

## THE BILL OF RIGHTS -- PLAIN AND SIMPLE

Learning Objectives: The students will

1. Explain the meaning of the amendments in the Bill of Rights.
2. Enhance their critical thinking skills by creating visual representations of the concepts expressed in the Bill of Rights.

TEKS: SS 3.10A, 17C&E, 4.15C, 21B, 22A&B, 5.15C, 20A, 24B, 25D

Materials: Copies of the “Bill of Rights” attachment for each student, “The Bill of Rights—Plain and Simple PowerPoint Presentation or overhead transparencies of the “Bill of Rights” attachment, numbered slips of paper with the numbers 1-10 (each number may be used more than once so that there are enough slips for every student in the class), copies of the scroll attachment

Vocabulary: Arms, assembly, Bill of Rights, crime, expression, jury, petition, press, religion, search warrant, speech, testify, trial

Teaching Strategy:

1. Give each student a copy of the Bill of Rights attachment. Using the Bill of Rights—Plain and Simple PowerPoint Presentation or overhead transparencies of the “Bill of Rights” attachment, lead a class discussion concerning the meaning of each of the amendments.
2. Have each student draw a slip of paper with a number (1-10). Explain that the number they draw represents the amendment that they are going to illustrate. (Students should not tell anyone which amendment they chose.)
3. Give each student a copy of the scroll attachment. Instruct students to create a visual representation by drawing pictures and/or symbols to depict their assigned amendments. They should not, however, list the number of their amendments anywhere on the scroll because their classmates are going to try to figure out which amendment is represented on their scrolls. Students should write the number of the amendment on the back of the scroll, along with their names.
4. After students have completed their scrolls, display them on the wall or chalkboard and label each scroll with a number. Using their copy of the Bill of Rights, students should record which scroll depicts which amendment. Students should write their answers on notebook paper and may work with a partner, if desired.

5. Debrief students by revealing the identity of the amendment represented on each scroll. Discuss which amendment students think is the most important in their lives and which is the least important.
6. Ask students to respond orally or in written form to any or all of the following questions:
  - Which scroll did you think was the most creative? Why?
  - Which scroll exhibited the best use of symbolism? Why?
  - Which scroll was the most difficult to analyze? Why?
  - What feelings did your favorite scroll give you?
  - What was the most difficult thing about creating your own scroll? Why?
  - If you could choose a song to accompany the scroll you created, what song would you choose? Why?
  - A new amendment that I think should be added to the Constitution is \_\_\_\_\_  
because \_\_\_\_\_
  - This lesson about the Bill of Rights has made me realize that \_\_\_\_\_

Extension for Gifted/Talented: Have students create a Student Bill of Rights. They should compose ten amendments representing the rights that they believe each student in their classroom should have. Students should defend their choices through a debate or by giving persuasive speeches.

## **THE BILL OF RIGHTS – PLAIN AND SIMPLE**

### **AMENDMENT 1** (*Freedom of Religion & Expression*)

THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT:

- 1) SET UP A RELIGION.
- 2) TAKE AWAY FREEDOM OF RELIGION.
- 3) TAKE AWAY FREEDOM OF SPEECH.
- 4) TAKE AWAY FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.
- 5) KEEP PEOPLE FROM PEACEFULLY MEETING IN GROUPS (ASSEMBLY).
- 6) KEEP PEOPLE FROM COMPLAINING TO THE GOVERNMENT TO CORRECT UNFAIR ACTIONS (PETITION).

### **AMENDMENT 2** (*Right to Bear Arms*)

THE PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO KEEP AND USE GUNS TO HELP PROTECT THE COUNTRY.

### **AMENDMENT 3** (*Quartering Soldiers*)

THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT MAKE PEOPLE LET SOLDIERS STAY IN THEIR HOMES.

**AMENDMENT 4** (*Security from Unreasonable Searches & Seizures*)

THE POLICE CANNOT:

- 1) SEARCH A PERSON WITHOUT A GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THE PERSON HAS DONE SOMETHING WRONG.
- 2) SEARCH A PERSON'S HOUSE OR A PERSON'S THINGS WITHOUT A GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THE PERSON HAS DONE SOMETHING WRONG.
- 3) ARREST A PERSON WITHOUT A GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THE PERSON HAS DONE SOMETHING WRONG.
- 4) TAKE A PERSON'S THINGS WITHOUT A GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THE PERSON HAS DONE SOMETHING WRONG.

THE POLICE MUST HAVE A SEARCH WARRANT THAT NAMES:

- 1) THE PLACE TO BE SEARCHED.
- 2) THE PERSON TO BE ARRESTED.
- 3) THE THINGS TO BE TAKEN.

**AMENDMENT 5** (*Rights to Due Process of Law*)

THE GOVERNMENT CANNOT:

- 1) TRY A PERSON MORE THAN ONCE FOR THE SAME CRIME.
- 2) MAKE A PERSON TESTIFY AGAINST HIMSELF/HERSELF.
- 3) TAKE AWAY A PERSON'S LIFE, LIBERTY, OR PROPERTY WITHOUT GOOD REASONS AND FAIR PROCEDURES.
- 4) TAKE AWAY A PERSON'S PROPERTY UNLESS THE PERSON IS FAIRLY PAID FOR HIS/HER PROPERTY.

**AMENDMENT 6** (*Right to a Free Trial*)

A PERSON CHARGED WITH A CRIME HAS THE RIGHT TO:

- 1) A SPEEDY AND PUBLIC TRIAL.
- 2) A JURY TRIAL IN A CRIMINAL CASE.
- 3) BE TOLD WHAT HE/SHE IS ACCUSED OF DOING WRONG.
- 4) FACE THE PEOPLE WHO SAY HE/SHE DID SOMETHING WRONG.
- 5) CALL WITNESSES TO SPEAK ON HIS/HER BEHALF.
- 6) HAVE AN ATTORNEY.

**AMENDMENT 7** (*Trial by Jury*)

PEOPLE HAVE THE RIGHT TO A JURY TRIAL IN CIVIL MATTERS. (DISAGREEMENTS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS)

**AMENDMENT 8** (*Fair Bail & Punishments*)

A PERSON CHARGED WITH A CRIME HAS A RIGHT TO A FAIR FINE.

THERE CANNOT BE ANY CRUEL AND UNUSUAL PUNISHMENT.

**AMENDMENT 9** (*Rights Retained by the People*)

SOME RIGHTS ARE LISTED IN THE CONSTITUTION, BUT UNITED STATES CITIZENS HAVE MORE RIGHTS THAN ARE LISTED HERE.

**AMENDMENT 10** (*Powers Reserved to States & People*)

THE CONSTITUTION:

- 1) GIVES SOME POWERS TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN WASHINGTON D.C.
- 2) SAYS THERE ARE SOME POWERS THE STATE GOVERNMENTS DO NOT HAVE.
- 3) GIVES ALL OTHER POWERS TO THE STATE GOVERNMENTS OR TO THE PEOPLE.

