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Delaware Day 4th Grade Competition

Lesson Seven

The Bill of Rights

Activities for this lesson were adapted from the Michigan Citizenship Collaborative Curriculum, 4th Grade United States Studies, Unit 5: Our Federal Government, Lesson 6: Limiting the Power of Government. www.micitizenshipcurriculum.org

Students will be able to:

- Explain when and why the Founders added the Bill of Rights to the U.S. Constitution. (Panel 1:6)

This lesson contains information, resources and ideas to help students understand the Bill of Rights. Teachers will determine best practices and methods to instruct the students.

1. Background Information

Remind students that the framers created three branches of government with a system of checks and balances. This was to ensure that no single branch would be too powerful. Many delegates at the constitutional convention believed a system of checks and balances was not enough. Delegates wanted protection to keep the government from taking away peoples' rights. Some states' delegates said they would not ratify (agree to) the Constitution until a Bill of Rights was added.

2. Activities: The Bill of Rights

- a. Distribute Document 1: *The Simplified Version of the Bill of Rights* (included in lesson two) and Document 2: *In Your Words*. Ask students to rewrite the Bill of Rights in their own words. (www.micitizenshipcurriculum.org).
- b. Review their answers. The 9th and 10th Amendments may be difficult to rewrite. Amendment Nine assures citizens of their rights. If a Right is not listed in the Bill of Rights, that does not mean they do not have that right. The Constitution cannot list every possible right or it would be a very long document. Amendment Ten says the federal government can only do the tasks outlined in the Constitution and anything else is reserved to the states. This is the "States' Rights" amendment.
- c. Distribute Document 3: *Scenarios* (www.micitizenshipcurriculum.org). Ask students to imagine how a Bill of Rights might protect people from these situations.
- d. Document 4: *The Bill of Rights Reference Sheet* is included for teacher reference.

3. Extending the Lesson

- a. Students could revisit the Government of Egbonia and identify which rights are violated.
- b. Students could develop their own scenarios that show how a Bill of Rights is needed.

- c. Students could find news articles that depict a right either being exercised or violated.
- d. Students could draw visual representations of one (or more) right.

The Bill of Rights – Simplified Version

Amendment One guarantees freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom for people to gather peacefully, and freedom for people to send petitions to their government.

Amendment Two states that in order to have a prepared military, people are guaranteed the right to keep and bear arms.

Amendment Three states that the government cannot force people to house and feed soldiers in their homes during times of peace.

Amendment Four states that people, their homes or their belongings are protected from unreasonable searches or seizures.

Amendment Five guarantees a person accused of a serious crime the right to be charged by a grand jury. It also states that people cannot be forced to give evidence against themselves. If a person is found not guilty of a crime, he/she cannot be put on trial for the same crime again. Finally, the federal government cannot unfairly take peoples' lives, freedom, or property.

Amendment Six guarantees a speedy and public trial by an impartial jury if a person is accused of a crime. The accused person also has the right to be told what they are accused of and they have the right to a lawyer. They also have the right to see and to question those people who have accused them of the crime.

Amendment Seven guarantees a trial by jury in civil cases which are cases that involve a dispute between private parties or between the government and a private party.

Amendment Eight says that courts cannot use cruel or unusual punishment or set bail and fines that are too high.

Amendment Nine states that the people have other rights that are not stated here.

Amendment Ten states that the people have all the rights not given to the United States government or forbidden to state governments by the U.S. Constitution.

In Your Own Words

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Scenarios

The Town Council of the city of Mapleton recently closed a popular park along a river. The Council claimed the town did not have enough money to maintain the park. Many people in the town of Mapleton were angry about the Town Council's decision. They held a rally in the park and held up signs saying "The Town Council Stinks!" and "The Town Council is a Bunch of Losers." The mayor of Mapleton had the police arrest anybody carrying a sign.

Herbert Jones, a policeman, was very angry when he noticed two large front windows of his house were cracked. He asked Mrs. Smith, his neighbor, if she had seen what happened. Mrs. Smith replied that she thought Ruby Walton, a teenager from down the street, had done the damage. According to Mrs. Smith, Ruby owned a sling shot and had once remarked that she did not like policemen. After hearing this Herbert Jones went to Ruby's house and demanded to look for the slingshot. He found it in her bedroom with several small rocks. He arrested Ruby.

Ramsay Ricket was one of the meanest people in Bloomville. He insulted people, made faces at people, and did everything he could to make people miserable. He was caught throwing eggs at a school on Halloween. Several witnesses saw him. The eggs did a lot of damage including breaking four windows and staining a large sign on the front of the school. He was arrested right after the incident. The mayor announced that since there were so many witnesses there was no need for a trial. He also stated that a trial would cost Bloomville money and Ramsay Ricket didn't deserve to have any money spent on him.

The Bill of Rights Reference Sheet

AMENDMENT	RIGHTS
1	freedom of religion freedom of speech freedom of the press freedom of assembly freedom of petition
2	right to carry arms , or weapons
3	don't have to give food or your home to soldiers during peace times
4	government cannot search property without good reason
5 – 8	Due process of law which means: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • right to a fair, public trial • a person does not have to speak against himself/herself in a trial • right to a lawyer to speak for them • cannot be put on trial twice for the same crime • cannot be given cruel or unusual punishment
9	People have rights that are not listed in detail in the Constitution.
10	As a final protection, the federal government can do only those things listed in the Constitution. All other authority belongs to the states or to the people.