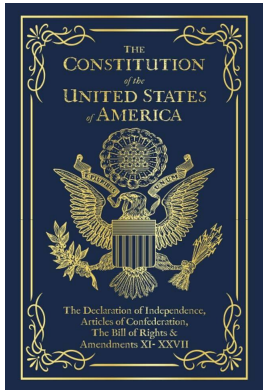


Book of the Month



 **Title:** The Founding Documents of the United States

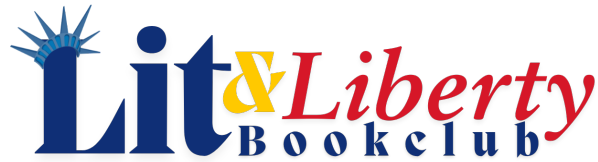
- The Declaration of Independence
- The Articles of Confederation
- The U.S. Constitution
- The Bill of Rights

Summary

These four documents form the bedrock of American democracy, charting the nation's revolutionary beginnings, its early struggles, and the framework that continues to shape its political life.

- The Declaration of Independence (1776) boldly asserted the colonies' right to self-governance and articulated ideals of liberty, equality, and popular sovereignty—ideals that still inspire movements for justice today.
- The Articles of Confederation (ratified 1781) represented the first attempt at a national government but revealed the weaknesses of a loose confederation, leading to calls for a stronger federal structure.
- The U.S. Constitution (1787) established the foundation for American governance through checks and balances, federalism, and the separation of powers.
- The Bill of Rights (1791)—the first 10 amendments—ensured the protection of individual liberties, including freedom of speech, religion, and the press.

Together, these documents reflect both the aspirations and contradictions of the American experiment. They're essential reading for anyone seeking to understand where we come from—and where we must go.



Why These Documents Were Chosen for Lit & Liberty

Lit & Liberty is rooted in the belief that democracy is not a finished project—it's a living promise. These founding documents were chosen because they represent the original blueprint of that promise. Studying them helps us understand both the brilliance and the blind spots of America's early ideals.

By revisiting these texts with open eyes, we can engage in meaningful dialogue about how their principles are being upheld, tested, and reinterpreted today. These documents ask us to wrestle with big questions: What does liberty look like? Who gets to be free? How do we form a more perfect union—not just on paper, but in practice?

This is where civic literacy meets civic action—and where history becomes a guide, not a relic.

Discussion Questions

1. What stood out to you most in reading these documents—a phrase, an idea, or a contradiction? Why did it resonate?
2. How do these documents reflect both the ideals and the limitations of the time they were written?
3. Which parts of these documents feel most relevant today? Which feel outdated or incomplete?
4. What responsibility do we have today to uphold, revise, or reinterpret these founding principles in light of modern challenges?