

WE THE PEOPLE ...

In the News



A Project of the 2002 Newspaper Innovators in Education Award Winners

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Introduction

In July 2002, the winners of the 2002 Newspaper Innovators in Education Awards gathered in Washington DC for a week of celebration and work. This guide is a result of an education seminar that was conducted by the Center for Civic Education and hosted by the Washington Post.

The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, nonpartisan corporation affiliated with the State Bar of California. The mission of the Center is to foster the development of informed, responsible participation in civic life by citizens committed to values and principles fundamental to American constitutional democracy. The Center develops and implements programs in civic education for public and private schools at elementary and secondary levels, cooperating with educators and scholars in the social sciences, humanities and the law. The Center offers curricular materials, leadership training, teacher education and research and evaluation in civics education.



All activities listed in this guide are based on lessons from *We The People: The Citizen and the Constitution* – high school edition: Center for Civic Education, 5146 Douglas Fir Road, Calabasas, CA 91302-1467; Phone: 800-350-4223. The Center for Civic Education is funded by the U.S. Department of Education by act of Congress and was established in 1987 under the Commission on the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution.

All of these activities can be conducted without the program provided by the Center for Civic Education but it is strongly recommended that you contact the Center to obtain the book on which these lessons are based. It is further encouraged that you provide information about the program to your local school system. If your local school is participating in either We The People or Project Citizen, these activities will be of significant usefulness in developing an NIE program to help your local schools.

Format

There are 40 lessons contained in *We The People*, the 2002 Newspaper Innovators in Education Award winners created 25 activities, each tied to a specific lesson from *We The People*, to demonstrate how the local newspaper can be used effectively with this program. Each activity will tie all or part of the content of the lesson to an activity that uses today's newspaper. Local NIE personnel are encouraged to add additional activities as you work with your local schools.

Title: Each lesson title is in the form of a question that the student will be challenged to answer during the course of study. These questions are taken directly from *We The People* and are used by permission.

Standard Addressed: Each lesson suggests at least one national standard that is addressed by the activity. These standards are taken from *National Standards for Civics and Government*, Center for Civic Education, 1994. Other standards may also be addressed by the activity and local NIE personnel may want to include state and local standards that are addressed by each activity. Standards listed are for middle school although the lessons are designed for students in grades 6–12.

Purpose of the Lesson: This description of the lesson is reproduced from *We The People* by permission of the Center for Civic Education.

Materials Needed: This gives the user a suggested list of materials needed to complete the activity. All activities use today's newspaper. Each student in class should have a copy of the newspaper to make the lessons most effective.

Newspaper Activity: This is a generalized description of a newspaper activity that would help reinforce the lesson being taught and to tie historic or theoretical references to today's news. All activities were created for the 6th – 12th grade levels.

Evaluation: A suggestion evaluation is provided for each activity. It is important that the teacher check to see that the students have grasped the concept being presented. Teachers are encouraged to develop their own evaluations that best meet local standards. The "purpose" section of each activity states the expected outcomes of the lesson from *We the People*. These outcomes should form the basis of your general evaluation of each lesson.

Summary

The intent of this guide is to encourage teachers and newspapers to use newspaper-based activities when following the programs of the Center for Civic Education. The use of today's newspaper can connect to today, concepts that may not appear relevant to students studying the historic development of our government. The U.S. Constitution is a living document and the pages of today's newspaper are the history books that chronicle the changes that occur on a daily basis.

What Would Life Be Like in a State of Nature?

Based on Lesson #1 of *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards I A 1. (Page 45, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

This lesson introduces you to some basic ideas of the natural rights philosophy and theories of government that were of great importance in the development of our government.

These major ideas include the state of nature, the law of nature, natural rights, consent and the social contract. You learn about these ideas as they were developed by the English philosopher, John Locke. (1632-1704)

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to describe how and why the natural rights philosophers used an imaginary state of nature to think about the basic problems of government. You should be able to explain some of the basic ideas of the natural rights philosophy.

Finally, you should be able to explain that the purpose of government based on the natural rights philosophy is to preserve our natural rights to life, liberty and property. (We the People, page 2)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Large chart paper
Scissors
Glue sticks

Newspaper Activity:

Divide your class into groups of 5 to 7 students.

After you have completed lesson one or a similar activity ask each group to create a large chart with three columns. Title one column "Natural Rights," title the second "Civil Rights" and label the third "Political Rights."

Ask each group to search through today's newspaper for examples of each type of right. They should use the entire newspaper including news articles, the advertisements, editorials and even the comics.

