

Author: Kelly Schmidt
Topic: Constitution and Early Republic
Subject: United States History
Grade Level: Middle School
Length of Lesson: Three 45-minute class periods

Introduction: Bill of Rights- Cause and Effect

Many of the basic freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights are a direct result of conflict the colonists encountered with the British government prior to the Revolutionary War. This lesson will be used to introduce students to the Bill of Rights and its impact on the lives of American citizens today.

Before teaching this lesson, students should already have a thorough knowledge of events preceding the Revolutionary War including, but not limited to, the following topics: writs of assistance, Sugar Act (including vice admiralty courts), Stamp Act, and Coercive Acts (including the Quartering Act), Olive Branch Petition, etc. The teacher should be sure to emphasize any English laws or practices the colonists viewed as unjust or as a violation of their civil rights under English law.

Objective(s):

1. Students will be able to identify and interpret the Bill of Rights using primary documents.
2. Students will be able to correlate events occurring prior to the Revolutionary War to the development of the Bill of Rights using a cause and effect format.
3. Students will be able to discuss the impact of the Bill of Rights on the lives of American citizens today.

Nevada State Content Standards and Benchmarks:

History Standard 2.0: Students will use social studies vocabulary and concepts to engage in inquiry, in research, in analysis and in decision making.

Benchmark 2.8.3: Read and use informational tools, including: charts, diagrams, graphs, maps, political cartoons, photographs, tables.

History Standard 6.0: 1700-1865: Students understand the people, events, ideas, and conflicts that led to the creation of new nations and distinctive cultures.

Benchmark 6.8.7: Explain why the Constitution was written.

Materials List:

- Parent Letter, *School Rules* (see attached)
- The Bill of Rights from the National Archives
- *The Bill of Rights Scenarios* (see attached)
- Cash register tape (cut into 40" sections - one for each student)
- Class set of rulers
- Class set of newspapers
- *Bill of Rights Today* worksheet (see attached)

Anticipatory Set:

The teacher should begin this lesson by passing out the New School Rules paper to each student. This is your chance to have fun with your students; you may want to tell them that due to problems in discipline and incidents of vandalism around the campus the school has decided to enact a new discipline code. Read through the New School Rules paper with them and ask them for responses. Anticipate student responses and be prepared for students to say, "You can't do that." Ask them to explain why. What, if anything, protects them? Are their rights or freedoms protected by law? What rights or freedoms are guaranteed to them as American citizens? This can be used to lead into a brief discussion regarding the Bill of Rights. Be sure to emphasize that this is the document that protects many of the rights students previously discussed.

In Class Activities:

Day 1

- Discuss the need for a Bill of Rights and the importance of these amendments.
- Project a copy of the Bill of Rights on an overhead or a LCD projector (see National Archives website). Ask for student volunteers to read and put each amendment in their own words. If this is too difficult for your students, you may want to only pick one or two to read.
- Read the Bill of Rights, as summarized on the *Bill of Rights Scenarios* worksheet, aloud in class. Discuss why the original Bill of Rights may be difficult to interpret (old English vs. modern vernacular).
- Students will complete the *Bill of Rights Scenarios* worksheet which asks students to decide which amendment would protect them in each of the given situations.

Day 2

- Review information from yesterday's lesson. Explain to the class that many of the states refused to ratify the new Constitution unless it had a Bill of Rights to legally protect their basic rights and freedoms as American citizens. Many of the rights they demanded were those the British government had violated prior to the Revolutionary War.
- Pass out one 40 inch section of cash register tape to each student. Have each student fold their tape into 2 inch sections, folding in opposite directions so the tape opens like a fan or accordion when complete. Students must have 20 sections when they are finished.
- Students will write one amendment, freedom or right guaranteed to them by the Bill of Rights on **every other** square of their folded paper.
- On the remaining blank sections have students use their history text, as well as information and notes from class, to explain what English law or practice may have prompted Americans to demand an amendment protecting the preceding right. For example:

<p>Amendment: Restricts quartering of troops in private homes.</p>
<p>Result of: Quartering Act</p>
<p>Amendment: Protects against unreasonable searches and seizures.</p>
<p>Result of: Writs of Assistance</p>

- When students have completed all sections, the teacher should use the completed projects to discuss cause and effect.

Day 3

- Place students in pairs or small groups and give one newspaper to each student.
- Each group will receive one *Bill of Rights Today* worksheet to complete collectively.
- Have students use newspapers to find examples of rights that have either been either protected or violated in today's society. These stories can either be local, national or global. Use this information to complete the *Bill of Rights Today* worksheets.
- Use the information on students' completed worksheets to hold a class discussion about various ways the Bill of Rights affects our lives today. Have students compare and contrast this with other countries around the world.

Evaluation/Assessment:

- Students can be evaluated on the accuracy of the Bill of Rights scenarios worksheet, Bill of Rights Cause and Effect project, and Bill of Rights Today worksheet.

Extension:

- Accelerated students will write a one page paper using the following format:
 - Write a first person journal entry from the year 1791. You may choose write as a slave, a woman, or a member of a Native American tribe. Explain what you think and how you feel about the Bill of Rights and the Constitution. Do you see any conflicting values with this newly formed nation? Do you feel limited by the Constitution and by those who wrote it? How? Describe your hopes and dreams for the new country. What possibilities or problems do you see on the horizon?

