

**D-Link**

A spinning globe appears and stays on the screen followed by the text "Can You Imagine..." on top of it. An image of a woman with a tape over her mouth with the text "...Living in a world where you can't speak your mind" floats over the globe from the right. This is followed by an image of a man behind bars praying with the text "...Living in a world where you can't practice your religious beliefs" floats by. An image showing the hands of a man handcuffed with the text "...Living in a world where you can be arrested and convicted without cause" floats by from the right. This is followed by the text "Three words stand between us and that kind of world." The text "We the people" appears on the screen and then merges with the "We the people" on an image of the Constitution of the United States. Images of people belonging to different race, color, and profession appear over the Constitution of the United States. All images disappear and the text "We the people" appears again on the American flag.

Audio Transcript

We the People, of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common

defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

**D-Link**

The course main menu with two selectable icons "What is the Constitution?" and "What does it mean to me?"

Screen Text

This screen has no text

Audio Transcript

This program reveals the personal and patriotic meaning of the Constitution for every American by answering these 2 questions:

1. What is the Constitution?
2. What does it mean to me?

**D-Link**

Screen with selectable icons for the four topics under "What is the Constitution?" section. The 1st topic "How does the Constitution apply today?" has the icon showing a man talking on the phone while working on a computer. The 2nd topic "Why do we have a Constitution?" has an image of a woman thinking. The 3rd topic "Why do people disagree about the constitution?" has an image of a female lawyer arguing. The 4th topic "What rights does the Constitution guarantee?" has an image of a demonstration.

Screen Text

“The Constitution of the United States is not a mere lawyers’ document: it is a vehicle of life, and its spirit is always the spirit of the age.”

—Woodrow Wilson, 28th U.S. President

Audio Transcript

“The Constitution of the United States is not a mere lawyers’ document: it is a vehicle of life, and its spirit is always the spirit of the age.”

—Woodrow Wilson, 28th U.S. President

**D-Link**

1st screen of “How does the Constitution apply today” topic. Every page under this topic has an image of a man talking on the phone while working on a computer on the left. The text “Consider these questions:” is written above the image with the questions: Does the Constitution apply to today’s issues? and How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work? under it. There are three selectable tabs “Constitution, Interpretation, and Background” on every page under this topic. This is the page under the constitution tab.

Screen Text

Does the Constitution apply to today’s issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

Explore how the Constitution:

Is the Supreme Law of the Land (Article VI)

Article VI: Supreme Law of the Land

... This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding...

Describe the relationship between the Federal Government and the states (Article IV)

Article IV: Federal/ State relationship

...The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence...

Reserves certain powers to the states and citizens (Amendment X)

Amendment X: Reserve Powers

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

Can be amended to address current issues (Article V)

Article V: Can Be Amended

The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures and three fourths of the several States or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress...

Audio Transcript

To understand what the Constitution is, you have to understand how it applies to our world today. Consider how the Constitution relates to today's issues. Do you think it affects your life? Review the Constitution section to see how the Constitution itself can help you answer these questions. To learn the many ways in which the Constitution applies today, click on the Interpretation tab. Click on the Background tab to learn more about how our Founding Fathers established the Constitution to ensure its relevance throughout the ages.



D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of “How does the Constitution apply today?” topic, an Image showing headlines “Supreme Court Rules that State Measure is Constitutional, Senator Questions Constitutionality of the New Law, and Communities Disagree on Boundaries of First Amendment Rights”

Screen Text

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

The Constitution continues to guide our lives...

Audio Transcript

In the news on any given day, you will probably notice the words “Constitution” or “Constitutional”—multiple times. As the ultimate rule book for our Government, the Constitution guides the way that all Americans live and work together.



D-link

Under the Interpretation tab of “How does the Constitution apply today?” topic, a collage of images showing the Capitol building, Declaration of Independence, and a sounding block with a gavel and a balance on top of an American flag.

Screen Text

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

The Constitution is the supreme law of the land.

Audio Transcript

As the Supreme Law of the Land, the Constitution underpins our Government and legal system. Constitutional provisions for legislation provide the basis for new laws to be made. All of our laws must be consistent with the principles of the Constitution.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS cpms

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me? CC Close

How does the Constitution apply today?

Consider these questions: Constitution Interpretation Background

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

Justice Stephen Breyer, accompanied by Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, defines the relationship among the Federal Government, the states, and the citizens.

Back More

Select an image to explore: What is the Constitution?

D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of "How does the Constitution apply today?" topic, video defining relationship among the Federal Government, the states and the citizens.

Screen Text

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

Justice Stephen Breyer, accompanied by Justice Sandra O'Connor, defines the relationship among the Federal Government, the states and the citizens. s

Audio Transcript

Listen to Justice Stephen Breyer explain how the Constitution defines the relationships between the Federal Government, the states, and the citizens.

Breyer: "Then look at the tenth amendment. Look at that. It says..."The powers not delegated to the United States" – that means to the Federal government – "by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it" – which there are only a few – "are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." – and that means if you don't find the power delegated in the Constitution, it's there in the States. Now why did they do that? When they wrote it, it was a government – it wasn't even in Washington. It was in Philadelphia, wasn't it? I bet you know that. I bet there are a lot of people outside Pennsylvania may not know it. But I know it. And you know it. It's gonna be right there at the Federal Capital, perhaps Philadelphia. Everywhere else was far away. Well, it's far away it would be absurd having people in Philadelphia or wherever the capital was, telling them what to do." So the people who wrote this Constitution understood that local affairs have to be run locally.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS CPMS

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me?

How does the Constitution apply today?

Consider these questions: Constitution Interpretation Background

Justice Breyer explains how the Constitution helps us solve problems.

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

Back More

Select an image to explore: What is the Constitution?

D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of "How does the Constitution apply today?" topic, video explaining how the Constitution helps us solve problems.

Screen Text

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

Justice Breyer explains how the Constitution helps us solve problems.

Audio Transcript

Now hear Justice Stephen Breyer explain how the Constitution helps us solve problems.

Breyer: "...that Americans from the time they're 6 years old are forced to learn how to work with each other in groups, and they have to learn how...to get my way, I better be sure you are getting your way. Or if we can't do it, we'll work out a compromise. Or if we can't do it, it will be a mess, but eventually, we're going to work together. Now that, taught in school, is what lets this document work. Because at the heart of this document, I would say is not free speech. It's there...it's not even equal protection, that's there, or federalism or separation of powers. Those are very, very important. But they're not what this is about. What this is really about at the bottom of it is how to create a country, now of 300 million people, where people can solve their problems democratically."



D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of "How does the Constitution apply today?" topic, image showing editing of Constitution.

Screen text

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

The Constitution can be amended to address current issues. Thus far, 27 amendments have been added

Audio Transcript

Our forefathers knew that the Constitution would have to change over time to address issues that they could not yet imagine. So, they built in a process for amending it. Over the years, 27 amendments to the Constitution have expanded the definition of citizenship and improved the way our Government works, making the Constitution a living document that remains relevant today.



D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of “How does the Constitution apply today?” topic, photo of a person taking an oath.

Screen Text

Does the Constitution apply to today’s issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

Federal Government employees take an oath to uphold and support the Constitution.

Audio Transcript

All Federal employees take an oath to uphold (support and defend – are the actual words) the Constitution. This oath strengthens your ties to the Constitution through the important work you do.



D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of “How does the Constitution apply today?” topic, photo showing men walking with the American flag celebrating Constitution Day.

Screen text

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

Celebrating Constitution Day and Citizenship Say reminds us of the Constitution's importance and continuing relevance.

Audio Transcript

Every year, we celebrate the signing of the Constitution and the freedoms we enjoy as Americans.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS cpms

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me? C ▶ 🔊 CC Close

How does the Constitution apply today?

Consider these questions: Constitution Interpretation Background

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

The Constitution is a document still in the making.

Year	Event
1776	Declaration of Independence
1781	Articles of Confederation
1783	Treaty of Paris
1787	Constitutional Convention
1788	Constitution Ratified
1791	Bill of Rights Added
1795 - 1992	Amendments Added

Move your cursor over each date to see how our Constitution has evolved. More

Select an image to explore: What is the Constitution?

D-Link

Under the Background tab of “How does the Constitution apply today?” topic, a timeline showing the key milestones in our Constitution’s history.

Screen Text

Does the Constitution apply to today’s issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

The Constitution is a document still in the making.

1776 – Declaration of Independence

The Declaration of Independence, adopted on July 4, 1776, was the colonies' formal declaration of independence from Great Britain. It proclaimed the key principles for which we fought the American Revolution, including the equality of all men, their empowerment with certain basic rights, and the right of a people to overthrow a destructive government.

These same ideals and principles would later guide the writing of the Constitution.

1781 – Articles of Confederation

Early on, the former colonies realized that they needed to unite in order to beat Britain. So, in 1777 at the Second Continental Congress, they drafted the Articles of Confederation, which defined their relationships. The Articles of Confederation were ratified in 1781 and became the first governing framework of the United States of America.

1783 – Treaty of Paris

The Revolutionary War officially ended with the signing of the Treaty of Paris. The states now formed a new nation.

1787 – Constitutional Convention

The Articles of Confederation gave most of the power to the states, so the central government was weak and ineffective. It could not muster troops or raise taxes. In order to enact laws, the government needed the cooperation of the states, which was often lacking. Frustrated by the lack of progress, by the spring of 1787, Congress realized that it had to do something to make the government more effective. So, the members of Congress convened in Philadelphia to update the Articles of Confederation. Ultimately, they created a new Constitution, which they signed on September 17th, 1787.

1788 – Constitution Ratified

After the Constitution was signed, it went to the states for ratification. Although debate raged between those who supported the Constitution and those who did not, nine of the 13 states had approved ratification by June 1788, and the new Constitution went into effect. By the end of 1788, all but two states had voted for ratification.

1791 – Bill of Rights Added

The major arguments against the Constitution were that it:

- ◆ Gave too much power to the central government, and
- ◆ Did not go far enough in protecting individual rights.

To address these grievances, the new government added a Bill of Rights via the first 10 amendments to the Constitution.

1795 – 1992 – Amendments Added

A key weakness of the Articles of Confederation was that they were difficult to amend, which hindered the new government from addressing problems and correcting mistakes. Determined not to repeat this error, the Founding Fathers ensured that the new Constitution could be amended. It has been amended 17 times since the Bill of Rights to address a wide range of issues that our nation has faced.

Audio Transcript

This timeline shows a brief history of how our Constitution came to be and how it has evolved over time. Take a minute to review key milestones in our Constitution's history.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS cpms

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me? C ▶ 🔊 CC Close

How does the Constitution apply today?

Consider these questions: Constitution Interpretation Background



Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

Key amendments have broadened the definition of citizenship and protected important rights.

Date	Amendment
1787	Constitution Signed
1791	Bill of Rights
1868	XIV
1870	XV
1913	XVI
1920	XVII
1961	XXIII
1964	XXIV
1971	XXVI

Back Move your mouse over each date to learn more. More

Select an image to explore: What is the Constitution?

D-Link

Under the Background tab of “How does the Constitution apply today?” topic, a timeline showing some key amendments that have broadened the definition of citizenship and protected important rights.

Screen Text

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

Key amendments have broadened the definition of citizenship and protected important rights.

1787 – Constitution Signed

On September 17, 1787, our Founding Fathers signed the Constitution, which consisted of seven articles that:

- Established the three branches of government and assigned power to them
- Defined the relationships among the states
- Provided a means for changing the Constitution via amendments
- Established the Constitution as the supreme law of the land
- Described how the Constitution could be ratified

1791 – Bill of Rights

In 1791, a Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution in the form of the first 10 amendments; they listed rights guaranteed to the states and individuals. The addition of the Bill of Rights addressed concerns that the Federal Government might infringe on presumed but not specified rights.

1868 – XIV

The Fourteenth Amendment gave U. S. citizenship to the freed slaves and promised them equal protection under the law.

1870 – XV

The Fifteenth Amendment extended voting rights to black men by barring the Federal or state governments from denying the right to vote based on “race, color, or previous condition of servitude.”

1913 – XVII

The Seventeenth Amendment gave citizens the right to directly elect their Senators, instead of having state legislature appoint them.

1920 – XIX

The Nineteenth Amendment extended voting rights to women by barring the Federal or state governments from denying the right to vote based on sex.

