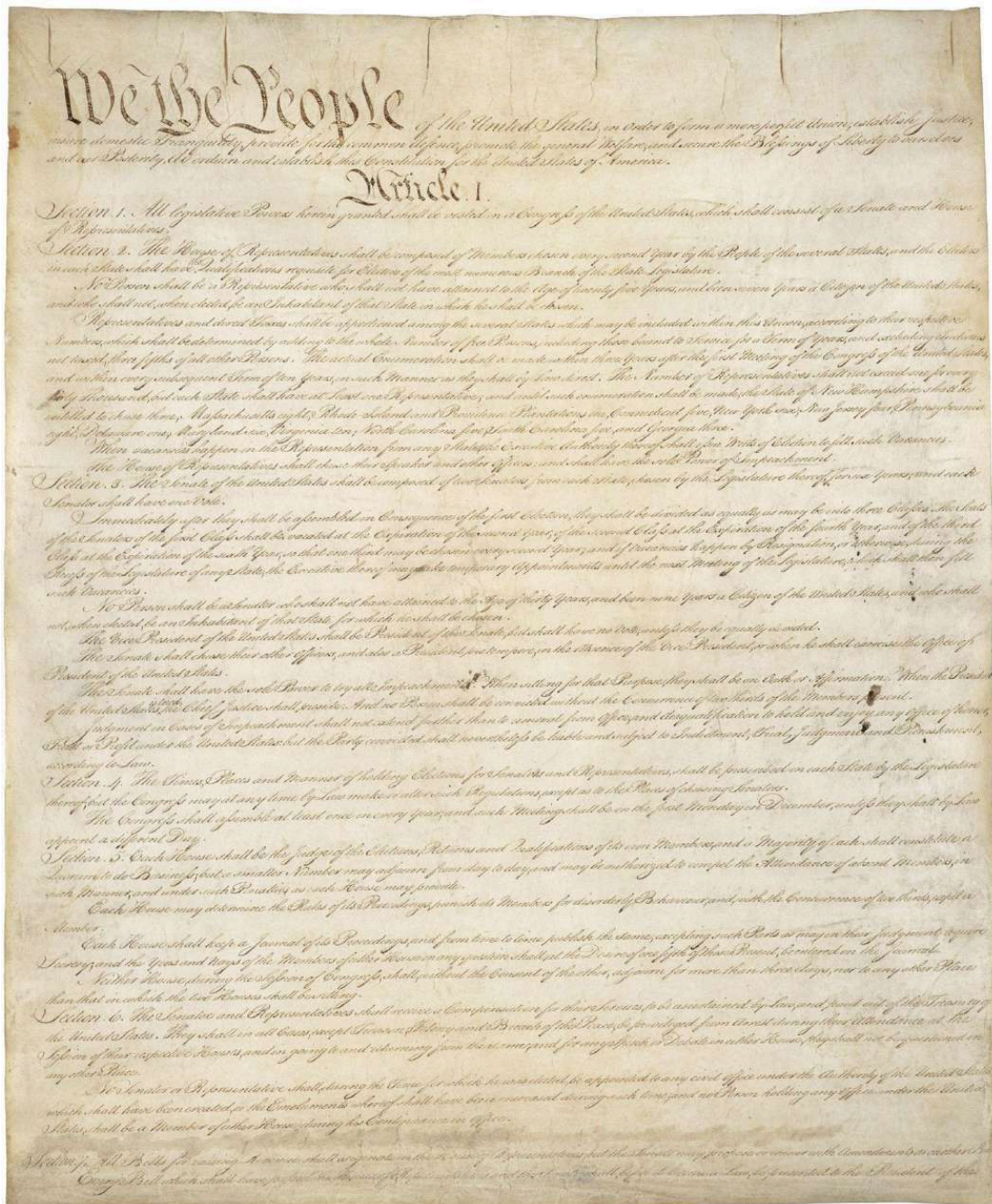


3-5: The Constitution and Our Community Teacher Guide



How to Use this Guide

Dear Educators,

Thank you for your interest in The Constitution and Our Community virtual program for grades 3-5! This guide outlines the program's guiding questions, standards alignment, and program logistics. It also includes instructions and material for facilitating the program's **required** pre-program activity as well as a recommended post-program activity. We look forward to connecting with your students soon to learn more about the United States Constitution!

