

STIRRING UP THE BILL OF RIGHTS

Learning Objective(s): the student will

- A. Analyze the meaning of the rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights.
- B. Explain the significance of the rights guaranteed in the Bill of Rights to the lives of American citizens.

TEKS: 8.19B; Govt.13C

Materials Needed: copies of the Bill of Rights for each student; amendment analysis sheet for each group, sheet of notebook paper for each student to use as a collection sheet.

Teaching Strategy:

1. Give each student a copy of the Bill of Rights and have them read the document, highlighting key ideas.
2. Divide the students into small groups and assign each group one of the amendments to analyze using the amendment analysis sheet. The groups do not have to be the same size. For example, Amendment Two and Seven could be a group of two; while Amendment One, Five, and Six could have up to four. Explain there are four parts to the analysis:
 - Key vocabulary terms and definitions
 - Paraphrase of the amendment in their own words
 - Visual representation of the meaning of the rights in the amendment
 - Two to three examples of what life would be like if this amendment was not in the Bill of Rights
3. When the groups have completed their analysis sheet, post the sheets around the room. Allow each group to visit the other nine amendments to discuss and review their understanding of the key elements of the amendment.
4. Have each individual student number a sheet of paper from one to twelve. Direct the student to use their copy of the Bill of Rights as well as their understanding of visiting the amendment analysis sheets to write their answers to the following statement on lines 1-3 of their collection sheet:

Three reasons the Bill of Rights are important to lives of American citizens are:

Remind students that they are to use their own interpretation of specifics from the document and the amendment analysis in their answers. To illustrate give them the following as an example of an acceptable reason:

Example: Because of the right to an attorney in the Sixth Amendment, no one will have to face a trial for a crime just because they don't have the money to hire one.

5. When all students have completed the above task, explain that at the teacher's signal, they are to take their collection sheet and find one other student. With that student, they are to share what they wrote for one of their responses on the first round and record one of their partner's different reasons written during the first round on their collection sheet. This should give each student four different reasons at the end of round one.
6. At the teacher's signal, the students are to "stir" around to find another student to share and record one **new** reason to be recorded on their collection sheets. Continue this "stirring" process until their collection sheet is full of twelve different reasons the Bill of Rights are important.
7. When the students return to their desks, they should look at their twelve reasons and pick the top three to share in a written evaluation for the teacher.