Place the headline or main idea of each article, photo, etc. in the appropriate column followed by a short explanation stating why the article is an example of the right selected.

Evaluation:

Ask each group to share with the full class the articles or examples they selected. They should explain why they believe each example is placed in the correct column. The remainder of the class can vote on whether or not they think the example has been placed in the appropriate column.

An alternative would be to allow each group to score one point for each example it found that was not found by any other group. There must still be agreement that the example was placed in the correct category.

How Does Government Secure Natural Rights?

Based on Lesson #2: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards I A 1 and I B 2 (Page 45 and 47: National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

This lesson introduces you to some basic ideas the Framers used in creating the kind of government they thought would best protect the natural rights of each individual and promote the good of all.

When you finish this lesson you should understand the difference between limited and unlimited government, the difference between written and unwritten constitutions and how Americans have used the term constitutional government. You should be able to explain why a government with a constitution is not necessarily a constitutional government and be able to identify alternative models of government that the Founders had to choose from. (We the People; page 7)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Poster making materials
Scissors
Glue
Markers

Newspaper Activity:

Challenge your class to scan today's newspaper to find at least three stories about countries that have a limited government. Do the same for three countries that have unlimited government.

Create a poster showing the articles about either limited or unlimited government. Decorate the poster with pictures or drawings of the countries selected. Create a poster for the other form of government.

On each of the posters list the rights and responsibilities of the citizens you can infer from the articles selected.

Evaluation:

The teacher can grade each poster or individuals or groups can present the information on each poster to the class and the teacher can evaluate the presentation.

A rubric can be developed to evaluate the poster. It should include the accuracy of the selection of articles, quality of the artistic design of the poster, etc.

What Did the Founders Learn about Republican Government from the Ancient World?

Based on Lesson #3: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards I A 1. (Page 45, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

In this lesson you learn how the Founders were influenced by the ideas of classical republicanism: The importance of the Roman Republic and the moral ideal of civic virtue. You examine how these ideas shaped their thinking about what kind of government they wanted to create for the United States.

When you finish the lesson, you should understand not only the principles of classical republicanism but the difficulties the Founders encountered in attempting to apply those principles to the new American nation. You also should understand how classical republicanism differed from the natural rights philosophy in its account of human nature and individual rights. You should be able to explain how James Madison was able to adapt the ideas of classical republicanism, democracy and civic virtue to American circumstances. (We The People, Page 13)

Materials Needed:

Today's Newspaper
Blank Paper

Newspaper Activity:

Working alone or in small groups, ask your class to search through today's newspaper to find examples of articles, photos, etc. that demonstrate either "common good" or "civic virtue."

Each individual or group should list the headline or the article and write a short description showing why the article should be considered either a "common good" or a "civic virtue."

Ask your students to examine advertisements in today's newspaper and create a list of characteristics of a good ad. Using that list as a guide, create a public service advertisement that encourages either the common good or civic virtue.

Share these “ads” with the rest of the class or place them on a bulletin board.

Evaluation:

Ask your students to turn to the comics page of today’s newspaper. Ask them to find one example of a common good and one example of a civic virtue as demonstrated by a character in a the comic strip.

What were the British Origins of American Constitutionalism?

Based on Lesson #5: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards II D 1. (Page 58, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

This lesson describes how some basic rights of Englishmen were established and why they were important to the American colonists. You examine English government in its early stages from the ninth through the thirteenth centuries, known as the feudal period. You also examine the initial development of the English constitution. Finally, you learn about the Magna Carta and its importance to the Founders.

When you finish this lesson you should be able to explain the importance to the Founders of the following ideas: the basic rights of Englishmen, The Magna Carta and the development of constitutional government in England. (We The People, Page 26)

Materials Needed:

Today's Newspaper
Writing paper

Newspaper Activity:

Ask your class to search through today's newspaper for a story about a bill that is being proposed in a local, state or national legislature. Ask each student to write a short summary of the rights that are being protected or eroded by the bill.

Direct the students to the editorial page of today's newspaper and have them read each of the editorials found there. As a class, create a list of the characteristics of a good editorial.

Ask each member of the class to write an editorial in support or in opposition to the legislation based on their knowledge of rights. Were the rights in question with this legislation listed in the Rights of Englishmen?

Evaluation:

Use a peer editing process to help each student refine his or her editorial.

The teacher can evaluate this writing style, as he or she would do with any other writing assignment.

Why Did the American Colonists Want to Free Themselves from Britain? What Basic Ideas about Government Did the Founders Put in the Declaration of Independence?

