

Understanding the Bill of Rights

Grade 4 • SOCIAL-STUDIES • Students identify basic freedoms and protections contained in the Bill of Rights and apply them to age-appropriate situations. • Standards: D2.Civ.2.3-5, D2.Civ.10.3-5

Read each situation below. Then write which freedom or right from the Bill of Rights is being used or protected.

1. Maria writes a story for the school newspaper about ways to improve the cafeteria menu. Which freedom is she using?
2. David and his family attend their church service every Sunday morning. Which freedom protects their right to do this?
3. A group of neighbors holds a meeting in the park to discuss building a new playground. Which freedom allows them to gather together like this?
4. Officer Johnson needs to search Mr. Lee's house for evidence, but the judge says he must get a warrant first. Which amendment requires the police to get a warrant?
5. Sarah is accused of stealing a bicycle, but she has the right to have a trial where a group of citizens will decide if she is guilty. What is this group of citizens called?
6. When Marcus is arrested, the police officer reads him his rights and tells him he does not have to answer questions that might make him look guilty. Which amendment protects this right?
7. A person on trial is told they have the right to have a lawyer help defend them in court, even if they cannot afford to pay for one. Which amendment guarantees the right to a lawyer?
8. The judge decides that someone accused of a minor crime must pay one million dollars to get out of jail while waiting for trial. The lawyer argues this amount is unfair and too high. Which amendment protects against punishments that are too harsh or unfair?

9. A town creates a new rule that families have the right to make decisions about their children's education at home. Someone says this right is not listed in the Bill of Rights. Which amendment says that people can have rights even if they are not specifically written in the Constitution?

10. The state of California passes a law about how schools in California should teach science. The national government says states have the power to make decisions about education in their own state. Which amendment reserves certain powers for the states?

Answer Key — Understanding the Bill of Rights

For the teacher / parent. Do not distribute with the worksheet.

1. Freedom of speech (or freedom of the press) *(The First Amendment protects freedom of speech and freedom of the press, allowing people to express their opinions in writing.)*
2. Freedom of religion *(The First Amendment protects freedom of religion, allowing people to practice their faith.)*
3. Freedom of assembly (or freedom to assemble) *(The First Amendment protects freedom of assembly, allowing people to gather peacefully in groups.)*
4. Fourth Amendment *(The Fourth Amendment protects against unreasonable searches and seizures and generally requires a warrant.)*
5. A jury *(The Sixth and Seventh Amendments protect the right to a trial by jury.)*
6. Fifth Amendment *(The Fifth Amendment protects against self-incrimination, meaning you cannot be forced to testify against yourself.)*
7. Sixth Amendment *(The Sixth Amendment guarantees the right to have assistance of counsel (a lawyer) in criminal cases.)*
8. Eighth Amendment *(The Eighth Amendment protects against excessive bail and cruel and unusual punishment.)*
9. Ninth Amendment *(The Ninth Amendment states that people have other rights beyond those specifically listed in the Constitution.)*
10. Tenth Amendment *(The Tenth Amendment reserves powers not given to the federal government for the states and the people.)*