



Constitutional Principles and Structures SS.7.CG.1.9
Limits on Government Power
VIDEO SCRIPT



INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS, THE RULE OF LAW AND DUE PROCESS

1. The U.S. Constitution creates a system of government with three branches: legislative (Congress), executive (the President) and judicial (the Supreme Court).
2. The Constitution also includes the principle of limited government. This means that the government can only do what the people allow it to do and each branch of the government has power that is defined and limited by the Constitution.
3. If you watched the previous video in this series, you learned that constitutional government is based on a written set of laws that all citizens agree to follow, and a written set of laws is called a constitution. The U.S. Constitution includes the principle of limited government. This means that the government can do only what the people allow it to do.
4. Three more important principles are individual rights, the rule of law and due process of law, and in this video we are going to take some time and explore these as well.
5. In this video, we will learn about the concepts of limited government, separation of powers and checks and balances.
6. After watching this video, you will be able to:
 - ◆ Explain the concept of limited government in the U.S. Constitution.
 - ◆ Explain the concepts of individual rights, rule of law, and due process of law.
7. Remember that the principle of limited government means that the government can do only what the people allow it to do. The powers and responsibilities of federal and state governments are outlined in the Constitution.
8. Let's check in- Try to answer the following in your own words. What is the purpose of limited government?
→ ANSWER TO QUESTION
9. Remember that our Founding Fathers wanted to create a federal system of government that was effective and powerful but also safeguarded (protected) individual rights. Individual rights are those 'inalienable rights endowed by our Creator' and protected by the Constitution and Bill of Rights
10. So the Constitution sets up a system that protects the rights of the individual while also limiting the powers of the federal government. Later on they added the Bill of Rights to list the rights of citizens as a way to guarantee the government will not interfere with those rights.
11. Two examples of the way the Constitution protects individual rights are that there can be no

ex post facto laws, meaning that you cannot be punished if a new law suddenly makes something you once did legally illegal. And Habeas Corpus means that you cannot be held for a crime without evidence. You'll learn more about both of these when you learn how the Constitution safeguards and limits individual rights.

12. Our Bill of Rights protects the rights of citizens and limits government through such examples as the right to a jury trial, the right to bear arms, and the freedom of speech. You'll learn more about these when you learn more about the Bill of Rights.

13. Let's check in- Try to answer the following in your own words. What are individual rights?
→ ANSWER TO QUESTION

14. Let's recap what we've learned. Individual rights are endowed by our Creator and protected by the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Some examples of rights in the Constitution are no ex post facto laws and the right to Habeas Corpus. Some examples of rights in the Bill of Rights are freedom speech, right to a jury trial, and the right to bear arms. Let's turn our attention now to the principle or concept of due process and how it limits government.

15. The principle of due process is so important that it's actually in the Bill of Rights twice! We see it in the 5th Amendment and we see it in the 14th Amendment. So what IS due process?

16. The Fifth Amendment says that no one shall be "deprived of life, liberty or property without due process of law." The Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment says the exact same thing in the exact same words!

17. What this means is that there is a legal and REQUIRED process in place that must occur before the government can challenge your liberty or property! You'll learn a lot more about due process in other videos and material in this course.

18. Let's check in- Try to answer the following in your own words. – What is due process?
→ ANSWER TO QUESTION

19. Let's recap what we've learned so far. Individual rights are endowed by our Creator and protected by the Constitution and Bill of Rights, and due process limits the power of government by requiring a legal and constitutional process take place before challenging your liberty or property.

20. Finally, we have the rule of law. The rule of law is the idea that the law applies equally to everyone no matter who they are!

21. For example, when a president commits a crime, the law applies to them just like it would anyone else! President Nixon's resigning from office is an example of upholding the rule of law after he was accused of covering up a crime! This is another way of limiting the power of government and ensuring the rule of the people.

22. Let's check in– Try to answer the following in your own words. What is the rule of law?
→ ANSWER TO QUESTION

23. So let's recap what we've learned. Individual rights are endowed by our Creator and protected by the Constitution and Bill of Rights, and due process limits the power of

government by requiring a legal and constitutional process take place before challenging your liberty or property. The Rule of Law is the principle that the law applies to everyone equally, no matter who they are.

24. So our Constitution is a wonderful document. It upholds the principle of individual rights, the rule of law, and due process of law, as well as separation of powers and checks and balances to ensure that we have a limited government.

25. Be sure to check out the other video on limited government to learn more about our Constitution and more principles of limited government.