Based on Lesson #8: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards V B 1-4. (Page 76-77, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

In this lesson you learn that the growth of the American colonies raised issues that were difficult to resolve peaceably. You consider the circumstances that produced the Declaration of Independence, as well as the major ideas about government and natural rights included in that document.

When you finish this lesson you should be able to describe British policies toward the colonies that the American colonists believed violated basic principles of constitutional government. You also should be able to explain the reasons why Americans resisted these policies and how this resistance led to the Declaration of Independence. Finally, you should be able to describe the arguments justifying the separation of the colonies from Great Britain that are found in the Declaration of Independence. (We The People, Page 42)

Materials Needed:

Today's Newspaper
Scissors
Colored construction paper
Thumbtacks or pins
3 X 5 cards

Newspaper Activity:

Divide your class into three groups. Assign each group a section of a bulletin board with the following titles: Freedom of Assembly, Trial by Jury, Freedom of Speech.

Each group is to search the newspaper for current day examples of the freedoms that helped frame the Declaration of Independence.

As each article or photo is placed on the bulletin board, the group must create, on a 3 X 5 card, a short explanation of the freedom being shown and tell how it relates to the forces that created the Declaration of Independence.

Evaluation:

Evaluate the oral presentation of each group as they explain their section of the bulletin board to the rest of the class.

What Basic Ideas about Government Did the State Constitutions Include? How Did the New States Protect Rights?

Based on Lesson #9: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III C & D (Page 64-65, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

A review of the main ideas in the state constitutions will show you how the Founders designed their state governments to protect their rights and promote the common good. In this lesson you learn how the Massachusetts state constitution was uniquely designed to achieve these ends. You also learn about the bills or declarations of rights that these state constitutions included. These chartered guarantees of rights, for which Virginia's Declaration of Rights served as a model, had a great influence on the development of the U.S. Bill of Rights.

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to explain how the basic ideas about government and rights you have studied were included in state constitutions. You also should be able to explain how the experience of the states in developing their own constitutions and bills of rights influenced the framing of the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. (*We The People*, page 47)

Materials Needed:

Today's Newspaper
Scissors
Glue
Blank paper

Newspaper Activity:

Ask each member of your class to create a notebook in which they will keep examples showing how your state constitution was created and how it protects specific rights.

Each day for a week, ask your students to review the current day's newspaper and find articles about issues dealing with your state government.

Clip out three articles a day and paste each on a separate page in the notebook.

Below each article write a short summary of how your state constitution addresses each of the following basic ideas:

- Higher law and natural rights
- Social contract
- Popular sovereignty
- Representation and the right to vote
- Legislative supremacy
- Checks and balances

Evaluation:

At the end of the week, ask each student to create a chart showing how many examples of each of the concepts listed above were found. Below the chart ask the student to write a short summary of how your state constitution reflects the basic values expressed in the U.S. Constitution.

Who Attended the Philadelphia Convention? What Did They Agree to Do?

Based on Lesson #11: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III D & E. (Page 65-67, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

The second U.S. Constitution was written at a convention held in Philadelphia in 1787. This lesson describes the idea of a constitutional convention, how the Philadelphia Convention came to be, some of the most important people who attended it, and some of the first steps they took to create our present Constitution.

When you complete this lesson, you should be able to describe the steps leading to the calling of the Philadelphia Convention and some of the leading Framers who attended it. (We The People, Page 60)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Scissors
Writing paper

Newspaper Activity:

In today's newspaper, find an article or picture showing a group that has decided to unite to bring about a change in public policy.

Over a stated period of time, collect articles related to the issues addressed by this group.

Review several letters to the editor in today's newspaper and create a list of characteristics of a good letter to the editor.

Pretend you are a member of the group you have been following and draft a letter to the editor stating your position on the issue involved.

Evaluation:

Evaluate the letters written for correct letter-writing style and for the validity of the argument presented.

What Powers Were Granted to the Legislative Branch?

Based on Lesson #13: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III A (Page 61, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

This lesson describes the basic organization of Congress. It explains why Congress was organized into two houses, why representation in the House of Representatives is based on population, and why each state selects two senators. The lesson also describes some powers of Congress as well as some limitations on its powers. It concludes with a discussion of the issues that caused disagreement between the southern and northern delegates.

When you complete this lesson, you should be able to explain how and why the present system of representation in Congress was adopted and the major powers of Congress. You should also be able to explain the major areas of contention between the northern and southern states and how they were settled. (*We The People*, Page 68)

Materials Needed:

Today's Newspaper
Blank paper

Newspaper Activity:

Find and collect a series of articles in the newspaper in which the legislative branches of the U.S. Congress is exercising its powers.

