



*My Rights & Liberties: SS.7.C.3.6*  
**Constitutional Rights and  
Their Impact**  
**VIDEO #1 Script**

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## Constitutional Rights Video #1

1. Political, economic, and social systems of the United States are connected closely to the concept of individual rights. It is important that we consider the question of what it means to exercise our constitutional rights, and what it means for us when the government tries to uphold or even limit our constitutional rights.
2. Wait a minute, what are constitutional rights anyway? Well, constitutional rights are those rights granted to us as citizens of the United States under the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and other amendments to the Constitution.
3. In this video, we will evaluate constitutional rights and their impact on individuals and society. After watching, you will be able to:
  - ✓ Understand the relationship between individual rights and the social, political, and economic systems in the United States
4. In order for the US government to work well, the people's constitutional rights must be protected. The Bill of Rights and other amendments to the Constitution protect our individual rights. For example, the First Amendment includes the personal freedoms that such as religious exercise, peaceful assembly, speech, press, and petitioning the government.
5. Religious exercise means that we can worship as wish, and the government can't promote one religion over another. Freedom of press means the government can't restrict the news except in extreme cases. And with freedom of speech, the government can't restrict what we say except in extreme cases, like screaming 'fire' in a movie theater without a fire.
6. Freedom of peaceable assembly is the right to hold meetings and form groups without the government interfering.
7. The right to petition means that people have the right to ask the government to fix the problems in their community.
8. Remember that all of these rights in the First Amendment are both political, which means that individuals are protected when they want to have a voice in government and social, which means that people can organize to have a voice in government.
9. It's not just the First Amendment that matters though. The Fourth and Fifth Amendments protect people accused of crimes from abuse of power by the federal government.

10. And then we have the Fourteenth Amendment, which protects people accused of crimes from abuse of power by state governments.
11. The 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> Amendments protect our rights in many different ways. For example: protecting our property from illegal search and seizure!
12. We are also protected from being forced to testify against ourselves when we are accused of a crime. This is called protection from self-incrimination.
13. Our individual rights and liberties don't just stop with the right against self-incrimination though. We also have the right to a jury trial, the right to a lawyer, and the right to due process, all of these protected by our Constitution.
14. You might be wondering what due process means. Well, due process means that the laws must be fair and must be followed properly before someone's life, liberty, or property is taken from them. We'll talk a little more about due process later in this video.
15. Of course, it is not just political or social rights that matter. Economic rights and freedoms are also very important. They include the right to buy, sell, produce, trade, or use goods and services.
16. Of course, economic rights are about more than stuff. Property rights are a major part of economic rights, as well. Property rights include the right to own, produce, trade, purchase, or use property. And our property rights as Americans are protected by due process.
17. Even though our property rights are protected by due process, the government can still take our property. According to the Fifth Amendment, the government does have the power of eminent domain, which means it can take the private property of individuals if it is for the public, or common, good. For example, building a road, a border wall, a sports stadium, and a school.
18. Even though eminent domain gives the government the right to take the property if it's for the public, or common good, they can't just take it right from you because that wouldn't be fair and it would violate Due Process. They DO have to pay you for your property.
19. So let's do a little bit of review and look back to see how our Constitution does protect our rights. Remember, the First Amendment includes the personal freedoms that include religious exercise, peaceable (or peaceful) assembly, speech, press, and petition, while 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Amendments protect people accused of crimes from abuse of power by the federal government.
20. And remember that the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment protects people accused of crimes from abuse of power by the state governments. And finally, remember that the government can't use eminent domain to take your property without paying you a fair price for it first.
21. So let's recap and think about we've learned. Try answer each of the following questions on your own.

22. What is due process?

23. ANSWER TO QUESTION

Let's try a couple more.

24. What is the restriction the government has if it wants to take your property for the public good?

25. ANSWER TO QUESTION

Let's try one more, and think back on what we learned about individual rights.

26. Give an example of how the Constitution protects our individual political rights.

27. ANSWER TO QUESTION

28. We'll, we've learned quite a bit about our rights and liberties over the last few minutes. In our next video, we'll look at some scenarios that have people practicing these rights, and we'll think about an important question: How do we balance our individual liberties and rights with protections for the community? Be sure to check out that video, and thanks for watching.