

PARADE classroom®

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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Kastrom/AP Wide World



Protesters rally in front of a power plant in Ohio. The First Amendment of our Constitution guarantees you the right to assemble peacefully.

► This Week's Focus:

Celebrating the Constitution

This week's guide provides materials for Constitution Day. Recent law requires all schools to teach the Constitution on Sept. 17. Since that day falls on a weekend this year, it can be celebrated the week before or the week after. To help you, we've included a lesson plan and two skills sheets. Another lesson plan focuses on the Pentagon's high school database. Is it a good idea? And finally, we follow Bruce Feiler on a visit to Iran. We'd also like to remind you that it's not too late for you to enter PARADE's Tell America's Story contest. You'll find details at www.paradeclassroom.com.

Everyday Newspaper Activity

Activity #3: Identify Issues. Ask students to choose a problem that they've heard about in the news. What do they already know about the issue? Have them gather additional information from the paper. Then ask them to propose solutions to the problem. Discuss the solutions. Will they work? Have elected officials proposed their own

Special Bulletin: Hurricane Help!

Hurricane Katrina left thousands of people homeless, hungry and frightened throughout Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi. They need your help. Please consider a class project to benefit the American Red Cross (www.redcross.org), which is taking the lead in providing relief.

► In the News: Celebrating the Constitution; The Pentagon's High School Database p.2

► In PARADE: A Visit to Iran p.3

► Skills Sheets: The Bill of Rights and a Free Press p.4; First Amendment Rights p.5

Celebrating the Constitution

Curriculum links: Civics and government, American history, social studies

Briefing: The U.S. began as a loose group of states under the Articles of Confederation. When Representatives from those states gathered in Philadelphia in 1787 to amend those Articles, they soon realized that the U.S. needed a closer-knit form of government. All through the summer, they worked on the U.S. Constitution. Among the issues they debated was how much power the national government should have compared with the states. They also decided the structure of the government and how representatives would be elected. They ended up with a three-part government, in which no branch would have too much power. The executive branch (the President) enforces and administers the laws. The legislative branch (Congress) makes the laws and spends our tax money. The judiciary (the courts) interprets and applies the laws. The Constitution was signed on Sept. 17, 1787. In 1791, Congressman James Madison of Virginia convinced lawmakers to add a list of rights. These rights, including freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, the right to privacy, the right to a jury trial and others, became the Bill of Rights. They form the first 10 amendments to the Constitution.

Classroom Debates

- **The Constitution created checks and balances between the executive, legislative and judicial branches.** Can you find examples in the paper of conflicts between these branches?
- **The Constitution includes the Bill of Rights.** Can you find news involving freedom of the press? Freedom of speech? Freedom of religion? The right to privacy? Other rights included in the Bill of Rights? If there's a court case involved, how do you think the court should decide?

Newspaper activity: The Constitution determined the balance between federal and state powers. Look through the paper and see if you can find any conflicts between these powers.

Resources: Books: Linda Monk's *The Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution* (Hyperion, 2003) and *The Bill of Rights: A User's Guide* (Close Up, 2004), John Patrick's *The Oxford Guide to the U.S. Government* (Oxford, 2001) and Jamin Raskin's *We the Students* (Congressional Quarterly, 2003). Web sites: Learn about the Constitutional Convention and read the Constitution.*

The Pentagon's H.S. Database

Curriculum links: Current events, civics, social studies

Briefing: If you're 16 or older, the Pentagon knows a lot about you. It has a contract with a private database company, BeNow, Inc., to collect information about high school students aged 16 to 18 and all college students. What sort of information are they collecting? Everything from birthdays, e-mail addresses and Social Security numbers, to ethnicity and grade-point averages. They even know what subjects you're taking. So what's the idea? The Department of Defense wants the information to help with military recruiting efforts. The program has been going on for two years, but the public didn't learn about it until this summer. People did know about a similar program under the No Child Left Behind Act. Under those regulations, schools that did not provide student information to military recruiters could lose their federal funding. Individual students could opt out, however, and officials say they can opt out of the database as well. To do so, students must provide information about themselves that will be kept in a "suppression file." Recruiters are not supposed to contact these students. While the military had been missing its recruitment goals, the active-duty Army reached its targets in June and July. The National Guard, however, has met its goal only once in the past year and a half.

