

Lesson 6: The Bill of Rights

Big Ideas of the Lesson

- As a compromise between the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists, a Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution after it was ratified. It was made up of ten amendments to the Constitution.
- These amendments guaranteed rights such as freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and the right to a fair and public trial.
- The Bill of Rights was influenced by colonial experiences. This was especially true of Amendments 1 to 4.

Lesson Abstract:

In this lesson, students review the Bill of Rights and connect Amendments 1-4 to specific colonial experiences studied in previous units. They begin by reviewing the Federalist and Anti-Federalist positions regarding the need for a Bill of Rights. Next, they examine how colonial experiences influenced the contents of the Bill of Rights.

Content Expectations

5 – *U3.3.7*: Describe the concern that some people had about individual rights and why the inclusion of a Bill of Rights was needed for ratification.

5 – *U3.3.8*: Describe the rights found in the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Amendments to the United States Constitution.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects:

RI.5.2: Determine two or more main ideas of a text and explain how they are supported by key details; summarize the text.

Key Concepts

amendment
Bill of Rights
compromise
limited government
U.S. Constitution

Instructional Resources

Equipment/Manipulative
Overhead projector or document camera/projector

Student Resource

Bower, Burt, et al. *America's Past*, Social Studies Alive Program. Palo Alto, CA: Teacher's Curriculum Institute, 2010 or a similar fifth grade social studies textbook. Pp. 201-209.

Teacher Resource

Egbo, Carol. *Supplemental Materials (Unit 7, Lesson 6)*. Teacher-made material. Michigan Citizenship Collaborative, 2012.

The Bill of Rights. Our Documents. 3 April 2012
<<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=13>>.

Lesson Sequence

1. Begin the lesson by giving each student a copy of "Analyzing Quotations", located in the *Supplemental Materials (Unit 7, Lesson 6)*. Explain that students should use what they have already learned and their reading comprehension skills to analyze the quotations. Give students time to complete the task. Then have them turn and talk about their responses with a partner.
2. Lead a class discussion of the quotations using the following questions:
 - How is Jefferson's point of view different from Madison's?
 - Why do you think they had such different points of view?
 - Was the decision made to add a Bill of Rights by March of 1789? How do you know?
 - Which one of these men was an Anti-Federalist?Note that a chart showing sample answers has been included in the *Supplemental Materials (Unit 7, Lesson 6)*.
3. Review the Federalist/Anti-Federalist debate concerning the Bill of Rights. Have students stop and jot down what they remember learning in the previous lesson. Then have them turn and share their responses with a partner. Guide a discussion about the issue of adding a Bill of Rights with the entire class. Be sure to address the following during the discussion:
 - The Federalists did not think a Bill of Rights was necessary. They felt the Constitution had sufficient safeguards regarding limits of the power of the national government. They also worried that if you spelled out certain rights, it might be interpreted as saying these were the only rights people had.
 - The Anti-Federalists felt a Bill of Rights was needed. They worried that a strong national government might infringe on the individual rights of the people.
 - As a compromise the Federalists agreed to add a Bill of Rights to the Constitution following its ratification.
4. Explain that James Madison, considered the father of the Constitution, had once been against a Bill of Rights.¹ Nevertheless, Madison led the new Congress in creating a Bill of Rights. Share the following information regarding the process used:

¹ Although Madison strongly supported individual liberty he thought that by listing them specifically in a "Bill of Rights" would end up limit rights (by naming them) and prove useless in actually protecting anyone (based on what happened when individual states passed bills of rights).

- State ratification conventions proposed more than 200 amendments for the Bill of Rights.
 - From these, Madison pulled together 19 possible amendments.
 - Congress accepted 12 of these and the states approved ten of them.
 - One of the rejected amendments dealt with the size of the House of Representatives.
 - The other rejected amendment prevented Congress from changing salaries of its members until after an election of representatives had been held. This particular amendment was ratified 202 years later and became the 27th Amendment.
5. Give each student a copy of “The Bill of Rights – Simplified Version”, located in the *Supplemental Materials (Unit 7, Lesson 5)*. Note that this was the same simplified version used in Lesson 4 of Unit 1. Discuss the rights and their simplified descriptions using the following questions to guide your discussion:
- Which of these rights do you consider most important? Why?
 - What kind of conflicts do you think arise over the Second Amendment?
 - The Bill of Rights was written many years ago. Do you think any of these amendments are out-dated now and not needed? If so which ones? Why?
 - Why do you think more than one amendment has to do with people who are accused of a crime?
 - What do you think the purposes of Amendments nine and ten was?
 - How might life be different if the Bill of Rights had never been added to the Constitution?
 - Do you think the Anti-Federalists were happy with this document? Why or why not?
 - Do you think the Federalists were happy with this document? Why or why not?
- (Note: You may wish to show students a copy of the Bill of Rights as they were written. One can be found at the following website:
<<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=13>>.)
6. Write the following question on an overhead transparency or board: “Where do you think James Madison and others got their ideas for the Bill of Rights?” Have students respond to this question by answering it in their social studies journals. Prompt them by asking them to think about what they learned about during the year. Have students share their ideas. Explain that colonial experiences relating to infringements on their freedoms by the King and Parliament were reflected in the kinds of rights people wanted after Independence.
7. Divide students into small groups of three or four students each and give each group a copy of “Influences of Colonial Experiences”, located in the *Supplemental Materials (Unit 7, Lesson 5)*. Explain that they should work together to identify and describe a connection between the right listed on the chart and something that happened during colonial times. Using Word Card #17, review the term ‘quarter’ if necessary. If groups are struggling, model the process by doing the first section of the chart together. Ask students to think of something that happened in colonial times that made freedom of religion important to people either before or after the American Revolution. A possible answer would be that people like the Puritans came to the colonies seeking religious freedom. Allow groups about fifteen minutes to work. Encourage them to use their textbook and notes from previous units to assist them. Then have the small groups share

their charts with the entire class. Note that a chart showing sample answers has been included in the *Supplemental Materials (Unit 7, Lesson 6)* for reference.

8. As a way of pulling the content of the last few lessons together, use the lesson graphic organizer, which also serves as the unit organizer, to lead a culminating discussion on the major ideas of the unit.

Assessment

Have students write a paragraph describing the connections between colonial experiences and Amendments 1-4.