**The Bill of Rights**

Which amendment should be on our billboard?

**Adapted from CPALMS lesson #69420**

SS.7.C.2.4 Evaluate rights contained in the Bill of Rights and other amendments to the Constitution.

SS.7.C.3.3 Illustrate the structure and function (three branches of government established in Articles I, II, and III with corresponding powers) of government in the United States as established in the Constitution.

For this decision-making lesson, students will discuss criteria for choosing the amendment from the Bill of Rights that would be the best choice for a city hall’s new billboard based on information provided by articles, videos, and their classroom texts. Using this information, students will rank their choices and explain how they reached their decisions.

**Problem**

Which amendment would be the best focus for Pinewood?

**Alternatives**

Four amendments: Amendment 4 (right to privacy), Amendment 5 (right to a fair and legal trial), Amendment 6 (right to a speedy trial), and Amendment 7 (right to trial by jury)

**Criteria**

Protection to health, property, finances, and family

**Decision**

Which amendment did you choose? How did you make that decision?

1. Read the letter from the City of Pinewood and discuss the decision that the students need to make (which one of the Bill of Rights would be the best amendment to put on the city hall’s new billboard). Discuss the criteria that the class included regarding how to choose the amendment (which amendment best promotes protection to health, property, finances, and family).
2. Review what our Constitution is and why it was written. An overview of the preamble and articles are available at <https://kids.laws.com/articles-of-the-constitution>
3. Why is the Bill of Rights an important American document? (picture is located at the bottom of this lesson plan). How was the inclusion of the Bill of Rights important in the Founding Father’s ability to ratify the Constitution?
4. Use the following link from the Bill of Rights Institute to review the Bill of Rights. <http://billofrightsinstitute.org/founding-documents/bill-of-rights/>
   1. There is a link to download a PDF file of the Bill of Rights.
5. Talk with students about how the Bill of Rights allows us to make choices related to the goods and services we enjoy everyday. These rights protect us from the government or other citizens entering our homes, taking us to jail, preventing us from meeting in groups or clubs, or talking freely about the things that are important to us.
6. Provide students with the note-taking tool. Review the alternatives and criteria related to the billboard.
7. Use the following links to research each of the four amendments:

* The National Center for Constitutional Studies <https://nccs.net/online-resources/us-constitution/amendments-to-the-us-constitution/the-bill-of-rights-amendments-1-10>
* Scholastic News: The Bill of Rights (student friendly language) <http://www.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=7467>
* You Tube video (song) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWPTjFbBj10](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HWPTjFbBj10" \t "_blank)

1. After all information has been gathered, use the matrix to start a discussion on Amendment 4. What notes were made related to each of the criteria? Does Amendment 4 protect our health, property, finances, and families? If yes, how?
2. Repeat this process for the other amendments.
3. In teams the students will work together to evaluate the completed matrix and make a decision regarding the amendment that best reflects the interests of Pinewood. Students will then rank each amendment from first to last.
4. Students will then present their findings to the class, giving the reasons why ranked the choices as they did and the procedure of how they got to that decision. What is the opportunity cost (the next-best amendment for the billboard)?
   1. Encourage students to discuss each step in their processes for making their choices. What did they do first? After that?
5. Students write a letter to the mayor of Pinewood reporting:

* how they ranked each location
* the process they used for making their choices and
* why the amendment they chose is the best one for the new city hall billboard.

A frame can also be used:

Date:

Dear Mr. Mayor,

Our team has reviewed information on the four amendments that you provided and are suggesting the following for your new billboard. We have ranked amendments in order beginning with our top choice.

Top Choice:

Alternate Choice #1:

Alternate Choice #2:

Alternate Choice #3:

Our step-by-step procedure for ranking the choices in this way was:

Thank you for the opportunity to assist you with this project!

Sincerely,

Extension/ideas:

* Create a presentation for the Mayor that shows the design of the new billboard.
* Look for instances of the lesson’s economic terms in other texts in Unit 2.
* Read more about the Bill of Rights at ReadWorks:
  + <https://www.readworks.org/article/Right-On!/a90b6ec0-23e7-423a-8c99-92e30ed85714#!articleTab:content/>

Differentiation:

* Reduce alternatives and/or criteria.
  + Create a new letter from the Mayor’s office asking students to reconsider their choices based on different alternatives/criteria
* Increase alternatives and/or criteria.
  + Same as above
* Provide note-taking tools with some of the information from Reading Wonders, videos, and/or web articles already filled in.