Select an issue in which there is contention between the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Draw a Venn diagram that illustrates each branch's position on the issue. Show the places the two bodies differ within their own circle and show where they agree in the overlapping portion of the diagram.

Evaluation:

Ask each student to write a short essay describing how each branch of Congress was given the rights and powers it has in comparison to the other branch.

What Conflicting Opinions Did the Framers Have about the Completed Constitution?

Based on Lesson #15: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards II C. (Page 57, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

This lesson describes some conflicting points of view of leading Framers about the Constitution. Most of the delegates argued for the adoption of the Constitution, although many had reservations about all or parts of it. The reservations of three were so serious that they refused to sign the document. The position of one of these Framers, George Mason, is explored in detail. You also will examine Benjamin Franklin's statement in defense of the Constitution.

When you have completed this lesson, you should be able to explain the positions of Franklin and Mason, and give arguments in support of and in opposition to their positions. (We The People, page 80)

Materials Needed:

Today's Newspaper

Newspaper Activity:

Divide the class into small groups.

Each group searches through today's newspaper to find an article about an issue on which 2 individuals or groups disagree.

Each group will create a summary of the issues involved and create a compromise that might be acceptable to both groups.

Each group does an oral presentation to the class.

Evaluation:

Review today's newspaper to determine the characteristics of a good advertisement. Create an advertisement supporting the compromise position developed for the debate above.

What Was the Anti-Federalists' Position In the Debate about Ratification?

Based on Lesson #16: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards II D. (Page 58, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

The people who opposed ratification of the Constitution, which created a federal government, were called Anti-Federalists. To understand their point of view, we will focus on the writings of Mercy Otis Warren, the author of many plays and political pamphlets. The Anti-Federalists' position was based mainly on the ideas that had been discussed for more than 2,000 years about the kind of society that was necessary for a republic. You also learn about the Bill of Rights, one of the most important contributions of our Constitution.

When you complete this lesson you should understand the contributions of Anti-Federalists and be able to explain their arguments. (We The People, Page 84)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Art supplies

Newspaper Activity:

The Anti-Federalists argued that the Constitution had many flaws. There are groups and individuals today who still take that position.

In today's newspaper find an article about a national current event that demonstrates the Anti-Federalists views about the U.S. government.

Creatively express the Anti-Federalists viewpoint. (Examples: dramatization, poem, song, visual arts, etc.)

Students present to the class or display on a bulletin board.

Evaluation:

Ask the students in the class to see if they can determine the position being portrayed by creative demonstration of the other students.

What Was the Federalist's Position In the Debate about Ratification?

Based on Lesson #17: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards II D. (Page 58, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

The people who supported the ratification of the Constitution, which created a federal government, were called Federalists. It is important to understand the differences of opinion between the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists. This lesson describes the strategy and the arguments the Federalists used to get the Constitution ratified. These include the concepts of the social contract and consent. You learn that in the larger states, such as New York and Virginia, the debates about ratification were very close and, to get some Anti-Federalists support, the Federalists agreed that when the first Congress was held it would draft a bill of rights to be added to the Constitution.

When you complete this lesson you should be able to explain why the Federalists wanted the Constitution to be ratified in state conventions, the arguments that were used to justify this procedure and the arguments made by the Federalists in support of the Constitution. (*We The People*, page 87)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Blank paper

Newspaper Activity:

Over the period of a week identify news articles in which the powers of the various branches of the national government are demonstrated.

Identify the branch of government and the power demonstrated in each article.

Draw a political cartoon depicting the effects of having only two branches of government rather than three.

Evaluation:

Give students a copy of today's newspaper and ask them to find at least one article that demonstrates the function of each of the three branches of government.

How was the Constitution Used to Organize the New Government?

Based on Lesson #18: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III A. (Page 61, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

This lesson explains the steps taken by the First Congress to name a president and vice president, to provide funding for the new government, to draft a bill of rights and to organize the executive and judicial branches.

When you complete this lesson, you should be able to explain how the Constitution provides an outline of the federal government's organization and that details are added by the government itself. You also should be able to explain how the First Congress used the Constitution to name a president and vice president and to raise revenue to fund the new government. You should be able to describe how Congress organized the executive branch and how it has expanded. In addition, you should be able to describe how the federal court system was established in the Judiciary Act of 1789. Finally, you should be able to explain how the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution. (We The People, page 92)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper

Newspaper Activity:

Over the period of a week or more, identify news articles in which the work of the various cabinet departments are demonstrated.

