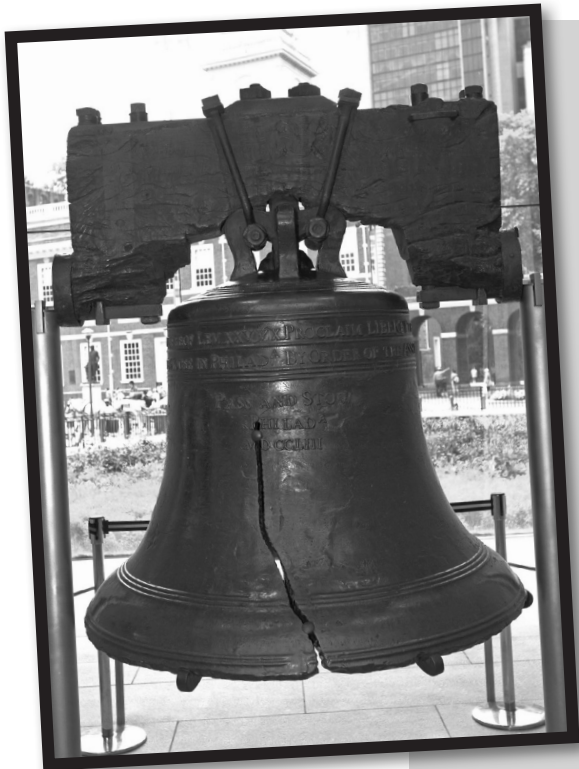


Unit 3

The Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Amendments



Liberty Bell

Unit Focus

- ☆ The Constitution of the United States
- ☆ The Bill of Rights
- ☆ The Amendments to the Constitution
- ☆ Spotlight Reading: Benjamin Franklin

Key Vocabulary Preview

Constitutional Convention of 1787

Constitution

“We the People of the United States ...”

Benjamin Franklin

Federalist Papers

James Madison

Alexander Hamilton

market economy (capitalist economy)

powers of the federal government

separation of powers

checks and balances

amendment

the right to bear arms

vote

voting age

Bill of Rights

freedom of speech

freedom of religion

freedom of press

freedom of assembly



1. Before You Read



- A.** Look at the picture above. Ask your partner these questions.
1. Who is the leader of your native country—a president, a king or queen, a military leader, or a religious person?
 2. Is the government elected, appointed, or led by the military or a royal family in your native country?
 3. Who makes the laws in your native country?
 4. Did you vote in your native country? Why or why not?
- B.** Sit in a group of four. Talk about this question. Write your answers in the chart.
- What are some laws of the U.S. government?
- EXAMPLE:** You can vote when you are 18 years old.

Laws of the United States

- C.** Read your answers to the class.



Citizenship Reading

A. What do you know about these words? Write your ideas on the lines.

	Constitution		Bill of Rights
	Amendments		

B. Read.

U.S. History: The Law of the Land

Revolutionary War ends			Bill of Rights adopted			Fifteenth Amendment added			Twenty-Sixth Amendment added
1783	1787	1791	1865	1870	1920			1971	
	Constitution written		Thirteenth Amendment added		Nineteenth Amendment added				

The Constitution of the United States After the Revolutionary War, colonial leaders needed to organize a national government. In 1787, they met at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. They wanted to protect their rights of freedom, liberty, and equality. They wrote the United States Constitution. Benjamin Franklin was the oldest member at the Constitutional Convention.

The Federalist Papers supported the passage of the U.S. Constitution. Written by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, the Federalist Papers discussed the ideas in the Constitution. They spread information about the need for a powerful central government.

The Constitution was passed on September 17, 1787, and it was later ratified by the states. The Preamble (introduction) to the Constitution begins with the words, “We the People of the United States.”

The Constitution is the plan of government. It defines the government’s responsibilities. It is the supreme law of the land. Everyone must follow the law. The federal government can pass laws, collect taxes, print money, organize an army, declare war, and make treaties. Some powers are given to the national government, and some powers are given to the states.

The Constitution establishes a representative democracy (a republic) as our form of government. The economic system in the United States is a market economy. The Constitution guarantees the rights of all people in the United States, both citizens and noncitizens.

The Constitution

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graph TD
    A[The Constitution] --> B[Original Constitution]
    A --> C[Bill of Rights]
    A --> D[27 Amendments]
  
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There are three branches of government: the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch. The separation of powers, called checks and balances, prevents one branch of government from becoming more powerful than the others.

The Bill of Rights The Constitution can be changed by the people. A change is called an amendment. The first ten amendments are called the Bill of Rights. They were adopted in 1791. The First Amendment guarantees freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of religion, the right to assemble (hold a meeting), and the right to ask for a change of government. Some other amendments in the Bill of Rights guarantee the rights of people accused of crimes. For example, a person accused of a crime has the right to have a lawyer and the right to a trial by jury. The rights of everyone living in the United States, both citizens and noncitizens, include freedom of expression, freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of worship, freedom to petition the government, and the right to bear arms.