1961 – XXIII

The Twenty-Third Amendment gave residents of the District of Columbia the right to vote in presidential elections

1964 – XXIV

The Twenty-Fourth Amendment prohibited the poll tax, which had been used to discourage low-income and minority voters from voting.

1971 – XXVI

The Twenty-Sixth Amendment lowered the voting age from 21 to 18.

Audio Transcript

As the Constitution has been amended, the rights of citizenship have been extended to more people. Take a minute to review some key amendments that have broadened the definition of citizenship and protected important rights.



D-Link

Under the Background tab of “How does the Constitution apply today?” topic, a collage of images showing the Declaration of Independence, and the 3 philosophical principles that the Constitution is based on – Rule of Law, Social Contract Theory, and Separation of Powers.

Screen Text

Does the Constitution apply to today's issues?

How does the Constitution affect the way we live and work?

The Constitution is based on philosophical principles that have stood the test of time.

Rule of Law

Dating back to ancient times, the Rule of Law states that a society's decisions should be based on a standard set of laws, rather than on any one leader and judge's discretion. By applying these laws equally and objectively to all people, a society can avoid abuses of power.

Social Contract Theory

Social contract theory is a framework for analyzing individuals and their governments, which is described in the writings of philosophers John Locke, Thomas Hobbes, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. It describes government as a contractual relationship between individuals and the state, in which individuals give up their absolute freedoms in exchange for collective benefits.

Separation of Powers

The idea of separation of powers is most frequently associated with the writings of John Locke, and Baron de Montesquieu.

Writings in the 17th century, John Locke stated that the functions of the government should be divided. He identified three powers of government: legislative, executive, and federative (foreign relations).

Writing shortly before the American Revolution, French political thinker, Baron de Montesquieu, believed that "government should be set up so that no man need be afraid of another."

These ideas inspired the system of branches of government, with checks and balances, established in our Constitution.

Audio Transcript

The philosophical principles that inspired our Constitution were not new ideas. Some even dated back to ancient times. Here are three of the most important principles that define our Constitution.

**D-Link**

1st screen of “Why do we have a Constitution?” topic. Every page under this topic has an image of an African American woman thinking about “What does the Constitution do for our country?”, and “How does it affect your life?” There are three selectable tabs “Constitution, Interpretation, and Background” on every page under this topic. This is the page under the Constitution tab.

Screen Text

What does the Constitution do for our country?

How does it affect your life?

The Constitution established 3 branches of government that provide our system of checks and balances.

Legislative (Article I)

ARTICLE I

SECTION. 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

SECTION. 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to chuse (choose) three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New-York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall chuse (choose) their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

SECTION. 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three

Classes. The Seats of the Senators of the first Class shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Class at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and of the third Class at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during the Recess of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such Vacancies.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall chuse (choose) their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: And no Person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.

Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishment, according to Law.

SECTION. 4. The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

SECTION. 5. Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business; but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner, and under such Penalties as each House may provide.

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behaviour, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of those Present, be entered on the Journal.

Neither House, during the Session of Congress, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other Place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

SECTION. 6. The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been encreased (increased) during such time; and no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office.

SECTION. 7. All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the Objections at large on their Journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the Objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law. But in all such Cases the Votes of both Houses shall be determined by Yeas and Nays, and the Names of the Persons voting for and against the Bill shall be entered on the Journal of each House respectively. If any Bill shall not be returned by the President within ten Days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their Adjournment prevent its Return, in which Case it shall not be a Law.

Every Order, Resolution, or Vote to which the Concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of Adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the Same shall take Effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the Rules and Limitations prescribed in the Case of a Bill.

SECTION. 8. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow Money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court;

To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offences against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy; To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards and other needful Buildings;-And

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

SECTION. 9. The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.

The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed.

No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census or Enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another: nor shall Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

SECTION. 10. No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.

No State shall, without the Consent of the Congress, lay any Imposts or Duties on Imports or Exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing its inspection Laws: and the net Produce of all Duties and Imposts, laid by any State on Imports or Exports, shall be for the Use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such Laws shall be subject to the Revision and Controul (Control) of the Congress.

No State shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any Duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace, enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

Executive (Article II)

ARTICLE II:

SECTION. 1. The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows:

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole

Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse (choose) by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner chuse (choose) the President. But in chusing (choosing) the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall chuse (choose) from them by Ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the Time of chusing (choosing) the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:—"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

SECTION. 2. The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offenses against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

SECTION. 3. He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

SECTION. 4. The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

Judicial (Article III)

ARTICLE III:

SECTION. 1. The judicial Power of the United States shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services, a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

SECTION. 2. The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and Treaties made, or which shall be made, under their Authority;--to all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls;--to all Cases of admiralty and maritime Jurisdiction;--to Controversies to which the United States shall be a Party;--to Controversies between two or more States;--between a State and Citizens of another State;--between Citizens of different States;--between Citizens of the same State claiming Lands under Grants of different States, and between a State, or the Citizens thereof, and foreign States, Citizens or Subjects.

In all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be Party, the supreme Court shall have original Jurisdiction. In all the other Cases before mentioned, the supreme Court shall have appellate Jurisdiction, both as to Law and Fact, with such Exceptions, and under such Regulations as the Congress shall make.

The Trial of all Crimes, except in Cases of Impeachment; shall be by Jury; and such Trial shall be held in the State where the said Crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the Trial shall be at such Place or Places as the Congress may by Law have directed.

SECTION. 3. Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.

The Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture

except during the Life of the Person attainted.

Audio Transcript

Considering all the reasons that we have a Constitution will help you understand the power of this relatively short document. What do you think the Constitution does for our country? How does it affect its citizens' lives and work? Review the sections of the Constitution that can help you answer these questions. You can also view an interpretation of why we need a Constitution and how we use it. Then take a minute to explore the events and ideas that led our Founding Fathers to create a Government made up of three branches, with checks and balances on their powers.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS cpms

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me? C II 🔊 CC Close

Why do we have a Constitution?

Consider these questions: Constitution Interpretation Background



What does the Constitution do for our country?

How does it affect your life?

Justices O'Connor and Breyer discuss how the Constitution establishes the framework for our Government.



[More](#)






Select an image to explore:
What is the Constitution?




D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of “Why do we have a Constitution?” topic, a video with discussion between Justices O’Connor and Breyer on how the Constitution establishes the framework for our Government.

Screen Text

What does the Constitution do for our country?

How does it affect your life?

Justices O'Connor and Breyer discuss how the Constitution establishes the framework for our Government.

Audio Transcript

Listen to Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Stephen Breyer discuss how the Constitution establishes the framework of our Government.

O'Connor: "And the genius and innovation of this Constitution of ours was that it established three separate branches, each with some power over the other two. It was rather an innovation in the world at the time it was written and it really has withstood the test of time."

Breyer: "Now, is there an ideal balance? No, it's been different at different stages of the country's history. There have been different shifts as to which of the branches is predominant, or how predominant, and whatever, and that reflects circumstances in politics."

Breyer: "But the fundamental idea is nobody gets too powerful. That's why we set up the system where we divide the power into pockets. That's an inefficient system, but it is a system that protects against one small group of people gaining all the power."



D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of “Why do we have a Constitution?” topic, images of the Capitol building depicting the Legislative branch, and the White House depicting the Executive branch are shown.

Screen Text

What does the Constitution do for our country?

How does it affect your life?

The Constitution defines how our nation defends itself.

Legislative Branch:

- ◆ Raises army
- ◆ Maintains a navy
- ◆ Calls forth the militia
- ◆ Declares war

Executive Branch:

- ◆ Serves as commander in chief
- ◆ Appoints military officers

Audio Transcript

The responsibility for defending our nation is split between the Legislative and Executive branches of Government. Article I of the Constitution gives Congress the power to raise an army, provide and maintain a navy, call forth the militia, and declare war. Article II defines the President's role as the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Army and Navy and of the militia. Providing this civilian control over the military helps prevent the armed forces from being used against the citizens. While, the President has the power to appoint military officers, the Senate must confirm them.



D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of “Why do we have a Constitution?” topic, an image of Bill of Rights is shown.

Screen Text

What does the Constitution do for our country?

How does it affect your life?

The Constitution guarantees rights to the states and to the citizens.

Audio Transcript

The articles of the Constitution delegate certain powers to, and delineate certain rights of, the states and people, such as relief from unlawful imprisonment and a representative form of government. The first ten amendments, which are the Bill of Rights, further specify the rights of the people and the states.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS cpms

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me? C II 🔊 CC Close

Why do we have a Constitution?

Consider these questions: Constitution Interpretation Background



What does the Constitution do for our country?

How does it affect your life?

Justices O'Connor and Breyer describe how the Constitution helps to guide the way we live and work together.

[Back](#)



Select an image to explore:
What is the Constitution?

D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of “Why do we have a Constitution?” topic, a video with Justices O’Connor and Breyer on how the Constitution helps to guide the way we live and work together.

Screen Text

What does the Constitution do for our country?

How does it affect your life?

Justices O'Connor and Breyer describe how the Constitution helps to guide the way we live and work together.

Audio Transcript

Now listen as Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Stephen Breyer discuss how the Constitution helps to guide, as well as unite, our country.

O'Connor: "To establish the fundamental ground rules for a government. Otherwise, we'd have anarchy. What would we have if we didn't have some basic principles of governance in this country, a system of government?"

Breyer: "And we're in a country with every race, every religion, every point of view, every possible national origin. They're not just from California and New Mexico, Maine, Massachusetts. 300 million people, a lot of them recent immigrants with their parents, were. Who knows where they come from -- they come from all over and they live together. You get into arguments in your class, but you settle them. You got here, didn't you? Well, you think people don't argue on the basis of abortion? How do you think people feel about that? How do you think they feel about prayer in schools? How do you think they felt about the last election or the one before? Now, these 300 million people are here, getting their disputes solved. Go look on television -- see how they do it in some places. They pick up paving stones and hit them over the head or worse, and we don't do that. We don't do it."

O'Connor: "Or, look what's happening in Darfur. Darfur. Do you want to fight it out on the streets or do you want to take it to court? And it's about that simple in a way."



D-Link

Under the Background tab of “Why do we have a Constitution?” topic, an image showing a tug-o-war between the Federalists (Federal Control) and Anti-federalists (States and Citizens’ Rights) groups.

Screen Text

What does the Constitution do for our country?

How does it affect your life?

The question of states' and citizens' rights vs. federal control remains at the heart of the Constitution.

Audio Transcript

During the debates over the Constitution's ratification, a major controversy arose over the lack of a clearly stated list of the rights of the people and the states. The Federalists maintained that the Constitution listed the powers of the Government and left everything else to the states and the people. They were afraid that a list of rights could be used to limit people's freedoms.

The Anti-Federalists, on the other hand, feared that without a list of rights, a tyrannical government could take freedoms away from its citizens.

Ultimately, the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution in the form of 10 amendments. The Tenth Amendment specifically states that all rights not listed automatically belong to the people or the states.

**D-Link**

1st screen of “Why do people disagree about the Constitution?” topic. Every page under this topic has an image of an female lawyer arguing about “Is the Constitution clear?, and how do our beliefs and values affect our views?” There are three selectable tabs “Constitution, Interpretation, and Background” on every page under this topic. This is the page under the Constitution tab.

Screen text

Is the Constitution clear?

How do our beliefs and values affect our views?

The answer to these questions lies in the Constitution as a whole and in how one interprets it.

A healthy debate regarding how to interpret and apply the Constitution has been going on since its inception, just as the Founding Fathers intended.

Audio Transcript

Our Founding Fathers took great care to describe explicitly the government they envisioned. So, why do we disagree about what that vision was? Isn't the Constitution clear? How might your beliefs and values affect your views? The answers to these questions lie in the Constitution as a whole. Click 'Interpretation' to learn how new inventions and developments affect how we interpret the Constitution. To learn more about how the Constitution has evolved over the past 200 years, click the Background tab.



D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of the “Why do people disagree about the Constitution?” topic, a collage of images showing hands on a cell phone, hands on a computer keyboard on a background with the globe.

Screen Text

Is the Constitution clear?

How do our beliefs and values affect our views?

New inventions and developments continually arise that lead our lawmakers back to the Constitution for guidance.

Audio Transcript

When the Founding Fathers created the Constitution, technologies like computers and cell phones didn't exist. With these new technologies have arisen new questions about freedom of speech and the Government's role in commerce.