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National Standards Alignment

National Standards for Civics and Government	College, Career, & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards
NSCG.K-4.2.F.1 Students should be able to identify ways people can work together to promote the values and principles of American democracy.	D2.Civ.2.3-5: Explain how a democracy relies on people's responsible participation, and draw implications for how individuals should participate.
NSCG.5-8.1.A.1 Students should be able to explain the meaning of the terms civic life, politics, and government.	D2.Civ.7.3-5. Apply civic virtues and democratic principles in school settings
NSCG.5-8.4.E.1 Students should be able to explain the relationship between participating in civic and political life and the attainment of individual and public goals.	D2.Civ.8.3-5: Identify core civic virtues and democratic principles that guide government, society, and communities.

Required Pre-program Activity

Historical Context

Note: The following provides background information for content covered during The Constitution and Our Community virtual program. It is adapted from material available online at [About the Constitution | National Archives](#).

Just a few years after the Revolutionary War, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and George Washington feared their young country was on the brink of collapse. America's first constitution, the Articles of Confederation, gave the Confederation Congress the power to make rules and request funds from the states, but it had no enforcement powers, couldn't regulate commerce, or print money. The states' disputes over territory, war pensions, taxation, and trade threatened to tear the young country apart. Alexander Hamilton helped convince Congress to organize a Grand Convention of state delegates to work on revising the Articles of Confederation.

The Constitutional Convention

The Constitutional Convention assembled in Philadelphia in May of 1787. The delegates shuttered the windows of the State House and swore secrecy so they could speak freely. Although they had gathered to revise the Articles of Confederation, by mid-June they had decided to completely redesign the government. There was little agreement about what form it would take.

After three hot summer months of equally heated debate, the delegates appointed a Committee of Detail to put its decisions in writing. Near the end of the convention, a Committee of Style and Arrangement kneaded it into its final form, condensing 23 articles into seven in less than four days.

On September 17, 1787, 38 delegates signed the Constitution. It was an extraordinary achievement. Tasked with revising the existing government, the delegates came up with a completely new one. Wary about centralized power and loyal to their states, they created a powerful central government. Representing wildly different interests and views, they crafted compromises. It stands today as one of the longest-lived and most emulated constitutions in the world.

The Constitution of the United States contains a preamble and seven articles that describe the way the government is structured and how it operates. The first three articles establish the three branches of government and their powers: Legislative (Congress), Executive (office of the President,) and Judicial (Federal court system). A system of checks and balances prevents any one of these separate powers from becoming dominant. Articles four through seven describe the relationship of the states to the Federal Government, establish the Constitution as the supreme law of the land, and define the amendment and ratification processes.

Pre-program Activity Instructions

Note: The pre-program activity supports student learning about the Constitution . This activity includes important ideas that the program itself builds upon and that must be covered in advance to ensure that students have a successful virtual program experience.

The Constitution and Our Community

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Objectives: After completing the Constitution and Our Community pre-program activity, students will be able to:

- Define the term community
- Identify the different communities that they are a part of
- Describe the way we establish and maintain order in a community
- Connect the Constitution to their own lives and communities

Activity Outline:

1. **Introduction:** Think-Pair-Share

- What is a community?
 - **Think:** Ask students to choose two to three words that they would use to define the word community
 - **Pair:** In small groups, have students share their words and then, as a group, come up with a definition for the term community
 - **Share:** Ask for a few groups to share their definitions
- A community is a group of people that share something in common. This could include location, language, religion, rules, and/or government.

