



How is the U.S. Constitution relevant to the daily lives of Americans citizens?

Dear Educator,

Thank you for your interest in *The Constitution at Work: Elementary Edition* distance learning program from the National Archives for grades 4–5.

During this distance learning program, students will learn about the content, impact, and perpetual relevance of the U.S. Constitution on the daily lives of American citizens. Students will analyze primary source documents from the holdings of the National Archives and see how these documents illustrate the Constitution at work.

Within this guide, you will find everything you need to prepare your class for the upcoming videoconference program, including a **pre-program activity** and what to expect during the videoconference with the National Archives.

During the videoconference, students will need:

- One die** to be rolled throughout the program to select which Article of the Constitution will be discussed.
- Materials from the **Pre-Program Activity** including:
 - A copy of the assigned document
 - The completed **Written Document Analysis Worksheet** found on page 6 (to be completed during Pre-Program Activity)
 - The appropriate Constitutional Connection Worksheet corresponding to the group number found on pages 12–16
- The Constitution at Work Graphic Organizer** found on page 18 (to be completed during the distance learning program)

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.

United States History Content Standards for Grades 5–12 United States Era 3 Standard 3B

The student understands the guarantees of the Bill of Rights and its continuing significance.

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.

NSS-C.5-8.1.C.2

Students should be able to explain the various purposes constitutions serve.

NSS-C.5-8.1.D.1

Shared powers and parliamentary systems. Students should be able to describe the major characteristics of systems of shared powers and of parliamentary systems. To achieve this standard, students should be able to describe the major characteristics of systems of shared powers, e.g., in the United States the president and members of the Cabinet cannot be members of Congress powers are separated among branches, each branch has primary responsibility for certain functions, e.g., legislative, executive, and judicial each branch also shares the powers and functions of the other branches, e.g., Congress may pass laws, but the President may veto them, the President nominates certain public officials, but the Senate needs to approve them, Congress may pass laws and the President may approve, but the Supreme Court may declare them unconstitutional

NSS-C.5-8.1.D.2

Confederal, federal, and unitary systems. To achieve this standard, students should be able to define federal system—a system in which power is divided and shared between national and state governments.

NSS-C.5-8.2.A.1

Students should be able to explain the essential ideas of American constitutional government. To achieve this standard, students should be able to explain essential ideas of American constitutional government as expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and other writings, e.g., the people are sovereign; they are the ultimate source of power. The Constitution is a higher law that authorizes a government of limited powers.





NSS-C.5-8.2.D.1

Students should be able to explain the meaning and importance of the fundamental values and principles of American constitutional democracy. To achieve this standard, students should be able to identify fundamental values and principles as expressed in basic documents, e.g., Declaration of Independence and United States Constitution.

NSS-C.5-8.3.A.1

Students should be able to explain how the powers of the national government are distributed, shared, and limited. To achieve this standard, students should be able to explain how legislative, executive, and judicial powers are distributed and shared among the three branches of the national government. Explain how each branch of government can check the powers of the other branches.

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS [↗](#)

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.3.1

Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.5.1

Quote accurately from a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3.7

Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7

Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3.3

Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4.3

Identify the reasons and evidence a speaker provides to support particular points.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.3

Summarize the points a speaker makes and explain how each claim is supported by reasons and evidence.





Guidance for Pre-Program Activity

MEET THE DOCUMENTS (REQUIRED)

TIME: 45 MINUTES

MATERIALS:

- Written Document Analysis Worksheet (one per student)**
- Documents #1–5:** Each group of students will receive a copy of the assigned document. Documents can be shared by the group, or each group member can receive a copy of the document.
- Constitutional Connection Worksheet (one per student)** Worksheet corresponds with assigned document number.
- Pencil**

Teacher Note: This activity is designed to familiarize students with the documents that they will be using during the videoconference with the National Archives. Divide students into 5 groups. Assign each group one of the documents #1–5.

Here is a list of the documents included:

Article in the Constitution	Document Description	Documents
Article I	Game Board Patent	595519
Article II	Louisiana Purchase Map	594889
Article III	Judgement in <i>Brown v. Board</i>	596300
Article IV	Sheryl Byland Letter	594335
Article V	19th Amendment	596314

Instructions for Students: During our distance learning program with the National Archives, we will explore how these documents show the Constitution at work and discuss how they are relevant to the lives of American citizens. To prepare for our discussion, each group will analyze its assigned document. Each student should record notes about your assigned document on the **Written Document Analysis Worksheet**.