To address these types of new issues, our lawmakers turn to the Constitution for guidance in applying the principles that our Founding Fathers intended. The trouble is, no one quite agrees on those intentions—even the Founding Fathers.



D-link

Under the Interpretation tab of the “Why do people disagree about the Constitution?” topic, an image showing a syringe with a needle labeled “Cruel and unusual punishment?”

Screen Text

Is the Constitution clear?

How do our beliefs and values affect our views?

Sometimes the language of the Constitution is vague.

Audio Transcript

Sometimes, the language in the Constitution is vague because the Founding Fathers could not foresee every eventuality. For instance, the term “cruel and unusual punishment” can be interpreted in a variety of ways—ways our forefathers could never have imagined.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS **cpms**

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me? C II 🔊 CC Close

Why do people disagree about the Constitution?

Consider these questions: Constitution Interpretation Background

Is the Constitution clear?
How do our beliefs and values affect our views?

Justices Scalia and Breyer demonstrate how different viewpoints can lead to disagreements about the Constitution's intentions.

Back More

Select an image to explore:
What is the Constitution?

D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of the “Why do people disagree about the Constitution?” topic, a video on a demonstration by Justices Scalia and Breyer on how different viewpoints can lead to disagreements about the Constitution’s intentions.

Screen Text

Is the Constitution clear?

How do our beliefs and values affect our views?

Justices Scalia and Breyer demonstrate how different viewpoints can lead to disagreements about the Constitution's intentions.

Audio Transcript

Watch Justices Antonin Scalia and Stephen Breyer debate originalist and evolutionist views of the Constitution.

Scalia: "There are those who think that the Constitution is to be interpreted in such a way as to keep it up-to-date. That is to say, it does not mean today, what it meant when it was adopted. Some of its provisions change in order to keep with the times."

"The other view, which is held by people who are called originalists – I'm one of them – is that the Constitution doesn't change. If you want to change it, there is an amendment provision. Amend it. It's not up to the Supreme Court to write a new Constitution."

"An originalist would say, look, when the eighth amendment was adopted in 1791 – the eighth amendment prohibits "cruel and unusual punishments" – the death penalty was not a cruel and unusual punishment. There is no doubt that it wasn't. The death penalty was a penalty for every felony. It was the definition of a felony – a crime punishable by death. So, it's easy for me to say, the death penalty maybe a very bad idea, people don't have to have it. If they don't like it, they can abolish it. But don't come to me and say the Constitution doesn't permit it, because in 1791, when people voted to prohibit cruel and unusual punishments, they didn't...this is not what they were talking about. That's an originalist approach."

Breyer: "It's not quite...People who, perhaps don't hold this originalist view, say the meaning of the Constitution changes."

"But I think justice Scalia will also agree that words in the commerce clause for example, which says that: "Congress has the power to regulate interstate and foreign commerce..." or words of the first amendment: "Congress shall pass no law abridging the freedom of speech..." What is the freedom of speech? What is interstate commerce? There were no automobiles in 1781, 1791, 1789, 1787...you pick your year...There were no automobiles at that time..."

Scalia: "1789 for the commerce clause"

Breyer: "and they didn't even have internet. They didn't even have television. So, I think probably we both agree that even though there was no such thing in 1789, 1791, whatever year you want there, still this phrase applies. The world has changed."



D-Link

Images of various states in the United States and the Capitol building are shown under the Interpretation tab of the “Why do people disagree about the Constitution?” topic.

Screen Text

Is the Constitution clear?

How do our beliefs and values affect our views?

People have different ideas about how far the Federal Government's powers should extend.

Audio Transcript

Under the Articles of Confederation, the states retained most of the powers, leaving the Federal Government weaker. However, the new Constitution strengthened the Federal Government.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS **cpms**

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me?

Why do people disagree about the Constitution?

Consider these questions: Constitution Interpretation Background

Is the Constitution clear?
How do our beliefs and values affect our views?

Even the Founding Fathers disagreed about the Constitution.

THE FEDERALIST
A Collection of Essays written up in
support of the New Constitution.
By a Group of Men-Fish.
Compiled by the Author, with Additional
and Alterations.
The second and last volume of the Papers
and Speeches of the Founding Fathers. The
author, and delivered to the public in the
original form of an address, of which copies
will be printed in separate copies, varying from
10 to 100, and sold at a discount.
It contains the most recent copies, with
notes, written by the author's agents.
PHILO-FELIUS,
1788-1789
Articles of the Convention,
in which the author, and his agents,
are to be seen.

More

Select an image to explore:
What is the Constitution?

D-Link

Image of a Federalist paper under the Background tab of the “Why do people disagree about the Constitution?” topic.

Screen Text

Is the Constitution clear?

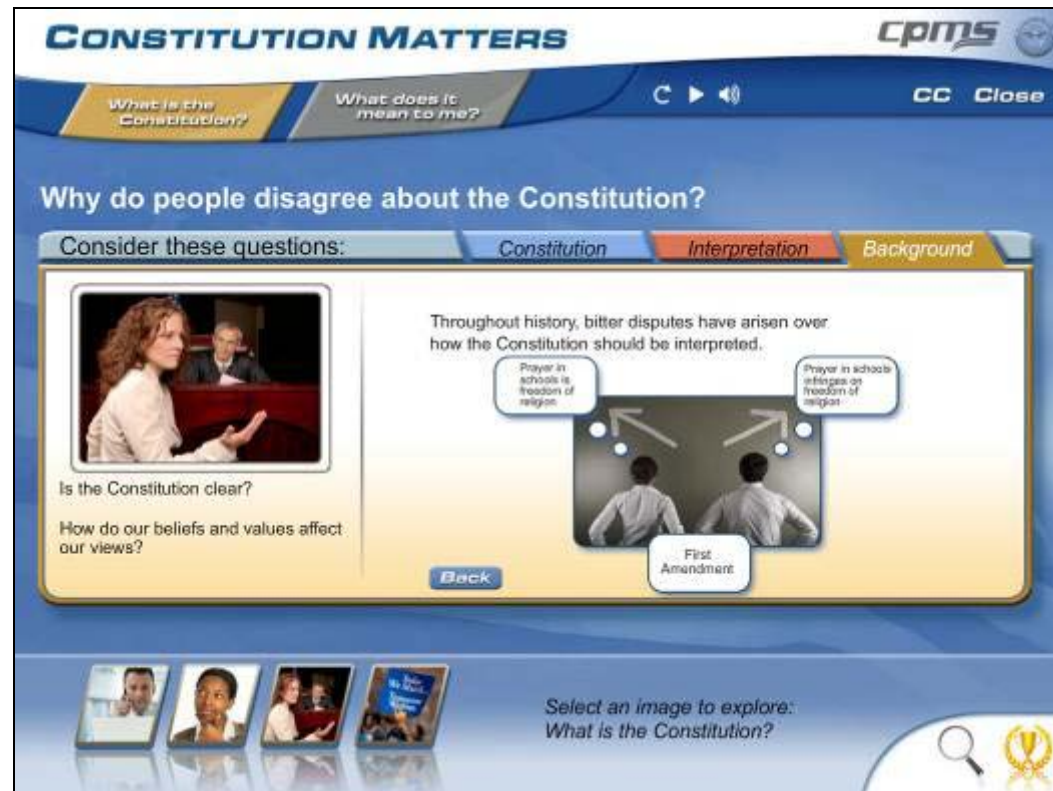
How do our beliefs and values affect our views?

Even the Founding Fathers disagreed about the Constitution.

Audio Transcript

During the debate over ratification of the Constitution, leading Federalists, such as James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, wrote articles in the newspapers, explaining why the states should ratify the Constitution. Anti-Federalists, such as Patrick Henry, also wrote widely about why the Constitution should not be ratified.

The Federalist and Anti-Federalist Papers can help us understand the origins of today's debates. The Federalist Papers are often referred to for insight on the Founding Fathers' thinking during arguments of Constitutional interpretation.

**D-Link**

Under the Background tab of the “Why do people disagree about the Constitution?” topic, image showing two people with different viewpoints on the 1st Amendment as “Prayer in schools is Freedom of religion”, and “Prayer in schools infringes on Freedom of Religion”

Screen Text

Is the Constitution clear?

How do our beliefs and values affect our views?

Throughout history, bitter disputes have arisen over how the Constitution should be interpreted.

Audio Transcript

Throughout history, bitter disputes have arisen over how the Constitution should be interpreted. For example, while people may agree that freedom of religion is an important right, they may disagree on how it's practiced.

**D-Link**

1st screen of “What rights does the Constitution Guarantee?” topic. Every page under this topic has an image showing a demonstration with the message “Today we march, tomorrow we vote.” This topic calls for the consideration of two questions, What rights does the Constitution guarantee individuals?, and What rights does it guarantees states?” There are three selectable tabs “Constitution, Interpretation, and Background” on every page under this topic. This is the page under the Constitution tab.

Screen text

What rights does the Constitution guarantee individuals?

What rights does it guarantee states?

The Constitution defines citizens' rights in:

- ◆ The Bill of Rights (Amendments I – X)
- ◆ The Writ of Habeas Corpus (Article, Section 9)

BILL OF RIGHTS

Amendment I: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II: A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III: No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV: The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V: No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI: In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

Amendment VII: In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII: Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX: The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X: The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

ARTICLE I, SECTION 9:

...The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it....

Audio Transcript

Having just overthrown a government that did not respect its subjects' rights, the Founding Fathers were anxious to protect the rights of both individuals and states. Just what rights did the Constitution initially specify? What rights were added later? Review Article I, Section 9 and the Bill of Rights to find out. Then click the Interpretation tab to learn more about both states' rights and individual rights. Click the Background tab to learn why our forefathers chose to emphasize certain rights.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS cpms

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me? C II 🔊 CC Close

What rights does the Constitution guarantee?

Consider these questions: Constitution Interpretation Background

The Writ of Habeas Corpus protects us against unjust imprisonment.

Today We March... Tomorrow We Vote.

What rights does the Constitution guarantee individuals?

What rights does it guarantee states?

More

Select an image to explore:
What is the Constitution?

D-Link

Under the Interpretation tab of the “What rights does the Constitution Guarantee?” topic, an image showing a female lawyer defending a prisoner in front of the judge.

Screen Text

What rights does the Constitution guarantee individuals?

What rights does it guarantee states?

The Writ of Habeas Corpus protects us against unjust imprisonment.

Audio Transcript

The Writ of Habeas Corpus was one of the first individual rights defined and one of the few actually included in the articles of the Constitution. It allows prisoners to petition a judge if they feel that they are being held without cause—or allows others to petition on their behalf. This right protects people from being unjustly imprisoned.

The screenshot shows the 'CONSTITUTION MATTERS' interface. At the top, there's a header with the title 'CONSTITUTION MATTERS' and the 'cpms' logo. Below the header, there are two tabs: 'What is the Constitution?' and 'What does it mean to me?'. The 'What does it mean to me?' tab is selected. The main content area is titled 'What rights does the Constitution guarantee?'. Below this title, there are three tabs: 'Consider these questions:', 'Constitution', 'Interpretation', and 'Background'. The 'Consider these questions:' tab is selected. It contains a list of questions: 'What rights does the Constitution guarantee individuals?' and 'What rights does it guarantee states?'. To the right of these questions, there is a list of rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights: 'Freedom of expression', 'Right to bear arms', 'Prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure', and 'Trial by jury'. At the bottom of the main content area, there is a 'Back' button. Below the main content area, there is a section titled 'Select an image to explore: What is the Constitution?' with four image thumbnails. The first thumbnail is selected and shows a person holding a sign that says 'Today We March... Tomorrow We Vote.'.

D-link

There is no image on this page under the Interpretation tab of the “What rights does the Constitution Guarantee?” topic.

Screen Text

What rights does the Constitution guarantee individuals?

What rights does it guarantee states?

The Bill of Rights makes up the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution and guarantees such rights as:

- ◆ Freedom of expression
- ◆ Right to bear arms
- ◆ Prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure
- ◆ Trial by Jury

Audio Transcript

The Bill of Rights guarantees to American citizens important rights, such as freedom of expression, the right to bear arms, freedom from unreasonable search and seizure, and the right to due process of the law with a trial by jury in both criminal and civil cases. It also ensures that rights not listed are still protected, and it gives the states and citizens powers not given to the Federal Government, except any specifically denied them.

