



## Lesson Plan: “Why is this important to me?”

### Context of the unit:

United States Constitution

[Project will be the introduction to the unit of study on the United States Constitution]

### Context of the lesson within the unit:

This 8<sup>th</sup> grade project will be used for *Constitution Day* and lead into the unit study on the United States Constitution

### Standards Addressed in this Unit History Social Science

*8.2 Students analyze the political principles underlying the U.S. Constitution and compare the enumerated and implied powers of the federal government.*

### California History-Social Science Framework: Goal of Democratic Understanding and Civic Values: Constitutional Heritage

*Students must understand the nation’s constitutional heritage and the principals of the Constitution that created our democratic form of government.*

**National Civics Standard 4: Understands the concept of a constitution, the various purposes that constitutions serve, and the conditions that contribute to the establishment and maintenance of constitutional government.**

### Standards Addressed in this lesson: History Social Science

*8.2.6 Enumerate the powers of government set forth in the Constitution **and the fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights.***

### California Visual and Performing Arts: Visual Arts Content Standards

*5.0 Connections, Relationship, and Applications: Students apply what they learn **in the visual arts across subject areas.** They develop competencies and creative skills in problem solving, communication, and management of time and resources that contribute to lifelong learning and career skills.*

### California History-Social Science Framework: Goal of Democratic Understanding and Civic Values:

**Constitutional Heritage** *To understand the nation’s constitutional heritage, students must: Understand the basic principals of democracy...They need to develop an appreciation for the guarantees provided in the Bill of Rights...*



## National Standards for Civics and Government 5-8 Content Standards

*Personal rights. Students should be able to evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues involving personal rights.*

*To achieve this standard, students should be able to*

- *identify personal rights, e.g., freedom of conscience, freedom to marry whom one chooses, to have children, to associate with whomever one pleases, to live where one chooses, to travel freely, to emigrate*
  - *identify the major documentary sources of personal rights, e.g., Declaration of Independence, United States Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, state constitutions*
  - *explain the importance to the individual and to society of such personal rights as*
    1. *freedom of conscience and religion*
    2. *freedom of expression and association*
    3. *freedom of movement and residence*
    4. *privacy*
2. *identify and evaluate contemporary issues that involve personal rights, e.g., restricting membership in private organizations, school prayer, dress codes, curfews, sexual harassment, the right to refuse medical care.*

## Common Core State Standards for ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects K-5

### College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading K-5

#### Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2. Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.



## Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.

## Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

8. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

## **College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing K-5**

### Text Types and Purposes

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

## **Common Core State Standards for ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects**

## **College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading Grades 6-12**

### Key Ideas and Details

1. Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

## **College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing Grades 6-12**

### Text Types and Purposes

1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

## **Objective(s):**

Students will be able to:

- distinguish the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment
- analyze how our society would be different without First Amendment freedoms
- examine how First Amendment freedom affects everyday life and
- analyze why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms.



## Lesson Plan: “Why is this important to me?”

### Big Idea(s):

- **Active engagement promotes understanding in the classroom and in society.**  
*(Integration and application of new learning in multiple learning modalities helps students deepen understanding.)*
- **E Pluribus Unum: out of many, one.**  
*(From a variety of sources and experiences, a successful government and legal system has been developed.)*

### Essential Questions/Issues:

1. What are the fundamental liberties ensured by the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights?
2. What does the First Amendment mean to students?
3. What responsibilities go along with First Amendment rights?
4. What could happen when people are not responsible with their rights?
5. Why is being responsible with our rights and freedoms important?
6. Does social capital (involvement) strengthen a republic?

### Higher Order Thinking Question:

1. How might our lives be different today if the Constitution did not include the Bill of Rights – the First Amendment rights in particular? (Analysis)
2. Why is it critical that each citizen use their First Amendment freedoms and rights responsibility? (Analysis, Evaluation)



**Lesson Plan: “Why is this important to me?”**

**Assessment:**

- Students will be evaluated through informal checks for understanding, teacher observation, writing, class participation, and artwork
- Students will complete “First Amendment Freedoms” worksheet
- Students will select and complete one of three extended learning projects (Rubric)

**Quality Criteria:**

*Why Is This Important To Me?*

*Bill of Rights .... First Amendment Freedoms*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Due Date \_\_\_\_\_ Per. \_\_\_\_

California State Standard	Criteria for Evaluation	Score of 4: Advanced	Score of 3: Proficient	Score of 2: Basic	Score of 1: Below Basic	Score of 0: Far Below Basic	Student evaluation	Teacher evaluation
HSS 8.2.6	<b>Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by:</b>	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by distinguishing and describing	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by distinguishing (with brief	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by listing the freedoms	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are not		



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California State Standard	Criteria for Evaluation	Score of 4: Advanced	Score of 3: Proficient	Score of 2: Basic	Score of 1: Below Basic	Score of 0: Far Below Basic	Student evaluation	Teacher evaluation
	- distinguishing and describing the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment	the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment	description) the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment	listing ( with no description) the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment	guaranteed by the First Amendment	enumerated		
California State Standard	Criteria for Evaluation	Score of 4: Advanced	Score of 3: Proficient	Score of 2: Basic	Score of 1: Below Basic	Score of 0: Far Below Basic	Student evaluation	Teacher evaluation
HSS 8.2.6	<b>Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by:</b>  - examining how First Amendment freedom affects everyday life	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by examining how First Amendment freedom affects everyday life	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by describing how First Amendment freedom affects everyday life	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by very briefly describing how First Amendment freedom affects everyday life	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by just listing how First Amendment freedom affects everyday life	The affects of First Amendment freedoms on everyday life are not mentioned		
HSS 8.2.6	<b>Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by:</b>  - analyzing why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by analyzing why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by describing why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by very briefly describing why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms	Fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights are enumerated by just listing why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms	There is not analysis of why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms		



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California State Standard	Criteria for Evaluation	Score of 4: Advanced	Score of 3: Proficient	Score of 2: Basic	Score of 1: Below Basic	Score of 0: Far Below Basic	Student evaluation	Teacher evaluation
<b>WS 1.5</b>	<b>Accurate information and details demonstrate understanding and an effective balance between researched information and original ideas is achieved</b>	Accurate information and details demonstrate understanding and an effective balance between researched information and original ideas is achieved	Accurate information and few details demonstrate understanding and balance between researched information and original ideas is achieved	Information and details demonstrate limited understanding and limited balance between researched information and original ideas	Limited information and details and limited balance between researched information and original ideas is achieved	No accurate information and/or balance -- original ideas cannot be determined		
<b>WS 1.5</b>	<b>Project clearly demonstrates interpretation and analysis, not just description</b>	Project clearly demonstrates interpretation and analysis, not just description	Project demonstrates interpretation and analysis, not just description	Project demonstrates limited interpretation and analysis, mostly description	Project demonstrates little interpretation and analysis, just description	Projects lacks interpretation, analysis, and description		
<b>WA 2.0</b> <b>WC 1.4, 1.5, 1.6</b>	<b>Standard English spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and sentence structure are used appropriately throughout the project</b>	Standard English spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and sentence structure are used appropriately throughout the project	Standard English spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and sentence structure are used appropriately with few errors	Standard English spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and sentence structure are used with errors that do not hinder understanding	Inconsistent use of standard English spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and sentence structure	Countless errors with standard English spelling, punctuation, capitalization, grammar and sentence structure		



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<b>VPA 5.0</b>	<b>Project includes:</b>  <b>-Visual Arts connections and applications across subject area are demonstrated by graphic elements that appropriately support narrative and add in understanding</b>	Project includes:  - Five or more graphic elements appropriately support narrative and add in understanding	Project includes:  - Four different graphic elements appropriately support narrative and add in understanding	Project includes:  - Three different graphic elements appropriately support narrative and add in understanding	Project includes:  -Only one graphic element	Project includes:  - No graphic elements		
	<b>Project includes:</b>  <b>-Complete heading (project title, student name teacher, class period, date)</b>	Project includes:  - Complete heading that is properly formatted			Project includes:  - Incomplete heading			

**\*Total Overall Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

\*[Total Overall score = #/8]

**Final Project Grade** \_\_\_\_\_ (final evaluation by teacher)

Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ (Your signature indicates that you have seen the final project evaluation, including final grade by teacher.)

**Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_



## Lesson Plan: “Why is this important to *me*?”

### Activity Steps:

**Hook:** Teacher presents to the class the PowerPoint *The Constitution & Bill of Rights*

An Introduction ©2002 Constitutional Rights Foundation. This PowerPoint introduces the project’s background information and leads into the unit on the Constitution.

### Procedure:

#### Focus activity:

Teacher asks students how they would feel if:

- there was a rule at lunch time that you could not talk to anyone about anything that happens at school
- there was a rule that they were not allowed to read about or listen to news that described anything negative about our government
- only teachers were allowed to talk to the principal

As a class, students discuss how they might react to these situations.

#### Reading and discussion:

- Analyze how our society would be different without First Amendment freedoms
- Distinguish the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment

Teacher distributes the handout, “The Land of Cantdo...Where the First Amendment is Missing,” to the class. Teachers explains that this story is about a place where there is no Bill of Rights, no First Amendment. Students read the story as a class.

After students have completed the reading, teacher leads a discussion asking the following questions:

1. How would you like to live in Cantdo? Why?
2. What were some of the problems the family encountered?
3. What freedoms did the family miss having?
4. What laws were in place that took away personal freedoms? What were the freedoms that were taken away?
5. How would our lives be different if these freedoms were taken away?



Teacher writes “First Amendment” on the board (or on laptop with LCD projector) and leads students to list the First Amendment freedoms and what they mean.

- Speech – to be able to say what we want
- Assembly – to gather in groups
- Press – to write, televise, report, perform what we want
- Petition – request change or complain to and about the government
- Religion – to practice any religion [also, the government cannot start a religion].

Teacher passes out handout of the Bill of Rights and refers to the First Amendment.

Teacher lead class discussion by asking students, “How do you use these freedoms in your life?”

**Content assessment:**

Distinguish the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment

- Examine ways the First Amendment freedoms have affected everyday life
- Analyze why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms

Teacher distributes the handout “First Amendment Freedoms.”

Teacher explains class assignment:

- Students are to illustrate and write a brief description of how each
- First Amendment freedoms have affected our everyday life  
(Students can refer to the story of Cantdo to get ideas.)

Teacher explains and assigns extended learning assignment

- Students choose one of three extended learning assignments ~



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1. Students will create a “Mountain Book” (see handout for construction direction). Students will clip from a daily newspaper examples of stories or photos that deal with each of the five freedoms protected by the First Amendment: religion (church meetings, religious celebrations, religious issues, etc.); speech (speaker addressing an audience, letters to the editor, columnists, etc.); press (editorials, stories about press conferences, interviews, etc.); assembly (stories of meetings, demonstrations, parades, etc.); petition (articles dealing with citizens protesting governmental policy, with citizens criticizing government officials, with people organizing in opposition to those in authority, etc.). In addition, summarize in a sentence or two the nature of each example and analyze why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms. (Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation)
2. Students will compose “I Am...” poems (see handout for format) using each protected right of the First Amendment as the basis of the poems. Then students will place the poems as the center of a collage that distinguishes the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment and illustrates the need for citizens to use First Amendment freedoms responsibly including what could happen when people are not responsible with their rights... Examples: freedom of speech ~Yell “fire” in a theater, freedom of press ~ take photos of people’s personal lives, freedom of assembly ~ riots break out during a protest, etc. (Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation)
3. Students will create a “Step Book” (see handout for construction directions) that distinguishes the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment, demonstrates how each First Amendment freedom affects everyday life, and why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms. Students will illustrate and write a brief summary for each freedom. Illustrations can be student drawn and/or computer generated. (Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation)

### **Special Needs of students are considered in this lesson:**

Activities include multiple modalities of learning - verbal, non-verbal, written, creative art – that meet the needs of all learners. Extension ideas/activities can be substituted to address the needs of GATE students.

