Lesson Overview

Bill of Rights: You Mean I’ve Got Rights?

Goal
Students will be introduced to the rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and other important constitutional amendments. This lesson prepares students to play the Our Courts game “Do I Have a Right?”

Time
One class period

Nutsheil
First, you’ll let students choose from a checklist of rights to include in a hypothetical “Pamphlet of Protections.” Then you’ll read through the actual text of the Bill of Rights and a few other amendments, comparing the hypothetical “protections” with the rights we actually have. You’ll offer guided practice with a mix and match circulation activity, then let students summarize their real-life rights with a cloze activity about the Bill of Rights and the other amendments.

Concepts
Purpose, origin, and content of the Bill of Rights and other important Amendments to the Constitution

Objectives
The student will...
- Select important rights citizens should have by choosing from a checklist of pre-made questions.
- Use labels to compare the rights they chose with the rights in the actual constitutional amendments.
- Match original-language constitutional rights with plain-English rights.
- Identify constitutional rights by completing a cloze activity

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**Bill of Rights: You Mean I’ve Got Rights?**

**Time:** One class period

**Distribute**
- One packet to each student

**Anticipate**
- By reading the first paragraph of “Rights: Starting from Scratch” with students, then having them complete the checklist

**Poll**
- Students to find out which rights got the most votes for the “Pamphlet of Protections.”

**Transition**
- Into the Bill of Rights by reading the last paragraph on the “Rights: Starting from Scratch” page with students.

**Explain**
- That you will be reading the actual text of the Bill of Rights together. You will be looking to see whether any of the rights students chose for the Pamphlet of Protections are in the Bill of Rights.

**Preview**
- The Bill of Rights pages together. Point out that these are “amendments” (additions/changes) to the Constitution. Point out the side where students will write which “pamphlet” Protections correspond with each amendment (some amendments will have no corresponding Protection and some will have more than one).

**Read**
- The Bill of Rights page with students as a class, pausing to explain as necessary.
  - As you read, ask students if they can give a synonym for each bold word. Have students write a synonym above, below, or next to each bold word. (See Active Participation Guide for list of synonyms)
  - As you read, ask students to identify which (if any) “Protections” correspond with the amendments. Have them write the number of the Protection(s) on the line provided next to each amendment.

**Ask**
- Students to look at the anticipation activity and circle the Protections that were NOT in the Bill of Rights.

**Time**
- Students for two minutes while they discuss with a partner why those rights might not have been included and whether they think they should have been included. Warn students you will spot-check answers.

**Spot Check**
- Answers by randomly calling on students.

**Tell**
- Students they will be doing an activity to learn the rights in the amendments.

**Guide**
- Students through the Mix & Match activity (see Active Participation Guide). This activity works best if you either participate or circulate as though you were participating.

**Give**
- Students time to complete the cloze worksheet.

**Close**
- By having students tell a partner three rights the Bill of Rights gives them
Bill of Rights: Active Participation Guide
You Mean I’ve Got Rights?

SYNONYM LIST

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Synonym</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>abridging</td>
<td>reducing</td>
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<tr>
<td>petition</td>
<td>ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>fix</td>
</tr>
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<td>complaints</td>
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<td>lawyer</td>
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<td>state</td>
<td>country</td>
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<td>violated</td>
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<td>housed</td>
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<td>crime</td>
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<td>danger</td>
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<td>effects</td>
<td>things</td>
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<td>forced</td>
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<tr>
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<td>fair</td>
</tr>
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<td>given citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>construed</td>
<td>interpreted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>privileges</td>
<td>rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immunities</td>
<td>things you don't have to do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delegated</td>
<td>given</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MIX & MATCH ACTIVITY

If you’ve ever been reluctant to do an activity where students circulate around the room… wait! You really can maintain order in your classroom if you follow the steps provided.

Here's how the activity works: You will give each student a card. Some cards have the actual Bill of Rights text; the matching cards have plain-English explanations of the rights. When you say “Mix!” students must walk around the room trading cards with as many people as they can until you call “Match!” When you say “Match,” students must stop trading and find the person who has the card that matches the one they are now holding. You will then tell the class to arrange in a circle. Very quickly, go around the circle and have each pair read the cards they have to be sure they really match. Then call “Mix!” again and repeat the activity.

To help make sure your class does not descend into chaos, follow these steps:

1) **GIVE**  
each student a card before they get up. If you can, give yourself a card also.

2) **EXPLAIN**  
how the activity works. (see above description and steps 4 - 6 below)

3) **STATE**  
your expectations and show students in advance where you want the circle. (Suggested expectations: 1) Trade cards as fast as you can. 2) Stop trading instantly when you hear “match.” 3) No trading after you hear “match.”)

4) **TELL**  
students to stand up and move out from behind their desks.