Develop a chart of the agencies with the name of key officials placed in their proper place on the chart.

Examine the articles about each department and infer what that department does. Write a short description of the duties and powers of the department as they were described in the news articles.

Evaluation:

Challenge your students to find articles about at least three of the following departments of the Executive Branch. Write a short description of the functions of the department.

- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Defense
- Department of Energy
- Department of Housing/Urban Development
- Department of Justice
- Department of State
- Department of Treasury
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Education
- Department of Health/Human Services
- Department of Interior
- Department of Labor
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Veteran's Affairs

What Rights Did the Constitution Protect? How Was the Bill of Rights Added to the Constitution?

Based on Lesson #19: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III A 1. (Page 62, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

The Federalists argued that separation of powers, checks and balances, the federal system and the size and diversity of the nation provided the best protection for the rights of individuals. In particular, they pointed to the provisions of the new Constitution that prohibited both the federal and state governments from violating important rights.

In this lesson you examine the rights the Framers included in the Constitution and discuss their importance. In addition, you learn of the struggle to add a bill of right to the Constitution, reactions to the Bill of Rights, and the reasons it provided only limited protection of rights.

After completing this lesson, you should be able to list the rights the Framers included in the Constitution. You should be able to describe these rights, explain why they were chosen and explain their importance. You also should be able to explain the conflict over adding a bill of rights to the Constitution, the result of the conflict and why the Bill of Rights had such a limited effect on the lives of Americans at the time. (We The People, page 96)

Materials Needed:

Today's Newspaper

Newspaper Activity:

Ask your class, as individuals or small groups, to collect articles where a persons rights are not protected under the Bill of Rights and have their rights abridged, for example, racial prejudice or threats from economic powers.

Have the individuals or groups identify agencies or professionals in your community that could address such injustice.

Let the group interview a representative of the agency or professional regarding a case they may have dealt with in the past.

Write an article, using the 5 W's and the H format, about the agency and how they helped the people they serve.

Evaluation:

Ask each group to draft an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that would add the protection they found to be missing in the study they have done.

What Caused the Rise of Political Parties?

Based on Lesson #20: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III F 3. (Page 69, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

Soon after the government was established, there was an unforeseen development to which the Framers were very much opposed. This was the formation of political parties. This lesson describes how they came to be formed. The lesson also describes the importance of political parties to our present system of government.

When you complete the lesson, you should be able to explain why the Framers were opposed to the idea of political parties. You should also be able to explain the conflicting points of view that led to the development of political parties, the reasons for the demise of the Federalist party and the role that political parties play in American politics today. (We The People, page 102)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Writing paper
Blank paper
Art supplies

Newspaper Activity:

Research and identify the political parties that are represented in your state by a place on the most recent ballot.

Divide the class into small groups and assign one party to each group. They should collect articles about their party.

Ask each group to write a letter to a local representative of the party to come to class to speak about the party.

Review advertising, especially political advertising in the newspaper and create a list of characteristics of a good political ad.

Create a campaign for your party, which will include political ads for the newspaper, campaign buttons, bumper stickers, and political posters.

Evaluation:

Hold a mock election with a candidate to represent each of the political parties. Each group should present its campaign to another class. Let the other class vote for the candidate they support based on the campaigns.

What Amendments to the Constitution Were Added to Protect the Rights of African Americans?

Based on Lesson #24: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III B. (Page 63, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

In this lesson you examine the laws passed and the amendments added to the Constitution after the Civil War. These were intended to free enslaved Africans and give them the same rights other Americans had. These amendments, however, were not enough to guarantee the new citizens their rights. You learn how some states passed their own laws to deny African Americans their rights and prevent them from developing political power.

When you complete this lesson, you should be able to explain how the federal government attempted to use the Civil War Amendments to the Constitution to protect the rights of African Americans. You should be able to describe how the government used civil rights legislation to achieve the same end. You also should be able to explain how these attempts to end political discrimination against African Americans were limited at the state level. (*We The People*, page 122)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Writing paper

Newspaper Activity:

Research 3 to 5 past personalities who championed human rights causes. Write a paragraph summarizing the cause championed by each individual.

In today's newspaper, find 3 to 5 modern day examples of human rights activists and summarize their views.

Write a letter to the editor supporting or opposing one of the current human rights issues.

Evaluation:

Students will demonstrate knowledge of the people who have promoted change in human rights past and present by writing an essay that compares and contrasts the issues supported by one past human rights supporter and one from the current newspaper.

