



My Rights & Liberties SS.7.CG.2.3
The Bill of Rights and Amendments
VIDEO SCRIPT



THE BILL OF RIGHTS AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

1. Think about some of the activities you and your family do during the week. Do you attend a religious service? Read the newspaper over breakfast and discuss current events? Go to a public meeting? The good news is that you and your family are free to do any one of those things because the U.S. Constitution contains a Bill of Rights. In this video, you will learn about the Bill of Rights and the rights found in the First Amendment.
2. In this video, we will explore these rights. After watching, you will be able to:
 - ◆ Recognize that the Bill of Rights is made up of the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, and
 - ◆ Recognize the five freedoms contained in the First Amendment.
3. An amendment is a change to a constitution. The U.S. Constitution currently has 27 amendments. The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution. So, how did we get a Bill of Rights?
4. Well, when the Framers first put together the Constitution, a group called the Anti-Federalists argued that the Constitution as written did not do enough to guarantee the rights of the people.
5. The Federalists on the other hand, thought the Constitution didn't need to list specific rights that people are guaranteed. The two groups debated and the Anti-Federalists would only vote to ratify, or formally approve, the Constitution as long as a bill of rights was added.
6. In 1791, three years after the Constitution was ratified, the Bill of Rights was added to the U.S. Constitution. These ten amendments shape the rights of citizens in the United States by defining individual freedoms outlining the rights of those accused of a crime, defining how citizens are protected from the federal government and extending power to the states.
7. Let's take a closer look at each individual amendment, starting with the First Amendment. In just that one amendment, there are five important freedoms protected. The five freedoms in the First Amendment are:
 - ◆ Freedom of speech
 - ◆ Freedom of press
 - ◆ Freedom of religious exercise
 - ◆ Freedom of peaceable assembly
 - ◆ Freedom to petition the government
8. The five freedoms in the First Amendment are rights we exercise every day and they are an important part of life in the United States. Perhaps the most talked about freedom, among middle school students, is the right to free speech.

9. Freedom of Speech allows individuals to express their opinions. This includes speech that may criticize the government or government officials.
10. As mentioned, freedom of speech allows individuals to express their opinions. The Framers of the U.S. Constitution had been punished for criticizing the King of England before the colonists declared independence. Because of this, freedom of speech also gives citizens the right to criticize the government or government officials.
11. The second of the five freedoms is freedom of press. Freedom of the press allows individuals to publish or print information and news. Can you imagine what things would be like if the government controlled our news?
12. Freedom of the press allows individuals to report and write about the news, government and government officials without fear of being punished for what they write.
13. The third of the five freedoms is freedom of religious exercise. Freedom of religious exercise allows individuals to practice their religion freely or to choose not to practice religion at all.
14. The fourth is freedom to peaceably assemble. This means that people have the right to gather in groups. These groups may include people who wish to hold a public protest to share their ideas or beliefs about an issue.
15. Think about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and how he used public protests, marches and speeches to bring attention to the issue of civil rights.
16. The last of the five freedoms is freedom to petition the government and can include free speech, press, and assembly! This freedom allows individuals to express their concerns to the government. Petitioning the government may include asking the government for changes in the law.
17. Let's check in- Do you remember what the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution are called?
→ ANSWER TO QUESTION
18. Can you identify the five freedoms in the First Amendment?
→ ANSWER TO QUESTION
19. If all of those rights are found in just one amendment, I bet you can't wait to see what the other nine do!