After completing the Written Document Analysis Worksheet you will receive a **Constitutional Connection Worksheet** with an excerpt from the Constitution that relates to your assigned document. Work with your group members to answer the questions on the worksheet.

During the program with the National Archives, each group will present the document they were assigned. Be prepared to answer questions about the document, how it illustrates the Constitution at work, and how it is relevant to the lives of Americans today. A dice will be rolled to determine which group's turn it is to present. So, be prepared! You will also need to listen to your fellow classmates present their assigned documents so that you can fill out **The Constitution at Work Graphic Organizer** during the program.





VOCABULARY

Before the pre-program lesson, you may find it helpful to review some of the vocabulary that will be used during the distance learning program. You can use the list of key words below, or use your preferred vocabulary review method.

Constitution: The document that established the basic laws and principles of the American government.

Legislative branch: The branch of government that makes the laws. Also known as Congress, it is made up of two chambers: the House of Representatives and the Senate.

House of Representatives: The lower house of the Legislative Branch.

Representative: A person who is elected by the people to represent or act for those who elected him/her in the United States House of Representatives. Representatives are elected for two-year terms. The number of representatives each state has is determined by a state's population.

Senate: The upper house of the Legislative Branch.

Senator: A person who is elected by the people to represent or act for those who elected him/her in the United States Senate. Senators are elected for six-year terms. Every state has two Senators.

Patent: A document that gives the inventor of something the right to be the only one to make or sell the invention for a certain number of years.

Executive branch: The branch of government that carries out or enforces the laws. The executive branch is headed by the President of the United States.

President: The head of and chief executive of the United States government. The President is elected for a four-year term.

Treaty: An agreement between two or more countries.

Judicial branch: The branch of government made up of the court system responsible for deciding arguments about the meaning of laws.

Supreme Court: The highest court in the United States court system and the head of the Judicial branch. It has nine Supreme Court justices who are appointed for life.

Judge: A public official whose duty is to decide questions brought before a court.

Unconstitutional: Not according to or agreeing with the Constitution of the United States.

Amendment: A formal change to the United States Constitution.

Suffrage: The right to vote.



Analyze a Written Document



Meet the document.

Are there any special markings on the document? Circle all that apply.



STAMP



POSTMARK HANDWRITTEN



NOTE



OFFICIAL SEAL



SPECIAL LETTERHEAD



OTHER

Is it handwritten or typed?



BOTH

Write down any words that you don't know. Then look up the definitions.



Try to make sense of it.

What is the main idea of the document?

List two quotes (words from the document) that help support the main idea.

Why do you think this document was written?



Observe its parts.

Who wrote this document?

What is the date of the document?

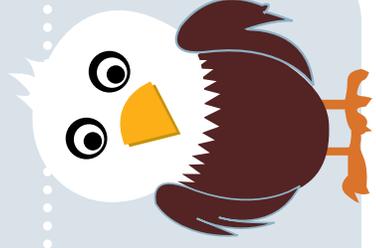
Who read or received this document?



Use it as historical evidence.

Where do you think you could find out more information about the persons who wrote or received this document?

Where do you think you could find out more information about this event?



Supreme Court of the United States

No. 1 ----- , October Term, 19 54

Oliver Brown, Mrs. Richard Lawton, Mrs. Sadie Emmanuel et al.,
Appellants,

vs.

Board of Education of Topeka, Shawnee County, Kansas, et al.

*Appeal from the United States District Court for the -----
District of Kansas.*

*This cause came on to be heard on the transcript of the record from the United States
District Court for the ----- District of Kansas, -----
and was argued by counsel.*

*On consideration whereof, It is ordered and adjudged by this Court that the judgment
of the said District ----- Court in this cause be, and the same is
hereby, reversed with costs; and that this cause be, and the same
is hereby, remanded to the said District Court to take such
proceedings and enter such orders and decrees consistent with
the opinions of this Court as are necessary and proper to admit
to public schools on a racially nondiscriminatory basis with all
deliberate speed the parties to this case.*

Per Mr. Chief Justice Warren,

May 31, 1955.



