

## A Hero for Liberty

**Author: Pat Ortiz**

Antilles High School, Ft. Buchanan, Puerto Rico

### About this Lesson

*The National Constitution Center announced that former British Prime Minister Tony Blair will receive the 2010 Liberty Medal. This award is given annually to men and women of courage and conviction who strive to secure the blessings of liberty to people around the globe. Students will discuss and further define the criterion, with the help of the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution, and use it to nominate an individual who lived during the Founding Era. In groups, students will research and nominate Founders for the Liberty Medal as if the year were 1788 (first anniversary for the signing of the U.S. Constitution).*

**Grade(s) Level**

6-11

**Classroom Time**

2, 45 minute class period

**Handouts**

Founding Fathers Chart

Preamble Worksheet

**Constitution Connections**

Preamble: "to secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity"

**Background**

Established in 1988 to commemorate the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, the Liberty Medal was first awarded to Lech Walesa and since then has been awarded annually "to men and women of courage and conviction who strive to secure the blessings of liberty to people around the globe." To learn more about the medal and its recipients go to the National Constitution Center Liberty Medal website at <http://constitutioncenter.org/libertymedal/>

The National Constitution Center has announced that former British Prime Minister Tony Blair will receive the 2010 Liberty Medal in recognition of his steadfast commitment to conflict resolution. President Bill Clinton, Chair of the National Constitution Center, will award the prestigious medal to former Prime Minister Blair at a public ceremony on Monday, September 13, 2010 at 7:00 p.m., at the National Constitution Center on Independence Mall in Historic Philadelphia.

**Objectives**

Students will:

- Gain an understanding about the following: the Founding Fathers and their history, the Preamble to the Constitution, National Constitution Center, public action, and global citizenship
- Evaluate the criteria for the Liberty Medal
- Participate in democratic deliberation seeking group resolution

**Standards**

NSS-C.5-8.2 FOUNDATIONS OF THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

What are the foundations of the American Political System?

NSS-C.5-8.5 ROLES OF THE CITIZEN

What are the Roles of the Citizen in American Democracy?

NSS-C.9-12.4 OTHER NATIONS AND WORLD AFFAIRS

What is the Relationship of the United States to Other Nations and to World Affairs?

## Activity

### Warm Up

1. As students enter the classroom post the announcement for the current recipient of the 2010 Liberty Medal to be presented on Sept. 13<sup>th</sup> at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia.
2. Discuss with the students who Tony Blair, this year's recipient, is and why they think that Blair was chosen to receive this important award. Have students watch the Liberty Medal Award ceremony that will be broadcast live September 13th on WPVI-TV/6abc and webcast live on [www.6abc.com](http://www.6abc.com). If the ceremony has already passed you can find video of the ceremony on by searching "Liberty Medal" on [www.6abc.com](http://www.6abc.com).
3. Discuss how the actions of the current winner make the recipient worthy of the award.
4. Have the students research the National Constitution Center's Liberty Medal website at <http://constitutioncenter.org/libertymedal/> for past recipients and why they were awarded the medal.
5. Explain that they (the students) will embark on a history visit to the year 1788. The nation will celebrate the first anniversary of the signing of the Constitution. The elite in Philadelphia are planning a celebration. One of the highlights of the event will be a commemorative medal bestowed on a Founding Father who most exemplified our values of liberty.
6. The teacher will lead a discussion with the class listing the qualifications needed to receive this prestigious award. Be sure to keep the list posted for reference later in the lesson. The National Constitution Center "awards men and women of courage and conviction who strive to secure the blessings of liberty to people around the globe" as criterion for awarding this medal each year. Ask students to look at the Preamble to the United States Constitution and consider if any of its phrases might help further define the Liberty Medal criterion. You may use the **Preamble Worksheet** or project the Preamble using the National Constitution Center's Interactive Constitution at [http://ratify.constitutioncenter.org/constitution/index\\_no\\_flash.php](http://ratify.constitutioncenter.org/constitution/index_no_flash.php)

### Primary Activity

1. Students should log on to the National Constitution Center webpage at <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/founders>. This section highlights the Founders and provides brief information on each. The attached **Founding Fathers Chart** should be completed carefully as the information will be needed during the oral presentation to the panel.
2. Organize students into small groups so that each group represents one Founder.
3. After researching this Founding Father, students should then complete the **Preamble Worksheet** on the Founder and his connection to the Preamble. This activity will give

students further insight as to how the Founder exhibits constitutional values for Liberty Medal nomination.

4. Following their research, the group will give a presentation to the selection board composed of fellow classmates, school resource persons, administrators, or parents. It will be their job to convince the panel that this Founding Father is worthy of such a prestigious award, the Liberty Medal. Judges should judge the presentations with the criteria set forth by the class at the beginning of the lesson.
5. Following the presentation the panel can deliberate with the class and decide who is most worthy among the Founding Fathers to receive the Liberty Medal.
6. Students should be as creative as possible with their presentations. Some possible presentation examples might be: dressing as the character in typical period clothes, preparing a Power Point presentation, drawing a story board, making a video or delivering a radio announcement.
7. Finally the official announcement will be made to the class and the school community as to which Founding Father will be the 1788 Liberty Medal award winner.
8. To further assess student work, you may choose from one of the projects listed below.

## Assessment Options

1. Log on to the website [www.6abc.com](http://www.6abc.com) and view the actual presentation of the 2010 Liberty Medal presentation to be aired on Sept. 13. Following the viewing of the official ceremony students can write a comparison essay comparing the qualities of the 2010 medal winner and the class 1788 medal winner.
2. Sponsor a post celebration activity honoring the 1788 Liberty Medal winner. Students can research typical recipes from the era and share them with the panel and guests. For some ideas, you can view George Washington's bill for entertaining the delegates to the Constitution Convention at the City Tavern by going to Teaching American History Constitution Convention website at <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/convention/citytavern.html>
3. Construct a mini scrapbook highlighting the Founding Father winner. The scrapbook can trace his personal and professional life and how he helped to change the world by participating in the Constitutional Convention.
4. Write a letter to the Founding Father winner expressing to him your gratitude and your hopes for his continued success.
5. Plan the trip, clothes and lodging for the Founding Father and his family during his stay in Philadelphia to receive his medal. Be sure to include typical lodging, famous clothing designers and other items to make his trip perfect. Websites such as [www.NationalParks.com](http://www.NationalParks.com) and <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/convention/map/> can help in the planning.
6. Write a speech for the winning Founding Father to read in accepting the 1788 Liberty Medal.

U.S. Founding Fathers Worksheet

	Name	State	Education	Accomplishments	Noteworthy Qualities
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					

## *The Preamble Worksheet*

**Directions:** Read carefully the Preamble of the Constitution listed below. Review the list of your Founding Father candidates and select one that that best matches the qualifications of your Liberty Medal candidate.

*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,<sup>[1]</sup> 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.*

Name of Founder	Preamble Phrase(s)	Qualities of Preamble/Criterion Exhibited

Actions/Accomplishment that Highlight Founder's Qualities