5) **SAY**  
“Mix!” Even if you don’t have a card, circulate with students. The whole time they are mixing, keep reminding them to trade. Immediately pinpoint students who are trying to hold on to their card. Keep them trading as fast as they can. Thirty seconds is probably a good time for mixing.

5) **SAY**  
“Match!” Tell students they must stop trading immediately and find their match.

6) **CIRCLE**  
the class and read the cards as quickly as possible. Keep up the tempo! You can go around in order or choose pairs randomly.

7) **REPEAT**  
the activity until you've gone through the process three times.
The year is 2056. The world as you know it has been completely destroyed by alien invaders. You and a group of survivors have just won a terrifying battle against the aliens, who have now left the planet. Now you're free, but everyone is still afraid because there is nothing on paper to guarantee people will have rights. The leaders of the group have decided to create the Pamphlet of Protections. The Pamphlet will define what rights people will have. The following are rights that some of the leaders think should be included in the Pamphlet of Protections. They want your input. Mark your top 10 choices below:

- The people shall have the right to own weapons.
- Everyone must be friends with everyone else.
- People are free to express their opinions on any subject.
- A person accused of a crime has the right to a fair trial.
- Criminals shall not be punished in a way that is mean or weird.
- The people shall have the right to clean streets and parks.
- Laws can't stop adult citizens from voting.
- The people shall have the right to a free education.
- All people shall be protected equally by the laws.
- The people shall never be enslaved.
- No person shall be searched without a good reason.
- The people shall be free to drive as soon as they can operate a car.
- No person shall be required to fight in a war.
- No person will be put on trial twice for the same crime.
- A person may follow any religion or no religion.

Anticipation Activity
The Bill of Rights

**Amendment I**
Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

**Amendment II**
A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

**Amendment III**
No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner . . . .

**Amendment IV**
The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

**Amendment V**
No person shall . . . be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

**Amendment VI**
In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury . . . and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

**Amendment VII**
In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.
Amendment VIII
Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX
The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X
The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

Other Important Amendments

Amendment XIII
Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

Amendment XIV
All persons born or naturalized in the United States . . . are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Amendment XV
The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Amendment XIX
The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

Amendment XXVI
The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of age.
Yes! Identify the real-life rights the Bill of Rights gives you by filling in the missing words below:

effects unusual speedy soldiers place persons
houses eighteen twice searched persons
arms color property slavery gender
witness offense public speech cruel persons
protection petition himself public seizures papers
press government things seized

1) A person accused of a crime has the right to a _____________________ and __________________ trial.

2) A warrant must describe the ____________ to be _____________ and the _____________ or __________
   to be ________________.

3) People have the right to keep and bear _________________.

4) There will be no ________________ and ________________ punishments.

5) ________________ shall not exist in the United States.

6) A person accused of a crime does not have to be a ________________ against ________________.

7) Private __________________ cannot be taken for ________________ use without paying the
   owner a fair price.

8) People have the right to be free from unreasonable ________________ and ________________
   of their ________________, ________________, ________________, and ________________.

9) There can’t be any law restricting peoples’ freedom of ________________ or of the ________________.

10) People have the right to __________________ the ______________________ if they are unhappy.

11) People who are at least ________________ years old have the right to vote regardless
    of their ________________, ________________, or ________________.

12) A state cannot deny anyone equal __________________ of the state’s ____________.

13) A person cannot be put on trial __________________ for the same ________________

14) People don’t have to let __________________ live in their houses.
The year is 2056. The world as you know it has been completely destroyed by alien invaders. You and a group of survivors have just won a terrifying battle against the aliens, who have now left the planet. Now you’re free, but everyone is still afraid because there is nothing on paper to guarantee people will have rights. The leaders of the group have decided to create the Pamphlet of Protections. The Pamphlet will define what rights people will have. The following are rights that some of the leaders think should be included in the Pamphlet of Protections. They want your input. Mark your top 10 choices below:

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2. Everyone must be friends with everyone else.
3. People are free to express their opinions on any subject.
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5. Criminals shall not be punished in a way that is mean or weird.
6. The people shall have the right to clean streets and parks.
7. Laws can’t stop adult citizens from voting.
8. The people shall have the right to a free education.
9. All people shall be protected equally by the laws.
10. The people shall never be enslaved.
11. No person shall be searched without a good reason.
12. The people shall be free to drive as soon as they can operate a car.
13. No person shall be required to fight in a war.
14. No person will be put on trial twice for the same crime.
15. A person may follow any religion.

REWIND... The year is 1791. The world as Americans knew it has recently been turned upside down by the end of the Revolutionary War—a war that gave them their freedom from England. Now American colonists will no longer have to submit to an unfair king who wanted to keep Americans from having rights of their own. America is independent, but there is nothing on paper to guarantee the new government will give people the rights and freedoms they want. A group of leaders decides to add a Bill of Rights to the Constitution to define what rights people will have. On the next two pages, compare the Bill of Rights to your Pamphlet of Protections. But be careful: Some rights will be in both documents and some won’t!
The Bill of Rights

Amendment I
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Amendment II
A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III
No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner.