5/20
Child

Re: new flag design

11/77

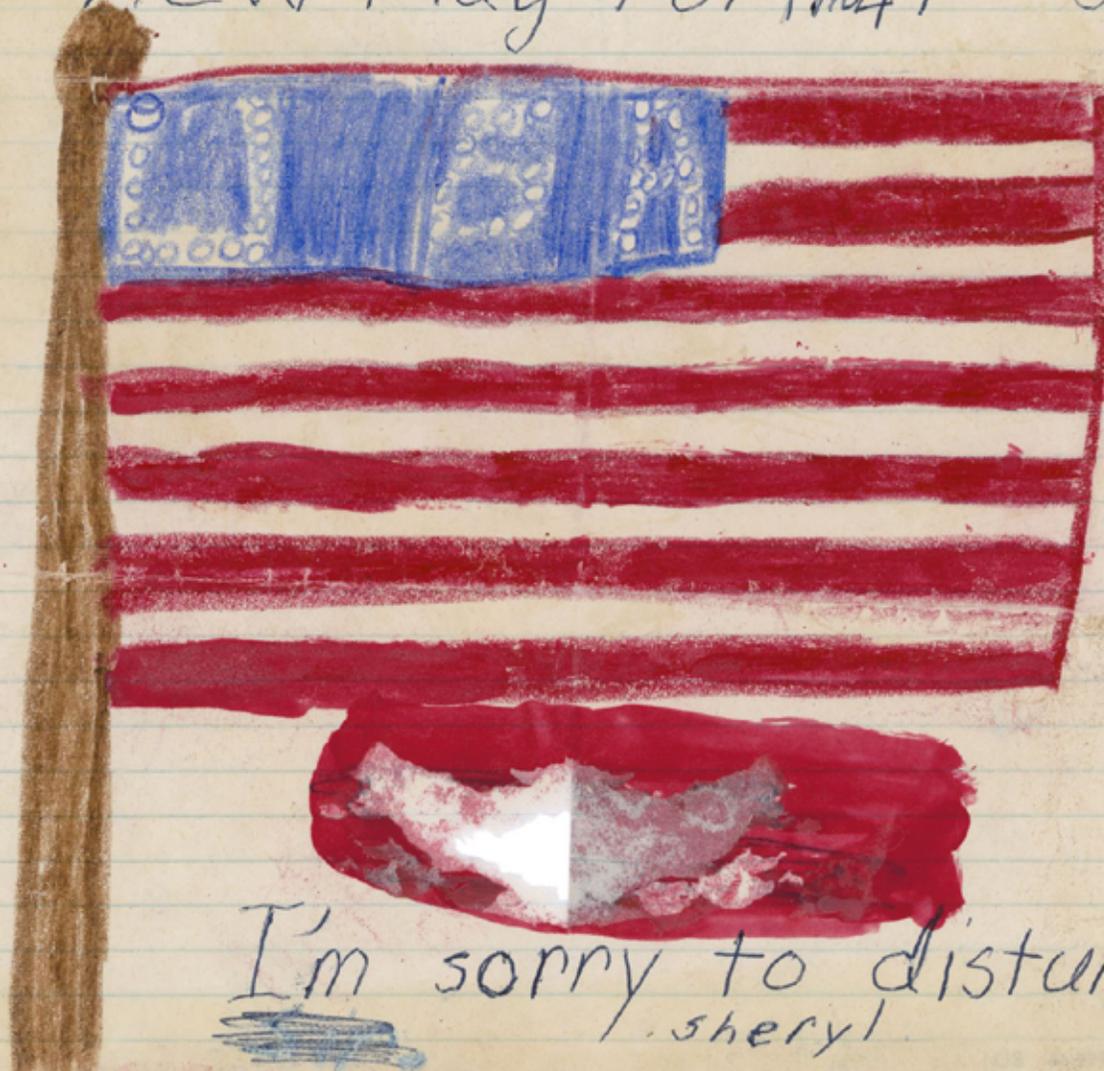
8

ack
10/30/58
Dove

Dear president
Eisenhower,

My name is Sheryl Byland.
I am 8 years old.

My suggestion for the
new flag for the 9th state is,



A T B
m h e
e e u
r a
i t
c i
a f
u
l

I'm sorry to disturb you
sheryl

Sixty-sixth Congress of the United States of America;

At the First Session,

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the nineteenth day of May,
one thousand nine hundred and nineteen.

JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution extending the right of suffrage
to women.

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States
of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein),
That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution,
which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when
ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States.*

“ARTICLE ————.

“The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or
abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

“Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate
legislation.”

J. H. Gillett

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Thos. R. Marshall

Vice President of the United States and

President of the Senate.



The Constitution at Work

Name: _____

Group #1—Constitutional Connection Worksheet

Work with your group to answer the following questions:

Use the notes you took on the **Written Document Analysis Sheet** and write one to three sentences that summarize your document.

