COMING SOON:

DEVELOPING A POINT OF VIEW

1. Why would you want to learn principles in your school?

2. In your opinion, what are some negative outcomes of lacking these principles in your school?

3. Do you feel that your school provides you with a clear understanding of how the Constitution works?

4. If you were to revise a policy in your school, what would you change and why would you make this change?

5. Next, have your students rank their school for each constitutional principle on the following scale: 1 = very weakly supported, 2 = weakly supported, 3 = moderately supported, 4 = strongly supported, 5 = very strongly supported.

STUDENT HANDOUT 2

The Dasrob Bylaws, which are primarily focused on discipline and athletics, and which are the bread and butter of the bylaws, have been revised or updated since the Constitution was last amended.

The exchange of ideas is important to support the community and should be supported by everyone. By considering a variety of values, we can understand and celebrate the many different perspectives that are present in our schools and our society.

Developing a point of view gives students a stronger voice in school affairs and encourages democratic participation. This model allows faculty and students to address issues facing the community together, and enables students to practice the skills needed to become effective citizens and leaders.

Students should use evidence and examples that were previously listed to support their answers.

The Framers of the Constitution envisioned deliberation among a diverse citizenry who had a stake in the decisions being made. Deliberative democracy requires that individuals and groups be given the opportunity to express their views and to hear the views of others.

The Constitution is a living document that can be interpreted and applied in different ways. In a deliberative democracy, the Constitution serves as a guide and a source of inspiration for individuals and groups who are working to create a better world.

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The U.S. Constitution is more than the blueprint for our system of government. It embodies a set of principles we live by and represents who we are as a people. The challenge the Framers of the Constitution faced was to create a government strong enough to insure peace and order, but not so strong that it threatened individual rights. To ensure this balance is maintained, the principles outlined in the Constitution, such as the separation of powers and a system of checks and balances, allow for the creation, enforcement, and review of laws.

In order to create a safe and successful learning environment for students, our school systems have constructed their own sets of rules and regulations. Those rules attempt to strike the same balance the Framers did, between order and liberty. Considering that many schools draft their own constitutions and create student councils and government systems, do these models include the constitutional principles that the Founders considered absolutely necessary in order to maintain a democracy? What governing models do administrators look to when drafting their school policies? What are some of the ways students are able to make their voices heard? How do the rights of students in a school system differ from our individual rights as U.S. citizens? Are we able to see the principles of the Constitution in our school systems, and is there a need to incorporate more of these principles?

What do you think?

Examples of how we see the principles of the U.S. Constitution reflected in our school:

Ways our school can incorporate some of the principles of the U.S. Constitution:
The Exchange: A Marketplace of Student Ideas

STUDENT HANDOUT 1

APPROACHING THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

The U.S. Constitution is the foundation of our democracy. It was written in 1787 and has been amended 27 times since then. The Constitution outlines the structure of the government, the rights of citizens, and the procedures for amending the document. The Constitution is a living document, constantly evolving as it is interpreted and applied to new situations.

STUDENT HANDOUT 2

DEVELOPING A POINT OF VIEW

STUDENT WORKSHEET

The Exchange: A Marketplace of Student Ideas

Student Government Test 3: Lessons and Activities


The Exchange offers a unique opportunity for high school students to explore the principles of the U.S. Constitution. It allows students to engage in a dynamic exchange of ideas and to develop a deeper understanding of the Constitution and its role in American society.

Are the principles of the U.S. Constitution reflected in your school?

1. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
2. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
3. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
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10. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
11. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
12. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
13. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
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15. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
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18. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
19. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?
20. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?

Are the principles of the U.S. Constitution reflected in your school?

1. Draft a new school constitution.
2. Distribute the handout. Have your students look over the various articles of the Constitution and rank them based on criteria they feel are important for your school.
3. Consider questions such as “Can students be trusted to govern?” and “Should schools be more democratic?”

