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| **A close up of a logo  Description automatically generated** | **Federalists & Anti-Federalists**  **Main Ideas** |
| * **I can identify the viewpoints of the Federalists and Anti-Federalists about the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.** |

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The **Federalists** wanted the states to ratify, or approve, the Constitution as written in 1787. They shared their ideas in the **Federalist Papers**. The Constitution would create a federal system of government in the United States where the central government would share power with the states.

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| **Federalists supported the Constitution because:** |
| • Constitutional big ideas such as separation of powers and the system of checks and balances protected the people because no branch of government could become too strong. |
| • By not listing (**enumerating**) specific rights in the Constitution, the people were protected better than they would be if there was a list of rights. It would be impossible to think of all of the rights to which citizens are entitled. A list of specific rights might mean the government could violate any unlisted (**unenumerated**) rights. |
| • The Constitution would unite the country and would lead to the growth of more business and trade. They believed that the **Articles of Confederation** had failed to do these things. |

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The **Anti-Federalists** were against the ratification of the Constitution. They shared their ideas in the **Anti-Federalist Papers**. They wanted to make only minor changes to the government as set up under the Articles of Confederation. They were afraid that the Constitution created a national government that was too strong and did not protect individual rights.

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| **Anti-Federalists opposed the Constitution because:** |
| • The Constitution needed a specific list of rights to protect the people from the power of the national government. |
| • Too much power would be taken away from the states. |
| • The **“necessary and proper” clause**, also known as the **“elastic clause,”** of the Constitution would give too much power to Congress. |
| • The executive branch (the president and those who worked with him) would be too strong. |
| • The system of government (**federalism**) described in the Constitution was new and untested. No government anywhere else in the world had tried anything exactly like this new system. |
| • The United States was too large for one central government to manage. |