

Constitution Day 2019

Did you know? The 38 of the 41 delegates present at the Constitutional Convention signed the United States Constitution on **September 17, 1787**. It would not become binding until it was ratified by at least nine of the 13 states. This year, we celebrate **1787** with a series of appropriately-numbered activities intended to expand your knowledge of the Constitution.



1

The amendments of the Constitution were a sticking point for not ratifying the original document. In fact, several states would not ratify it until it contained rights that are now outlined in the First Amendment. Amendments were adopted later. Of utmost importance to **journalism** was the **First Amendment**. Name the **5 rights** outlined in the First Amendment:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

8

As mentioned above, **eight states** did not immediately ratify the U.S. Constitution. Identify which states those were and why they were so hesitant.

7

A “hot button” issue in the press this year has to do with **citizenship**, which is described in the Constitution as “birthright.” If an individual immigrates to the U.S., he or she may become a citizen by completing a series of tasks, including **passing an exam**. Could you pass? See if you can answer these 7 Constitution-specific questions that appear on citizenship exams:

1. What is the Supreme Law of the Land?
2. What does the Constitution do?
3. What are the 1st three words of the Preamble to the Constitution?
4. What is an amendment?
5. What do we call the 1st 10 amendments?
6. How many amendments does the Constitution have?
7. What is one freedom from the First Amendment?

7

The debate about citizenship in the U.S. continues. Flip this over to read **seven** articles about citizenship issues, and then discuss with your class or staff.

EXTRA! EXTRA!

A July Gallup Poll revealed that a record 27% of U.S. Americans view immigration as the most important problem facing the U.S.

Read the story from Gallup here: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/261500/mentions-immigration-top-problem-surpass-record-high.aspx>

Visit the following links to read recent news stories and op-eds about the immigration debate in the United States. Then, discuss the stories with your classmates or staff members. Finally, see if you can find other recent stories to discuss.

Journalism students: How could you cover the debate in your own media outlet?

1. “No shower for 23 days: U.S. citizen says conditions were so bad that he almost self-deported” (Dallas News, July 24, 2019):
<https://www.dallasnews.com/news/immigration/2019/07/24/no-shower-23-days-us-citizen-held-deportation-shares-like-immigrant>
2. “The enduring cruelty of Trump’s immigration agenda” (The Washington Post, July 26, 2019):
https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/07/26/enduring-cruelty-trumps-immigration-agenda/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.802ca5601cdb
3. “America isn’t the ‘Only Country’ with birthright citizenship” (The Atlantic, October 31, 2018):
<https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/10/birthright-citizenship-other-countries-trump/574453/>
4. “In Tijuana, expectant moms hope for U.S. asylum” (NBC News, July 24, 2019):
<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/tijuana-expectant-moms-hope-u-s-asylum-n1032806>
5. “Does the Constitution grant citizenship to anyone born inside the United States?” (The Federalist, July 1, 2019):
<https://thefederalist.com/2019/07/01/constitution-grant-citizenship-anyone-born-inside-united-states/>
6. “Trump is challenging what it means to be American, and naturalized citizens are unsettled” (Los Angeles Times, July 25, 2019):
<https://www.latimes.com/politics/story/2019-07-21/with-send-her-back-chant-trump-tears-at-the-meaning-of-citizenship>
7. “Democrats veer left on immigration at debates, pleasing base (and Trump)” (The New York Times, June 29, 2019):
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/29/us/politics/democratic-debates-immigration.html>