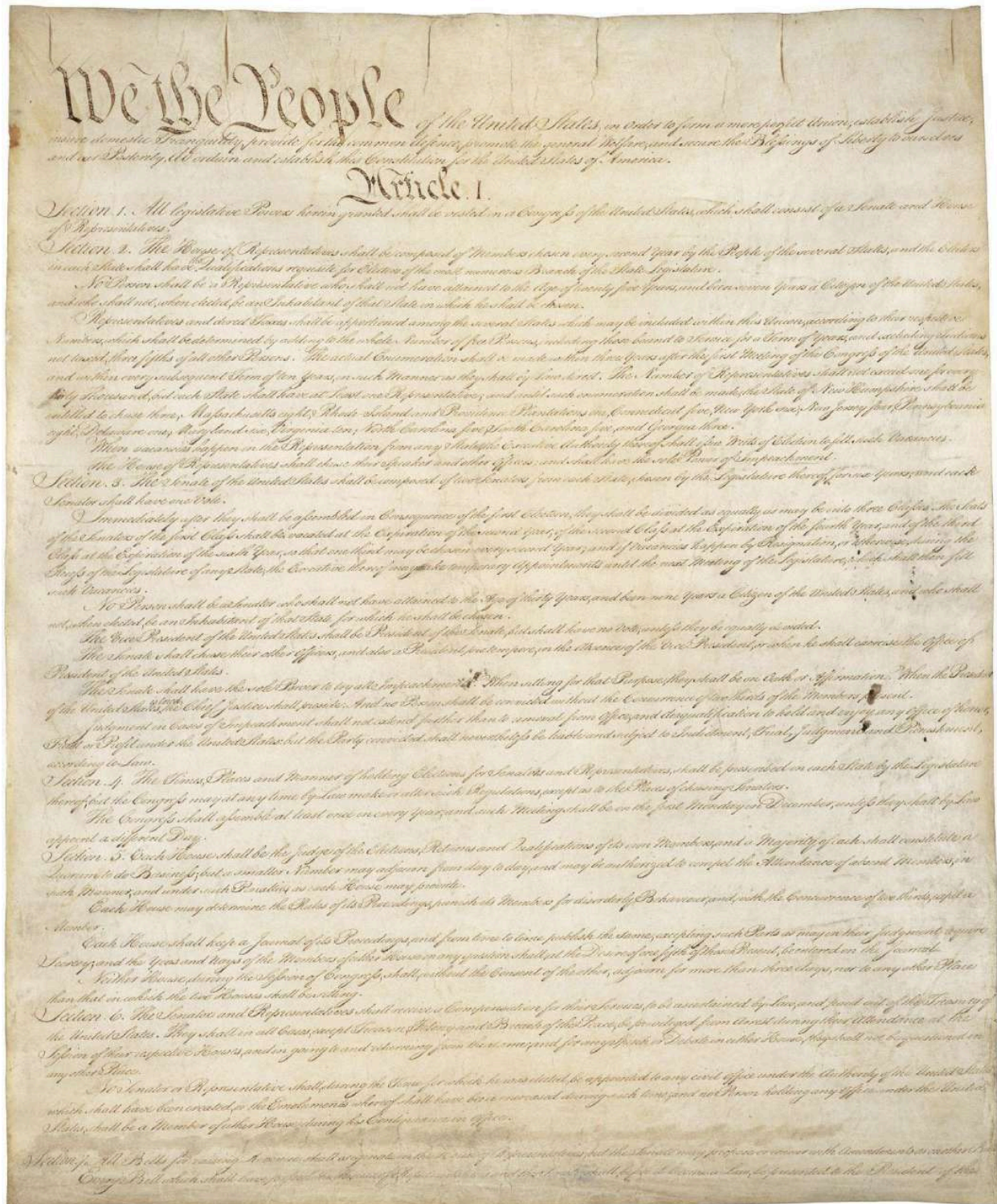
2. **Main Activity:** Community Graphic Organizer

- This activity should be completed as a whole group, in small groups, or individually.
- Each student should receive a graphic organizer (see [page 7](#)). Feel free to modify the graphic organizer as needed.
- Have students put the word “you” in the first (smallest) arch and then the name of their classroom in the second arch. In this classroom, you are a part of a community – a group of people that come together to learn and help each other.
- **Ask students:** What different groups or communities are you a part of at the school outside of the classroom?
 - Potential student answers include:
 - Grade
 - Sports Team
 - Club
 - School itself