CONSTITUTION MATTERS cpms

What is the Constitution? What does it mean to me? C II CC Close

What rights does the Constitution guarantee?

Consider these questions:

Constitution Interpretation Background

What rights does the Constitution guarantee individuals?

What rights does it guarantee states?

The Bill of Rights originally guaranteed rights not available under British rule. These rights still apply.

- Freedom of Expression ([Amendment I](#))
- The Right to Bear Arms ([Amendment II](#))
- Prohibition against Quartering of Troops ([Amendment III](#))
- Prohibition Against Unreasonable Search and Seizure; Right to Due Process of Law; Right to a Fair Trial; Right to a Trial by Jury in Civil Cases; Cruel and Unusual Punishment ([Amendments IV - VIII](#))
- Unenumerated Rights ([Amendment IX](#))
- Rights Reserved to the States and the People ([Amendment X](#))

Click each amendment to learn more.

Select an image to explore:
What is the Constitution?

D-Link

There is no image on this page under the Background tab of the “What rights does the Constitution Guarantee?” topic.

Screen Text

What rights does the Constitution guarantee individuals?

What rights does it guarantee states?

The Bill of Rights originally guaranteed rights not available under British rule. These rights still apply.

- ◆ Freedom of expression (Amendment I)
- ◆ The Right to bear arms (Amendment II)
- ◆ Prohibition against Quartering of Troops (Amendment III)
- ◆ Prohibition against unreasonable search and seizure; Right to Due Process of Law; Right to a Fair Trial; Right to a Trial by Jury in Civil Cases; Cruel and Unusual Punishment (Amendment IV – VIII)
- ◆ Unenumerated Rights (Amendment IX)
- ◆ Rights Reserved to the States and the People

Amendment I – Freedom of Expression

Religious freedom was important to the framers of the Constitution because many of the colonists had left Europe to escape religious persecution

Freedom of the press was another important freedom because governments often tried to control their citizens by obstructing and manipulating the press. Thomas Jefferson said: “Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.”

The freedom to petition the government was important to the colonists because one of their key complaints against King George III was that he failed to hear their grievances. The freedom of assembly was originally considered trivial and was almost deleted, but some representatives insisted that without freedom of assembly, every other right in the Bill of Rights could be taken away

Amendment II – The Right to Bear Arms

Having assembled an army of militiamen and won the Revolutionary War, the colonial Americans believed that a militia made up of citizen soldiers was their best method of defense. So, they wanted to protect the rights of citizens to bear arms.

Amendment III: Prohibition against Quartering of Troops

The colonists had often been forced to provide room and board for British soldiers, so this amendment was important to make sure that they would never have to do that again.

Amendments IV–VIII: Prohibition Against Unlawful Search and Seizure; Right to Due Process of Law; Right to a Fair Trial; Right to a Trial by Jury in Civil Cases; Cruel and Unusual Punishment

Under the British judicial system, colonial Americans had experienced search and seizure without a warrant, as well as long stays in prison waiting for trials that were more farce than fair. So, the founding fathers added several amendments to protect U.S. citizens against the practices of unlawful search and seizure and to guarantee them the right to a fair and speedy trial by jury. Protection against cruel and unusual punishment and trial by jury was seen as so important in protecting individual rights that they were guaranteed even in civil cases.

Amendment IX: Unenumerated Rights

Those who advocated against the need for a Bill of Rights feared that it could limit individual rights to those listed. So, the Ninth Amendment was an important addition to ensure that even rights not listed, such as the right to privacy, were protected.

Amendment X: Rights Reserved to the States and the People

Since the beginning of our country, the balance of power between the Federal Government and the states has been hotly contested. Federalists viewed a strong central government as a requirement for the United States to succeed. Anti-Federalists feared giving too much power to the central government. The states recognized that they had to give up some of their powers in order to make their country strong, but they insisted on adding this amendment to ensure their continued role in governing the country.

Audio Transcript

The rights listed in the Bill of Rights shed light on the issues and concerns of colonial Americans. Take a minute to learn more about the history of each amendment.

**D-Link**

Screen with selectable icons for the four topics under “What does it mean to me?” section. The 4 topics are, Being a Citizen, Becoming a Citizen, Taking an Oath, and Celebrating Constitution Day and Citizenship Day. Each topic is associated to an icon with an image of people from different race, color, age, and profession.

Screen Text

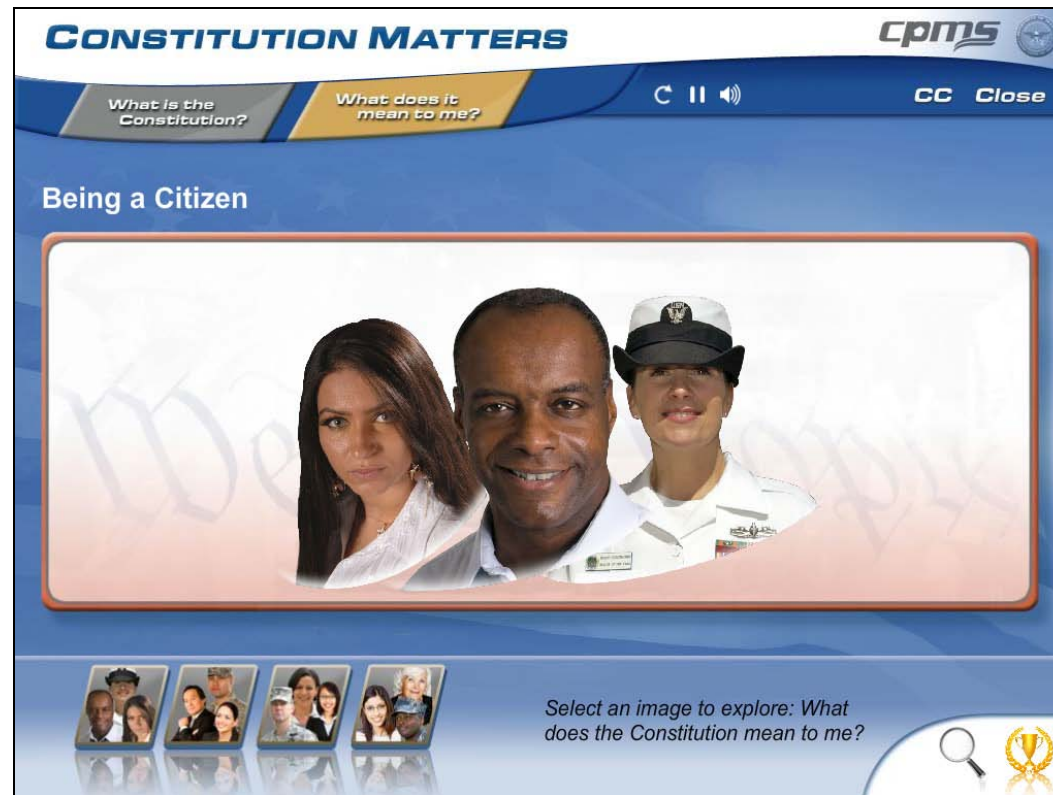
“The best principles of our republic secure to all its citizens a perfect equality of rights.”

—Thomas Jefferson, 3rd U.S. President

Audio Transcript

“The best principles of our republic secure to all its citizens a perfect equality of rights.”

—Thomas Jefferson, 3rd U.S. President



D-Link

Animation with images of people belonging to different race, color, age, and profession appear on the screen.

Screen Text

There is no text on this screen.

Audio Transcript

To me, being a U.S. citizen means enjoying freedoms not found in a lot of other countries. Hearing the international news has made me realize how lucky we are to live in a nation that is governed by laws and guided by a Constitution, and not subject to the whims of our leaders.

My parents immigrated to the U.S. from Turkey. I still remember their pride when they became citizens— and because of them I now have the gift of citizenship.

We are blessed in this country to have all sorts of rights—of speech, to vote, to practice our religious beliefs.... And I am proud to serve to protect those rights, not just for myself and my family, but for all Americans.



D-Link

Animation with images of people belonging to different race, color, age, and profession appear on the screen.

Screen Text

There is no text on this screen.

Audio Transcript

My family came to this country when I was a young girl. We had no money, but my father had pride, a strong work ethic, and a desire for a better life. This oath I just took, it's not just to the United States Constitution—it's to my father. He would be very proud of me. And now I can pass on to my children all the benefits of being an American citizen.

I left my country 7 years ago to escape religious and personal persecution. I came to America because I heard that everyone was accepted here and that there were many opportunities for those willing to learn and work hard. I got a green card, I worked hard, and now, I am truly a part of this great country.

Two years ago, my life was nothing but a struggle to survive another day. But then I came to America, and got the opportunity to serve in the United States Air Force. After a year of service, I could become a citizen of this great country, which I have been proud to serve. Today, I took my oath of citizenship, swearing allegiance to the Constitution and ready to perform my duties, both as a citizen and as an Airman.



D-link

Animation with images of people belonging to different race, color, age, and profession appear on the screen.

Screen Text

There is no text on this screen.

Audio Transcript

Fourteen years ago, when I started my civil service career, I took an oath to uphold the Constitution. And I take that oath very seriously. It means that what I do could affect the lives of all citizens, and I have to perform the duties of my office in a way that makes me proud and earns the trust of the people I serve.

I never expected to be so inspired on my first day of work. I'd never worked in the Government before, so I didn't know I'd have to take an oath to uphold the Constitution. But as I recited the words back to my supervisor, I could feel tears well up in my eyes. Suddenly, this job seems a lot more important than I first realized.

It may seem hard to believe that my job is defined by a document that was written over 200 years ago. But it's true. The Constitution defines our work in the military. I feel very committed to doing my job in a way that brings the principles of the Constitution to life for all Americans.

**D-Link**

Animation with images of people belonging to different race, color, age, and profession appear on the screen.

Screen Text

There is no text on this screen.

Audio Transcript

To me, Constitution Day is a reminder of the freedoms we have in this country, a reminder that we should care about these freedoms. Because if we don't care, we become apathetic—and that's where the real problems start....

To tell you the truth, I didn't even know we had a Constitution Day until last year. But since then, I decided each Constitution Day I'm going to pick an Amendment and celebrate that Amendment! This year, it's the Fourth Amendment—protection against search and seizure—to me that's the right to privacy—a really important one!

One of my buddies here on the base celebrates Constitution Day by reading the Bill of Rights to his kids. I like that idea.... I've been thinking of doing that myself. I know they celebrate it at school, but it's nice to honor it at home too, just to remind them why daddy does what he does everyday.

**D-Link**

Screen has four selectable tabs – Preamble, Articles, Bill of Rights, and Amendments XI – XXVII. Below the tabs is an image of a magnifying lens over the Declaration of Independence.

Screen text

The constitution has four main sections. Select a tab to learn more about each section.

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page

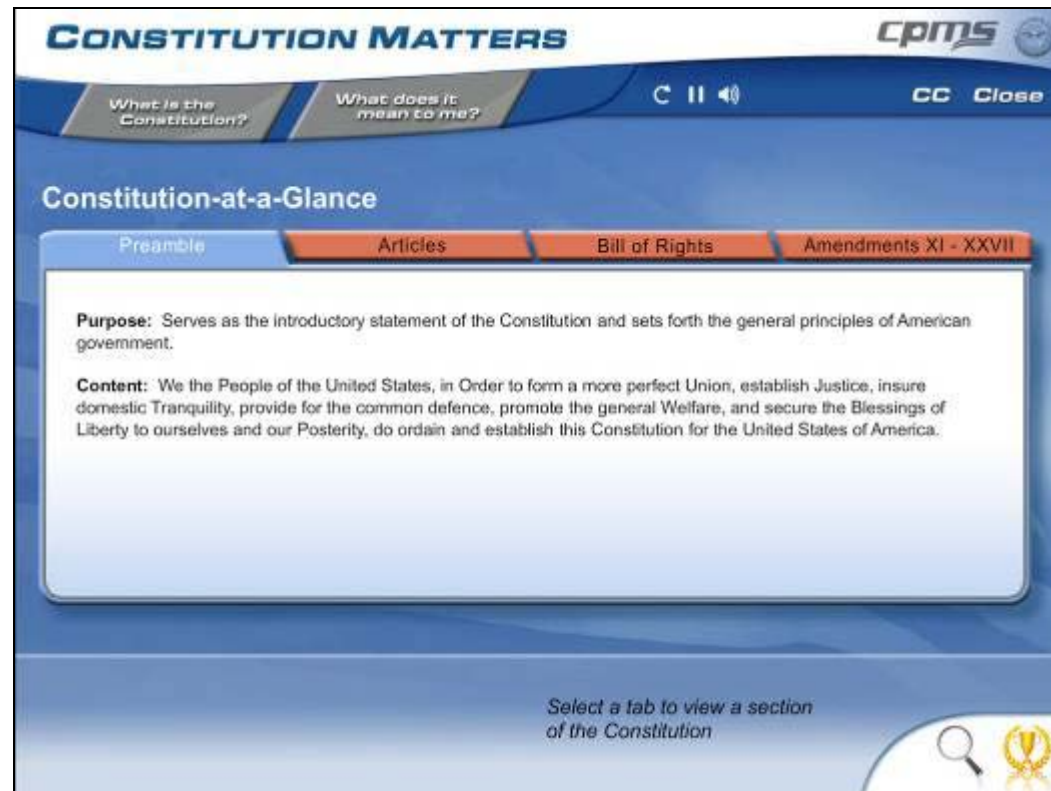
**D-Link**

Image of the Constitution-at-a-glance page showing the Preamble tab selected.