How Did the Fourteenth Amendment Expand Constitutional Protections of Rights?

Based on Lesson #25: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III E 3; II D 1-3; II A 1. (Page 67; 58; 54, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

Next to the preservation of the Union and the abolition of slavery, the most important constitutional development of the post-Civil War era was the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment. Originally intended to protect the rights of newly freed African Americans, the “Great Amendment,” as it is sometimes called, has become a principal guarantee of the rights of all Americans, as important as the Bill of Rights.

In this lesson you examine those provisions of the Fourteenth Amendment that have made it so important. They gave new meaning to our concepts of citizenship, due process of law and equal protection of the laws. You also examine the process of incorporation, by which many protections included in the Bill of Rights have been expanded to protect the rights of individuals against actions by state governments.

When you finish this lesson you should be able to explain the purpose of the Fourteenth Amendment and its three key provisions – privileges and immunities, due process of law, and equal protection of the laws. You also should be able to explain the distinctions between procedural and substantive due process, and different interpretations of the word “equality” in the principle of equal protection of the laws. Finally you should be able to define incorporation and describe its effect on the federal system and the power of the states. (We The People, Page 127)

Materials Needed:

Today’s newspaper

Newspaper Activity:

After researching the following Supreme Court Cases, summarize in one or two sentences the main points of each case.

- Gitlow vs. New York (Free Speech and Free Press)
- Powell vs. Alabama (Death Penalty)
- Palko vs. Connecticut (Double Jeopardy)

Using this information, cut out one article in today's newspaper that deals with the ruling and/or the rights it protected.

In small groups, pretend that you are a lawyer arguing one side of the case. Give at least five reasons for your position as you argue before the Supreme Court.

Role-play the debate before the Supreme Court with another group taking the opposing view.

Evaluation:

The teacher can develop a rubric for scoring the presentation before the court. Look for the presentation of factual materials; quality of public speaking; research skills that were used to develop the argument.

How Has the Right to Vote Expanded Since the Adoption of the Constitution?

Based on Lesson #27: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III F 3; V E 3. (Page 69; 89, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

Suffrage, that is, the right to vote, has been a subject of controversy throughout our history. During the colonial period and the early years of our nations, voting was generally restricted to white men who owned property. While the majority of white males qualified for suffrage, other people such as women, African Americans, Native Americans and members of certain religious groups were usually denied the right to vote. In this lesson, you examine how the right to vote has been extended during the last 200 years to almost every citizen 18 years of age or older.

When you have completed this lesson, you should be able to describe the extension of voting rights as a result of changes in the voting laws in the various states, amendments to the Constitution and decisions of the Supreme Court. You also should be able to describe how the extension of the right to vote is related to some fundamental ideas and principles about constitutional government that you have studied. (*We the People*, page 140)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Blank paper
Internet access and printer

Newspaper Activity:

Using the archives of your local newspaper, either at the newspaper, the public library or on-line, research the 18 year old vote from the last election.

Make a bar graph comparing the percentage of young voters who voted in the last election to the percentage of older voters who voted in the last election. Compare the percentage of each voting for specific candidates. Summarize your findings in one or two sentences.

Check on your state's website for a copy of the voter registration form. Complete the form as you would if you were old enough to vote.

Examine the advertising in today's newspaper. Create an effective ad that would recruit young people to register to vote.

Hold a mock election.

Evaluation:

This activity can be used to assess a wide range of skills including research, mathematics, writing skills, technology and life skills.

Why Does the First Amendment Limit the Government's Power over Religion?

Based on Lesson #29: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards II A 1; II B 1. (Page 53-55, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

Two clauses in the First Amendment protect freedom of religion. These are the “establishment” and “free exercise” clauses. In this lesson you examine the Founders’ belief that religion and government should be separate. Each clause deals with a different part of this separation. The “establishment” clause prohibits the federal government from establishing one or more official religions or churches for the nation. The “free exercise” clause prevents the government from putting unreasonable restrictions on particular religious practices.

When you complete this lesson, you should be able to explain the importance of freedom of religion and describe the differences between the establishment and free exercise clauses in the First Amendment. You also should be able to explain different interpretations of the establishment clause and the conflicts between the establishment and free exercise clauses. Finally you should be able to explain the issues and considerations involved in limiting the free exercise of religious beliefs. (We The People, page 154)

Materials Needed:

Today’s newspaper

Newspaper Activity:

Conduct a survey among students, adults and teachers to see how they feel about Freedom of Religion and separation of church and state.