Excerpt from the Constitution: Article I, Section 8

The Congress shall have power... To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries.

Next, use your *Document Analysis Worksheet* and this excerpt from the Constitution to answer the following questions:

How does your document illustrate the above excerpt of the Constitution?

How does your document demonstrate that the Constitution is relevant to your life and/or the lives of American citizens?





The Constitution at Work

Name: _____

Group #2—Constitutional Connection Worksheet

Work with your group to answer the following questions:

Use the notes you took on the **Written Document Analysis Sheet** and write one to three sentences that summarize your document.

Excerpt from the Constitution: Article II, Section 2

[The President] shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur.

Next, use your *Document Analysis Worksheet* and this excerpt from the Constitution to answer the following questions:

How does your document illustrate the above excerpt of the Constitution?

How does your document demonstrate that the Constitution is relevant to your life and/or the lives of American citizens?





The Constitution at Work

Name: _____

Group #3—Constitutional Connection Worksheet

Work with your group to answer the following questions:

Use the notes you took on the **Written Document Analysis Sheet** and write one to three sentences that summarize your document.

Excerpt from the Constitution: Article III, Section 2

The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution.

Next, use your *Document Analysis Worksheet* and this excerpt from the Constitution to answer the following questions:

How does your document illustrate the above excerpt of the Constitution?

How does your document demonstrate that the Constitution is relevant to your life and/or the lives of American citizens?





The Constitution at Work

Name: _____

Group #4—Constitutional Connection Worksheet

Work with your group to answer the following questions:

Use the notes you took on the **Written Document Analysis Sheet** and write one to three sentences that summarize your document.

Excerpt from the Constitution: Article IV, Section 3

New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union.

Next, use your *Document Analysis Worksheet* and this excerpt from the Constitution to answer the following questions:

How does your document illustrate the above excerpt of the Constitution?

How does your document demonstrate that the Constitution is relevant to your life and/or the lives of American citizens?





The Constitution at Work

Name: _____

Group #5—Constitutional Connection Worksheet

Work with your group to answer the following questions:

Use the notes you took on the **Written Document Analysis Sheet** and write one to three sentences that summarize your document.

Excerpt from the Constitution: Article V

The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution.

Next, use your *Document Analysis Worksheet* and this excerpt from the Constitution to answer the following questions:

How does your document illustrate the above excerpt of the Constitution?

How does your document demonstrate that the Constitution is relevant to your life and/or the lives of American citizens?





The Constitution at Work

Guidance for Videoconference Materials

MATERIALS:

- One die** to be rolled throughout the program to select which Article of the Constitution will be discussed.
- Assigned Document #1–5**
- Completed Written Document Analysis Worksheet**
- Completed Group Constitutional Connection Worksheet**
- The Constitution at Work Graphic Organizer (one per student)**
- Pencil**

Teacher Note: During the videoconference program students should sit with their document groups and have their assigned document and completed written document analysis worksheet available. Students will be instructed to use their documents to complete **The Constitution at Work Graphic Organizer** and to share their findings. While each group shares, the other groups will be instructed to add notes to their graphic organizers.

After the program introduction, the National Archives facilitator will ask the teacher to choose a group to roll the die. The group having the corresponding document number with the number rolled will begin the group reporting. If a six is rolled then the National Archives facilitator will discuss a document that illustrates a concept from Article VI in the Constitution.

For your reference, we have provided an answer key for **The Constitution at Work Graphic Organizer** at the end of this Teacher Guide.

Additional Documents Highlighted During the Distance Learning Program

For your own reference, here are the additional documents shared by the National Archives facilitator during the *Constitution at Work: Elementary Edition* program.

Article in the Constitution	Document Description	Documents
Article VI	Oath of Office for Senator Daniel K. Inouye	7741395
Article VII	Delaware's Ratification of the Constitution of the United States	1503374



Name: _____

The Constitution at Work Graphic Organizer

Article and Section of Constitution	Brief Description of the Document	How does the document illustrate the Constitution at Work?	How does the document demonstrate that the Constitution is relevant to my life and/or the lives of American citizens?
Article I Section 8: <i>The Congress shall have Power... To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries</i>	Game Board Patent		
Article II, Section 2: <i>The President shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provide two thirds of the Senators present concur</i>	Louisiana Purchase Map		
Article III, Section 2: <i>The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution</i>	Judgement in the Supreme Court Decision in <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i>		
Article IV, Section 3: <i>New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union</i>	Sheryl Byland Letter		
Article V: <i>The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution</i>	19th Amendment		
Article VI: <i>The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, . . . and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution</i>	Senator Daniel K. Inouye's Oath of Office		
Article VII: <i>The Ratification of the Conventions of nine States, shall be sufficient for the Establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the Same.</i>	Delaware's Ratification of the U.S. Constitution		



The Constitution at Work

Post-Program Activity

DOCSTEACH ACTIVITY

MATERIALS:

- Access to the DocsTeach website via internet or DocsTeach app.