Screen text

Purpose: Serves as the introductory statement of the constitution and sets forth the general principles of American government.

Content: We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the

common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our prosperity, do ordain and establish this constitution for the United States of America.

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page

**D-Link**

Image of the Constitution-at-a-glance page showing the Articles tab selected.

Screen text

Purpose: The Articles were the first part of the constitution that was written and ratified. They laid out the structure of the government.

Content:

Article I: Legislative Branch

Article II: Executive Branch

Article III: Judicial Branch

Article IV: Relationships among the states

Article V: Amending the Constitution

Article VI: Supreme Law of the Land

Article VII: Ratification of the Constitution

Screen text:

ARTICLE I

SECTION. 1. All legislative Powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

SECTION. 2. The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States, and the Electors in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.

No Person shall be a Representative who shall not have attained to the Age of twenty five Years, and been seven Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State in which he shall be chosen.

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct. The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at Least one Representative; and until such enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to chuse (choose) three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New-York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania eight, Delaware one, Maryland six, Virginia ten, North Carolina five, South Carolina five, and Georgia three.

When vacancies happen in the Representation from any State, the Executive Authority thereof shall issue Writs of Election to fill such Vacancies.

The House of Representatives shall chuse (choose) their Speaker and other Officers; and shall have the sole Power of Impeachment.

SECTION. 3. The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote.

Immediately after they shall be assembled in Consequence of the first Election, they shall be divided as equally as may be into three Classes. The Seats of the Senators of the first Class shall be vacated at the Expiration of the second Year, of the second Class at the Expiration of the fourth Year, and of the third Class at the Expiration of the sixth Year, so that one third may be chosen every second Year; and if Vacancies happen by Resignation, or otherwise, during the Recess of the Legislature of any State, the Executive thereof may make temporary Appointments until the next Meeting of the Legislature, which shall then fill such Vacancies.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and been nine Years a Citizen of the United States, and who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for which he shall be chosen.

The Vice President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no Vote, unless they be equally divided.

The Senate shall chuse (choose) their other Officers, and also a President pro tempore, in the Absence of the Vice President, or when he shall exercise the Office of President of the United States.

The Senate shall have the sole Power to try all Impeachments. When sitting for that Purpose, they shall be on Oath or Affirmation. When the President of the United States is tried, the Chief Justice shall preside: And no Person shall be convicted without the Concurrence of two thirds of the Members present.

Judgment in Cases of Impeachment shall not extend further than to removal from Office, and disqualification to hold and enjoy any Office of honor, Trust or Profit under the United States: but the Party convicted shall nevertheless be liable and subject to Indictment, Trial, Judgment and Punishment, according to Law.

SECTION. 4. The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing (choosing) Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meeting shall be on the first Monday in December, unless they shall by Law appoint a different Day.

SECTION. 5. Each House shall be the Judge of the Elections, Returns and Qualifications of its own Members, and a Majority of each shall constitute a Quorum to do Business; but a smaller Number may adjourn from day to day, and may be authorized to compel the Attendance of absent Members, in such Manner, and under such Penalties as each House may provide.

Each House may determine the Rules of its Proceedings, punish its Members for disorderly Behaviour, and, with the Concurrence of two thirds, expel a Member.

Each House shall keep a Journal of its Proceedings, and from time to time publish the same, excepting such Parts as may in their Judgment require Secrecy; and the Yeas and Nays of the Members of either House on any question shall, at the Desire of one fifth of

those Present, be entered on the Journal.

Neither House, during the Session of Congress, shall, without the Consent of the other, adjourn for more than three days, nor to any other Place than that in which the two Houses shall be sitting.

SECTION. 6. The Senators and Representatives shall receive a Compensation for their Services, to be ascertained by Law, and paid out of the Treasury of the United States. They shall in all Cases, except Treason, Felony and Breach of the Peace, be privileged from Arrest during their Attendance at the Session of their respective Houses, and in going to and returning from the same; and for any Speech or Debate in either House, they shall not be questioned in any other Place.

No Senator or Representative shall, during the Time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office under the Authority of the United States, which shall have been created, or the Emoluments whereof shall have been increased (increased) during such time; and no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during his Continuance in Office.

SECTION. 7. All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States; If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the Objections at large on their Journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the Objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law. But in all such Cases the Votes of both Houses shall be determined by Yeas and Nays, and the Names of the Persons voting for and against the Bill shall be entered on the Journal of each House respectively. If any Bill shall not be returned by the President within ten Days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their Adjournment prevent its Return, in which Case it shall not be a Law.

Every Order, Resolution, or Vote to which the Concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of Adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the Same shall take Effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the Rules and Limitations prescribed in the Case of a Bill.

SECTION. 8. The Congress shall have Power To lay and collect Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises, to pay the Debts and provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States; but all Duties, Imposts and Excises shall be uniform throughout the United States;

To borrow Money on the credit of the United States;

To regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States, and with the Indian Tribes;

To establish an uniform Rule of Naturalization, and uniform Laws on the subject of Bankruptcies throughout the United States;

To coin Money, regulate the Value thereof, and of foreign Coin, and fix the Standard of Weights and Measures;

To provide for the Punishment of counterfeiting the Securities and current Coin of the United States;

To establish Post Offices and post Roads;

To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries;

To constitute Tribunals inferior to the supreme Court;

To define and punish Piracies and Felonies committed on the high Seas, and Offenses against the Law of Nations;

To declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make Rules concerning Captures on Land and Water;

To raise and support Armies, but no Appropriation of Money to that Use shall be for a longer Term than two Years;

To provide and maintain a Navy; To make Rules for the Government and Regulation of the land and naval Forces;

To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;

To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining, the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress;

To exercise exclusive Legislation in all Cases whatsoever, over such District (not exceeding ten Miles square) as may, by Cession of particular States, and the Acceptance of Congress, become the Seat of the Government of the United States, and to exercise like Authority over all Places purchased by the Consent of the Legislature of the State in which the Same shall be, for the Erection of Forts, Magazines, Arsenals, dock-Yards and other needful Buildings;-And

To make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying into Execution the foregoing Powers, and all other Powers vested by this Constitution in the Government of the United States, or in any Department or Officer thereof.

SECTION. 9. The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person.

The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it.

No Bill of Attainder or ex post facto Law shall be passed.

No Capitation, or other direct, Tax shall be laid, unless in Proportion to the Census or Enumeration herein before directed to be taken.

No Tax or Duty shall be laid on Articles exported from any State.

No Preference shall be given by any Regulation of Commerce or Revenue to the Ports of one State over those of another: nor shall Vessels bound to, or from, one State, be obliged to enter, clear, or pay Duties in another.

No Money shall be drawn from the Treasury, but in Consequence of Appropriations made by Law; and a regular Statement and Account of the Receipts and Expenditures of all public Money shall be published from time to time.

No Title of Nobility shall be granted by the United States: And no Person holding any Office of Profit or Trust under them, shall, without the Consent of the Congress, accept of any present, Emolument, Office, or Title, of any kind whatever, from any King, Prince, or foreign State.

SECTION. 10. No State shall enter into any Treaty, Alliance, or Confederation; grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal; coin Money; emit Bills of Credit; make any Thing but gold and silver Coin a Tender in Payment of Debts; pass any Bill of Attainder, ex post facto Law, or Law impairing the Obligation of Contracts, or grant any Title of Nobility.

No State shall, without the Consent of the Congress, lay any Imposts or Duties on Imports or Exports, except what may be absolutely necessary for executing it's inspection Laws: and the net Produce of all Duties and Imposts, laid by any State on Imports or Exports, shall be for the Use of the Treasury of the United States; and all such Laws shall be subject to the Revision and Controul (Control) of the Congress.

No State shall, without the Consent of Congress, lay any Duty of Tonnage, keep Troops, or Ships of War in time of Peace, enter into any Agreement or Compact with another State, or with a foreign Power, or engage in War, unless actually invaded, or in such imminent Danger as will not admit of delay.

ARTICLE II

SECTION. 1. The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows:

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two Persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately chuse (choose) by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then

from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner chuse (choose) the President. But in chusing (choosing) the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State having one Vote; A quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall chuse (choose) from them by Ballot the Vice President.

The Congress may determine the Time of chusing (choosing) the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

No Person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the Same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.

The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation:--"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States."

SECTION. 2. The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any Subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offenses against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

SECTION. 3. He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

SECTION. 4. The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

ARTICLE III

SECTION. 1. The judicial Power of the United States, shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services, a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

SECTION. 2. The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, the Laws of the United States, and Treaties made, or which shall be made, under their Authority;--to all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls;--to all Cases of admiralty and maritime Jurisdiction;--to Controversies to which the United States shall be a Party;--to Controversies between two or more States;--between a State and Citizens of another State;--between Citizens of different States;--between Citizens of the same State claiming Lands under Grants of different States, and between a State, or the Citizens thereof, and foreign States, Citizens or Subjects.

In all Cases affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be Party, the supreme Court shall have original Jurisdiction. In all the other Cases before mentioned, the supreme Court shall have appellate Jurisdiction, both as to Law and Fact, with such Exceptions, and under such Regulations as the Congress shall make.

The Trial of all Crimes, except in Cases of Impeachment; shall be by Jury; and such Trial shall be held in the State where the said Crimes shall have been committed; but when not committed within any State, the Trial shall be at such Place or Places as the Congress may by Law have directed.

SECTION. 3. Treason against the United States, shall consist only in levying War against them, or in adhering to their Enemies, giving them Aid and Comfort. No Person shall be convicted of Treason unless on the Testimony of two Witnesses to the same overt Act, or on Confession in open Court.

The Congress shall have Power to declare the Punishment of Treason, but no Attainder of Treason shall work Corruption of Blood, or Forfeiture except during the Life of the Person attainted.

ARTICLE IV

SECTION. 1. Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State. And the Congress may by general Laws prescribe the Manner in which such Acts, Records and Proceedings shall be proved, and the Effect thereof.

SECTION. 2. The Citizens of each State shall be entitled to all Privileges and Immunities of Citizens in the several States.

A Person charged in any State with Treason, Felony, or other Crime, who shall flee from Justice, and be found in another State, shall on Demand of the executive Authority of the State from which he fled, be delivered up, to be removed to the State having Jurisdiction of the Crime.

No Person held to Service or Labour in one State, under the Laws thereof, escaping into another, shall, in Consequence of any Law or Regulation therein, be discharged from such Service or Labour, but shall be delivered up on Claim of the Party to whom such Service or Labour may be due.

SECTION. 3. New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union; but no new State shall be formed or erected within the Jurisdiction of any other State; nor any State be formed by the Junction of two or more States, or Parts of States, without the Consent of the Legislatures of the States concerned as well as of the Congress.

The Congress shall have Power to dispose of and make all needful Rules and Regulations respecting the Territory or other Property belonging to the United States; and nothing in this Constitution shall be so construed as to Prejudice any Claims of the United States, or of any particular State.

SECTION. 4. The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and on Application of the Legislature, or of the Executive (when the Legislature cannot be convened) against domestic Violence.