Resource Materials:

- Appleby, J., Brinkley, A., McPherson, J., The American Journey. Glencoe McGraw-Hill, New York, NY, 2003.
- National Archives, Bill of Rights-
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters_of_freedom/bill_of_rights/bill_of_rights.html
 - Select Charters of Freedom, select Bill of Rights, then select Read Transcripts.

Adaptations:

- To accommodate ELL students, adapt this lesson in the following ways:
Day 1: Show students the original copy of the Bill of Rights from the National Archives. They do not need to read it aloud in class as it was originally written. Pass out the summary of the amendments from the Bill of Rights scenarios and complete it together in class.
Day 2: Complete the foldable project as instructed above. Instead of having students write why amendments were written, simply have them draw a symbol representing the rights or freedoms guaranteed to us as Americans. For example, a church might represent freedom of religion, a gavel or courthouse might represent the right to trial by jury, etc.
Day 3: Have students use newspapers to find pictures or headlines which represent stories written about these rights.

Name:
Period:
Date:

Directions: Use the Bill of Rights on the opposite side of this paper to complete the following questions. Be sure to write all of the amendments that would apply for each situation.

Bill of Rights Scenarios

1. You are arrested for stealing and the punishment is death. Which amendment(s) would protect you? _____
2. When you are arrested, you are thrown in jail without a trial? Which amendment(s) would protect you? _____
3. There is a war with the country of Canexico and the government wants to force you to house and feed a soldier. Which amendment prohibits this? _____
4. The government tries to pass a law forcing everyone to be the same religion. Which amendment would stop them? _____
5. A law is passed stating that large groups of people cannot gather together to peacefully protest any new laws or government actions. Which amendment would stop this from happening? _____
6. The government takes over all newspapers and prints only what they want you to know. Which amendment prohibits this? _____
7. You believe you have the right to own a gun and serve in a militia. The state you are in makes this illegal. Which amendment would protect you? _____
8. You are accused of stealing and the police enter your home and your friend's homes and search it without a search warrant. Which amendment would stop this from happening? _____
9. You are accused of stealing a piece of gum and the judge sets the bail at three million dollars. Which amendment prohibits this? _____
10. Which amendment would make sure you get a trial by a jury of your peers instead of one judge deciding if you are innocent or guilty? _____

Extra Credit

1. What is an amendment? _____
2. The first ten amendments to the Constitution are called _____

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Bill of Rights
(Summarized)

1st Amendment:

Guarantees freedom of religion, speech, assembly, and press, and the right of people to petition the government.

2nd Amendment:

Protects the rights of states to maintain a militia and of citizens to bear arms (weapons).

3rd Amendment:

Restricts quartering of soldiers in private homes.

4th Amendment:

Protects against “unreasonable searches and seizures.”

5th Amendment:

Citizens cannot to be deprived of “life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.”

6th Amendment:

Guarantees the right to a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury.

7th Amendment:

Assures the right to a jury trial in cases involving the common law (the law established by previous court decisions).

8th Amendment:

Protects against excessive bail, or cruel and unusual punishment.

9th Amendment:

Provides that the people’s rights are not restricted to those specified in the first eight amendments.

10th Amendment:

Restates the one of the Constitution’s basic principles, federalism, by providing that any powers not granted to the national government nor prohibited to the states are reserved to the states and to the people.

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Harney Middle School
School Rules

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Due to increased incidents of violence, vandalism and theft on campus and in the surrounding community, our school has found it necessary to enact the following school rules. These new rules are effective immediately.

1. School uniforms will be available for purchase at the start of the month. Students will be required to wear the required uniform everyday. Students found to be in violation of the dress code are subject to immediate suspension and/or expulsion for the remainder of the year.
2. All yearbook articles and photographs must have the approval of the school administration prior to publication. In addition, all school newspaper articles must be written on topics approved by the administration. Any student submitting an article on an unapproved topic is subject to suspension and/or expulsion.
3. Due to theft in the surrounding community, school lockers and students will be subject to random searches. Again, searches will be random and will take place on a daily basis.
4. Any property found on students or in student lockers deemed to be of questionable nature or disruptive to the school community is subject to immediate seizure. These items will not be returned to students, so students are encouraged to leave any items that might be “questionable or disruptive” at home.
5. Students will not be allowed to enter or shop in stores in the surrounding community in groups larger than three without a parent or guardian. Students found to be in violation of this law will be subject to arrest.
6. Students attending school will be fingerprinted to aid in the arrest of those responsible for past and present crimes on campus and in the surrounding community.
7. Due to an increase in fights taking place in the park before and after school, students are hereby prohibited from gathering in the park in groups larger than three without the direct supervision of a parent or guardian. Students in violation of this rule are subject to immediate arrest, suspension and/or expulsion from school.
8. School officials will make regular and random visits to the homes of students to ensure that the home environment is suitable and conducive to learning. Students may

be removed from homes that are found to be “questionable” and alternate living arrangements will be made.

9. Students and parents are forewarned that all decisions by the school administration are final. Protests and appeals will not be granted or heard.

Sincerely,

HMS Administration

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Bill of Rights Today

Directions: Use the newspaper to find 10 articles which discuss rights or freedoms guaranteed to you in the Bill of Rights. Be sure to write which amendment the article refers to, the right or freedom described in the article, the headline and page number of the article, and what the article is about.

Amendment	Right or Freedom	Headline & Page	Summary of the Article

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