The Amendments to the Constitution Today, there are twenty-seven amendments to the Constitution. The Thirteenth Amendment freed slaves. It passed in 1865. The Fifteenth Amendment guaranteed former slaves the right to vote. It passed in 1870. The Nineteenth Amendment guaranteed women’s right to vote. It passed in 1920. The Twenty-Sixth Amendment to the Constitution established the minimum voting age of 18. It passed in 1971. The right to vote is the most important right of a U.S. citizen. The Fifteenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-Fourth, and Twenty-Sixth Amendments guarantee citizens the right to vote.

- C. Review the reading. Circle any new words. Add these words to your dictionary. Discuss the new words with your teacher and classmates.



3. After You Read

A. Read the sentences. Put a ✓ under *True* or *False*.
Talk about your answers with your classmates.

1. A change to the Constitution is an amendment.
2. There are 30 amendments to the Constitution.
3. The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments.
4. The Constitution was written in 1787.
5. The Constitution was written in Washington, D.C.
6. The Constitution begins with “We the People of the United States.”

	True	False
1.	✓	
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

B. Fill in the blanks using the words below. Read the story with a classmate.

amendments	Bill of Rights	18	Twenty-Sixth
Constitution	Philadelphia	vote	twenty-seven
freedom of speech	noncitizens	supreme	government
religion	press	assembly	

The U.S. (1) Constitution was written in 1787. The Constitutional Convention was held in (2) _____ . The Constitution is the (3) _____ law of the land. It sets up the (4) _____ .

The (5) _____ is another name for the first ten (6) _____ to the Constitution.

An amendment is a change to the Constitution. Now, there are (7) _____ amendments to the Constitution. The right to (8) _____ is

the most important right guaranteed in the Constitution. A citizen must be (9) _____ years old to vote. Voting rights are guaranteed in the Fifteenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-Fourth, and (10) _____ Amendments.

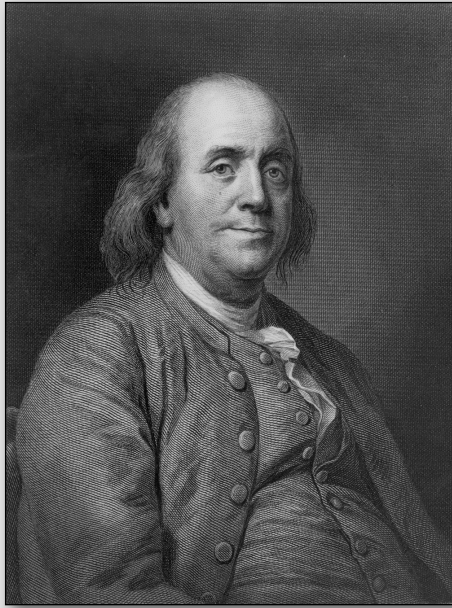
The Bill of Rights was adopted in 1791. The First Amendment in the Bill of Rights guarantees (11) _____ , (12) _____ , (13) _____ , and (14) _____ .

The rights of citizens and (15) _____ are guaranteed by the Bill of Rights and the Constitution.



4. Spotlight Reading

Benjamin Franklin 1706–1790



Benjamin Franklin
American diplomat and oldest
member of the Constitutional
Convention

In 1787, fifty-five delegates met to write the United States Constitution. The meeting was in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The delegates wanted to protect the rights of freedom, liberty, and equality. At that time, Benjamin Franklin was the oldest member at the Constitutional Convention. He was 81 years old.

Franklin had an interesting life. He was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on January 17, 1706. In his family, there were seventeen children. He loved to read and study, but he could only go to school for two years. Instead, he helped his father make soap and candles to support the family. When he was a young man, Franklin worked for his brother James. James was a printer.

Later, Benjamin Franklin became a printer, a writer, and a publisher. He wrote and published a newspaper. He was the writer of *Poor Richard's Almanac*, which contained weather reports, recipes, and predictions. He was also a scientist and an inventor. He invented a special stove to heat houses, the Franklin stove, and bifocal lenses for glasses. In the 1750s, Franklin experimented with electricity. Franklin started the first free libraries in the United States.

For many years, Franklin lived in Europe. He was a diplomat representing the American colonies. In 1777, he convinced the king of France to send guns, money, and soldiers to America. The money, soldiers, and supplies helped the colonies win the Revolutionary War against England. After returning from France, Franklin freed his slaves.

Franklin died on April 17, 1790. When he died, he was 84. Franklin was one of the Founding Fathers of the United States. Before he died, the colonists won the American Revolution and the U.S. Constitution was written.