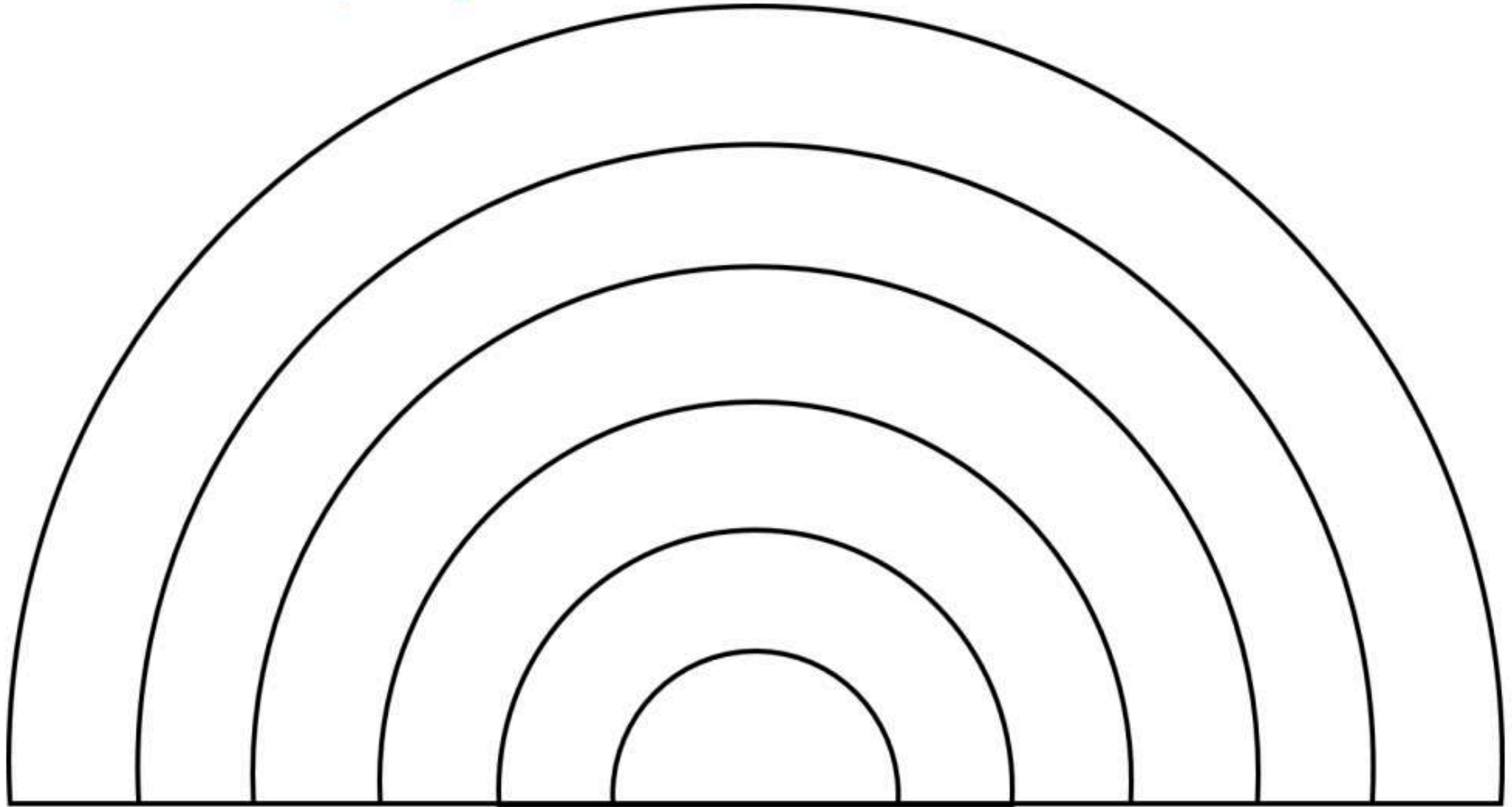
- Have students consider the size of the communities they mention. Students should place the names of smaller communities in the smaller arches and the larger communities in the larger arches.
- Explain to students that their classroom is part of an even bigger community (their school). Their school is also a part of a larger community.
- **Ask students:** Outside of school, what other groups or communities are you a part of?
 - Potential student answers include:
 - Family
 - Neighborhood
 - Teams/clubs outside of school
 - Town
 - County
 - State
 - Have students consider the size of the communities they mention. Students should place the names of smaller communities in the smaller arches and the larger communities in the larger arches. The goal is for students to organize the communities they are a part of from smallest to largest. For the purpose of this activity, the final (largest) arch should be the United States of America.
- Rules and Responsibilities within our Communities
 - Explain to students that any time people come together in a community, there are different ideas about what, how, and when things should be done.
 - One way to establish and maintain order, and limit conflict in a community, is to create laws and rules.
 - **Turn & Talk:** Turning to the people around them, have students discuss the following questions.
 - What rules do we have in this classroom?
 - Why do we have these rules?
 - Ask for a few volunteers to share their responses
 - Rules help ensure order and safety for our community. If we look at each of the communities we are a part of, we can find additional examples of rules.
 - Let's think about the largest community we identified today—the United States.
 - Does anyone have any examples of laws we have in the United States?
 - In addition to providing order and keeping people safe, laws also help to protect people's rights—things we get to do.
 - What are some examples of the rights we have in the classroom?
 - What are other rights that we have in the United States?
 - We all have a responsibility to participate in our communities in a way that respects the rights of others.

