

## PIECING TOGETHER THE FIRST AMENDMENT

Learning Objectives: The students will

1. Examine the freedoms guaranteed in the First Amendment of the Constitution.
2. Utilize critical thinking skills to solve a puzzle.
3. Communicate their thoughts through the creation of a visual representation of concepts reflected in the First Amendment.

TEKS: SS 1.17A, 18A&B, 2.11A, 18A&E, 19A&B

Materials: Sets of the First Amendment Puzzle attachment (cut apart and placed in envelopes), pencils, crayons

Vocabulary: Assembly, Constitution, freedoms, petition, press, religion, rights, speech

Teaching Strategy:

1. To introduce the lesson, display the word “right” and ask students to define it. (A right is a freedom that belongs to you and no one can take it away.)
2. Divide the students into pairs. Give each pair of students an envelope containing the First Amendment Puzzle.
3. Have students assemble the puzzle (If desired, an overhead transparency of the completed puzzle may be shown to students while they are assembling the puzzle.) and then ask them what the word printed on each puzzle piece means. Students should conclude the following:
  - Speech is the right to say what one wants.
  - Press is the right to print information or news in such sources as the newspaper, books, magazines and Internet.
  - Assembly is the right to gather together with others in a peaceful way.
  - Petition is the right to state one's wishes or changes he or she wants made, in written form, and have others who agree with his or her views and sign the document.
  - Religion is the right to worship as one pleases.

4. Explain that the five words in the puzzle represent the freedoms or rights that are guaranteed to citizens in the First Amendment of the Constitution.
5. Have students draw and color a picture on each puzzle piece to represent each right. (Stick figures are encouraged.)
6. Students should put their completed puzzles in their envelopes and then trade puzzles with another pair of students. Each pair should assemble the puzzle they receive.
7. Have the two pairs of students compare how the illustrations on their puzzles are alike and how they differ.
8. Ask students if they could only keep one puzzle piece, which freedom would they want to keep the most. Have them explain which freedom or piece of the First Amendment would they be willing to give up and why.
9. Debrief the lesson by asking students to draw conclusions concerning what happens when a piece of the puzzle is missing. Have students infer what would happen if they lost one of their First Amendment rights.

Extension for Gifted/Talented: Ask students to write an original story about someone who took freedom of speech too far. They should include what the consequences should be for the person's actions and a conclusion concerning why there are limits to freedom of speech.

# **First Amendment Puzzle**