5. Make It Real

A. Sit in a group of four. Read the scenes below. Talk in your group about one of the scenes.

Scene 1	Scene 2
<p>It is 1787. It is the time of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Your group opposes having a single president. You think a president is the same as a king. You are afraid that one rich man will control the new government. Talk about how you feel. One group member writes the ideas.</p>	<p>It is 1787. It is the time of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Your group favors having an elected president. You think one person can represent all the people. You think a single president will be the best leader. Talk about how you feel. One group member writes the ideas.</p>

B. Now, meet a student from another group. Introduce yourself. Talk about your feelings about having a powerful president. Talk about the United States. Talk about the future.



6. Real Stories

A. Read a student's story.

Coming to the United States



Rovelio Perez

My wife and I came to the United States from Guatemala on foot. We walked for several days. We wanted to have better opportunities for ourselves and for our children. We wanted our children to have a good education. After I arrived, my life was very difficult. I painted cars in body shops for many years. I had to buy all my own masks, uniforms, and equipment. After I came to the United States, my wife left me.

Now, after many years in the United States, I have enough money to support my children. There are more opportunities for jobs. I like the liberty and democracy we have here. In Guatemala, there was a lot of violence and danger. I was afraid to talk about my ideas. In the United States, you can talk about your ideas. You can talk about the government and give your opinion. You can say what you like and what you don't like.

B. Talk to a classmate about freedom of speech.

★ What can you talk about in your country? (ideas, government, opinions)

★ What can you talk about in the United States? (ideas, government, opinions)

C. Write a story about having freedom of speech in the United States.

D. Read your story to a partner. Ask your partner a question about his or her story.



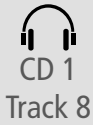
7. Take the Test

This section will give you practice for the Naturalization Test.

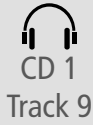


A. Listen to the questions. Circle the correct answers.

1. What is the supreme law of the United States?
 - a. the Constitution
 - b. the Declaration of Independence
 - c. the Pledge of Allegiance
 - d. the “Star-Spangled Banner”
2. What happened at the Constitutional Convention of 1787?
 - a. the American Revolution
 - b. The Constitution was written.
 - c. George Washington became president.
 - d. the Boston Tea Party
3. What is the introduction to the Constitution called?
 - a. the Bill of Rights
 - b. the supreme law of the land
 - c. the Preamble
 - d. the Declaration of Independence
4. What do we call a change to the Constitution?
 - a. a citizen
 - b. an amendment
 - c. a representative
 - d. a report
5. What is one power of the federal government?
 - a. to give a driver’s license
 - b. to print money
 - c. to provide police protection
 - d. to provide schools
6. Who wrote the Federalist Papers?
 - a. Washington and Lincoln
 - b. Madison, Hamilton, and Jay
 - c. Franklin and Jefferson
 - d. Native Americans
7. What is the economic system of the United States?
 - a. planned economy
 - b. fascism
 - c. feudalism
 - d. market economy
8. What is one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?
 - a. He was a soldier in the American Revolution.
 - b. He was born in New York.
 - c. He started the first free libraries in the United States.
 - d. He traveled to Mexico.



B. Now, listen again and check your answers.
Review the questions and answers with your partner. (Answers are at the back of the book on page 158.)



C. Listen to each sentence. Then, listen again and write what you hear.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Pairs: Check your partner's answers with the sentences on page 158.

D. N-400 Parts 5 and 6A: Your Physical Description and Your Place of Residence

Interview a partner. (See pages 106–110 in Unit 10 for additional questions.)

1. How tall are you?
2. How much do you weigh?
3. What is your race?
4. What color is your hair?
5. What color are your eyes?
6. How long have you lived at your present address?
7. Did you list all the places you've lived in the last five years?

E. Clarification: If you don't understand something in the interview, you can say:
Could you please repeat that?






8. Think About Your Learning

My favorite activity in this unit was _____ .

I want to study more about:

- The Constitution
- The Bill of Rights
- The Amendments to the Constitution
- _____ (other)

9. Game

 <p>↑</p>	<p>What is the most important right of U.S. Citizens?</p> <p>→</p>	<p>What is one amendment that guarantees voting rights?</p>	<p>What is the rule of law?</p>	<p>★ FINISH ★ ★</p>
<p>What are other rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights?</p>	<p>What is one right guaranteed by the First Amendment?</p>	<p>Whose rights are guaranteed by the Constitution?</p>	<p>Which amendment guaranteed women's right to vote?</p> <p>←</p>	<p>Which amendment freed the slaves?</p> <p>↑</p>
<p>What are the three branches of government?</p> <p>↑</p>	<p>What is one power of the federal government?</p> <p>→</p>		<p>What kind of government does the United States have?</p>	<p>What stops one branch from becoming too powerful?</p>
	<p>How many amendments are there to the Constitution?</p>	<p>What do we call a change to the Constitution?</p>	<p>What are the first three words of the Constitution?</p> <p>←</p>	<p>What is the introduction to the Constitution called?</p> <p>↑</p>
<p>★ ★ START ★</p> <p>→</p>	<p>What is the supreme law of the land?</p>	<p>What does the Constitution do?</p>	<p>When was the Constitution written?</p>	