


# Constitution Day

## Goals

- To understand the purpose of the U.S. Constitution as expressed in the Preamble
- To create a classroom constitution modeled after the goals set forth in the Preamble



OUR CLASSROOM CONSTITUTION

We the \_\_\_\_\_

in order to \_\_\_\_\_

establish the following rules \_\_\_\_\_

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, by \_\_\_\_\_

**Overview:** Students read and explore the meaning of the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution and write a classroom constitution modeled after the goals set forth in the Preamble.

## Materials

- One or more copies of the Constitution, either in manuscript or transcript form. Copies may be downloaded and printed from the National Archives website:  
<http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/constitution.html>
- Copies of “Constitution Day 1” and “Constitution Day 2” templates.

## Directions

1. Show students a copy of the Constitution and point out the Preamble. Read or let students read the Preamble. Ask students why they think the framers of the Constitution wrote the Preamble.
2. Tell students they are going to write their own classroom constitution with goals like those stated in the Preamble, but first they must fully understand the Preamble. Assign six small groups and assign each group one of the following phrases from the Preamble: *to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, secure the blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity.*
3. Give students copies of "Constitution Day 1". Tell members of each group to underline their part of the Preamble and decide what that part means. Then ask each group to make a classroom rule that would help accomplish that goal or another similar goal.
4. Have students in each group explain to the class what their part of the Preamble means and share their rule. Let the class vote on each rule. If you have a whiteboard or large screen projector for your computer, open the “Constitution Day 2” template and type each rule into the template after students vote on it. Some rules may merit rewording and a repeat vote.

5. Give students copies of “Constitution Day 2”, or have students open the file at the computer, and make their own copies of the classroom constitution. Post a copy of the new constitution and have students save their personal copies in their notebooks.

***Stationery Studio Extensions***

- Tell students to pretend it is September 17, 1787, and the Continental Congress has just signed the new U.S. Constitution. Ask students to write a news article announcing the new Constitution and explaining its purpose. Students may want to use the “Parchment” border or one of the “Newspaper” borders from the original Stationery Studio collection.
- Have students write a persuasive essay telling why they think their classroom rule (or someone else’s rule) should or should not become part of your Class Constitution.