- Responsibilities are things we have to do. Sometimes we have different responsibilities based on our roles in our community. Let's think about our classroom as an example:
 - What are your responsibilities as students in our classroom?
 - What are my responsibilities as your teacher in our classroom?
- **Program Connection:** As members of a community, we agree to respect each other's rights, follow the rules, and fulfill our responsibilities. A written document can serve as a symbol of our agreement to do these things. When the United States declared independence from Great Britain with the Declaration of Independence, that was just the beginning. What did it actually mean to be an independent United States? Who would be in charge? How would the country run? The Constitution provided us with this structure. This document united states with different interests, laws, and cultures under one system of government. The Constitution of the United States is a document that describes the way the government is structured and its responsibilities, that protects the rights of the people, and serves as the highest law of the land. The Constitution established a framework for government, but its success depends on the active and responsible participation of the people. The phrases "we the people" & "to form a more perfect union" from the preamble of the Constitution remind us that we all play an important role in making our communities better.

Pre-program Activity Documents



Our Communities Graphic Organizer



How to Prepare Students for *The Constitution and Our Community* Virtual Program

Guiding Questions

- How does the Constitution help people work together in communities?

Program Overview

During this interactive program, students will learn about the Constitution and how it connects to their communities. By analyzing primary sources from the National Archives, students will explore how people throughout history have used their voices and worked together to improve their communities.

Guidance for Virtual Program

Note: The following outlines keys for success for The Constitution and Our Community virtual program.

Before Attending The Constitution and Our Community Virtual Program

1. Please complete the required pre-program activity to prepare students for the virtual program.
2. Please print or provide students with digital access to the program documents (see [page 10](#)). Please be aware that the educational activity for the program requires students to be divided in small groups, with each group receiving a set of documents listed below. There are 3 sets of documents. More than one group can receive the same set, but it is **important for there to be some variation across the classroom.**
 - [The United States Constitution, Page 1](#)
 - Petition from children from New Jersey to end Slavery
 - **Set 1:**
 - [Students peacefully protest after Hurricane Katrina](#)
 - [Letter Asking for a Kids Day](#)
 - **Set 2:**
 - [Youth March for Integrated Schools](#)
 - [Keep America Beautiful Day](#)
 - **Set 3:**
 - [National Day of Service at MLK Memorial](#)
 - Letter to President Reagan from Jay Smrekar and David Fish

During The Constitution and Our Community Virtual Program

1. Please plan to connect to your scheduled program a minimum of **5 minutes** before the scheduled start time. Please note: The NARA Education Team facilitates multiple student programs every day. To ensure every student receives the best program possible, the NARA education team will reschedule student programs for groups that connect more than 15 minutes late.

2. We require that the requesting educator or another educator from your institution be present during the program to observe the session and support classroom management.
3. The Constitution and Our Community is an interactive virtual program. The NARA Educator facilitating the program may request the classroom teacher's help to call on students to share their responses.
4. Students will interact with National Archives documents during this program through whole group and small group activities. Please have students seated for the program in a way that enables them to have small group discussions (3-4 students per group).

Program documents - p.10-21

Note: Please ensure that students have access to the following documents during The Constitution and Our Community virtual program. During this program, students will gather information from these documents, so it is important that students are able to clearly view them.

We the People

of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquillity, 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.

Article 1.

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 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 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 including 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 direct. The Number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty Thousand, but each State shall have at least one Representative, and each Enumeration shall be made, the State of New Hampshire shall be entitled to have three, Massachusetts eight, Rhode Island and Providence Plantations one, Connecticut five, New York six, New Jersey four, Pennsylvania seven, Delaware one, Maryland one, 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 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 Term of any Senator, the Executive of the State in which he shall have acted, shall fill such Vacancies.

