



## NSDAR Educational Resources Committee

### "Constitution Week 3-5"

#### Lesson Plan

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**State:** Texas

#### 1. **Identify the standards to be addressed:**

##### **History**

Describe how individuals, events, and ideas have changed communities, past and present

Identify the issues that led to the creation of the U.S. Constitution, including the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation

Identify the contributions of individuals, including James Madison, and others such as George Mason, Charles Pinckney, and Roger Sherman who helped create the U.S. Constitution

##### **Government**

Explain the purposes of the U.S. Constitution as identified in the Preamble

Explain the reasons for the creation of the Bill of Rights and its importance

Identify and explain the basic functions of the three branches of government;

Identify the reasons for and describe the system of checks and balances outlined in the U.S. Constitution

Describe the basic structure of government in the local community, state, and nation

Identify local, state, and national government officials and explain how they are chosen

Identify the purposes of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, including the Bill of Rights; and

Describe and explain the importance of the concept of "consent of the governed" as it relates to the functions of local, state, and national government

Identify and explain the basic functions of the three branches of government according to the Texas Constitution

Identify the intent, meaning, and importance of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the Bill of Rights (Celebrate Freedom Week).

##### **Citizenship**

Identify leaders in state, local, and national governments, including the governor, local members of the Texas Legislature, the local mayor, U.S. senators, local U.S. representatives, and Texans who have been president of the United States

Describe the origins and significance of national celebrations such as Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Constitution Day, Columbus Day, and Veterans Day

Explain the contributions of the Founding Fathers to the development of the national government;

Identify past and present leaders in the national government, including the president and various members of Congress, and their political parties

Describe the fundamental rights guaranteed by each amendment in the Bill of Rights, including freedom of religion, speech, and press; the right to assemble and petition the government; the right to keep and bear arms; the right to trial by jury; and the right to an attorney; and

Describe various amendments to the U.S. Constitution such as those that extended voting rights of U.S. citizens.

#### 2. **Statement of the objective and lesson outcomes:**

Student will be able to:

1. Identify at least one contribution of following figures to Constitution/ Constitutional Convention: James Madison, George Washington, Roger Sherman, James Wilson

2. Name the document that preceded the Constitution

3. List the three branches of the government and one purpose for each

4. Identify the Preamble and Bill of Rights sections of the Constitution and list one fact about each

5. Identify current president, vice president, senators, and representative
6. Name at least three rights guaranteed by Bill of Rights

3. **Materials, resources, and technology to be used by teacher/students:**

**Websites**

- <http://www.scholastic.com/browse/collection.jsp?id=391>
- <http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/constitution-day-grades-6-8.html>
- <https://www.k12.com/constitution-day.html>
- <http://www.lbjlibrary.org/education/educational-resources/>
- <https://constitutioncenter.org/constitution-day/constitution-day-resources/middle-school-resources/>

**Simplified Constitution Websites**

- [http://www.atlcomputing.com/aaron/info/easy\\_constitution.htm](http://www.atlcomputing.com/aaron/info/easy_constitution.htm)
- <http://www.government-and-constitution.org/us-constitution/us-constitution-simplified.htm>
- <https://teachingcivics.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Simplified-United-States-Constitution-and-Bill-of-Rights.pdf>
- <https://kids.laws.com/articles-of-the-constitution>
- <https://237740038185050404.weebly.com/articles-1-7.html>

4. **Introduction of the topic:**

Class discussion: Present the following questions to students: Does our country have rules to follow? Where are those rules written down and who decided on them? Guide them in the idea of laws of city, state, country; the legislative body that would have made these laws; what part if any citizens have on making these laws and where they might find information about the laws or proposed laws.

Next, show Brain Pop Constitution video:

<https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/ushistory/constitutionalconvention/>

5. **Procedure for instruction:**

Present the following vocabulary words and the meaning using dictionary definitions and context within sentences: preamble, executive, legislative, judicial, guarantee, rights

1. Using lecture, website, and/or video, list basics for Constitutional Convention: date, location, states attendees came from, number of attendees. A fill in sheet for this basic information can be given to students to use during the lesson presentation.

In addition, note contributions of the following particular men: Madison (helped draft Constitution, proposed Bill of Rights), Washington (president of convention), Sherman (helped with compromise that lead to House and Senate), Wilson (helped draft Constitution). The fill in sheet may include a matching section for this.

2. Discuss Articles of Confederation (“a loose confederation of sovereign states and a weak central government” <http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/articles.html> has a bibliography of sources, including important dates. This site [https://www.ducksters.com/history/american\\_revolution/articles\\_of\\_confederation.php](https://www.ducksters.com/history/american_revolution/articles_of_confederation.php) has a simplified discussion of the articles themselves and the problems associated with them.

3. Using a tree analogy, discuss 3 branches of government- legislative, judicial, executive; who or what bodies involved in each; and what the purpose is for each;

4. Use visual version via document camera or website such as of Constitution, including Bill of Rights to locate Preamble and Bill of Rights, read and discuss meaning of Preamble, list basic rights guaranteed in Bill of Rights. One possibility for the visual online is <https://www.archives.gov/foundingdocs/constitution>, a source for printable can be found at <https://www.printableconstitution.com>. What rights are most important to them? What if we did not have that particular right?

5. List current office holders for US president and vice president, senators for state, representative for area of state; Find out how they would write or email each. One place to look these up is <https://www.270towin.com/elected-officials/>. Relate these to which branch of state or federal government they would be a part of. Brainstorm what they might say to the person.

6. **Lesson closure:**

Apply what they have learned to the celebration of Constitution Day/Week - why we celebrate (an important point in our history, helped form a true union), why the document is important (tells how government is run, guarantees our freedoms), how we can honor it (good citizenship).

7. **Assessment of student understanding:**

Quiz - Matching - names of 4 men to their contribution; T/F on Articles of Confederation and 3 branches of government, given list circle names of current president, vice -president, senators, representative  
Draw picture illustrating one of the rights guaranteed in Bill of Rights