Amendment IV
The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

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Amendment XIV
All persons born or naturalized in the United States . . . are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

Amendment XV
The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

Amendment XIX
The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.

Amendment XXVI
The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of age.
**Teacher’s Key**

Yes! Identify the real-life rights the Bill of Rights gives you by filling in the missing words below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>effects</th>
<th>unusual</th>
<th>speedy</th>
<th>soldiers</th>
<th>place</th>
<th>persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>houses</td>
<td>eighteen</td>
<td>twice</td>
<td>searched</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arms</td>
<td>color</td>
<td>property</td>
<td>slavery</td>
<td>race</td>
<td>persons</td>
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<td>witness</td>
<td>offense</td>
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<td>cruel</td>
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</tr>
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<td>protection</td>
<td>petition</td>
<td>himself</td>
<td>public</td>
<td>seizures</td>
<td>papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>press</td>
<td>government</td>
<td>things</td>
<td>seized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) A person accused of a crime has the right to a ______ speedy ______ and ______ public ______ trial.

2) A warrant must describe the ______ places ______ to be ______ searched ______ and the ______ persons ______ or ______ things ______ to be ______ seized ______.

3) People have the right to keep and bear ______ arms ______.

4) There will be no ______ cruel ______ and ______ unusual ______ punishments.

5) ______ Slavery ______ shall not exist in the United States.

6) A person accused of a crime does not have to be a ______ witness ______ against ______ himself ______.

7) Private ______ property ______ cannot be taken for ______ public ______ use without paying the owner a fair price.

8) People have the right to be free from unreasonable ______ searches ______ and ______ seizures ______ of their ______ persons ______, ______ houses ______, ______ papers ______, and ______ effects ______.

9) There can’t be any law restricting peoples’ freedom of ______ speech ______ or of the ______ press ______.

10) People have the right to ______ petition ______ the ______ government ______ if they are unhappy.

11) People who are at least ______ eighteen ______ years old have the right to vote regardless of their ______ race ______, ______ color ______, or ______ gender ______.

12) A state cannot deny anyone equal ______ protection ______ of the state’s ______ laws ______.

13) A person cannot be put on trial ______ twice ______ for the same ______ crime ______.

14) People don’t have to let ______ soldiers ______ live in their houses.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amendment I</th>
<th>If you are guilty of a crime, the judge is not allowed to sentence you to any cruel or unusual punishments. The punishment has to fit the crime; it’s your constitutional right!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amendment I</td>
<td>The government is only allowed to take away your land if the land will be used for a public purpose. And if it does take your land, the government has to give you a fair price for it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amendment V</td>
<td>You have the right as a citizen to keep and bear ordinary weapons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amendment V</td>
<td>Everyone – no matter what you look like, how much money you have, or how popular you are – should be treated equally under the law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amendment XIII</td>
<td>Have something to say? The Constitution has your back. You have the right to communicate and express ideas and opinions -- to the government, in the press, and in public, even when your thoughts are controversial or unpopular.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amendment XV</td>
<td>Once you turn eighteen, the Constitution guarantees you the right to vote. So start thinking about who you want to vote for!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
If someone from the government wants to go through your stuff, she needs to have a reason. For example, the police can’t enter and search your property without a good reason or your permission.

**Amendment I**
Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

If you are on trial for a crime, you have a right to a fair and impartial jury.

Women and men have equal rights to an equal vote in all public elections.

**Amendment III**
No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner . . . .

Double jeopardy is not a game... it’s a right! Once you’ve been found guilty or innocent, you cannot be put on trial or punished for that same crime again.

**Amendment VIII**
Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

**Amendment VI**
In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a ... trial, by an impartial jury.

Slavery cannot exist and people can’t own or buy or sell other people. This is one of the only constitutional rights that you can sometimes use against people who are not the government -- but only if they are enslaving you!

**Amendment V**
... nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amendment XXVI</th>
<th>Amendment IV</th>
</tr>
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<td>The right of citizens of the United States, who are 18 years of age or older, to vote, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of age.</td>
<td>The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated.</td>
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<td>The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.</td>
<td>In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Amendment II</th>
<th>Amendment XIV</th>
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<td>A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.</td>
<td>... No state shall ... deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.</td>
<td>The government cannot force you to let soldiers into your home or onto your property. It’s up to you to decide who you let inside your house!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amendment II</th>
<th>Amendment XIV</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No matter your race or ethnicity, as a citizen you have the right to vote.</td>
<td>... No state shall ... deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Different people have different faiths, and the Constitution protects your right to practice whatever religion you choose. It also says that the government can’t establish a religion or prefer one faith over another.

Once you are arrested for a crime, you have the right to a speedy trial, one that happens soon after your arrest, and doesn’t last too long.