



FREEDOM CONNECTION

(40-50 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students gain an understanding of the Bill of Rights and the major freedoms it guarantees.

MATERIALS

Index cards (10 for each student); a hole punch; yarn or string

GET READY

- ✓ Punch holes in the upper left-hand corner of the index cards, or secure multiple hole punchers for your students to do it themselves.
- ✓ Have a discussion with your students about the U.S. Constitution to lay the groundwork for this activity on the Bill of Rights.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Inform your students that they are going to explore the Bill of Rights and make connections between it and their own lives.
- ✓ Tell your students that after the Constitution was ratified, people were concerned that it did not guarantee certain rights. Say, *With the king previously denying certain freedoms before the war, colonists were worried about their rights being abused by a new government.* Give each student a copy of the Bill of Rights found at: http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html
- ✓ Read and discuss the Bill of Rights as a group. Make sure your class has a good understanding of each right.
- ✓ Divide students into groups of three or four and ask them to discuss the freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. Each group should confirm that all its members know the meaning of each right.

- ✓ Next, have your students continue to work in groups and have them think of real-life scenarios that are protected by the 10 rights. Give each student 10 large index cards with holes punched in the upper left-hand corners of the cards.
- ✓ Have students label each index card with a number, 1 through 10, indicating each freedom of the Bill of Rights. Your students should then write a brief scenario that would be protected by each right. (Group members can consult each other as they work.)
- ✓ Have your students bind their cards with a piece of string or yarn.
- ✓ Allow students to volunteer to share some of their Bill of Rights scenario cards.
- ✓ Ask your students to write a paragraph or essay about how their lives would be different if the Bill of Rights was never created.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What did this activity teach you about the importance of the Bill of Rights?*
- ★ *Was it challenging to come up with a scenario for each right? Why or why not?*
- ★ *Could you fathom how your life would be different without the Bill of Rights? How might it be changed?*
- ★ *Which right is the most important to you? Explain why.*

SUGGESTED ASSESSMENT:

Students could write an essay outlining four ways that their lives would be different if the Bill of Rights were never created.