ARTICLE V

The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of two thirds of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either Case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress; Provided that no Amendment which may be made prior to the Year One thousand eight hundred and eight shall in any Manner affect the first and fourth Clauses in the Ninth Section of the first Article; and that no State, without its Consent, shall be deprived of its equal Suffrage in the Senate.

ARTICLE VI

All Debts contracted and Engagements entered into, before the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be as valid against the United States under this Constitution, as under the Confederation.

This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.

The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.

ARTICLE VII

The Ratification of the Conventions of nine States, shall be sufficient for the Establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the Same.

Done in Convention by the Unanimous Consent of the States present the Seventeenth Day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and Eighty seven and of the Independence of the United States of America the Twelfth In Witness whereof We have hereunto subscribed our Names,

Go. Washington

Presidt and deputy from Virginia

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page.

**D-Link**

Image of the constitution-at-a-glance page showing the Bill of Rights tab selected.

Screen text

Purpose: The Bill of Rights lists the rights guaranteed to the citizens and the states.

Content:

Amendment I: Freedom of Expression

Amendment II: The Right to Bear Arms

Amendment III: Freedom from Quartering of Troops

Amendment IV: Freedom from Unreasonable Search and Seizure

Amendment V: Right to Due Process of Law

Amendment VI: Right to a Fair Trial

Amendment VII: Right to a Trial by Jury in Civil Cases

Amendment VIII: Freedom from Cruel and Unusual Punishment

Amendment IX: Unenumerated Rights

Amendment X: Rights reserved to the States and the People

AMENDMENT I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

AMENDMENT II

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

AMENDMENT III

No Soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the Owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

AMENDMENT IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be

searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

AMENDMENT V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

AMENDMENT VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defence.

AMENDMENT VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any Court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

AMENDMENT VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

AMENDMENT IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

AMENDMENT X:

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to

the people.

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page.

**D-Link**

Image of the constitution-at-a-glance page showing the Amendments XI – XXVII tab selected.

Purpose: Since the Bill of Rights was ratified, 17 amendments have been ratified. These amendments have addressed the changing circumstances in our evolving country or corrected a weakness in the original document.

Content:

Amendment XI: Lawsuits against States

Amendment XII: New Process for Choosing an Executive

Amendment XIII: Abolition of Slavery

Amendment XIV: Equal Protection of the Laws

Amendment XV: Suffrage Regardless of Race

Amendment XVI: Income Tax

Amendment XVII: Direct Election of Senators

Amendment XVIII: Prohibition

Amendment XIX: Suffrage Regardless of Sex

Amendment XX: Lame Ducks

Amendment XXI: Repeal of Prohibition

Amendment XXII: Presidential Term Limits

Amendment XXIII: Electoral Votes for DC

Amendment XXIV: Poll Tax Ban

Amendment XXV: Presidential Succession and Disability

Amendment XXVI: Lower Age for Voting

Amendment XXVII: Congressional Pay Limits

AMENDMENT XI

February 7, 1795

The Judicial power of the United States shall not be construed to extend to any suit in law or equity, commenced or prosecuted against one of the

United States by Citizens of another State, or by Citizens or Subjects of any Foreign State.

AMENDMENT XII

June 15, 1804

The Electors shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate; -- The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted; -- The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a majority of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.-- The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

AMENDMENT XIII

December 6, 1865

SECTION. 1. Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.

SECTION. 2. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XIV

July 9, 1868

SECTION. 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction

the equal protection of the laws.

SECTION. 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice-President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

SECTION. 3. No person shall be a Senator or Representative in Congress, or elector of President and Vice-President, or hold any office, civil or military, under the United States, or under any State, who, having previously taken an oath, as a member of Congress, or as an officer of the United States, or as a member of any State legislature, or as an executive or judicial officer of any State, to support the Constitution of the United States, shall have engaged in insurrection or rebellion against the same, or given aid or comfort to the enemies thereof. But Congress may by a vote of two-thirds of each House, remove such disability.

SECTION. 4. The validity of the public debt of the United States, authorized by law, including debts incurred for payment of pensions and bounties for services in suppressing insurrection or rebellion, shall not be questioned. But neither the United States nor any State shall assume or pay any debt or obligation incurred in aid of insurrection or rebellion against the United States, or any claim for the loss or emancipation of any slave; but all such debts, obligations and claims shall be held illegal and void.

SECTION. 5. The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

AMENDMENT XV

February 3, 1870

SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

SECTION. 2. The Congress shall have the power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XVI

February 3, 1913

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

AMENDMENT XVII

April 8, 1913

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. The electors in each State shall have the qualifications requisite for electors of the most numerous branch of the State legislatures.

When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: Provided, That the legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.

This amendment shall not be so construed as to affect the election or term of any Senator chosen before it becomes valid as part of the Constitution.

AMENDMENT XVIII

January 16, 1919 (Repealed by amendment 21)

SECTION. 1. After one year from the ratification of this article the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors within, the importation thereof into, or the exportation thereof from the United States and all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof for beverage purposes is hereby prohibited.

SECTION. 2. The Congress and the several States shall have concurrent power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XIX

August 18, 1920

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XX

January 23, 1933

SECTION. 1. The terms of the President and the Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January, and the terms of Senators and Representatives at noon on the 3d day of January, of the years in which such terms would have ended if this article had not been ratified; and the terms of their successors shall then begin.

SECTION. 2. The Congress shall assemble at least once in every year, and such meeting shall begin at noon on the 3d day of January, unless they shall by law appoint a different day.

SECTION. 3. If, at the time fixed for the beginning of the term of the President, the President elect shall have died, the Vice President elect shall become President. If a President shall not have been chosen before the time fixed for the beginning of his term, or if the President elect shall have failed to qualify, then the Vice President elect shall act as President until a President shall have qualified; and the Congress may by law provide for the case wherein neither a President elect nor a Vice President shall have qualified, declaring who shall then act as President, or the manner in which one who is to act shall be selected, and such person shall act accordingly until a President or Vice President shall have qualified.

SECTION. 4. The Congress may by law provide for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the House of Representatives may choose a President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them, and for the case of the death of any of the persons from whom the Senate may choose a Vice President whenever the right of choice shall have devolved upon them.

SECTION. 5. Sections 1 and 2 shall take effect on the 15th day of October following the ratification of this article.

SECTION. 6. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission. AMENDMENTXXI

AMENDMENT XXI

December 5, 1933

SECTION. 1. The eighteenth article of amendment to the Constitution of the United States is hereby repealed.

SECTION. 2. The transportation or importation into any State, Territory, or Possession of the United States for delivery or use therein of

intoxicating liquors, in violation of the laws thereof, is hereby prohibited.

SECTION. 3. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by conventions in the several States, as provided in the Constitution, within seven years from the date of the submission hereof to the States by the Congress.

AMENDMENT XXII

February 27, 1951

SECTION. 1. No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.

SECTION. 2. This article shall be inoperative unless it shall have been ratified as an amendment to the Constitution by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States within seven years from the date of its submission to the States by the Congress.

AMENDMENT XXIII

March 29, 1961

SECTION. 1. The District constituting the seat of Government of the United States shall appoint in such manner as Congress may direct:

A number of electors of President and Vice President equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives in Congress to which the District would be entitled if it were a State, but in no event more than the least populous State; they shall be in addition to those appointed by the States, but they shall be considered, for the purposes of the election of President and Vice President, to be electors appointed by a State; and they shall meet in the District and perform such duties as provided by the twelfth article of amendment.

SECTION. 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXIV

January 23, 1964

SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by

reason of failure to pay poll tax or other tax.

SECTION. 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXV

February 10, 1967

SECTION. 1. In case of the removal of the President from office or of his death or resignation, the Vice President shall become President.

SECTION. 2. Whenever there is a vacancy in the office of the Vice President, the President shall nominate a Vice President who shall take office upon confirmation by a majority vote of both Houses of Congress.

SECTION. 3. Whenever the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that he is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, and until he transmits to them a written declaration to the contrary, such powers and duties shall be discharged by the Vice President as Acting President.

SECTION. 4. Whenever the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive departments or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall immediately assume the powers and duties of the office as Acting President.

Thereafter, when the President transmits to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives his written declaration that no inability exists, he shall resume the powers and duties of his office unless the Vice President and a majority of either the principal officers of the executive department or of such other body as Congress may by law provide, transmit within four days to the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives their written declaration that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office. Thereupon Congress shall decide the issue, assembling within forty-eight hours for that purpose if not in session. If the Congress, within twenty-one days after receipt of the latter written declaration, or, if Congress is not in session, within twenty-one days after Congress is required to assemble, determines by two-thirds vote of both Houses that the President is unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office, the Vice President shall continue to discharge the same as Acting President; otherwise, the President shall resume the powers and duties of his office.

AMENDMENT XXVI

July 1, 1971

SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

SECTION. 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

AMENDMENT XXVII

May 7, 1992

No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect, until an election of representatives shall have intervened.

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page



D-Link

Quizzes and games page showing a trophy.

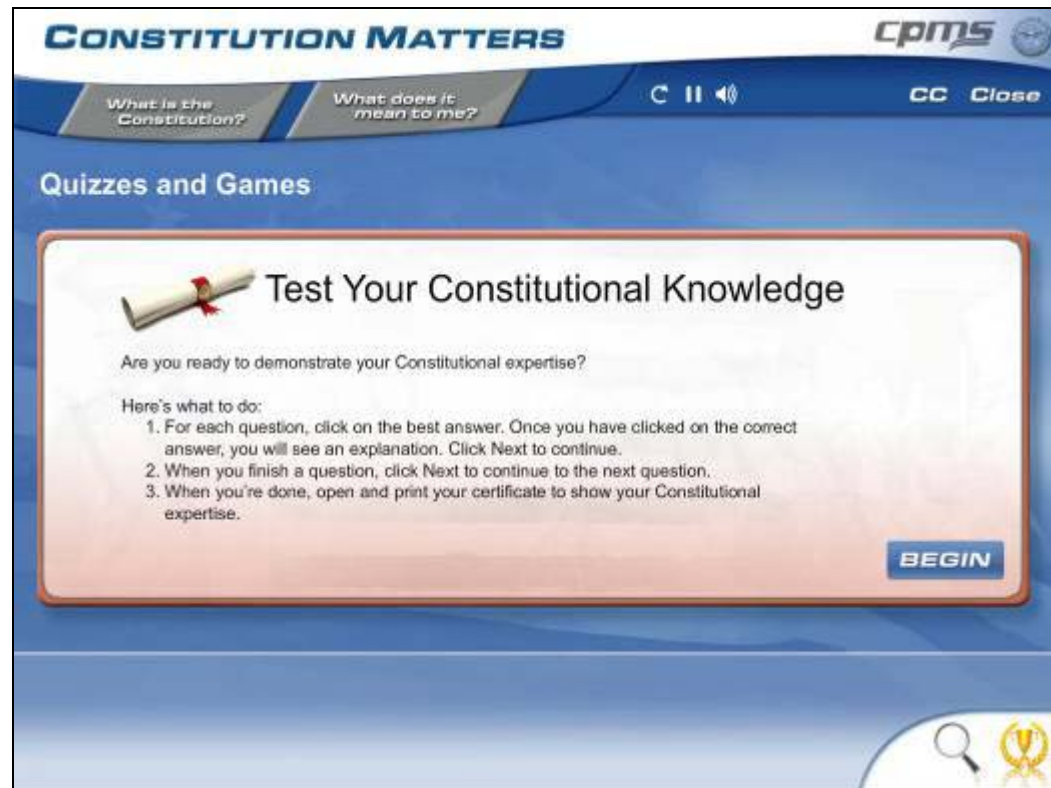
Screen Text

How much do you know about the Constitution?

Do you have what it takes to make judgments based on the Constitution like a Supreme Court Justice?

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page.

**D-Link**

Page with an image of a rolled-up certificate with the text "Test Your Constitutional Knowledge" next to it.

Screen Text

Are you ready to demonstrate your Constitutional expertise?

Here's what to do:

1. For each question, click on the best answer. Once you have clicked on the correct answer, you will see an explanation. Click Next to continue.
2. When you finish a question, click Next to continue to the next question.
3. When you're done, open and print your certificate to show your Constitutional expertise.

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page.

Question 1 – Which of these best describes what the Constitution is for our nation?

