

## In My Shoes: Role Playing American Government and Politics

Oprah said it succinctly, “Leadership is about empathy. It is about having the ability to relate to and connect with people for the purpose of inspiring and empowering their lives.” This is not new. Women’s Rights advocate, suffragette and poet Mary T. Lathrap wrote in 1895:

*Just walk a mile in his moccasins  
Before you abuse, criticize and accuse.  
If just for one hour, you could find a way  
To see through his eyes, instead of your own muse.*

In each of our five (5) units of study in American Government and Politics you will be invited to connect with relevant players. To better understand government and politics, walk in the shoes of those who have and continue to shape our government and politics. The end result will not only improve our understanding; provide practice of essential skills; but also inspire and empower our own civic engagement. Welcome. Get ready to “take the time to walk a mile in [their] moccasins.”

**Unit 1:** Yesterday’s Framers Meets Today’s Political Scientist

**Unit 2:** Meet an Iron Triangle

**Unit 3:** Join the Fight for Civil Rights

**Unit 4:** Analyze Public Opinion Data

**Unit 5:** Join a Linkage Institution

### Unit 1: FOUNDATIONS

#### Yesterday’s Framers Meets Today’s Political Scientist

In this role-playing exercise, you will be assigned a delegate to the Constitutional Convention in 1787; a contemporary political scientist; and one of the Federalist Papers essays. Complete presentation slides that include the following findings:

- Delegate to the Constitutional Convention: Biographical introduction written in your own words with appropriate visuals; Context information on a relevant debate that took place at the convention involving this delegate; Explanation of whether or not this delegate signed the proposed new constitution.
- Contemporary political scientist: Biographical introduction written in your own words with appropriate visuals; Context information on relevant research conducted by this political scientist; Direct evidence from a publication written by this political scientist.
- Federalist Paper essay: Brief synopsis of the arguments made in this essay.
- Create a hypothetical lunch conversation between your Framers, your political scientist and the topics found in your Federalist Paper essay. This dialogue should represent the relevant debates at the convention and how those debates might be discussed in our current political science culture.
- When all of the presentation slides have been completed and posted, you will be invited to eavesdrop 3-4 conversations and report back as to what you have learned.

# Unit 1: In My Shoes - Role Playing American Government and Politics **ROLES**

## Index of the Framers of the Constitution

### **Connecticut**

Oliver Ellsworth  
Wm. Samuel Johnson  
Roger Sherman

### **Delaware**

Richard Bassett  
Gunning Bedford Jr.  
Jacob Broom  
John Dickinson  
George Read

### **Georgia**

Abraham Baldwin  
William Few  
William Houston  
William L. Pierce

### **Maryland**

Daniel Carroll  
Daniel Jenifer  
Luther Martin  
James McHenry  
John F. Mercer

### **Rhode Island**

No delegates

### **Massachusetts**

Elbridge Gerry  
Nathaniel Gorham  
Rufus King  
Caleb Strong

### **New Hampshire**

Nicholas Gilman  
John Langdon

### **New Jersey**

David Brearly  
Jonathan Dayton  
William C. Houston  
William Livingston  
William Paterson

### **New York**

Alexander Hamilton  
John Lansing, Jr.  
Robert Yates

### **North Carolina**

William Blount  
William R. Davie  
Alexander Martin  
Richard D. Spaight  
Hugh Williamson

### **Pennsylvania**

George Clymer  
Thomas Fitzsimons  
Benjamin Franklin  
Jared Ingersoll  
Thomas Mifflin  
Gouverneur Morris  
Robert Morris  
James Wilson

### **South Carolina**

Pierce Butler  
Charles Pinckney  
Charles C. Pinckney  
John Rutledge

### **Virginia**

John Blair  
James Madison, Jr.  
George Mason  
James McClurg  
Edmund J. Randolph  
George Washington  
George Wythe

## Index of Contemporary Political Scientists (use these or other favorites)

John Aldrich  
Robert Axelrod  
Regina Bateson  
Jill Frank  
Rodney E. Hero  
Jennifer Hochschild  
Matthew Holden, Jr.  
Robert Jervis  
Peter J. Katzenstein  
Robert O. Keohane  
Christina Kiel  
David Lake  
Jeffrey Lazarus  
Margaret Levi  
Steven Livitsky

Arend Lijphart  
Jane Mansbridge  
Gwyneth McClendon  
Dale Murphy  
Pippa Norris  
Dianne Pinderhughes  
G. Bingham Powell  
Robert D. Putman  
Kelly Rader  
Melvin Rogers  
Mark Rupert  
Burcu Savun  
Theda Skocpol  
Susan Stokes  
Sidney Verba

## Federalist Papers #1 – 85 (pick one of the essays)