### **Extension Ideas:**

- Students create a political cartoon(s) that identifies citizens’ responsibility in using First Amendment freedoms.
- Students research and construct a PowerPoint arguing a time when people were not responsible with their rights.
- Pairs of students prepare a debate to defend one of the protected rights under the First Amendment.



## Lesson Plan: “Why is this important to me?”

### Materials and Resources Needed:

- Paper (colored and plain)
- Scissors and stapler
- Colored pens/pencils/markers
- Handout ... “The Land of Cantdo...Where the First Amendment Is Missing” ©2004 Constitutional Rights Foundation
- Handout ... “Bill of Rights” ©2004 Constitutional Rights Foundation
- Handout ... “First Amendment Freedoms” adapted from ©2004 Constitutional Rights Foundation
- Handout ... Student directions
- Handout ... “I am...” poem format
- Handout ... “Mountain Book” directions
- Handout ... “Step Book” directions
- Handout ... “Why Is This Important To Me? Bill of Rights...First Amendment Freedoms” Rubric
- Laptop and LCD projector
- Computer/printer

### References:

- Arvia, Angela, and Gail Kempf. “Learning American History Through Bookmaking I,” Teaching American History Institute. 2007.
- California History-Social Science Content Standards, California Department of Education. February 3, 2009. <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/st/ss/>
- Dogelman, Charles, Keri Doggett, and Bill Hayes. “The Bill of Rights,” Adventures in Law and History, Volume II, Coming to America, Colonial America, and the Revolutionary Era. Second Edition. Los Angeles: Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2004.
- Dogelman, Charles, Keri Doggett, and Bill Hayes. “The Land of Cantdo...Where the First Amendment Is Missing,” Adventures in Law and History, Volume II, Coming to America, Colonial America, and the Revolutionary Era. Second Edition. Los Angeles: Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2004.
- Doggett, Keri, and Bill Hayes. The Constitution & Bill of Rights, An Introduction. PowerPoint. Los Angeles: Constitutional Rights Foundation, 2002.
- History-Social Science Framework for California Public Schools Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. Developed by the History-Social Science Curriculum Framework and Criteria Committee, California Department of California. Reposted June 5, 2009.
- <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/cf/documents/histsocsciframe.pdf>
- National Standards for Civics and Government, 5-8 Content Standards, Center for Civic Education. <http://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=58erica#10>



**Lesson Plan: "Why is this important to me?"**

Student Handouts:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_

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## First Amendment Freedoms

- Examine ways the First Amendment freedoms have affected everyday life

In each box draw and write a brief description of how each First Amendment freedom has affected our everyday life.

Speech	Press
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



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<p>Assembly</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Petition</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<p>Religion</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>No religion established and run by government</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

California History-Social Science Standards 8.2.6 ~ enumerate the powers of government set forth in the Constitution and the fundamental liberties ensured by the Bill of Rights.



**I Am ....**

**The First Amendment...**

Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Press, Freedom of Religion, Freedom of Assembly, Freedom of Petition

**FIRST STANZA:**

I am (include two or more special characteristics it has)

I wonder (something curious)

I hear (a sound, real or imaginary)

I see (a sight, real or imaginary)

I feel (a feeling, real or imaginary)

**SECOND STANZA:**

I pretend (something it pretends)

I think (something it does think or think about)

I worry (something it worries about or something that bothers it)

I dream (something it dreams about or dreams of doing)

I hope (something it hopes for or hopes is true)

**THIRD STANZA:**

I understand (something it knows or thinks is true)

I say (something it believes in)

I want (something it wants or wants to be true)

