratoga during the American Revolution.

1. He led a rebellion with over 1,000 other farmers.

- B. This was done in order to prevent the Massachusetts state government from seizing (taking) their homes
- C. The rioting farmers attacked courthouses in Massachusetts during the rebellion
1. In response, Massachusetts sent their militia to drive the revolting farmers away.
- D. Many Americans saw Shays' Rebellion as a sign that the Articles of Confederation did not work

After Shays' Rebellion George Washington stated:

"I predict the worst consequences from a half starved limping government, always moving upon crutches and tottering at every step."

1. What government is George Washington referring to in this quote?
The Articles of Confederation.
2. According to George Washington, what does this government lack?
Power, Strength, and Stability.

Critical Thinking???

If you were a state leader during the critical period what would you do in order to improve the role of the National Government in the United States after Shays' Rebellion?
