

Brainstorm the Bill of Rights

Summary

Quick jump start to a discussion of the rights included in the Bill of Rights.

Time Frame

1 class periods of 30 minutes each

Materials

Copy of the Constitution

Background for Teachers

Be prepared to know all of the specific rights in the Bill of Rights as individual rights

Intended Learning Outcomes

Students will examine, list, and understand the specific individual rights that are contained in the Bill of Rights. Students will then be able to answer the question, "How does this apply to me?"

Instructional Procedures

Have students take out a piece of paper and list as many individual rights as they can from the Bill of Rights. Some students will list only one or two, which is fine. Allow 5 minutes for personal brainstorm.

Have students partner up. They should share their lists with each other, adding their partners' rights to their page. If there is doubt about a right they should mark it with a question mark. Give about 5 minutes.

Create teams of four from two partnerships. They should repeat the activity from step 2.

Have a team volunteer or pick a team to begin first and call out the rights on their lists. If they are really in the Bill of Rights list the right on the board. If it is not in the Bill of Rights list off to the side (for example many students will say privacy, right to vote or right to choose your career which are not specifically listed and should be listed off to the side)

Rotate through each group adding rights that are not already listed.

Have students get out their Constitutions and turn to the copy of the Bill of Rights. As you read through (or have a student read through) each amendment circle the amendments on the board as you read them from the Constitution. Add rights that the students did not come up with on their own.

Discuss with students how there are many specific rights that they may or may not have remembered or knew. For example, in the first amendment there is the right to freely exercise your religion, the right to not have an established religion, the right to free speech, the right to free press, the right to assemble and the right to petition.

Depending on time and level of students you can discuss the rights that were not specifically listed and how they 9th and 10th amendments come into play.

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