- ◆ Arguments for a republican form of government
- ◆ Democratic Ideals of the American People
- ◆ The Supreme Law of the Land
- ◆ Statement of Independence

Correct Answer: The Constitution is the Supreme Law of the Land and no other laws may supersede the authority of the Constitution.

Article VI states that *“This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.”*

Question 2 – Which of these best describes the relationships among the Federal Government, the states, and the citizens as described in the Constitution?

- ◆ States retain most of the powers; the Federal Government relies on the cooperation of the states; and some rights are guaranteed to the citizens.
- ◆ Both Federal and state powers are clearly defined; other rights are reserved to the people
- ◆ The states and Federal Government share power, with the people providing checks and balances
- ◆ The Federal Government’s powers are defined; other rights are reserved for the states and the people

Correct Answer: The Federal Government’s powers are defined; other rights are reserved for the states and the people

Articles I–III lay out the structure of the Federal Government and describe the powers of the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches. Amendment X, often referred to as the States’ Rights Amendment, states that *“The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.”*

Question 3 – The Constitution divides the responsibility of defense between which branches of the government?

- ◆ Judicial and Executive
- ◆ Executive and Legislative
- ◆ Legislative and Judicial

- ◆ Judicial, Executive, and Legislative

Correct Answer: The Constitution divides the responsibility of defense between the Executive and Legislative branches of the government. The Constitution addresses the responsibility for defense in Articles I and II:

Article 1, Section 8, empowers Congress to levy taxes in order to “provide for the common Defence (Defense).” It also gives Congress the right to declare war.

Article II, Section 2, states that *“The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into actual Service of the United States.”*

By putting a civilian in charge of the armed forces, the Founding Fathers hoped to prevent the military from turning against the citizens.

Question 4 – Which aspects of the Constitution enable it to remain a living document?

- ◆ Its ability to be amended
- ◆ The Bill of Rights
- ◆ Its powerful Preamble
- ◆ Its short length

Correct Answer: Its ability to be amended enables the Constitution to remain a living document. The Founding Fathers knew that the Constitution would have to change over time to address issues that they could not yet imagine. So, they built in a process for amending it. In 1791, ten amendments were added to provide an explicit Bill of Rights. Since then, 17 more amendments have expanded the rights of citizenship and improved the way our government works, making the Constitution a living document that remains relevant throughout the ages.

In addition, the Constitution remains relevant because in considering cases, the courts interpret the Constitution in the current context.

Question 5 – Which of these is NOT a way that the Constitution is used today?

- ◆ As a guide when making laws
- ◆ As a guide when interpreting laws
- ◆ To explain the necessity for a listing of citizens’ rights
- ◆ To solve problems

Correct Answer: The correct answer is to explain the necessity for a listing of citizens’ rights is not a way that the Constitution is used today. By laying the groundwork for our Federal Government and identifying the powers for its three branches, the Constitution serves as a guide for lawmakers when they are making laws and as a guide for the courts when they are interpreting laws. The Constitution provides a framework within

which Americans can work together to address issues and solve problems. While it provides a Bill of Rights, it does not explain the necessity for these rights.

Question 6 – Which of the following ways of interpreting the Constitution represents evolutionist thinking?

- ◆ We should amend the Constitution regularly so that it continues to evolve
- ◆ We should interpret the Constitution to mean exactly what it did in 1789
- ◆ We should apply the Constitution in the context of today's thinking
- ◆ We should use Charles Darwin's theories to understand the Constitution

Correct Answer: Much debate regarding the Constitution still goes on as originalists try to apply the Constitution as it was originally written and evolutionists try to apply the Constitution in the context of today's thinking. For example, an originalist would say that the stocks and pillories are not cruel and unusual punishment because that is how people were punished in 1789. An evolutionist would say that those punishments are cruel and unusual in today's context.

Question 7 – Of the fifteen rights listed in the Bill of Rights, which of the following is NOT specifically identified?

- ◆ Freedom of the press
- ◆ The right to privacy
- ◆ The right to bear arms
- ◆ The right to a speedy trial by jury

Correct Answer: Although not explicitly mentioned in the Constitution, the right to privacy is considered to be one of Amendment IX's "unenumerated rights" and is thought to be implied by the Third Amendment (freedom from quartering of troops in one's home) and the Fourth Amendment (freedom from unreasonable search and seizure).

Question 8 – Which of these best describes why the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution?

- ◆ Because the Constitution mandated the addition of a Bill of Rights
- ◆ Because the people voted in an election to add a Bill of Rights
- ◆ Because the Constitutions of all other democratic countries had one
- ◆ Because it addressed concerns raised during ratification debates

Correct Answer: The Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution because it addressed concerns raised during ratification debates. During the debates over ratification of the Constitution, a major controversy was the lack of a clearly stated list of rights for the people and the states. The

Federalists maintained that the Constitution listed the powers of the government and left everything else to the states and the people. They were afraid that a listing of rights could be used to limit people's freedoms.

The Anti-Federalists feared that without a list of rights, a tyrannical government could take freedoms away from its citizens.

Ultimately, the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution in the form of 10 amendments. The ninth and tenth amendments specifically state that all rights not listed automatically belong to the people and to the states

Question 9 – Which of these is NOT a political philosophy that formed the basis for the Constitution?

- ◆ Rule of Law
- ◆ Rule of Three
- ◆ Separation of Powers
- ◆ Social Contract Theory

Correct Answer: Rule of Three is not a political philosophy that forms the basis for the Constitution.

Three political philosophies that form the basis for the Constitution are:

Rule of Law—States that a nation's decisions should be based on a standard set of laws, and not on its leaders' and judges' discretion.

Separation of Powers—A political system in which power is divided among three branches of government so that each branch has some power over the others to ensure that they must cooperate with each other.

Social Contract Theory—The idea that people must freely enter a contract or agreement with their society, nation, or state to take on certain responsibilities and give up certain freedoms in order to enjoy the collective benefits.

Question 10 – Which of these rights was guaranteed by the Constitution before the Bill of Rights was added?

- ◆ Freedom of religion
- ◆ Freedom from unreasonable search and seizure
- ◆ Freedom from unlawful imprisonment
- ◆ Freedom from quartering of troops in one's home

Correct Answer: The correct answer is Freedom from unlawful imprisonment. Article I, Section 9 of the Constitution states that: "...*The Privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus shall not be suspended, unless when in Cases of Rebellion or Invasion the public Safety may require it...*"

The writ of habeas corpus allows prisoners to petition a judge if they feel that they are being held without cause—or allows others to petition on

their behalf. This right protects people from being unjustly imprisoned.

Question 11 – Which of these groups would have had the right to vote in 1910?

- ◆ All men over the age of 21
- ◆ White, 20-year-old men
- ◆ Black, 20-year-old women
- ◆ White women over the age of 21

Correct Answer: The correct answer is All men over the age of 21 had the right to vote in 1910. All members of the U.S. population have not always had the right to vote. Over the years, Constitutional amendments have changed the rules for who can vote, allowing ever wider participation in U.S. citizenship. By 1910, the Fifteenth Amendment had been passed, giving men 21 years of age and over, regardless of race, the right to vote. However, women would not get the vote until the Nineteenth Amendment was passed in 1920. And people between the ages of 18 and 21 would not get the vote until the Twenty-Sixth Amendment was passed in 1971.

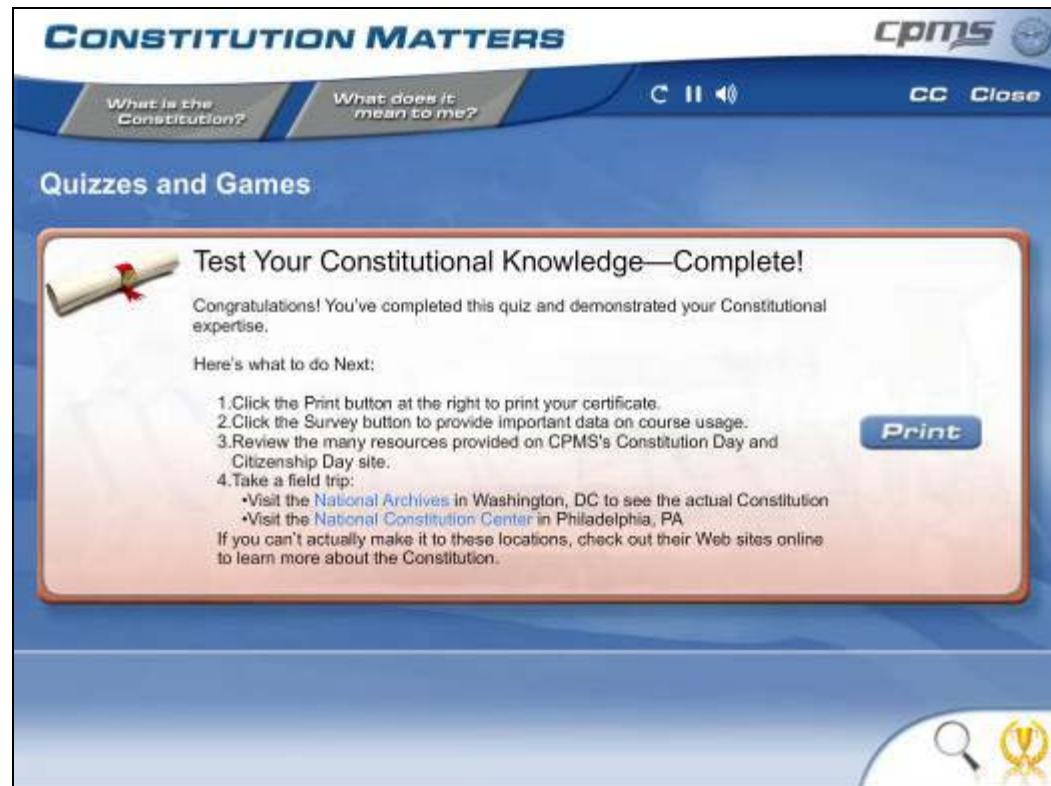
Question 12 – The Federalist Papers were newspaper articles written to persuade colonial Americans to ratify the Constitution. What important role do they play today?

- ◆ They provide the foundation for today's political parties.
- ◆ They provide the legal language for our laws.
- ◆ They provide insight into what the framers of the Constitution intended
- ◆ They reveal the personalities of the Founding Fathers

Correct Answer: The Federalist Papers can help us understand what the framers of the Constitution intended.

When the Constitution was signed by the Constitutional Convention on September 17, 1787, public opinion immediately divided into two factions: The Federalists, who advocated ratification of the Constitution, and the Anti-Federalists, who opposed ratification because they felt that too much power was given to the central government.

Leading Federalists, such as James Madison, John Jay, and Alexander Hamilton, wrote articles in the newspapers, explaining why the states should ratify the Constitution. These Federalist Papers illustrate the Founding Fathers' thinking on the Constitution.

**D-Link**

Page showing completion of “Test your Constitutional Knowledge” section. There is a print button on the page to print the certificate of completion.

Screen Text

Congratulations! You've completed this quiz and demonstrated your Constitutional expertise.

Here's what to do Next:

1. Click the Print button at the right to print your certificate.
2. Review the many resources provided on CPMS's Constitution Day and Citizenship Day site.
3. Take a field trip:
 - ♦ Visit the *National Archives* in Washington, DC to see the actual Constitution
 - ♦ Visit the *National Constitution Center* in Philadelphia, PA

If you can't actually make it to these locations, check out their Web sites online to learn more about the Constitution.

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page.



D-Link

Image of the Certificate of Completion for Test your Constitutional Knowledge quiz.

Screen Text

Department of Defense

CPMS (Civilian Personnel Management Service)

Test your Constitutional Knowledge

Certificate of Completion

Congratulations to

Name

For successfully demonstrating your knowledge of the Constitution on

Date

U.S. Constitution Day and Citizenship Day Course

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page.

