



## Resources, Questions, Activities Grade Band 9-12

### Focus Questions:

- To what extent were the problems of democratic governance addressed by the Constitution?
- How does the Constitution protect the rights of individuals; what are the responsibilities of individuals as a result of these rights?
- To what extent has the Constitution as a governing document and its' interpretation changed over time?
- To what extent did the Declaration of Independence contribute to the development of American democratic ideals?
- What were the major controversies during the Constitutional Convention?
- How were the issues involved in the ratification debate resolved?

### Activities:

- 1) [Declaration of Independence: Rough Draft to Proclamation](#) lesson plan from the Library of Congress Education Resources website. Students compare and analyze differences between Jefferson's original rough draft of the Declaration of Independence with the final version of the document. Students analyze and compare primary source documents and evaluate the choices Jefferson made while editing.
- 2) [Docs Teach activity – We the People](#). Students examine and compare original and final drafts of the Constitution. Lesson ultimately asks them to evaluate the significance of the choice to use the words, "We the People."
- 3) [Do I Have a Right?](#) Online game from iCivics in which students simulate running a law firm that specializes in Constitutional Law. The student gets to decide if potential clients have a right. Might be a great follow up activity to reading through the Bill of Rights. Note – will need to set up a free iCivics account – suggest making a general account all students can use. Relatively elementary/middle level, but fun for a couple minutes.
- 4) [Bill of Rights game from Constitution Center](#). The National Computer has crashed and students have to restore the Bill of Rights. The game displays the Bill of Rights and students have to find the missing rights or freedoms by clicking on icons in "freedomville." This could be a follow up activity after reading through and discussing the Bill of Rights or used to assess prior knowledge. Relatively elementary/middle level, but fun for a couple minutes.

- 5) Develop a freedom collage or wall. For a week or two leading up to Constitution Day, ask students to pin images, words, thoughts, they are thankful for and/or responsibilities they have as citizens. They could pin observations they make of rights and responsibilities of citizens as they go about their daily life. At the end of the week, ask the students to use the thoughts and images as evidence to answer the question: to what extent does the Constitution influence the rights, responsibilities and lives of American citizens?
- 6) To Sign or Not to Sign – The Power of a Signature. [Lesson plan](#) and [video clip](#) from National Constitution Center. A version of this lesson plan can also be located on [Docs Teach](#).
- 7) [The Constitution: Drafting a More Perfect Union](#). Lesson plan from the Library of Congress Education Resources website. Students analyze and compare primary source documents, George Washington’s annotated copy of the Committee of Style’s draft constitution and William Samuel Johnson’s annotated copy of the Committee of Detail Report, to understand the evolution of the final document and evaluate why it’s considered a “living document.”
- 8) [The Constitution: Counter Revolution or National Salvation?](#) Lesson plan from Library of Congress Education Resources website. Students pretend to be members of the special state conventions called to decide whether to replace the Articles of Confederation with the new Constitution. Teacher facilitates a student debate based on the question: does the new government represent salvation or downfall?
- 9) [The Preamble](#) – High school lesson plan that utilizes a short clip from the movie, *We the People*. Students analyze the significance of the words, “We the People,” and evaluate how the meaning has changed over time. Students will examine the Preamble and other historical documents, such as Abigail Adams letter to John Adams (1776), the Three-Fifths Compromise, and letter to George Mason Jr. from George Mason Sr. (1787).
- 10) [Constitution Day Resources from the Bill of Rights Institute](#). A collection of games, video clips, and lesson plans to learn more about the Constitution. They created a [lesson plan](#) specifically for high school students. The lesson involves students studying the Constitution from three perspectives, examining its structure, content, and underlying philosophy.



CONSTITUTION DAY  
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### **Additional Online Resources:**

[50 Core Documents](#)

[Almost Painless Guide to the U.S. Constitution](#) – access video (need to have a Johnson County library account to access)

[Bill of Rights Institute](#)

[Bill of Rights Game](#)

[Bill of Rights Rap](#)

[Center for Civic Education](#)

[Docs Teach](#)

[Fascinating Facts about the Declaration of Independence](#)

[Founders Online Quiz](#)

[Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History](#)

[iCivics](#)

[KSDE HGSS Resource Page](#)

[KSDE Celebrate Freedom Resources](#)

[Library of Congress Educational Resources](#)

[National Constitution Center](#)

[National Archives Teachers' Resources](#)

[Naturalization Test](#)

[PBS Learning Source](#)

[Social Studies Central](#)

[Teaching American History](#)

[The New York Times Learning Network](#)

[We the People – Constitution Day Lesson Plans](#)

[Zinn Education Project: Constitution Role Play](#)