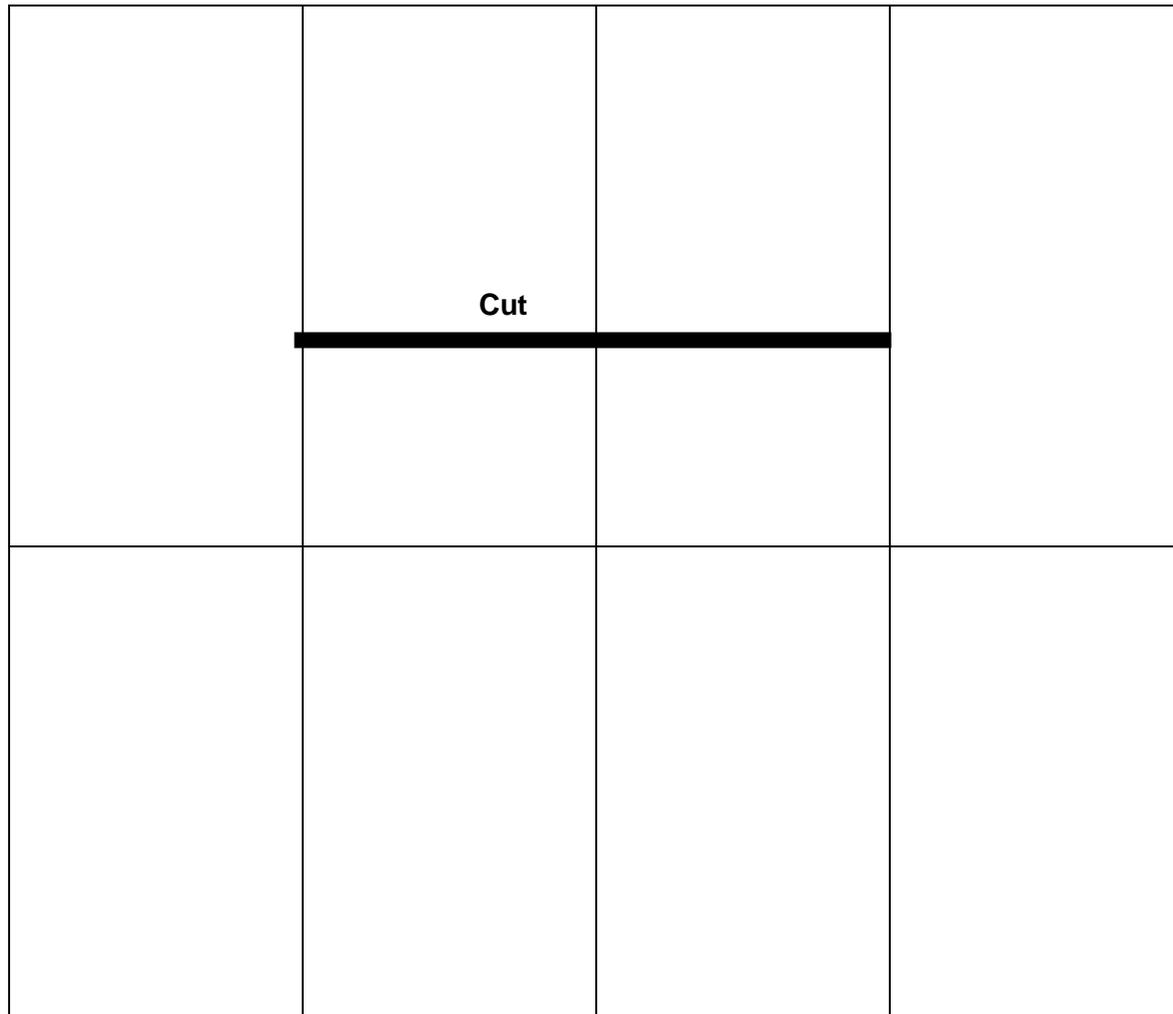
I try (something it makes an effort for or about)

I am (repeat the first line of the poem)

["It" refers to the freedoms of the First Amendment



**Mountain Book**



**Materials Needed:**

- One sheet of 8 ½" by 11" (or larger) paper
- News paper/magazine/Internet articles
- Scissors
- Stapler