Using newspaper articles as your guide, prepare a newspaper article, that includes a chart, to report on your findings. Make certain that your article includes who, what, where, when, why and how.

Evaluation:

The teacher should review the article for accuracy and correct newspaper style.

How Does the First Amendment Protect Freedom of Expression?

Based on Lesson #30: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards II A; III F; V E. (Pages 54; 68-69; 81-82, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

The First Amendment says that “Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceable to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” Together these four rights may be considered as one – the right to freedom of expression.

In this lesson you examine the benefits that freedom of speech and freedom of the press offer to the individual and society, why they were important to the Founders and the circumstances under which the government should be able to limit them.

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to explain the importance of freedom of expression to both the individual and society and its historical significance. You should be able to explain considerations useful in deciding when to place limits on freedom of speech and press and be able to take, defend and evaluate positions on issues involving the right to freedom of expression. (We The People, page 160)

Materials Needed:

Today’s newspaper
Internet access

Newspaper Activity:

Challenge your class to respond to the following question: With the advent of new technology, do you believe freedom of speech applies to the Internet? Why or why not?

Explain your position in one paragraph.

Using the Internet, find your newspaper's website or one from another newspaper if you do not have one. A listing of newspaper websites is available at www.naa.org. Click on Links to Newspapers

Check www.billofrights.org to find specific court cases that involve individuals or organization concerning freedom of speech.

Invite a lawyer who specialized in libel law to speak to your class.

Prepare at least five questions to ask the speaker. Post the questions and answers on a class created website.

Write an editorial that could be posted on your website entitled Freedom of Speech in Cyber Space.

Evaluation:

The teacher could evaluate the use of technology as well as the clarity of the persuasive writing that is done as part of this activity.

How Does the First Amendment Protect Freedom of Assembly, Petition and Association?

Based on Lesson #31: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards V 3. (Page 76, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

The First Amendment says that “Congress shall make no law ... abridging ... the right of the people to peaceably assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” In this lesson you examine the importance and historical background of these rights. You also discuss an important related right – freedom of association.

When you finish this lesson you should be able to explain the importance of the rights to freedom of assembly, petition and association. You should also be able to describe the history of these rights and in what types of situations they might be limited. Finally, you should be able to take and defend a position on an issue involving these rights.

Materials Needed:

Today’s newspaper
Art supplies
Tape recorder

Newspaper Activity:

The rights to assemble and petition the government for redress of grievances require a great deal of organization by individuals or groups to produce change. Often entire public relations campaigns are conducted.

As a class, find one issue described in your local newspaper that you would feel strongly about.

Divide the class into four groups. Prepare a public relations campaign to help your group create the following:

- A newspaper advertisement – Using your newspaper as an example, cut out words and pictures from actual advertisements to create an ad for your campaign.
- Signs – Using large newspaper letters, create demonstration signs in support of your position.
- Create a press release about your effort to create change. Pretend this would be sent to your local newspaper, TV and radio stations.
- Using the press release created above, create a 30 second radio spot, which supports your position on the issue. Record it and play it back for the class.

Evaluation:

The teacher will be able to assess the creative thinking skills, public speaking skills, artistic skills and writing skills of the class.

How Do the Fourth and Fifth Amendments Protect Us Against Unreasonable Law Enforcement Procedures?

Based on Lesson #33: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards I B. (Page 47, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

Both the Fourth and Fifth Amendments put limits on the methods use by law enforcement officials investigating crimes. The idea behind both amendments is that the government must respect the principle that people are innocent until they are proven guilty.

The Fourth Amendment limits the powers of law enforcement officials to enter and search people's houses or to stop and search someone without reasonable cause. The Fifth Amendment contains several other important protections. This lesson focuses on protecting individuals from being forced to confess to a crime. You examine the history of these rights and their importance to the Founders.

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to explain the purpose and history of the Fourth Amendment, issues raised by its interpretation and the importance of the Fifth Amendment provision against self-incrimination. Finally you should be able to take, defend and evaluate positions on cases involving the right against self-incrimination.

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper

Newspaper Activity:

Find an example in the newspaper of a country that has not limited the right of law enforcement or others to search and seize. Clip out the article and locate the country on a map. Determine the population of the country.

Create a dramatization based on the news article. Perform it for the class.

The rest of the class should watch the dramatization and then write a news article relating to the event. How would the report differ in a country without our basic freedoms?

Evaluation:

Divide the class in half. Assign one side to support the guarantees of the Fourth and Fifth Amendments and one half to oppose them. Conduct a mock debate.

How Do the Fifth through Eighth Amendments Protect Our Rights within the Judicial System?

