

Constitution Day

The U.S. Assistant Deputy Secretary for Innovation and Improvement has announced that, pursuant to legislation passed by Congress, educational institutions receiving federal funding from the U.S. Department of Education are required to hold an educational program pertaining to the United States Constitution on September 17 of each year.

Section 111 of Division J of Pub. L. 108-447, "Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2005," Dec. 8, 2004; 118 Stat. 2809, 3344-45 (Section 111), states that "each educational institution that receives Federal funds for a fiscal year shall hold an educational program on the United States Constitution on September 17 of such year for the students served by the educational institution." For purposes of the U.S. Department of Education's implementation of this requirement, "educational institutions" includes, but is not limited to, "local educational agencies" and "institutions of higher education" receiving federal funding from the U.S. Department of Education.

Section 111 requires that Constitution Day be held on September 17 of each year, commemorating the signing of the U.S. Constitution on September 17, 1787. However, when September 17 falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday, Constitution Day shall be held during the preceding or following week.

Constitution Day Resources

Below are several Web sites and links that contain numerous resources available for educators and students.

The Bill of Rights Institute

<http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org/teach/freeresources/constitutionday/>

Free educational and programming materials are available to schools to help teachers organize events to commemorate Constitution Day. The following information is available at the Bill of Rights Institute Web site:

- Which founder are you? Quiz
- Do you know your Constitution? Quiz
- Current Events Briefing Sheet and the Constitution eLessons for Middle and High School students
- 2010-2011 Being an American Essay Contest—What civic value do you believe is most essential to being an American?
- Celebrate the Constitution Tabloid – a 12-page tabloid packed with content including a crossword puzzle
- On-line module – an interactive experience
- Constitution lesson plans for high school middle school
- Biographical information about James Madison, the Father of the Constitution, that includes an audio component
- A Founders Gallery that features images of the Founders
- A lesson plan about the Bill of Rights that includes a short video

The National Constitution Center

<http://www.constitutioncenter.org>

NCC created this section to help teachers teach the U.S. Constitution and other civic-related topics to students of all ages. These lesson plans meet the Center for Civic Education's National Standards for Civics and Government and offer elementary grades K-4, middle grades 5-8, and high school grades 9-12 teachers a selection of classroom activities, readings, and Web resources. Each month this page will feature a new lesson plan highlighting recent Constitutional issues as well as historic events such as the Constitutional Convention. Access the Interactive Constitution at

<http://www.constitutioncenter.org/constitution/>.

Print a copy of the U.S. Constitution for students to analyze in small groups by clicking on the following address <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/constitution/constitution.pdf>. The U.S. Constitution can also be downloaded in multiple languages including Spanish at

http://www.constitutioncenter.org/ncc_edu_Other_Languages.aspx

Listen to the following podcasts from We the People Stories where historians discuss their books and research:

- The Summer of 1787
http://hancock.constitutioncenter.org/media/david_stewart/david_stewart64.mp3
- Plain, Honest Men: The Making of the American Constitution
[http://hancock.constitutioncenter.org/media/rick_beeman_03-23-09/rick_beeman_03-23-09_\(64\).mp3](http://hancock.constitutioncenter.org/media/rick_beeman_03-23-09/rick_beeman_03-23-09_(64).mp3)
- Gordon Wood—Revolutionary Characters
http://hancock.constitutioncenter.org/media/gordon_wood/gordon_wood.mp3
- Amar: "The Constitution: A Biography"
http://hancock.constitutioncenter.org/media/amar/akhil_amar.mp3

100 Milestone Documents is A National Initiative on American History, Civics, and Service

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/content.php?flash=true&page=milestone>.

This Web site contains access to 100 milestone documents of American history. These documents reflect our diversity and our unity, our past and our future, and our commitment as a nation to continue to strive to "form a more perfect union." Directly access the U.S. Constitution at

<http://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=true&doc=9>.

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

<http://www.archives.gov/education/>

This Web site contains many links and lessons for teachers and students. Constitution Day specific materials may be found at <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/constitution-day/>.

The National Archives also has a Web site with other information available on the U.S. Constitution online: <http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/constitution.html>.

Access high-resolution images of the Charters of Freedom documents, particularly the U.S. Constitution at the following Web site <http://www.archives.gov/historical-docs/document.html?doc=3&title.raw=Constitution%20of%20the%20United%20States>.

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/>

This Web site contains lessons, podcasts, and primary source documents. Access teaching modules on The Revolutionary War, The Constitution, or The New Nation at

<http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/modules.php>. Each curriculum module contains links to a reading overview, primary source documents, learning tools, visual aids, and resources.

The White House

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/kids/constitution/>

This Web site is created specifically for children and contains links to U.S. Constitution facts and quizzes, as well as many other resources.

The Constitution for Kids

<http://www.usconstitution.net/constkidsK.html>

This Web site contains the U.S. Constitution for grades K-3, a basic fact sheet with a link for pictures of the U.S. Constitution, and links to resources tailored to grades 4-7 and 8-12.

The Library of Congress

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/lessons/constitu/const-l1.html>

The Library of Congress Web site contains a three-day lesson on drafting the U.S. Constitution.

The Center for Civic Education

http://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=constitution_day

The link above directly accesses Constitution Day lessons for grades K-12. These age-appropriate lessons are suggested for use at each of the following grade levels: Kindergarten, Grades 1-2, Grades 3-4, Grades 5-6, Grades 7-8, Grades 9-10, and Grades 11-12. Permission to duplicate these lessons is given, provided the following credit line is used: *Reprinted with permission from the Center for Civic Education Copyright 2005. Center for Civic Education. www.civiced.org.*

Constitution Day, Inc.

<http://www.constitutionday.com>

Constitution Day, Inc. has been celebrating for the past eight years by simultaneously reciting the Preamble with schools and the fifty Governors' offices on a nationwide teleconference call. Visit the Web site for information on how to join the nation in the recitation of the Preamble and for educational material.