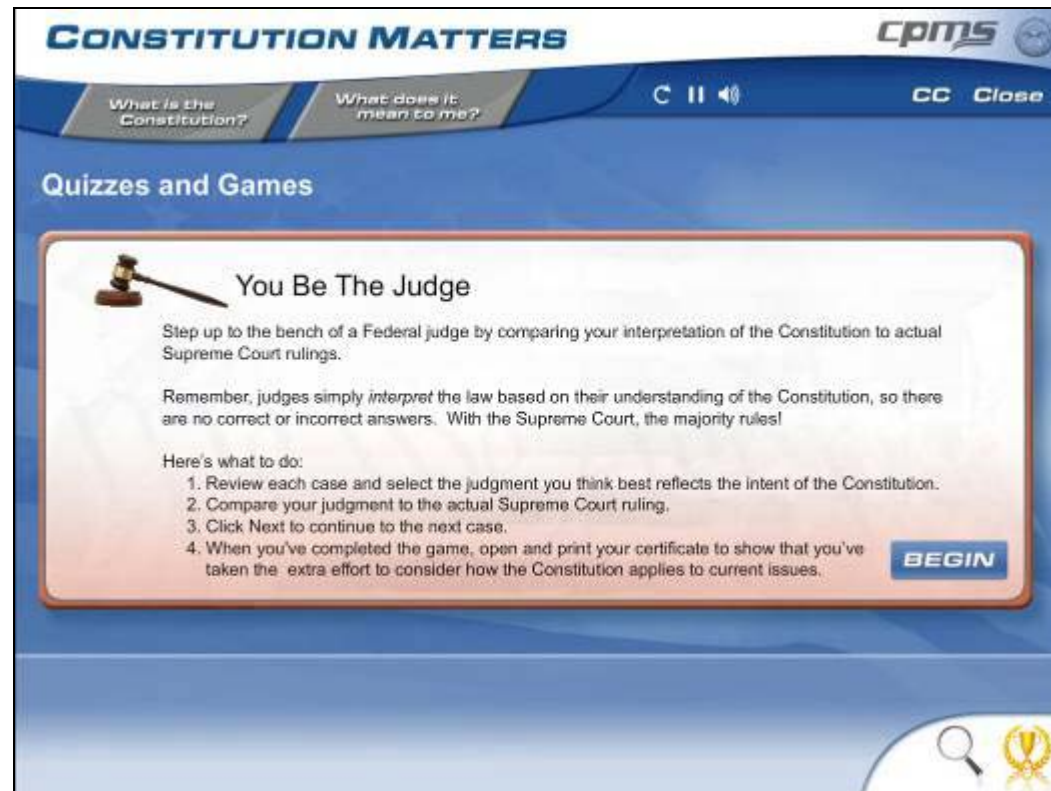
**D-Link**

Image of a gavel and a sounding block with the text "You Be the Judge" next to it.

Screen Text

Step up to the bench of a Federal judge by comparing your interpretation of the Constitution to actual Supreme Court rulings. Remember, judges simply interpret the law based on their understanding of the Constitution, so there are no correct or incorrect answers. With the Supreme Court, the majority rules!

Here's what to do:

1. Review each case and select the judgment you think best reflects the intent of the Constitution.
2. Compare your judgment to the actual Supreme Court ruling.
3. Click Next to continue to the next case.
4. When you're done, open and print your certificate to show that you've taken the extra effort to consider how the Constitution applies to current issues.

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page.

Case #1:

The United States military captures a Yemeni national in Afghanistan who was allegedly fighting with the Taliban. He is sent to the American Naval Base at Guantanamo, Cuba. His military attorney files a petition in Federal District Court for a writ of habeas corpus—requesting a judge to review the lawfulness of his detention.

Your Judgment:

- ◆ You refuse to hear the case because the prisoner is not a U.S. citizen.
- ◆ You refuse to hear the case because the prisoner is in Cuba.
- ◆ You hear the case because US federal courts have universal jurisdiction, meaning they can hear all cases brought before them.
- ◆ You hear the case because the prisoner is in an area under the exclusive jurisdiction and control of the United States, and Congress has not suspended the Writ of Habeas Corpus.

Supreme Court Judgment:

Supreme Court upholds your judgment: You hear the case because the prisoner is in an area under the exclusive jurisdiction and control of the United States, and Congress has not suspended the writ of habeas corpus.

In *Boumediene v. Bush*, the Supreme Court held that because Guantanamo is an area under the exclusive jurisdiction and control of the United States and Congress had not acted under its authority under Article I, sec. 9 of the Constitution to suspend the writ of Habeas Corpus, the prisoner's petition should be heard. The vote was 5-4, with Justice Anthony Kennedy writing the majority opinion. The dissenters disagreed with the Court's decision for a variety of reasons. Justice Scalia, for example, argued that because Boumediene was an alien and in an area over which the United States is not sovereign, the Court should not grant habeas review.

Case #2:

A Maryland State Police Trooper observes a vehicle weaving erratically on the interstate. The trooper activates the emergency lights and siren on the Police cruiser and the car pulls over to the side of the road after about 5 minutes. The trooper approaches the vehicle and asks the driver to exit the car. Upon exiting the car, the driver falls to the ground; the driver's breath smells strongly of alcohol. The Trooper places the driver under arrest and transports the driver to the State Police Barrack, where the driver, who turns out to be a Canadian national, is charged with driving under the influence of alcohol. At no time during the arrest did the trooper read the driver the "Miranda Warnings."

When the case gets to court, the attorney for the driver asks that the charges be dismissed because the driver was never read the "Miranda Warnings."

Your Judgment:

- ◆ You refuse to dismiss the charges because the driver was not an American citizen and thus not entitled to rights under the U.S. Constitution.
- ◆ You refuse to dismiss the charges because the “Miranda Warnings” only need to be read if the police intend to ask questions of the person arrested and use those questions against the person arrested.
- ◆ You dismiss the charges because *Miranda v. Arizona* requires that if a person that is arrested has not been read the “Miranda Warning,” the case must be dismissed.
- ◆ You dismiss the charges because as a Canadian citizen, the driver enjoys immunity from Maryland State law.

Supreme Court Judgment

The Supreme Court upholds your judgment: You refuse to dismiss the charges because the “Miranda Warnings” only need to be read if the police intend to ask questions of the person arrested and use those questions against the person arrested.

In *Miranda v. Arizona*, the Supreme Court required that a person that is arrested be advised of his or her rights only if the police are going to question the person and use information obtained from that questioning.

Case #3:

Captain Smith is an Army officer living in England with his civilian wife. After a series of marital problems, Smith's wife kills him. In accordance with the Status of Forces Agreement with the UK, she is tried and convicted in a court martial established under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. She challenges the validity of her trial, claiming that under the Constitution, she was entitled to a trial by a jury of her peers and since she was not a member of the military, the military officers on a court martial were not her peers.

Your Judgment:

- ◆ You rule that she could be tried in a court martial because there was an Agreement between the U.S. and the UK that allowed for trial by court martial.
- ◆ You rule that she could be tried in a court martial because she was married to a member of the military.
- ◆ You rule that she could not be tried by a court martial because the Constitution guarantees her the right to a trial by a jury of her peers, and as a civilian, military officers are not her peers.
- ◆ You rule that she could not be tried in a court martial because she was in England when the offense took place.

Supreme Court Judgment

The Supreme Court upholds your judgment: You rule that she could be tried in a court martial because she was married to a member of the military.

In *Reid v. Covert*, the Supreme Court ruled that the wife of an American serviceman who murdered her husband in England could not be tried in a court martial because it did not constitute a trial by a jury of her peers.

Case #4

A contractor working with the Department of Defense copies a series of classified documents and, without authorization, gives those documents to the *New York Times*. The *Times* begins publishing the documents in a several-part series. As soon as the U.S. Government discovers that the documents are being published, the Government brings suit in Federal district court seeking an injunction enjoining the publication of more documents.

Your Judgment

- ◆ You issue an injunction because the contractor did not have permission to take the documents.
- ◆ You issue an injunction because the *Times* did not have the right to possess the documents.
- ◆ You refuse to grant an injunction because of the First Amendment right to freedom of the press.
- ◆ You refuse to grant an injunction because some of the documents had already been published.

Supreme Court Judgment

The Supreme Court upholds your judgment: You refuse to grant an injunction because of the First Amendment right to freedom of the press.

A similar question arose In *New York Times v. U.S.*—the so-called Pentagon Paper Case. In that case Daniel Elsberg had smuggled documents out of the Department of Defense and sent them to the *Times* and the *Washington Post*. The Supreme Court ruled:

"Any system of prior restraints of expression comes to this Court bearing a heavy presumption against its constitutional validity." As it had done in multiple previous cases, the court rules that the Government had not met that burden.

But each Justice in the 6-3 majority had a different reason as to why no injunction should be issued in that case. If a future case were to arise, it would be necessary to look at the specifics of the case and compare those to the events of the Pentagon Papers case in order to gauge how the court might rule.

Case #5:

Jennifer Johnson was born on an American military base in Germany in 1979, while her father and mother, both American citizens, were serving in the United States Army.

In 2012, Johnson decides to run for President of the United States. The opposition raises questions about her eligibility.

Your Judgment

- ◆ You rule her ineligible to run because under the Article II, section 1 of the Constitution only a “natural born citizen” can run and since she was not born within the territory of the United States, she is not considered a natural born citizen.
- ◆ You rule her ineligible to run because she is not old enough.
- ◆ You rule her eligible to run because she is a “natural born citizen,” given that both her parents were American citizens
- ◆ You rule her eligible to run because she meets all requirements of Article II, Section 1.

Supreme Court Judgment:

The Supreme Court upholds your judgment: You rule her ineligible to run because she is not old enough.

Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution requires that “neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty five years.” Smith was born in 1979, so in 2012, she would be 33 at most.

There has been much discussion over the meaning of “natural born citizen,” but there has been no resolution by the courts. Given that the age issue is clear, no court would need to address the question of “natural born citizen.”

Case #6

A university requires campus recruiters to comply with its antidiscrimination policies and denies campus access to organizations that do not comply. Objecting to the military’s “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” policy, the university denies military recruiters the access to its campuses. In response, Congress passed the Solomon Amendment, which required schools receiving Federal funds to allow military recruiters on campus. The university appealed to the courts, stating that the amendment violates their rights to free speech and freedom of association.

Your Judgment

- ◆ You rule that the First Amendment prohibits Congress from forcing universities to permit military recruiters on campus.
- ◆ You rule that the Fourth Amendment protects the universities’ right to privacy so they do not have to permit military recruiters on campus.
- ◆ You rule that Article I, section 8 gives Congress the right to “raise and support Armies,” so military recruitment is always allowed regardless of funding issues.
- ◆ You rule that the First Amendment prohibits universities from denying organizations access to their campuses.

Supreme Court Judgment:

The Supreme Court upholds your judgment: You rule that Article I, section 8 gives Congress the right to “raise and support Armies,” so military recruitment is always allowed regardless of funding issues.

In *Rumsfeld v. Forum for Academic and Institutional Rights, Inc.*, the Supreme Court unanimously decided that the Government could deny

Federal funds to schools that do not permit recruitment. The court noted that the Solomon Amendment neither denies the institutions the right to speak, nor requires them to say anything. The opinion also holds that Congress, through the "raise and support Armies" clause, could even directly force schools to allow recruiting without threatening the withholding of funds, if they so desired, and that, as a result, no question of "unconstitutional conditions" arises.

**D-Link**

Completion page of the game – You Be the Judge. There is a print button on this page.

Screen Text

Congratulations! In your brief stint on this fictitious judicial bench, you demonstrated initiative and did a good job of considering how the Constitution applies to some current issues.

Here's what to do Next:

1. Click the **Print Certificate** button below to print your certificate.

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page.



D-Link

Image of the Certificate of Completion for You Be the Judge game in the U.S. Constitution Day and Citizenship Day course.

Screen Text

Department of Defense

CPMS (Civilian Personnel Management Service)

You be the Judge Game

Certificate of completion

Certify that on this day

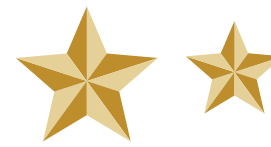
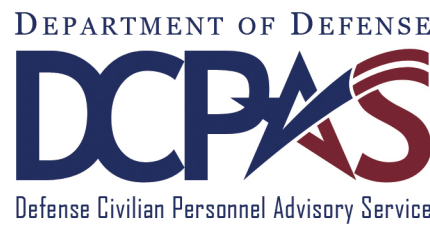
Date

Name

Presided over the You Be the Judge game ad issued fair impartial rulings.

Audio Transcript

There is no narration on this page.



*Test Your Constitutional Knowledge
Certificate of Completion*

*Congratulations
to*

*for
Successfully demonstrating your
knowledge of the Constitution
on*



U.S. Constitution Day and Citizenship Day Course

