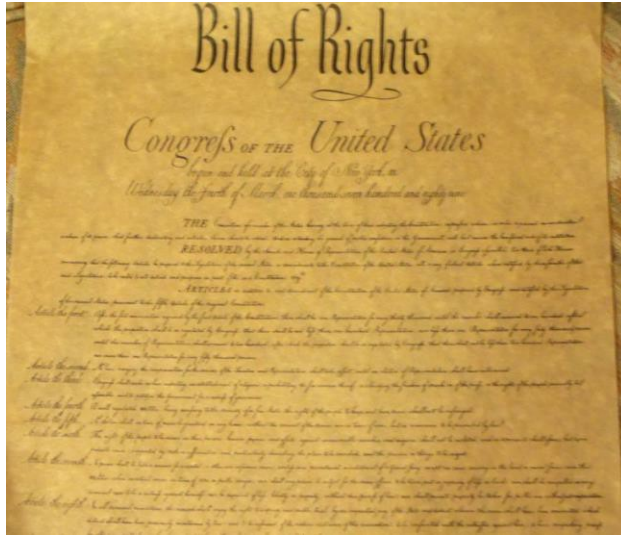


Primary Source Comprehension: The Bill of Rights

Grades: 3-5. SOL: 3.1 c, f. 3.6 a, d. 3.10 d. VS.1e, 1i, 4e, 6b. 4.1 b, d. 4.4a. 4.6 b, e, h. 4.7 e, j. 5.1 a-d, h. 5.4 a, b, f. 5.6 g, l, k.



Document Context:

The Bill of Rights was written after the Revolutionary War in 1791. It is a very special part of the Constitution, and it is the highest law in the United States. Its purpose was to protect citizens of the new United States and to ensure the government knew what it could and could not do to the people. Several of the members of the first Congress wanted to ensure certain liberties and rights were protected.

The first ten amendments to the United States Constitution make up the Bill of Rights. James Madison wrote these ten amendments in response to calls from several states representatives for greater constitutional protection for individual liberties. Rights are freedoms that people deserve. Liberties are a right or privilege; that one is free within society from unfair limitations forced by authority on one's way of life, behavior, or political views.

The Bill of Rights was strongly influenced by the Virginia Declaration of Rights written by George Mason. Other documents that influenced the Constitution include English documents such as the Magna Carta, the Petition of Right, the English Bill of Rights, and the Massachusetts Body of Liberties.

Exercise:

Read the Bill of Rights. Discuss what each means and then list all amendments in order with their correct descriptions and examples.

Secondly, open up the topic for deeper discussion. For instance, if and how these amendments are still relevant today. What differs now from when they were written in the United States? Do they apply to all citizens of the United States? Why or Why not? Do they need modification? (There are no wrong answers to these questions.)

The Bill of Rights

Name: _____

Place each description and example that best describes each amendment in the correct order.

Amendments	Description	Example
1st Amendment		
2nd Amendment		
3rd Amendment		
4th Amendment		
5th Amendment		
6th Amendment		
7th Amendment		
8th Amendment		
9th Amendment		
10th Amendment		

The Bill of Rights

Amendment I.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II.

A well-regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III.

No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV.

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V.

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall

private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI.

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Amendment VII.

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII.

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX.

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X.

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

The Bill of Rights

Cut and paste on worksheet.

Amendment Descriptions		Examples
Freedom of speech, assembly, press and religion.		Representatives of each state make decisions that impact schools.
Any power not given to the government is given to the individual States or the people.		A group of workers gather together and protest their unsafe work conditions.
Protects citizens from excessive bail and cruel and unusual punishment		A soldier knocks on a farmer's door, demanding to stay in the house. The farmer denies the request.
The right to keep weapons and bear arms will not be infringed upon.		Sarah sues her employer for not guaranteeing safe working conditions.
Just because it is not written in the Constitution, does not mean certain rights can be denied.		A person accused of a crime immediately receives sentence by a judge. LEGAL or NOT LEGAL
No military persons can live in another person's home without permission.		A citizen was put on trail and received a lawyer from the government. The jury found them guilty of arson.
Gives citizens the right to the due process of the law.		The authorities knock on Drew's door and present him with a warrant before they look inside.
Gives citizens the right for a trail by a jury in criminal cases.		Kathy takes her dog to the park every day. But this right is not in the Constitution.
Protects citizens from unreasonable search and seizure.		John applies for a permit and license to own a gun in Virginia.
Allows and protects citizen's rights to have a trail by jury in civil cases.		A person accused of stealing milk gets bail set at 1 million dollars. LEGAL or NOT LEGAL