**Documents 1**

**This excerpt is from a newspaper, *The Massachusetts Sentinel*, October 20, 1787. (From *Voices of America: Readings in American History*, Thomas R. Frazier, ed. Boston: Houghton Miflin, 1985, p. 61)**

*Let us look and [see] the [problems that exist] in every part of our country . . . the complaints of our farmers . . . the complaints of every class of [people who loan money] . . . the [sad] faces of our working people . . . our ships rotting in our harbors . . . the insults that are [made against America] in every court in Europe . . . View these things, fellow citizens, and then say that we do not require a new, a protecting, and efficient federal [national] government if you can.*

**Document 2**

**This excerpt from "Observations on the New Federal Constitution and on the Federal and State Conventions," by Mercy Otis Warren. It originally appeared as a newspaper article in the spring of 1788.**

*There is no security in the system [under the proposed new U.S. Constitution] either for the rights of [people with different ideas] or the liberty of the press . . . The executive and the legislature are so dangerously [combined] that [it should cause people to be alarmed] . . . There is no [system] for [making sure that power does not stay] in the same hands for life.*

**Document 3**

**These excerpts are adapted from a letter written by George Washington to John Jay, dated August 1, 1786. In these lines, Washington is agreeing with Jay’s criticism of the Articles of Confederation.**

*Your [opinion], that our [situation is quickly coming] to a crisis, [agree] with my own ... We have errors to correct. We have probably had too good an opinion of human nature in forming our confederation (i.e. the Articles of Confederation) . . . thirteen [powerful], independent, disunited States are in the habit of . . . refusing [to obey our national Congress] . . . [I pray that we can act in time to prevent the bad things we fear may happen].*

**Document 4**

**This excerpt is from a speech by Patrick Henry, a delegate to the Virginia State Constitutional Ratification Convention, given in June 1788. (From Jonathan Elliot, ed., The Debates in the Several State Conventions on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1836.)**

*[The Constitution] is a [proposal] as [big a change] as [the document] which separated us from Great Britain (i.e. the Declaration of Independence). [It is such a major change because it has the following effect]; our rights and privileges are endangered [by the new Constitution], and the [power] of the states will be [given up] . . . The rights of [free thought], trial by jury, liberty of the press . . . are [placed in danger].*