



What are rights and why are they important?

Dear Educator,

Thank you for your interest in the *Our Classroom Bill of Rights!* distance learning program from the National Archives for grades K–2. Within this guide you will find everything you need to prepare your class for the upcoming videoconference program.

During this distance learning program, students will be introduced to the concept of rights, discuss why rights are important, and learn about the Bill of Rights with the help of Sammy the American Bald Eagle puppet. Students will be asked to brainstorm rights that they think are important for their classroom and will vote on the top four most important rights to create their own Classroom Bill of Rights.

During the videoconference, students will need:

- To be divided into pairs. The students will work together to come up with a right they think is important for their classroom.

If you have any questions, please contact us at distancelearning@nara.gov.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

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National Standards Alignment

NATIONAL CENTER FOR HISTORY IN THE SCHOOLS HISTORY STANDARDS [↗](#)

Standards for Grades K–4 Topic 3 Standard 4A

The student demonstrates an understanding of how the United States government was formed and of the nation's basic democratic principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Explain the importance of the basic principles of American democracy that unify us as a nation; our individual rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; responsibility for the common good; equality of opportunity and equal protection of the law; freedom of speech and religion; majority rule with protection for minority rights; and limitations on government, with power held by the people and delegated by them to their elected officials who are responsible to those who elected them to office.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR CIVICS AND GOVERNMENT [↗](#)

NSS.C.K-4.C.1

Necessity and purposes of government. Explain probable consequences of the absence of government and of rules and laws. Explain that the basic purposes of government in the United States are to protect the rights of individuals and to promote the common good.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS [↗](#)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.1

With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.K.4

With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about unknown words in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.1

Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1.4

Ask and answer questions to help determine or clarify the meaning of words and phrases in a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2.1

Ask and answer such questions as *who*, *what*, *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how* to demonstrate understanding of key details in a text.





Guidance for Pre-Program Activity

WHAT ARE RIGHTS? ACTIVITY (REQUIRED)

TIME: 30 MINUTES

Teacher Note: The objective of this activity is to review rights and the importance rights.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Conduct a class discussion on rights. Define what rights are and ask students to explain why they think rights are important.

VARIATIONS:

Before the pre-program lesson, you may find it helpful to review some of the following vocabulary.

OUR CLASSROOM BILL OF RIGHTS! VOCABULARY

assemble: to meet together in one place

Bill of Rights: the first ten amendments to the United States Constitution; a document containing the rights that Americans hold most dear

freedom: being able to do what you want to do

protest: a complaint or objection against an idea, an act, or a way of doing things; an event in which people gather to show disapproval of something

religion: a system of beliefs and practices worshipping a God or gods

right: something to which a person has a just claim; something we have or can do freely

speech: the expression of thoughts in spoken words

worship: to pray





Guidance for Videoconference Materials

There are no materials required for the videoconference program.

Students will need to be paired up to do a “Think, Pair, Share” activity during the program.

For your reference, this is the complete list of images and documents that may be presented during the *Our Classroom Bill of Rights!* distance learning program.

IMAGE	DOCUMENTS
Photo of the <i>Exxon Valdez</i>	6455493
Photo of oil spill clean up	6440608
Letter written by Kelli Middlestead	596719
Photo of sea otters floating on ice	6002132
Photo of sea otters in the water with ice	6002134
Photo of sea otters in the water	6002131
Photo of sea otter in the water	6002149





Post-Program Activities

1. OUR CLASSROOM BILL OF RIGHTS!

The National Archives facilitator will provide the teacher with a copy of the Classroom Bill of Rights! that was created during the distance learning program. Have each student sign the provided Classroom Bill of Rights! and display it in the classroom for the remainder of the school year.

2. EXERCISE YOUR RIGHTS!

During our program with the National Archives, Sammy the Bald Eagle learned that he has the right to speak up about issues that are important to him and the right to tell the government about changes he wants to see in his community.

Have students practice this right by writing a letter (individually or as a class) to the principal of your school about a rule that should be changed, an event they think should be held at the school, or a privilege students think they should have for reaching a certain goal. Submit the letter(s) to the school principal to see if the students' civic action is recognized.

MATERIALS:

- Blank paper
- Pencils, pens, crayons, or markers





Additional Online Resources from the National Archives

DOCSTEACH

Access thousands of primary sources—letters, photographs, speeches, posters, maps, videos, and other document types—spanning the course of American history. We're always adding more!

Borrow from an ever-expanding collection of document-based activities created by the National Archives, and teachers from around the world. Copy and modify activities for your students.

Create your own activities using the online tools. It's as simple as: (1) selecting a tool, (2) choosing your primary sources, and (3) customizing instructions.

THE 225th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS ON DOCSTEACH

A special DocsTeach collection of primary sources and teaching activities on how we've attempted to form a more perfect union.



We, the students of _____'s

_____ grade class

at _____

do establish this

Bill of Rights

for our class enacted this _____ day of _____

in the year two thousand _____.

RIGHT #1: _____

RIGHT #2: _____

RIGHT #3: _____

RIGHT #4: _____

AGREED TO BY:

