



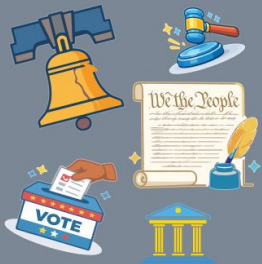
Student Workbook

Course 4

Grades 6–8

The Bill of Rights:
Your Freedoms &
Responsibilities





The Bill of Rights

Your Freedoms & Responsibilities

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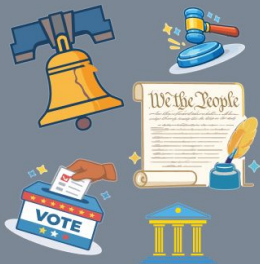
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The Bill of Rights

Your Freedoms & Responsibilities

Jump In

Rights vs. Rules: Where Should the Line Be?

After a student protest disrupted classes and raised safety concerns, your school announces a new rule:

No more walkouts, protests, or organized demonstrations of any kind will be allowed on campus.

School leaders argue the rule is necessary to protect safety, prevent disruptions, and keep students in class. Limiting organized demonstrations to maintain order is within their Constitutional rights. Some students agree with the new rule. Other students believe the school just crossed a line; will they still be able to exercise their First Amendment right to assemble?



Students start talking about the decision and begin posting in their civics class.

Reflect

Below, write 2-3 sentences answering these questions:

- *How should schools balance students' rights with their responsibility to maintain safety and order?*
- *What are the consequences of this new rule?*
- *Do you think this rule protects students, limits their rights too much, or both?*

Explain your reasoning and use examples from the scenario to support your opinion.

Rights in Real Life

When Power Gets Tested

The Bill of Rights is not just history; it shows up in real life all the time. People debate freedom of speech online, protest unfair treatment, challenge laws in court, and question whether rights are being protected or limited.

Directions: In this activity, you'll become a Constitutional Rights Reporter. Your job is to investigate a real local or national event connected to one of the rights protected in the Bill of Rights and explain what constitutional issue is being debated.

Find a current event that involves a constitutional right protected by the Bill of Rights.

Constitutional Rights Involved	Real-World Examples
<p><i>This could involve:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • freedom of speech • protests or walkouts • religion • press or social media • student rights • police searches • fair trials • privacy • protests or public safety debates 	<p><i>This could look like:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a school limiting clothing, signs, or political messages • students organizing a protest, walkout, or petition • a school library removing or restricting a book • a journalist being denied access to government information • a social media platform removing or limiting a post • police searching a person, home, backpack, phone, or vehicle • the use of cameras, facial recognition, or location tracking • Students advocating for a school issue. • A peaceful protest in a community. • A group petitioning local leaders. • A court case involving free speech.
Find a Current Event	
<p><i>You may use:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a local news story • a national event • a school-related issue • or an event you've personally heard people discussing 	

Step 1: Identify the Event

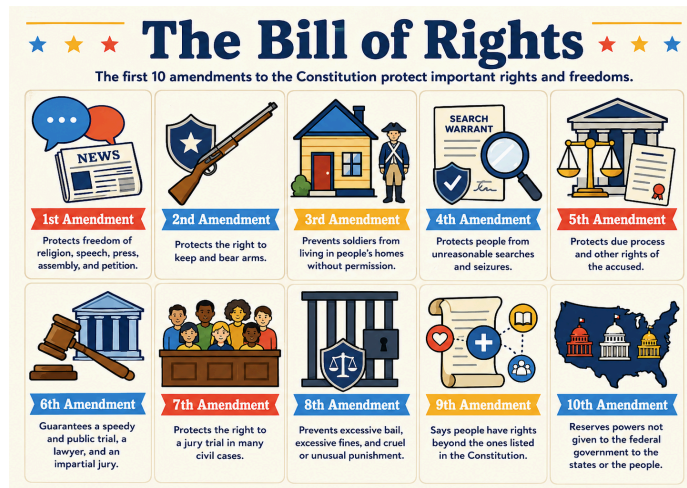
What happened? *Briefly describe the event in 3–5 sentences.*

Who was involved?

What decision or action took place?

Why are people debating it?

Step 2: Identify the Constitutional Right



Which Amendment connects to this event? *Explain your thinking*

Step 3: Analyze the Conflict

Do you think this event protects or challenges a constitutional right?

Use evidence from the event to support your thinking. Consider:

Who benefits?

Were rights protected equally?

Who may feel harmed or limited?

Was the government acting fairly?

Step 4: Complete the Constitutional Response

Use the sentence frame below to organize your thinking:

In this event, _____, the _____ Amendment applies because
_____ and _____.

The action taken by _____ either protects or threatens this right by
_____.

Step 5: Headline Challenge

Create a headline for your story like a real news reporter.

Examples: “Students Challenge Protest Ban”, “Court Debate Raises Questions About Privacy”,
“Community Divided Over Free Speech Decision”

Your Headline:

A Strong Investigation Will

- Identify the constitutional right involved.
- Describe the event accurately.
- Explain at least two perspectives on the issue.
- Use evidence to support each viewpoint.
- Explain why people may disagree.