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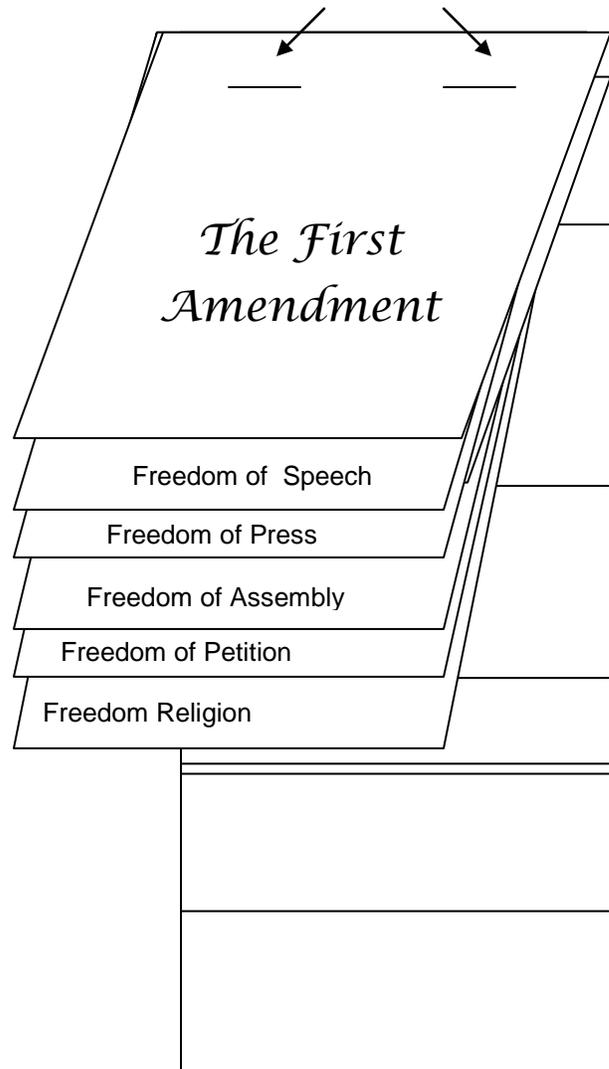
## Directions:

1. Fold paper in half lengthwise. Open.
2. Fold paper in half widthwise. Open.
3. Turn paper over. Fold in the ends to the widthwise fold. Open.
4. Fold paper lengthwise and cut up the box from the middle fold to the second fold. Open.
5. Fold in half lengthwise
6. Push the ends together so the middle section opens.
7. Hold two ends together and push in. Wrap the outside cover over the middle section.
8. Staple along edge to keep book secure.



Step Book

Staple here



**Materials Needed:**

- Six sheets of 8 ½" by 14" (or larger) paper
- Stapler
- Pencil
- Crayons/markers/ colored pencils



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## Directions:

1. Offset sheets of paper by one inch.
2. Fold the top over as shown, so that each page is set back from the one below.
3. Staple the fold.
4. Because ends of staples can be sharp, put a piece of clear or colored tape over the staple.



## Why Is This Important To Me? Bill of Rights.... First Amendment Freedoms Project

Students will:

- distinguish the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment
- examine ways the First Amendment freedoms have affected everyday life
- analyze why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms

Choose one of three extended learning assignments:

1. Create a “Mountain Book” (see handout for construction direction). Students will clip from a daily newspaper examples of stories or photos that deal with each of the five freedoms protected by the First Amendment: religion (church meetings, religious celebrations, religious issues, etc.); speech (speaker addressing an audience, letters to the editor, columnists, etc.); press (editorials, stories about press conferences, interviews, etc.); assembly (stories of meetings, demonstrations, parades, etc.); petition (articles dealing with citizens protesting governmental policy, with citizens criticizing government officials, with people organizing in opposition to those in authority, etc.). In addition, summarize in a sentence or two the nature of each example and analyze why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms. (Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation)
2. Compose “I Am...” poems (see handout for format) using each protected right of the First Amendment as the basis of the poems. Then students will place the poems as the center of a collage that distinguishes the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment and illustrates the need for citizens to use First Amendment freedoms responsibly including what could happen when people are not responsible with their rights... Examples: freedom of speech ~Yell “fire” in a theater, freedom of press ~ take photos of people’s personal lives, freedom of assembly ~ riots break out during a protest, etc. (Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation)



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3. Construct a “Step Book” (see handout for construction directions) that distinguishes the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment, demonstrates how each First Amendment freedom affects everyday life, and why it is important to be responsible with these rights and freedoms. Students will illustrate and write a brief summary for each freedom. Illustrations can be student drawn and/or computer generated. (Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation)