



NSDAR Educational Resources Committee

"Constitution Week 6-8"

Lesson Plan

Contributor: Betsy Ruffin

State: Texas

1. **Identify the standards to be addressed:**

History

Analyze the issues of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, including the Great Compromise and the Three-Fifths Compromise

Analyze the arguments for and against ratification.

Government

Identify the influence of ideas from historic documents, including the Magna Carta, the English Bill of Rights, the Mayflower Compact, the Federalist Papers, and selected Anti-Federalist writings, on the U.S. system of government

Identify colonial grievances listed in the Declaration of Independence and explain how those grievances were addressed in the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights

Summarize the purposes for and process of amending the U.S. Constitution

Describe the impact of 19th-century amendments, including the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments, on life in the United States

Analyze how the U.S. Constitution reflects the principles of limited government, republicanism, checks and balances, federalism, separation of powers, popular sovereignty, and individual rights

Compare the principles and concepts of the Texas Constitution to the U.S. Constitution, including the Texas and U.S. Bill of Rights.

Identify and describe examples of limited and unlimited governments such as constitutional (limited) and totalitarian (unlimited)

Compare the characteristics of limited and unlimited governments

Identify reasons for limiting the power of government

Citizenship

Define and give examples of unalienable rights;

Summarize rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights;

Identify and explain the duty of civic participation in societies with representative governments

Explain how the rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens reflect our national identity

Explain relationships among rights, responsibilities, and duties in societies with representative governments

Identify the leadership qualities of elected and appointed leaders of Texas, past and present, including Texans who have been president of the United States

2. **Statement of the objective and lesson outcomes:**

Student will be able to:

1. List one argument for and one against ratification of the Constitution

2. Describe the process for amending the Constitution

3. Compare and contrast the US and the Texas Constitutions and government structure/officials

4. Define the terms: checks and balances, separation of powers, unalienable rights,

5. List at least 5 rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights

6. List at least 2 responsibilities of citizens for civic duty

3. **Materials, resources, and technology to be used by teacher/students:**

Websites:

<http://www.scholastic.com/browse/collection.jsp?id=391>
<http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/constitution-day-grades-6-8.html>
<https://www.k12.com/constitution-day.html>
<http://www.lbilibrary.org/education/educational-resources/>
<https://constitutioncenter.org/constitution-day/constitution-day-resources/middle-school-resources/>

Constitution Document sites:

<https://www.archives.gov/publications/ebooks/exploring-constitution.html>
<https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution>
http://constitution.org/constit_.htm
<http://www.consource.org/index/>
<https://www.usconstitution.cc>

4. Introduction of the topic:

Present this question to students: What do you know about the Constitution? What would you like to know? List on computer document or paper on wall all items what they know items, both correct and incorrect , to use in lesson closure; on separate document, list questions.

Use one or both of the following videos to introduce the topic of Constitution Week, discussing briefly what they learned from the video:

<https://youtu.be/YISGbuohhro>
<https://youtu.be/jFffbz-zng>

5. Procedure for instruction:

Present the following vocabulary words and the meaning using dictionary definitions and context within sentences: amendment, ratification, unalienable rights, checks and balances, civic duty

Review basics by questioning students on what they remember about Constitutional Convention and filling in the “blanks” on following: date, place, people, and creation of Constitution (sources to start with:

<https://constitutioncenter.org/learn/educational-resources/historical-documents/constitution-fast-facts>.
<https://www.usconstitution.net/constkids4.html>)

1. Discuss ratification process, answering the following questions: who had to ratify, how many states were required, how long did this take- these may be listed by students as basic notes; what were the arguments for and against ratification - discuss and list these in a class chart

2 and 5. Who proposed the Bill of Rights and why? How was the Bill added to the Constitution? What basic rights do these first amendments guarantee and what do they mean? How many further amendments have been added and what is the process? How many states must ratify an amendment now? (Two sources: <https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/articles/teaching-content/explaining-bill-rights/>.
<http://www.government-and-constitution.org/amendments/constitutional-amendments.htm>)

Make sure students understand these rights by having them explain in their own words

3. (Esp for grade 8) - compare and contrast the Texas Constitution and the US Constitution - governing structure, officials, what types of amendments are added to each, how many, how are they ratified, (copy of Texas Constitution: <https://www.nationallibertyalliance.org/files/constitutions/Texas%20Constitution.pdf>)

(Compare,contrastworksheet:

<https://www.aledoisd.org/site/handlers/filedownload.ashx?moduleinstanceid=6112&dataid=6960&FileName=Texas%20v%20US%20Constitution.pptx>)

4. Define terms (one list of important terms :<https://www.enchantedlearning.com/history/us/documents/constitution/glossary.shtml>) and vocabulary (listed above) , where they appear or how they are related in/to Constitution and US government structure

6. Discuss the term civic and the concept of civic duty - What are our duties as good school citizens? We have duties as US citizens also - vote, serve on juries, obey laws, pay taxes, etc. Which can they do now (obey laws, be informed about public issues for example) and which have to wait until a certain age (voting for example)

6. **Lesson closure:**

Go back to lists created in introduction - Which are correct and not correct, correct those that were wrong or incomplete, answer those they wanted to know more about.

7. **Assessment of student understanding:**

Quiz: List - 1 argument for 1 against ratification of Constitution; 2 civic duties of US citizen; T/F - is it a right guaranteed in Bill of Rights; Fill in the blank - steps to amending Constitution; Vocabulary - use correctly in sentence.