

LESSON PLAN

Bill of Rights and Other Amendments

Level: Literacy, Low Beginning

Suggested Length: 2 class periods

Civics Test Questions

- #4—What is an amendment?
- #5—What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?
- #6—What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?
- #7—How many amendments does the Constitution have?
- #10—What is freedom of religion?
- #48—There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.
- #50—Name one right only for United States citizens.
- #51—What are two rights of everyone living in the United States?
- #54—How old do citizens have to be to vote for President?
- #66—When was the Constitution written?

Reading Test Vocabulary

Bill of Rights, citizen, Congress, government, right
 America, United States, U.S.
 How, What, When
 can, do/does, have, is/are/was/be, meet, name, pay, vote
 a, for, in, of, on, the, to, we
 first, many, one, people

Writing Test Vocabulary

citizens, Congress, freedom of speech, right
 United States
 can, have/has, is/was/be, meets, pay, vote
 and, for, in, of, on, the, to, we
 first, one, people

Objectives:

Students will:

- define an amendment
- describe the Bill of Rights
- identify rights in the First Amendment and explain to whom they apply
- explain freedom of religion
- describe rights only for United States citizens
- identify amendments about voting
- describe voting age and voting rights
- identify the year the Constitution was written

Materials:

Handouts: **The Bill of Rights and Other Amendments**, **The First Amendment**, **Word Search—The First Amendment**, **Four Amendments on Voting**, and **Correct the Sentence—Amendments**

8.5" x 11" visuals

Optional handout (Literacy Level Writing Practice): **Amendment**

Bill of Rights and Other Amendments Lesson Answer Key



Lesson Overview and Notes to Teacher:

This lesson explains the concept of amendments and the background of the Bill of Rights in relation to the Constitution. We recommend teaching the lesson on Benjamin Franklin and the U.S. Constitution prior to this one. This lesson covers details about the First Amendment and voting rights. There are numerous pictures in the handouts to help illustrate these concepts. We have

also included several 8 ½" x 11" visuals to use for class discussion. There are two activities, a word search and sentence correction, to help reinforce the new vocabulary and concepts. The Literacy Level Writing Practice handout **Amendment** gives handwriting practice and reinforces a Civics Test item.

Introduction: Write **Constitution** on the board. Ask the students **What does the Constitution do? (defines the government, protects basic rights)**. Explain that a **right** means something you can do because it is allowed by law.

Explain to the class that the Founding Fathers wanted to make sure that the rights of individuals were protected in the Constitution, which is why the Bill of Rights was written.

Guided Practice: Distribute the handout **The Bill of Rights and Other Amendments**. Read each sentence 2-3 times out loud for students to hear. Have the students repeat each line after you. Explain any new vocabulary and have the students fill in short definitions in the New Words box (**rights=something you can do because it is allowed by law, amendment=change to the Constitution, Bill of**

Rights=first ten amendments, individual=each person). Point out that **When was the Constitution written?, What is an amendment?, What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?, and How many amendments does the Constitution have?** are items on the Civics Test.

Practice: Distribute the handout **The First Amendment**. Discuss the photos in the handout, asking the students what they see. Review the paragraph in the same manner as above. After you review the rights listed in the box about the First Amendment, have the students look at the picture again and see if they can identify ways people in the photo are exercising those rights (**making a speech, reporters with microphones, people assembling, etc.**) Discuss with the students whether citizens in their native countries have the same rights as in the First Amendment. You can also use the 8 ½" x 11" visuals for further class discussion or small group work. Point out that **What is freedom of religion?, What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?, and What are two rights of everyone living in the United States?** are items on the Civics Test.

Distribute the handout **Word Search—The First Amendment**. Review the vocabulary in the Word Bank and have the students find and circle the words in the puzzle.

Distribute the handout **Four Amendments on Voting** and review the sentences as previously described. Ask the students if they have ever voted in their native country. Discuss the voting laws in their countries, such as who is allowed to vote, voting age, voting tax, penalty for not voting, and so on. Compare voting in other countries to the U.S. voting amendments covered in this handout. Review these Civics Test items with the class: **How old do citizens have to be to vote for President?, Name one right only for United States citizens, and There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.**

Evaluation: Distribute **Correct the Sentence—Amendments**. Have the students read each sentence and find the error. They should cross out the incorrect word or phrase and

re-write the sentence correctly on the line below. Go over the first sentence together on the board.

Writing Practice for Literacy/Low Beginning Students: The handout **Amendment** is included for

optional copy work. Point out that **What is an amendment?** is an item on the test.

*Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy speaking at a racial equality demonstration outside the Justice Department on June 14, 1963.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ppmsca-04295.*



*A synagogue on Yom Kippur, circa 1900.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-DIG-ggbain-02316.*



Striking textile workers participate in a Labor Day parade in Gastonia, North Carolina, 1934.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-123745.



Until 1920, women were not allowed to vote in political elections. This image shows women petitioning for the right to vote (ca. 1917) in New York State. Courtesy of the Library of Congress, LC-USZ62-53202