

Topic:

Introduction to the Bill of Rights

Time:

Two class periods

Grade:

4-6

Core:**Objectives:** Students will:

1. Think about their freedom and what freedom means.
2. Evaluate the need for rules.
3. Evaluate the importance of individual rights.

Procedure:

1. Have the students find a picture at home or in class that reminds them of their freedoms or rights as a U. S. citizen.
2. Have each student show and explain his/her picture.
3. Discuss the need for rules and to enforce those rules.
4. Discuss the importance of individual rights.
5. Brainstorm a list of rights. Use categories, such as students, teachers, chefs, custodians, parents, etc.
6. Talk about which of these rights is the most important. What would happen if a particular one were taken away? If possible, take one of them away for a short period of time.
7. **As an optional activity**, discuss the lives of people who have defended individual rights throughout history, such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Susan B. Anthony. This could be expanded into various projects including reports or letters to particular individuals of their choice, telling them that their lives made a difference.
8. Have the students save their pictures to be used for a bulletin board display or collages that are put together in cooperative groups. Or the pictures could be put together into booklets.
9. Have the students develop a Freedom Journal. Each day have them write a paragraph explaining a freedom they have enjoyed that day. Complete Handout 1: THE ALIEN.
10. Have the students complete Handout 2: CHOOSE THE AMENDMENT as a way to link freedoms and rights and the guarantees of the Bill of Rights. Discuss.

Additional Resources:

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11. In cooperative groups, have each group select an example (from Step 10 or a different example) which they will use in a short dramatization. First, have them act it out showing an infringement on the right. Second, have them act it out the way it would happen according to the Bill of Rights.
12. Thoroughly discuss each situation with the entire class.
13. Have the students complete Handout 3: CATEGORIES OF RIGHTS and discuss.

THE ALIEN



Hi! My name is Sthgir! I am from the planet Noitutitsnoc! On my planet, we have noticed that in this country of the United States, the humans have too many freedoms.

On a separate piece of paper, make a list of those freedoms.

Each month we are going to take away one of those freedoms from you greedy humans. Number them in the order you would like them to be taken away. (Number one will be the first one we will take away.)

P.S. What do you notice about my name?

CHOOSE THE AMENDMENT



Below, write the number of the Amendment that guarantees the right described in the situation.

- _____ 1. You may go to the church you like best on any day of the week.
- _____ 2. A person in jail is fed a decent meal, and his jail cell is clean.
- _____ 3. A poor street person is accused of a crime and cannot afford an attorney.
- _____ 4. A jury is chosen to hear a case.
- _____ 5. Someone is charged with a crime, and the trial is set for the earliest possible date on the court calendar.
- _____ 6. When a person is on trial and the prosecuting attorney asks him a question, he refuses to answer.
- _____ 7. Your mother writes a letter to the editor of the local newspaper saying that the police should be tougher on teenage drinking.
- _____ 8. When a young man is boarding the plane, a police officer stops her and says she must be searched.
- _____ 9. A person enjoys the woods and keeps a gun in the gun cabinet.
- _____ 10. A member of MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) is in the park giving a speech about how drunk drivers need to be taken off the highways.

CATEGORIES OF RIGHTS

In 1787, the U. S. Constitution was written to create and regulate government so that citizens of the United States would be free. Several people of the time felt this was not enough. They felt a list of basic rights also needed to be included. They felt so strongly about this that they would not sign the Constitution until the Bill of Rights was added. This was done in 1791. The Bill of Rights can be broken down into three categories. These categories are freedom of expression, rights of the people, and criminal procedure.

<p>A. Freedom of Expression</p> 	<p>B. Rights of the People</p> 	<p>C. Criminal Procedure</p> 
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Match the amendment with the category by writing the letter of the category on the blank before the amendment.

- _____ 1st Freedom of speech, press, religion, the right to petition and to peacefully assemble
- _____ 2nd Right to keep and bear arms
- _____ 3rd No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house
- _____ 4th Right against reasonable searches and seizures
- _____ 5th Right to remain silent; no double jeopardy
- _____ 6th Right to a speedy trial; right to an attorney
- _____ 7th Right to a jury trial in matters over \$20
- _____ 8th Excessive bail cannot be required nor cruel and unusual punishment imposed
- _____ 9th Rights other than those listed
- _____ 10th Rights of the states

