

TITLE OF LESSON

American Government Unit 1 Lesson 28 – Constitutional Amendments
How do rights connect to democracy?

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – History 12.1, 12.2

MATERIALS

The Constitution of the United States of America – Reading from <http://memory.loc.gov/const/const.html>
Lecture Notes Lesson 28 – Teacher Page

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To analyze the US Constitution for rights
 - To explore the history of the Bill of Rights and it's development
 - To create a definition of the constitutional amendments, Bill of Rights, and other related terms
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FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial complete homework assignments. Pass back graded assignments and have students place them in their binders.
 - 2) **Agenda** – Have students copy the goal, agenda, and homework onto the next clean page in their notebooks.
 - 3) Teacher Model – Below the goal/agenda have students copy the titles of three current events stories that you have chosen, leaving space for notes.
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. Notetaking Instructions – Before going over the current events stories with students this is a good time to begin to “wean” them off of simply copying notes from the overhead. Tell students that they should know what belongs in their notes for each of the stories (who, what, where, why). Explain that from now on you will not be writing down the notes for them, but instead having them listen and take notes as you talk. For the first couple of times you might want to repeat information and talk slowly, being very explicit about what they should be writing. However, over the next few lessons you should do this less and less.
2. Teacher Lecture: Current Events – Deliver your lecture on the three current events stories you have chosen (as always, try to focus on stories that either connect to students’ issues or are connected to current curriculum topics in class – i.e. Checks and Balances, Separation of Powers, Bill of Rights, etc.) At the end of taking notes today and after collecting their new current events sheets, you also might want to offer “extra credit” for students who would like to present their own current events stories to the class. Explain that in the next semester they will be required to present at least once.
3. Exam Review – After finishing current events pass back the exam that the students took in Lesson 25. Take time to go over the results of the exam carefully. Highlight areas where students had difficulty answering the questions and praise them in areas where the entire class did well. Answer any questions they might have about the content or answers on any of the questions.
4. **Goal Setting** – Have students look at the grade they earned on their first test. Have them decide the grade they would like to earn on their next test. On a separate sheet of paper, have them write their name and they grade they will try to earn on the next test. Under the grade they would like to earn, have them write two things they will do differently to get the grade they say they want. Collect them and note them in your grade book.

5. **Binders** – Have them put away their tests (into their binders).
6. **Review and Discuss: Constitution** -- Have students take out their copies of the *Constitution of the United States of America* (Reading) and to take a few minutes to review the structure and content. Ask them, as review, what the 3 sections of the Constitution are. Ask them also, if they have read anything (yet) about any rights given to people. Make this point loud and clear and ask them hypotheticals to get them thinking:
 - a) Given what we've already studied and read in the constitution, is there anything protecting freedom of speech?
 - b) Could the government make a law saying it is illegal to say anything bad about the president?
 - c) Could the government make a law saying that everyone must be catholic?
 - d) Could the government make a law that anyone can be arrested for any reason and not have a trial?"

As students answer, be sure you ask them how they came to their answer and how the constitution supports it.

7. **Amendments** – Make students use the constitution (in the preamble and the articles) to show you where rights are protected (they are not). So, ask students to guess where these rights (freedom of speech, religion, right to a trial, right to have a gun, etc.) might be located.
8. **Vocabulary: Amendment** – When they have guessed correctly (the amendments) ask students to tell you what an amendment is. Help them to define amendment as a change or addition to the Constitution. Have them open up their Constitutions to pages 8 through 14 and have them count how many amendments are currently attached to the Constitution.
9. **Read Aloud** – Next, have students read aloud the First 10 amendments and briefly discuss the meaning of each. In their notes for today, have students jot down the amendment number and the meaning they agree on for each.
10. **Lecture: Bill of Rights** – Tell students that on the next clean page in their notebook they will be taking some historical notes on the Bill of Rights from a short lecture you will give (see **Lecture Notes Lesson 28** in the Teacher Pages). Have them title their notes “Bill of Rights – History and Purpose” and begin your lecture.
11. **Vocabulary** – When finished, ask students (either individually or in pairs) to write a definition, in their notebook, for the terms amendment and Bill of Rights. Briefly go over this with the students but do not write a class definition yet for these terms.
12. **Homework Review** – Lastly, give students their homework and make sure they understand how to do it.

HOMEWORK

- 1) **Journal 3** – On a separate sheet of paper answer the following two questions (1 full page):
 - a) What is a “right”?
 - b) Do you have a “right” to get an “A” in this class? Why or why not?
- 2) Organize binders. Due Lesson 30.

GROUP ROLES

None

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

None