No Person shall be a Senator who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty Years, and seven 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 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 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 Place of choosing Senators.

The Congress shall assemble at least once in every Year, and such Meetings shall be on the first Monday of 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 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 Senate 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 Term 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 during such Term; and no Person holding any Office under the United States, shall be a Member of either House during the 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 to Matter of Increase or Diminution of Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises.

Original Bill which shall come from the House of Representatives, and the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as to Matter of Increase or Diminution of Taxes, Duties, Imposts and Excises.

To the Senate and House of Representatives
of the United States, in Congress assembled:

We the undersigned children of Eagleswood Perthamby,
New Jersey, Beg you to have slavery abolished and not
have any more children sold;

William S. Page. || George Conroy.

James L. Page.

Buba Page.

Geo Inness.

Rosa B. Inness.

Leilie Inness.

Thellen Inness.

Robert W. Macan.

Thomas Arlington Macan.

Nelson J. P. Macan.

Sarah B. Read.

Beatha Read.

Nellie Gray Cone.

Edith A. Palmer.

Frank A. Sterling

Set 1 Records

Dear Stacy: 15

0-1 @ those who joined with you in writing. 12

DEAL School
DEAL NJ.
Third Grade

Dear, Mr. Ford

Mothers and fathers get to have Father Day
and Mother Day. So why can't we have
Kids day? Because we have Birthdays But. so
do our parents. And PLEASE let us have
Kids day.

Yours TRU 14

Saul Sabin Penny Pissas Stacy Sylvia
Sean Scruffa David Delisa ~~CHRISSE~~ Rubin
Ira Saltzman Billy Bradshaw Frieda Seruya
Vinny Genta HADLEY EICHLER Michele Addico
Kyle Van Dyke Gail OBrien
Steven O. Kim Schuler Jenni Sabin David Burk

