**We the People**

**“The Constitutional Convention of 1787: A Revolution in Government”**

**Mr. Fernandez**

Please answer the following as you read the essay:

Introduction

1. In one recent survey, what percentage of Americans believed the phrase “all men are created equal” appeared in the Constitution?
2. What fraction of Americans expressed the belief that the Declaration of Independence was written after the Civil War?

The Beginning of an “American Identity”

1. According to the opening paragraph of the Declaration of Independence, what truths are “self-evident?” List as many as you can find…
2. Explain the importance of the first state constitutions.
3. Describe the power structure of the Articles of Confederation.
4. What were the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation?
5. For what specific reason did Congress finally call for the convention, which would become known as “The Constitutional Convention?”
6. Describe the “extraordinary accomplishment” achieved at the Constitutional Convention.

The Launching of a New American Constitution

1. Who was the “ring-leader” of the convention? Describe him.
2. Who forged the “new radical Virginia Plan?
3. Why do you think the Founding Fathers demanded secrecy at this time?
4. What were the most divisive issues under consideration?

The Founding Fathers and Federalism

1. Over what issue did the Founding Fathers argue for over six weeks? Why so?
2. How did the Virginia and New Jersey Plans differ considering representation?
3. What was the Connecticut Compromise?
4. What is federalism?

Creating an American President

1. Explain how compromise, once again, “won the day,” over the debates concerning the presidency.
2. Why did James Wilson support the idea of popular election of the president?
3. What did Wilson propose as a compromise?
4. What is the purpose of the Electoral College? Is it still in operation today?

The Founding Fathers and Slavery

1. Although neither the word “slave,” nor “slavery,” is in the Constitution, describe three major decisions made surrounding this dreadful institution.

The Absence of a Bill of Rights

1. For what main reason did George Mason propose that the Constitution be “prefaced with a bill of rights?”
2. Why was Jefferson upset over the absence of a bill of rights?
3. How many amendments are included in the Bill of Rights?
4. How many amendments have been added since the Bill of Rights?

“Approaching So Near to Perfection"

1. According to Ben Franklin, what was the wonder of the convention? Explain.