Classroom Debates

- **Is creating a database of students a good thing for the Pentagon to do?** How helpful will it be to military recruiters? What else might help the military reach its recruitment goals? Does the program—and its administration by a private firm—raise any privacy concerns? Is there any potential for misuse of data? Garfield High School in Seattle, Wash., has banned recruiters from its campus. Is this a good or a bad idea?

Newspaper activity: The military provides job opportunities. Look through the employment section of your paper. For what jobs might military service prepare you? What other types of jobs are available to high school graduates? To college graduates?

Resources: Web sites: Read newspaper and television analyses of the Pentagon program.*

*Visit www.paradeclassroom.com/links for links to all mentioned Web sites.

A Visit to Iran

Curriculum links: History, social studies, geography, comparative religion, current events

Briefing: Bruce Feiler, author of *Walking the Bible* and other books, recently visited Iran and found hope for an end to religious warfare. Iran has been in the news because of its budding nuclear program, its state-sponsored terrorism and its anti-American rhetoric. While visiting this Islamic religious dictatorship, Feiler's wife had to cover herself from head to toe in black. However, the couple found that the intensity of the religious revolution had faded, at least in Iran's capital of Tehran. In the countryside, they also found both fundamentalists and open-minded people. The wife of a vice president said, "I believe life will be better if we separate the spiritual aspects of religion from the political. If you read history, whenever religion has been used as an instrument for government, the religion has been harmed." Feiler also learned about Cyrus the Great. Born around 590 B.C.E., Cyrus ruled over an empire from India to Greece. He respected the religions of other people and issued the first declaration of human rights. Even the Bible respected him. In the Book of Isaiah, God calls Cyrus "his anointed one" because of his respect for human rights. "The most important challenge of our lifetime," Feiler wrote after his visit, is "finding a way for the religions to get along" — as they did in the time of Cyrus.

Newspaper activity: Look through the paper to find stories about Iran. What are they about? What are the concerns? Is the news positive or negative?

Resources: Books: Miriam Greenblatt's *Iran* (Children's Press, 2003), John King's *Iran and the Islamic Revolution* (Raintree, 2005), Azar Nafisi's *Reading Lolita in Tehran* (Random House, 2003), Bruce Feiler's *Where God Was Born* (William Morrow, 2005). Web sites: Read about Iran in Wikipedia and the CIA Factbook. Learn more about Cyrus from Wikipedia and other sites.*

Classroom Debates

• **Should Iran have freedom of religion?** How is a country with a state-sponsored religion different from the U.S. on an everyday basis? What would our country be like without religious freedom? Can you find newspaper stories about controversies in this country regarding freedom of religion? Can you find stories about violations of this right in other countries? Should people be tolerant of each other's religions? Explain. Do you believe we can have peace with Middle Eastern countries such as Iran? Why or why not? What could our country do to make it more likely?

ASK MARILYN

Brainteaser

Question: What do these adjectives have in common: chauvinistic, mesmerizing, platonic, ritzy?

Answer: All are derived from people's names. For example, ritzy comes from César Ritz, who founded the Ritz hotels. Platonic comes from the philosopher Plato.

Interact: Do students have questions or comments for Marilyn? Send them to Ask Marilyn, 711 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017, or e-mail marilyn@parade.com.

FRESH VOICES

A Memorable Assignment

For class discussion or writing assignment: Have you ever had a really interesting school assignment? Tom, 15, videotaped a World War II veteran who survived kamikaze attacks, typhoons and bombs. Tiffany, 18, wrote a report on Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, which had killed her twin sister. Have you ever had an assignment that meant a lot to you or changed the way you look at things? What was it? How did it affect you?

