

Teacher Guide 1: Pennsylvania Constitution of 1776

- 1. Was there a governor?** No
- 2. What was the Supreme Executive Council?** The group that replaced the governor, but had no veto power. It selected the Supreme Court Justice and most of the executive department heads.
- 3. Who made up the Supreme Executive council?** One member from each county elected from their own county every three years.
- 4. What did the Council of Censors do?** It supervised government officials to ensure performance and compliance with the Constitution of 1776.
- 5. Who could be elected to the Assembly?** Male taxpayers over 21. "The house of representatives of the freemen of this commonwealth shall consist of persons most noted for wisdom and virtue, to be chosen by the freemen of every city and county of this commonwealth respectively. And no person shall be elected unless he has resided in the city or county for which he shall be chosen two years immediately before the said election; nor shall any member, while he continues such, hold any other office, except in the militia."
- 6. How long was the term of office for a member of the Assembly?** 1 year
- 7. What religious qualifications are needed to be admitted to the Assembly?**
The religious qualification was a "belief in one God, the creator and governor of the universe, the rewarder of the good and the punisher of the wicked. Acknowledge that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament were given by Divine inspiration. No further or other religious test shall ever hereafter be required of any civil officer or magistrate in this State."
- 8. What if any were the term limits?** Four years in any seven-year period.
- 9. How was representation in the assembly apportioned among the counties?**
Representation was in proportion to the number of taxable inhabitants of each county.
- 10. What is the percent of the elected members of the Assembly needed to form a quorum?** 66 percent.
- 11. An oath was required, it *began I do swear (or affirm) that as a member of this assembly.* What was the impact of this requirement?** Certain religious groups, especially Quakers, if elected, could not swear an oath without breaking their religious tenets and therefore could not take office. Quakers who had previously had a majority were virtually excluded from the Assembly.