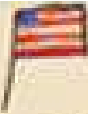
Set 2 Records





Set 3 Records





Dear Mr. Reagan

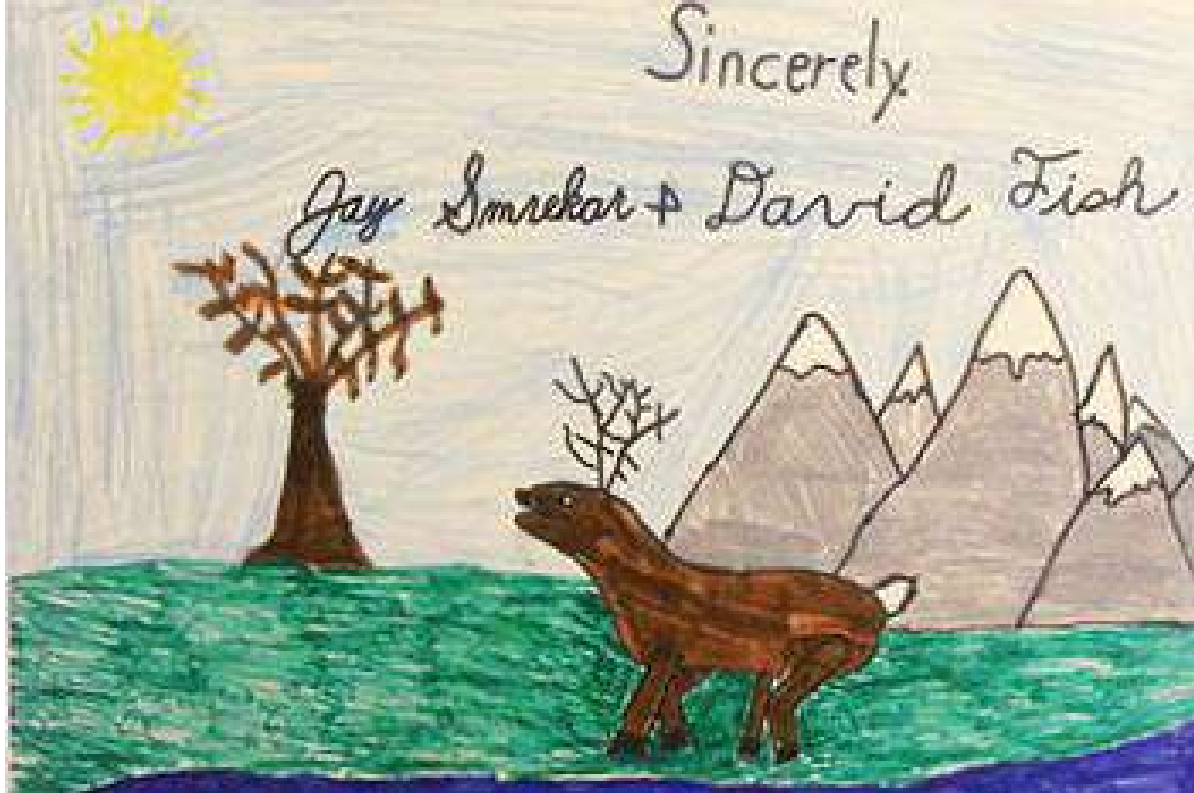


Our class made 1,000 paper cranes because there's a Japanese legend that if you make 1,000 paper cranes your wish will come true.

Our wishes are: No more nuclear weapons because millions of people would die and we wish you would help save the wildlife because we both like animals.

Sincerely,

Jay Smrekar + David Fish





The Constitution and Our Community

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. How are people working together or participating in their community?

2. What problem or issue were they trying to solve?

3. What does this record teach us about working together?

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Post-Program Activities

How can people make a difference?

Estimated time: 45 minutes

During this activity, Students will discover the many ways people can make a difference in their communities and influence their government. This activity can be used when teaching about civic participation and rights and responsibilities.

To complete this activity, students will match examples of civic engagement to records from the National Archives to answer the question: how can people make a difference?

The [teacher page](#) provides an overview of the activity and suggested teaching instructions.

Students can access the [student page](#) on their devices or you can project or screen share the page with the whole class.

Service Learning Project

Service learning is where the idea of civic engagement crosses over to real-world experience. A service learning project can promote valuable skills like communication, organization, teamwork, and empathy as students work to help others in their community. Service learning projects can take many different forms; the following suggestions are provided to help you get started. While much of the Constitution and the Community program focuses on government actions, students can also consider how people can take action every day to make a difference in their communities.

1. Identify a problem facing your school or your community

- a. You can select a couple of problems in advance for your students to vote on, or ask students to brainstorm issues they have observed in their communities or at school.

2. Research

- a. Ask students to think about how they can learn more about the problem. This might include researching different organizations in the community that focus on this issue or working in teams to draft emails or letters to experts on the issue your class has chosen to address.

3. Brainstorm

- a. As a class, brainstorm solutions to the problem. Remind students that community service can take many different forms, including; collecting donations, donating time or skills to a project, using your voice to raise awareness about an issue, or creating something to educate or inspire others.

4. Plan

- a. After students decide on a solution to pursue, it's time to make a plan. Ask students to think about what steps they need to take to solve the problem. Guide students in creating next steps to make their solution happen.

5. Take Action

- a. Working within the rules and requirements of your school and any partner organization, have your students put their service learning project into place.

6. Reflect

- a. Ask your students to journal about their experiences with the project. What did they learn about the issue facing their community? What new skills did they develop in trying to solve the problem? How does helping their community make them feel?

Here are some sample service learning projects your class might take on:

- **Pen Pals with Seniors** - Students develop an appreciation for and discover the value of human connection as they write and send cards to residents of local assisted living centers.
- **Beautify Your School** - Students learn about important social issues as they create murals in their school or classroom.
- **History in Your Own Back Yard** - Students learn about the contributions of important people in their community by researching them and creating “tabletop museums” for display in their school, local library, village or town hall or community center.
- **Plastic Round-up** - Students raise awareness of the problems associated with plastic pollution and make their community cleaner by organizing a plastic collection and recycling program.
- **Shelter Supply Drive** - Students learn of the needs of others as they collect supplies needed for community residents living in shelters.

Additional Educational Resources

Note: The following educational activities and resources are designed to support student learning. These activities are not required. Feel free to facilitate only the activities that you think would be most helpful for your students.

Resources on the Constitution from the National Archives

- [The Constitution of the United States](#)
- [The Constitution of the United States: A Transcription](#)
- [Constitution of the United States - A History](#)
- [Constitution of the United States \(1787\)](#)
- [Teaching the Constitution \(DocsTeach\)](#)

DocsTeach Educational Activities

- [The Constitution at Work: Elementary Edition](#)
- [We the People: Elementary Edition](#)