Interact: Ask students, "Do celebrities influence you?" Have them send their answers to Fresh Voices, Box 5103, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163-5103. Or e-mail them to freshvoices@parade.com. Students whose letters are published in PARADE will receive Fresh Voices T-shirts.

Answer Key:

The Bill of Rights and a Free Press (p. 4): 1. b; 2. d; 3. b; 4. b; 5. b; 6. c; 7. b; 8. e; 9. c; 10. a. First Amendment Rights (p. 5): 1. religion; 2. assembly; 3. press; 4. speech; 5. petition; 6. religion; 7. press; 8. assembly; 9. press; 10. speech.

The Bill of Rights and a Free Press

The Bill of Rights guarantees freedom of the press. But that's not all it does. How much do you know about this document, which makes a free press possible, and which protects your rights in many other ways? Take this quiz to find out.

- 1. The Bill of Rights:**
 - a. is part of the Declaration of Independence.
 - b. is comprised of the first 10 amendments to the U.S. Constitution.
 - c. says that all men are created equal.
- 2. The Bill of Rights guarantees your right to:**
 - a. freedom of religion.
 - b. trial by jury.
 - c. freedom of speech.
 - d. all of the above.
- 3. Which of these is not part of the Bill of Rights?**
 - a. the right to bear arms
 - b. the right to a public education
 - c. the right to "peaceably assemble" for political demonstrations
 - d. protection from "cruel and unusual" punishment
- 4. When suspects on trial say they will "plead the Fifth," they are calling on their Fifth Amendment right to:**
 - a. serve as their own lawyers.
 - b. refuse to testify against themselves in court.
 - c. select the members of their juries.
 - d. plead "not guilty" to a crime.
- 5. Freedom of the press is guaranteed by:**
 - a. the Freedom of Information Act of 1966.
 - b. the First Amendment to the Constitution.
 - c. The Ninth Amendment to the Constitution.
 - d. The Declaration of Independence.
- 6. Freedom of the press means that:**
 - a. newspapers always must be fair and objective.
 - b. newspapers can print whatever they want, whether or not it's true.
 - c. newspapers can print articles without government interference.
- 7. All countries have freedom of the press.**
 - a. true
 - b. false
- 8. Freedom of the press applies to:**
 - a. newspapers.
 - b. television.
 - c. the World Wide Web.
 - d. a and b only.
 - e. a, b and c.
- 9. It's against the law for newspapers to print libel. An article is considered libelous when:**
 - a. it hurts someone's feelings.
 - b. it criticizes the government.
 - c. it's false and damages someone's reputation.
 - d. it's not completely objective.
- 10. It's considered censorship when:**
 - a. the government stops a newspaper from printing a story.
 - b. a newspaper drops a story without first telling the writer.
 - c. both a and b.

First Amendment Rights

The First Amendment includes the rights to freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and freedom of petition.

Take a look at the situations below. In the blank before each one, write down which of these freedoms (religion, speech, press, assembly, petition) is at issue. If the case went to court, how do you think the courts would rule on the issues involved?

_____ 1. Susan wants to start an after-school Bible club at her high school.

_____ 6. The football coach calls for a moment of silence before a big game.

_____ 2. Miguel and his friends gather on a street corner to protest a city policy against loitering.

_____ 7. A group of parents demands that the "Harry Potter" series be removed from the school library.

_____ 3. A reporter is indicted for refusing to reveal a source.

_____ 8. A city passes an ordinance that says teenagers can't be out after 11 p.m.

_____ 4. Simon wears a T-shirt to school that says, "The Draft: Don't Register."

_____ 9. A faculty advisor tells the student editor that her article on bad cafeteria food cannot appear in the school paper.

_____ 5. Elena passes around a petition demanding that the city's mayor resign.

_____ 10. Aliyah breaks the dress code and wears jewelry that shows off her African heritage.