Based on Lesson #34: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards III A; V B. (Page62; 75, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

In this lesson, you examine how provisions of the Fifth through Eighth Amendments protect the rights of people accused of crimes and put on trial. After a brief examination of some provisions of the Fifth Amendment, you survey the Sixth Amendment, which protects people who are being held for trial, and protects persons convicted of crimes from receiving unjust treatment. Finally, you examine the continuing controversy about whether the death penalty should be prohibited under the Eighth Amendment.

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to identify the rights protected by the Fifth, Sixth, and Eighth Amendments to the Constitution. You also should be able to describe the issues involved in capital punishment and evaluate positions on it use.

Materials Needed:

Today's Newspaper
Writing paper

Newspaper Activity:

Find an article about a case that is going to trial or is currently being tried. Clip a series of articles about the trial.

Find references in the article that describe the protections of the people held for trial. These may be comments, quotes or explanatory notes about court procedures.

Write a letter to someone involved in the trial telling them what you have learned and inviting them to the classroom to answer questions you may have about the trial.

Evaluation:

Study the editorial cartoons that appear in the newspaper for a week. Draw an editorial cartoon based on your opinion of the legal process you are watching.

What Does it Mean to Be a Citizen?

Based on Lesson #35: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards V A. (Page 74, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

In previous units you were asked to focus on the history and nature of our legacy as a constitutional democracy. In this lesson you examine what this legacy means for us as individual citizens.

When you finish this lesson you should be able to explain how Americans have viewed citizenship and its rights and responsibilities. You also should be able to distinguish between a citizen and a resident alien. Finally, you should be able to explain the special importance the idea of citizenship has in America as a land of immigrants from many nations. (We the People, page 190)

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Poster paper
Art supplies

Newspaper Activity:

Write an editorial on the role of citizens in a constitutional democracy based on the following quotation: "A woman asked Ben Franklin if we were a democracy or a republic?" He replied, "A republic madam, if you can keep it!" What do you think he meant.

Create a collage of articles and photos from the newspaper showing people being good citizens.

Evaluation:

Ask your students to define a good citizen and to find newspaper articles that demonstrate that definition.

How Do We Use Our Citizenship?

Based on Lesson #36: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards V C. (Page 77, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

In this lesson you examine the characteristics of citizenship in a constitutional democracy. Citizens sometimes disagree about what their role should be. It is your right in a free society to decide how you wish to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship. What you have learned in this text and elsewhere about your heritage of constitutional democracy will help you in making this decision. How you conduct yourself as a citizen also will depend on your own interests and abilities.

When you complete this lesson you should be able to evaluate, take and defend positions on the roles of citizens in a constitutional democracy.

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Blank paper
Art supplies

Newspaper Activity:

Research a ballot issue using information from the newspaper including editorials, editorial cartoons, campaign ads, articles and voter guides. Describe the issue and list the arguments for and against the issue.

Design a pamphlet that is non-partisan that describes the issue and the range of possible solutions.

Distribute the pamphlets for students to use in the classrooms of your school. Conduct a debate based on information contained in the pamphlet.

Evaluation:

Hold a mock election to see how the other people in your class or school would vote on the issue.

What Are Some Constitutional Issues Facing United States Citizens in the Nation's Third Century?

Based on Lesson #39: *We The People ... The Citizen and the Constitution*

Standards Addressed:

This activity meets the grades 5-8 content standards V E. (Page 80, National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education)

Purpose of the Lesson:

In this lesson you focus on some constitutional issues being raised by our changing roles as citizens and the influence of many developments in modern society. You examine how these issues have challenged our understanding of group rights to life and to privacy and the conflict between individual rights and the general good.

When you finish this lesson, you should be able to describe and give examples of how changes in our society have raised new constitutional issues. You should be able to evaluate, take and defend positions on different philosophies of judicial interpretations of the Constitution.

Materials Needed:

Today's newspaper
Art supplies

Newspaper Activity:

Find articles in the newspaper that relate to one of these complex issues raised by changes in American society:

- Group rights
- Right to life and death
- Right to privacy
- Rights of the individual vs. providing for the common good
- Rights of citizens and the rights of resident aliens.

Use examples from the newspaper to show how change is made in this country.

Working in small groups, prepare a portfolio about a civic problem and a proposed solution. Include an editorial, a letter to the editor and a public service advertisement relating to you proposed solution to the problem.

Evaluation:

Present your solution to this civic problem to a panel of judges who can represent a city or town council or other legislative body. Try to convince them to adopt your solution to the problem.