

The Might of the Right

The impact of constitutional rights on individuals and society

Benchmark: SS.7.C.3.6 Evaluate constitutional rights and their impact on individuals and society.

Clarifications/Objectives:

- Students will recognize how individual rights shape involvement in the social, political, and economic systems.
- Students will recognize how the social, political, and economic systems in the United States are dependent upon individual rights.
- Students will use scenarios to recognize and/or evaluate options for exercising constitutional rights.
- Students will evaluate the impact of the government upholding and/or restricting individual constitutional rights.

Time: One class period

Materials:

- PowerPoint
- Handout A: The Might of the Right

Lesson Preparation

- **Complete Lesson 2.4: Bill of Rights prior to this lesson.** Students will need a background knowledge about individual rights in the U.S. Constitution to complete this activity.
- Review all handouts and PowerPoints
- Print and review the PowerPoint in “notes view”. The PowerPoint includes notes to guide the lesson.

Lesson Overview

Warm Up: Begin the lesson by using the PowerPoint to access the Bill of Rights (Shake It Off) video. Instruct students to note the rights listed in the song. Then, use the PowerPoint to have students identify other individual rights, including those not outlined in the Bill of Rights, by viewing pictures of individuals exercising those rights or the government upholding individual rights. The notes in the PowerPoint will include speaking points to address with the students. Ask students where they can find their individual rights listed (U.S. and Florida Constitutions).

Distribute Handout A. Have students work individually to evaluate their individual rights and select the two they think are the most important and the two they think are the least important. Students will need to include how they exercise these individual rights on a daily basis and why they are important or not as important to them. Then have students move into small groups (3 students) to discuss the rights they have selected, how these rights are used/exercised, and why they selected these rights. Students should try to reach a consensus on the two rights they think are the most important.

Continue with the PowerPoint. Discuss the 9th Amendment as it relates to individual rights. Students should understand that just because an individual right is not expressly included in the Constitution, does not mean they do not have the right.

Define social, political, and economic systems. Have students write in the space labeled “System” next to the rights they identified which system each right best fits (S – Social, P – Political, E – Economic). Students should be able to justify their response. Continue with the PowerPoint to show examples of individual rights being exercised within these systems.

Discuss the role of government in protecting and restricting individual rights. Explain that the purpose of the U.S. and Florida Constitutions is to protect the people from the government by identifying and protecting individual rights. Explain to students that rights are not absolute, meaning there are limits on our individual rights. Discuss some of these limits (see PowerPoint notes) and ask students for other times when individual rights might be restricted or limited. One extreme example of the limitation of individual rights is provided in the PowerPoint by highlighting the forced internment imposed on the Japanese Americans during World War II. Japanese Americans were placed in internment camps under the justification of domestic security.

Check for Understanding The final slide will include a question from the End of Course Exam Item Specifications book. Have the students independently write down their answer and ask student to explain how they made their decision.

Extension Activity: Have students play “Do I Have a Right?” on iCivics to learn more about their individual rights and how to recognize how those rights are exercised/protected.

<https://www.icivics.org/games/do-i-have-right>

The Might of the Right

Instructions: The rights listed below are some of the constitutional rights found in the U.S. Constitution.

- Select the two rights you think are the most important and the two rights you think are the least important. Write them in the appropriate columns below.
- Explain how you exercise these individual rights and why you think they are the most/least important.
- Classify the rights as part of the social system (S), political system (P), or economic system (E).
 - Freedom of religion
 - Freedom of speech
 - Freedom of press
 - Freedom of assembly
 - Right to petition the government
 - Right to protection from unreasonable searches and seizures
 - Right to protection from self-incrimination
 - Right to trial by jury
 - Right to legal counsel
 - Right to protection from cruel and unusual punishment
 - Right to vote

Most Important Rights		Least Important Rights	
Right:	System:	Right:	System:
I exercise this right by...		I exercise this right by...	
This right is important because...		This right is not as important as others because...	
Right:	System:	Right:	System:
I exercise this right by...		I exercise this right by...	
This right is important because...		This right is not as important as others because...	