



## Constitution Day

Lesson plan by Elizabeth Hanson

### Who

Students in grades 2-4

### Length of time needed

30 minutes

### Objectives

1. Understand the difference between freedoms and rules.
2. Understand what the Constitution is and what the Preamble is.
3. Understand the meaning of the Preamble.

### Materials Needed

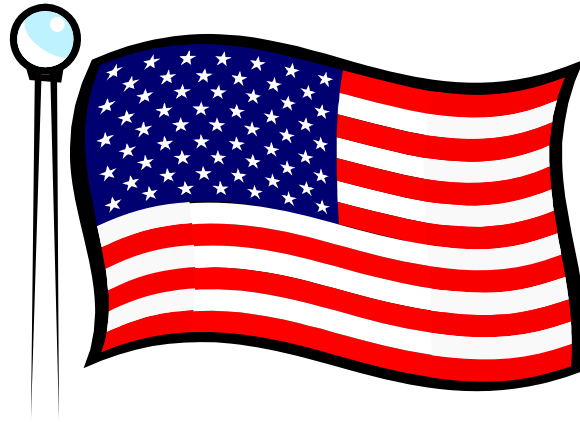
1. This hand-out (at least pages 3 and 4 of this handout for students to have. The first two pages you can put on the overhead).
2. A copy of the Constitution or a pocket Constitution
3. Poster paper and pens. You might want to record the students' responses, or have small groups of students make their own poster.

### Procedure

- Part One—Schema building
- Part Two—Presentation and vocabulary development
- Part Three--Activities

**Today is September 17.**

**It's Constitution Day!**



**The United States Constitution is a document that explains the freedoms and rules we have for life in the United States. The government must respect people's freedoms and follow the rules. The people must respect each other's freedoms and follow the rules.**

1. What do you like to do in your free-time?
2. Can you explain 4 rules you follow in this class?
3. Are there rules for teachers to follow? Can you think of 3?
4. Why do we need rules at school? Why do we need freedom?



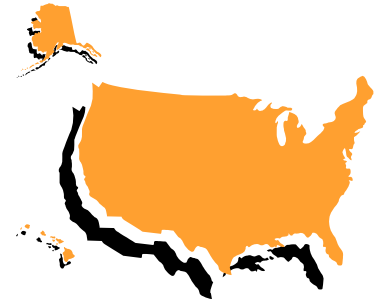
This man is studying our Constitution.

See how old this picture is!

Our Constitution was written in 1787.

**Look at the Constitution your teacher is showing you. Is it a huge book of freedoms and rules?                      Yes \_\_\_\_\_                      No \_\_\_\_\_**

The very first part of the Constitution is called the "Preamble." The Preamble tells us the purposes for having a government. What is a government? Do you think we need one? Why or why not?



Look at the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution below. It is ONE LONG SENTENCE!

The Preamble is one long sentence with many unusual words, so it's a little hard to understand. However, it is important to understand the preamble because we need to know what the U.S. government's job is. We live here.

**Listen to your teacher read the Preamble.**

**The Preamble to the  
Constitution of the United States**

We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

**Listen to your teacher explain the following ideas. Write down what your teacher says.**

perfect union	_____
domestic tranquility	_____
common defense	_____
general welfare	_____
blessings of liberty	_____
posterity	_____

**Now listen one more time as your teacher reads the preamble.**

**Then put an “x” in the box if....**

- You saw a copy of the Constitution.
- You listened to your teacher read the preamble to the Constitution and you understand it (at least a little).

Now divide into groups of 2-4 people. Together you will have 20 minutes to work on a Constitution Day assignment. This assignment will help you REALLY UNDERSTAND the Preamble, the list of reasons we have a government.

**Thumbs up for Constitution Day! YAHOO!**



Names: \_\_\_\_\_

**Look at your copy of the preamble and circle the correct answer.**

“We the People” the “p” in “people” is a capital letter to show that regular people in the U.S. are ( important not important)

The word “domestic” means ( outside the U.S. inside the U.S. )

The word “liberty” means ( freedom control )

The word “posterity” means ( people today people in the future )

**The early American people wanted these things. Match the ideas.**

1. I want liberty.	___ I want to protect myself from people who want to hurt me.
2. I want justice.	___ I don't want to go to jail if I'm innocent.
3. I want safety.	___ I want the freedom to say what I want without being afraid.

**Fill in the blanks of the Preamble with these words:**

liberty, Constitution, domestic, People, union, defense

We the \_\_\_\_\_ of the United States, in order to form a more perfect \_\_\_\_\_, establish justice, insure \_\_\_\_\_ tranquility, provide for the common \_\_\_\_\_, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of \_\_\_\_\_ to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this \_\_\_\_\_ for the United States of America.

**Now your teacher will correct the answers with you.**

**Finally, think about a good freedom for the people of the U.S. to have and let's make a poster!**

“All Americans should be free to \_\_\_\_\_.”