INSTRUCTIONS:

During our videoconference program with the National Archives, we discussed many examples of documents illustrating the Constitution at Work. Complete the following DocsTeach activity: [The Constitution at Work: Elementary Edition](#) for further practice identifying documents that illustrate the Constitution at work.





Additional Online Resources from the National Archives

Celebrating Constitution Day

September 17 is designated as Constitution Day and Citizenship Day to commemorate the signing of the U.S. Constitution in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787. Learn more about the U.S. Constitution through our public programs, family activities, and online resources.

The Constitution of the United States

Discover more about the Constitution of the United States by visiting the National Archives' webpage dedicated to the nation's founding document. Learn what it says and how it was made!

Meet the Framers of the Constitution

Explore brief biographies of each of the Founding Fathers who were delegates to the Constitutional Convention.

DocsTeach

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

Borrow from an ever-expanding collection of document-based activities created by the National Archives and teachers 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.

Checkout the special [DocsTeach collection](#) of primary sources and teaching activities related to the Constitution!

The Center for Legislative Archives

The Center preserves and makes available the historical records of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. The Center also offers wonderful resources for educators on representative democracy, how Congress works, and the important role Congress has played throughout American history, including lesson plans such as [Constitution Scavenger Hunt with Political Cartoons](#), and [Teaching the Six Big Ideas of the Constitution](#), as well as the [Congress Creates the Bill of Rights](#) mobile app and eBook.



The Constitution at Work Graphic Organizer Key

POSSIBLE STUDENT RESPONSES MAY INCLUDE:

Article and Section of Constitution	Brief Description of the Document	How does the document illustrate the Constitution at Work?	How does the document demonstrate that the Constitution is relevant to my life and/or the lives of American citizens?
Article I Section 8: <i>The Congress shall have Power... To promote the Progress of Science and useful Arts, by securing for limited Times to Authors and Inventors the exclusive Right to their respective Writings and Discoveries</i>	Game Board Patent	The Constitution gives Congress the power to promote discovery by protecting patents for new inventions, like this game board.	Thanks to the Constitution, if I ever have a new idea for an invention, I can apply for a patent to make sure I can make money from my invention.
Article II, Section 2: <i>The President shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provide two thirds of the Senators present concur</i>	Louisiana Purchase Map	The Constitution gives the president the power to make treaties and the Senate the power to approve treaties. This map shows us that a treaty with France led to new territory for the United States.	Treaties like this one have impacted the size of the United States.
Article III, Section 2: <i>The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution</i>	Judgement in the Supreme Court Decision in <i>Brown v. Board of Education</i>	This document shows that the Constitution makes the Supreme Court the highest court in the land with the power to reverse decisions made by lower courts.	The decisions of the Supreme Court help make sure all Americans are treated fairly.
Article IV, Section 3: <i>New States may be admitted by the Congress into this Union</i>	Sheryl Byland Letter	Sheryl's suggestion for a new flag reminds us that the Constitution allows for new States to be added to the United States	The United States grew from 13 states to 50 states, which has impacted where people live today
Article V: <i>The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution</i>	19th Amendment	This document shows Congress has the power to propose an amendment to the United States Constitution.	This amendment gave women the right to vote, which affects more than half the population of the United States.
Article VI: <i>The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, . . . and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution</i>	Senator Daniel K. Inouye's Oath of Office	The Constitution requires Senators to take an oath like this one to support the Constitution.	One day I'll help shape our country's laws by voting for my Senators and Representatives and they will take this oath.
Article VII: <i>The Ratification of the Conventions of nine States, shall be sufficient for the Establishment of this Constitution between the States so ratifying the Same.</i>	Delaware's Ratification of the U.S. Constitution	Delaware's ratification of the Constitution was the first step to making the Constitution the law of the land.	If Delaware and eight other States never ratified the United States Constitution, our government would look very different today