RESEARCH AND ASSESS: Identify the Constitutional Principles in Your School

Classroom Time:

High School

Middle School

RESEARCH AND ASSESS: Identify the Constitutional Principles in Your School

Classroom Time:

High School

Middle School

OPENING TOWN HALL MEETING

1. Do you have the right to a fair trial in our school? Explain.
2. Do you have the right to a fair trial in our school? Explain.
3. Do you have the right to a fair trial in our school? Explain.
4. Do you have the right to a fair trial in our school? Explain.
5. Do you have the right to a fair trial in our school? Explain.

DELIBERATION: Evaluate If Change Is Necessary

1. Do you think the current system of governance is working as it should?
2. Do you think the current system of governance is working as it should?
3. Do you think the current system of governance is working as it should?
4. Do you think the current system of governance is working as it should?
5. Do you think the current system of governance is working as it should?

PHASE OF THE COURSE: The Constitution in Action

1. Obeyed / Enforced

2. Obeyed / Enforced

3. Obeyed / Enforced

4. Obeyed / Enforced

5. Obeyed / Enforced

6. Obeyed / Enforced

7. Obeyed / Enforced

8. Obeyed / Enforced

9. Obeyed / Enforced

10. Obeyed / Enforced

11. Obeyed / Enforced

12. Obeyed / Enforced

13. Obeyed / Enforced

14. Obeyed / Enforced

15. Obeyed / Enforced

16. Obeyed / Enforced

17. Obeyed / Enforced

18. Obeyed / Enforced

19. Obeyed / Enforced

20. Obeyed / Enforced

WE THE PEOPLE

Our country faces numerous challenges: both foreign and domestic. We need citizens who understand that government is a forum where everyone has a voice and a stake in the outcome of decisions. We need citizens who can work together to achieve a common goal. We need citizens who can be stewards of our democracy and participate in our government.

To learn more about the U.S. Constitution, visit the National Constitution Center’s website at www.constitutioncenter.org.

Are the principles of the U.S. Constitution reflected in your school?
The Constitution

Second Amendment

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.

Framers' Decision on Second Amendment

Second Amendment was intended to place limits on the power of the federal government to create a national standing army. This was in response to the concerns raised during the ratification of the Constitution that the power of Congress to disarm the state militias and create a national standing army posed an intolerable threat to the sovereignty of the several States. There is no indication that the Framers intended to establish a right to violent revolution. This is why Abraham Lincoln's words still ring true today:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand." — Abraham Lincoln

Using the United States Constitution as a blueprint, We the School offers a model of student government that enables students to participate in a deliberative process.

Debate a Topic

...government of the people, for the people, by the people...

The Constitution was intended to reflect the values that should animate everyone. By considering a variety of values, we can understand not only the context for our common good, but also our deep discourses about what we value...and why others are not, and if any principles need to be better incorporated. In any deliberation you will need to be able to imagine both the potential for harmony and the likely possibility of conflict. This is why deliberation is such a key component of our work at We the School.

"We the People" is not a phrase. It is a call to action to reflect on our values and the Constitution in the hands of the people.

The Exchange is a dynamic way for high school students to discuss and practice the values and principles reflected in the Constitution. Participating students will engage in a deliberative process to develop a point of view on a specific constitutional topic, research the principles behind those topics, and present their conclusions to their peers and the larger community.

DEVELOPING A POINT OF VIEW

Point of View

Your students will work to craft a personal point of view on a specific constitutional topic, research the principles behind those topics, and present their conclusions to their peers and the larger community. Students will develop their points of view using the resources of We the School. The resources include a student workbook and handouts, an online discussion forum, and an email listserve to facilitate the exchange of ideas.

You can also use the Student Worksheet to help your students answer the following questions:

1. Why would you want these principles in your school?

2. In your opinion, what are some negative outcomes of having these principles in your school?

3. Are there policies in your school that uphold your right to due process? Searches and seizures? Freedom of expression?