Constitutional Rights Reporter Checklist

Before turning in your work, make sure you can say:

- ☐ I clearly explained the event and why people are debating it.
- ☐ I correctly connected the event to a specific constitutional right or amendment.
- ☐ I analyzed multiple perspectives, including who may feel protected, harmed, included, or limited.
- ☐ I used evidence and reasoning to explain whether rights were protected fairly.
- ☐ My headline and written responses show thoughtful civic and constitutional thinking.



The Bill of Rights

Freedom Comes With Responsibility

A right is a freedom or protection people are entitled to have. A responsibility is something people should do because their choices affect others. In a democracy, people have responsibilities such as staying informed, respecting the rights of others, speaking up about injustice, and participating in their communities.

Share Your Thinking

1. list 3-5 responsibilities you have at home,
2. list 3-5 responsibilities you have as a student at school
3. What do these responsibilities reveal about the qualities others depend on you to demonstrate?
4. How might the responsibilities you practice at home and school prepare you to be an active citizen in your community?

Home	School
 <p>Completing chores</p>	 <p>Completing assignments</p>
 <p>Caring for siblings or pets</p>	 <p>Respecting classmates and teachers</p>
 <p>Following family expectations</p>	 <p>Following school rules</p>
	 <p>Participating in group work</p>

Freedom, Fairness, and Responsibility in Action

Rights are powerful, but they do not work on their own. They depend on people understanding them, using them responsibly, and thinking about how their choices affect others.

Directions: In this activity, you will create your own case study that shows a constitutional right in action, the responsibility connected to that right, and what can happen when that responsibility is followed or ignored.

Create a short case study based on one right from the U.S. Bill of Rights.

Your case study should show:

- A constitutional right being used
- A responsibility connected to that right
- What happens when the responsibility is followed
- What happens when the responsibility is ignored

A Strong Response Will:

- ☐ Clearly identify the constitutional right.
- ☐ Explain the responsibility connected to that right.
- ☐ Describe realistic consequences.
- ☐ Show how individual choices can affect others and the community.
- ☐ Use complete sentences and specific details.

Optional Sentence Starters

- The constitutional right in my scenario is ...
- A responsibility connected to this right is ...
- When people use this right responsibly, ...
- When people ignore this responsibility, ...
- This situation matters because...

Here is what a strong scenario might look like:

Right: **Freedom of assembly**

Scenario: Students gather peacefully outside city hall to ask leaders to build a safer crosswalk. They stay in the permitted area and allow others to enter the building. Their actions bring attention to the problem while respecting public safety. If participants blocked emergency entrances or threatened people who disagreed, they could create danger and weaken support for their cause.

Step 1: Choose a Right

Select **one** right from the U.S. Bill of Rights. Here are some examples:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☐ Freedom of speech | ☐ Right to petition |
| ☐ Freedom of assembly | ☐ Right to a fair trial |
| ☐ Freedom of religion | ☐ Protection from unfair search |
| ☐ Freedom of the press | ☐ Freedom to petition |

Step 2: Create Your Scenario

On another piece of paper, write a short scenario, about 1–2 paragraphs, that shows this right in action.

Step 3: Analyze the Responsibility

Answer in the space that follows:

- What responsibility comes with this right?
- Who is responsible: citizens, students, government, or both?
- How could bias, fear, or unfairness affect what happens?
- Explain how the choices in your scenario affect the rights, safety, trust, or participation of at least one other person.

Step 4: Show the Outcome

Explain both sides in the space that follows:

- What happens when the responsibility is respected?
- What happens when the responsibility is ignored?

Step 5: Final Reflection

Use what you've learned (e.g., history, ideas, vocabulary) from this course to complete this sentence.

A right becomes stronger when people _____ because _____

Scoring Rubric

Criteria	Rights Defender 3 pts	Responsible Citizen 2 pts	Emerging Advocate 1 pt
Understanding of Constitutional Rights	Clearly explains a constitutional right and accurately connects it to the scenario. Demonstrates strong understanding of the Bill of Rights.	Explains a constitutional right and generally connects it to the scenario, though some details may be unclear.	Shows limited understanding of the constitutional right or its connection to the scenario.
Analysis of Responsibility & Fairness	Thoughtfully explains the responsibility connected to the right and analyzes how bias, fear, or unfairness could affect the situation.	Explains the responsibility connected to the right, but analysis may need more detail or deeper reasoning.	Provides limited explanation of responsibility, fairness, or how rights can be affected.
Scenario & Reflection Quality	Creates a realistic, thoughtful scenario and clearly explains outcomes when responsibilities are respected or ignored. Reflection shows strong civic thinking.	Scenario and reflection are complete but may need more detail, examples, or explanation.	Scenario or reflection is incomplete, unclear, or lacks reasoning and supporting details.

Score Guide

- **8–9 Points → Rights Defender**
You demonstrate strong civic reasoning, constitutional understanding, and thoughtful analysis of rights and responsibilities.
- **5–7 Points → Responsible Citizen**
You show good understanding and analysis, with opportunities to deepen your explanations and connections.
- **3–4 Points → Emerging Advocate**
You are beginning to build your understanding of constitutional rights, fairness, and civic responsibility.