

## **BILL OF RIGHTS DAY: A TIME TO EXAMINE KIDS' RIGHTS, TOO**

Learning Objective(s): The students will

1. Recognize some of the individual rights and freedoms that they have as citizens.
2. Understand how a citizen's rights and freedoms are protected by the Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution.
3. Utilize critical thinking skills to categorize and evaluate information.
4. Apply their knowledge and understanding of the Bill of Rights by creating a Kids' Bill of Rights.

TEKS: SS K.8A, 14 A&C, 1.11A, 17 A&C, 2.11A, 18 A,D &E

Materials: An overhead transparency of the Bill of Rights Amendment Cards attachment, sets of the Bill of Rights Amendment Cards, cut apart and put into envelopes

Vocabulary: accused, Bill of Rights, freedoms, government, privacy, right, rules, search, seizure, United States Constitution

Teaching Strategy:

1. To introduce the lesson, ask students why they have rules at school and home and have laws in their community. Tell students that rules and laws are important because they protect each citizen's rights.
2. Explain to students that they are entitled to certain rights and those rights prevent the government from interfering in their lives too much. These rights cannot be taken away from them.
3. Inform students the United States Constitution contains the main laws of our country, and the first ten amendments of the Constitution guarantee certain freedoms and individual rights, so they are known as the Bill of Rights. Further relate that December 15<sup>th</sup> is "Bill of Rights Day" because the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution on December 15, 1791.
4. Display the attached overhead transparency of the Bill of Rights Amendment Cards. Review each amendment with students, clarifying terms and/or concepts as needed.
5. Divide students into groups of two or three students each. Give each group a set of the Bill of Rights Amendment Cards. Assign any of the following activities:

- Have students categorize the amendments into groups and explain their system of categorization.
  - Challenge students to rank the amendments from the most important amendment to the least important, in their opinion. Students should defend their choices.
  - Ask students which right listed in the First Amendment is most important to them. Have students complete the following phrase: Freedom of \_\_\_\_\_ is important to me because \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Ask students what rights they think kids should have. List student responses on the board, chart paper, or the overhead. After students have completed a list a rights, lead them through the process of selecting the ten most important rights.
  7. The teacher should make a final copy of the Kids' Bill of Rights on a large sheet of paper or cardboard and display it in the classroom. Students may sign the Bill of Rights with their signatures, if desired.
  8. Debrief the activity by discussing the following questions:
    - Is it important for us to have a Bill of Rights? Why or why not?
    - Give an example of how the Bill of Rights protects you?
    - Should children have the same rights as grown-ups? Why or why not?
    - How would your life be different if you didn't have the freedom of speech, press, religion, or the freedom to meet in groups? Explain.
    - If you could add an amendment to the Bill of Rights, what would it be? Why?

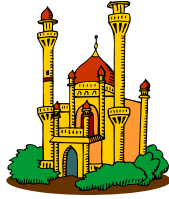
Extension for Gifted/Talented: Using the internet, have students go to the following website: [http://pbskids.org/stantonanthony/bill\\_of\\_rights.html](http://pbskids.org/stantonanthony/bill_of_rights.html) This website contains ideas from kids from all over the country concerning their suggestions for a Kids' Bill of Rights. Have students evaluate one or more of the submitted rights and explain why they agree or disagree with the statement.

# THE BILL OF RIGHTS AMENDMENT CARDS



Freedom of speech

## Amendment 1



Freedom of religion



Freedom of the press



Right to meet in groups



Right to petition the government to  
correct unfair actions

## Amendment 2



Right to have  
arms or weapons

## Amendment 3



Freedom from having  
soldiers staying in our  
homes

## Amendment 4



Right to privacy  
and from  
unlawful searches  
& seizures

## Amendment 5



Right to remain  
silent if you are  
accused of a crime

**Amendment 6**



**Right to a trial by jury in a criminal case**

**Amendment 7**



**Right to a trial by jury when 2 parties have a disagreement**

**Amendment 8**



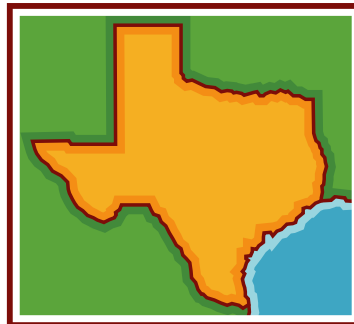
**Freedom from cruel & unfair punishment by a court of law**

**Amendment 9**



**Citizens have other rights that are not listed in the Bill of Rights**

**Amendment 10**



**Powers not given to the United States government belong to the states or people**