4. In your opinion, are there some principles that are more important than others? Why or why not?

5. Are there policies in your school that uphold your right to due process? Searches and seizures? Freedom of expression?

Your students will develop their points of view using the resources of We the School. The resources include a student workbook and handouts, an online discussion forum, and an email listserve to facilitate the exchange of ideas.

Students will be able to compare and contrast specific aspects of their school system (including school policies and student government system) with the key principles found in the Constitution. Students will also be able to identify the constitutional principle(s) that are not present in their school and to consider the consequences for a student's life and liberty.

For in-depth review of the Framers' understanding of the principles of the Constitution, visit the Facilitating Discussion module at the National Constitution Center’s website at:


For an in-depth look at the legal, constitutional, and political issues presented in the handouts, after developing a point of view, your students will rank their arguments and present them to the larger We the School community in a Town Hall discussion. Students will be able to compare and contrast their arguments and conclude with a consensus statement.

One high school, student-created Website to facilitate the exchange.

45 minutes

High School

Middle School

What is Deliberation?

Deliberation is an important part of a democratic society. It is the process of carefully considering a problem or issue in order to reach a reasonable decision. This often involves discussion, debate, and negotiation. Deliberation is also an essential part of a democratic government. It is through deliberation that laws and policies are made, and it is through deliberation that citizens can hold their leaders accountable. Deliberation is a process that is essential to a functioning democracy. It is through deliberation that we can arrive at a consensus and make decisions that are in the best interest of all.

It was a response to concerns raised during the ratification of the Constitution that the power of Congress to disarm the state militias and create a national standing army posed an intolerable threat to the sovereignty of the several States. There is no indication that the Framers intended to establish a right to violent revolution. This is why Abraham Lincoln's words still ring true today:

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DEVELOPING A POINT OF VIEW

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The Constitution

Second Amendment

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.

Fourth Amendment's

Search and Seizure

Search

The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

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DEVELOPING A POINT OF VIEW

In your opinion, what are some negative outcomes of having the Second Amendment in your school?

3. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?

Student Government
to the Lesson

1. Write your name on the top of the sheet of paper below.

2. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?

3. Do you feel, as a student, that your voice is heard and represented in your school system?

4. Are there policies in your school that violate your right to due process? Searches and seizures? Freedom of expression?

5. In your view, are the principles of the U.S. Constitution reflected in your school? Explain your answer.

Student Government Tool

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Fourth Amendment’s Best Policies

You had one step closer to my life, in property, in reality that process of the doing away with the third degree in the interrogation procedures. It is necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

QUOTES TO CONSIDER

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

The legislative power of the United States Congress may be exercised by the Congress of the United States of America. It is well known that the legislative power of Congress is capable of execution by the executive power of the United States of America.

The legal power of the President of the United States may be exercised by the President of the United States of America. It is well known that the legal power of the President of the United States may be exercised by the executive power of the United States of America.

We the People

The U.S. Constitution is one of our nation’s founding documents. It is the supreme law of the land and serves as the foundation upon which our government is based. The U.S. Constitution is also a living document that is influenced by our nation’s history, our ongoing struggles as a nation, and our efforts to shape the future of our country.

The Constitution was written and signed during the summer of 1787. The men who came to Philadelphia that summer did so because they knew the direction of the country they loved needed to change. They deliberated for many months over the fundamental principles of government, and the Constitution of the United States was written and signed during the summer of 1787.

The Constitution reflects the values and ideals of its time, and it continues to be a source of inspiration and guidance for future generations. It is a document that has endured the test of time, and it is a testament to the enduring spirit of our nation. The U.S. Constitution is one of our nation’s founding documents. It is the supreme law of the land and serves as the foundation upon which our government is based. The U.S. Constitution is also a living document that is influenced by our nation’s history, our ongoing struggles as a nation, and our efforts to shape the future of our country.

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