We believe that your visit to the Newseum, along with this unit of study on the framers of the Constitution, Bill of Rights and the First Amendment, will take you and your students back to the exciting, tumultuous founding of our nation in a way no textbooks can.

It is not easy to regain the sense of urgency that people experienced during the eras we study in history classes. Without actually feeling the tensions of the time, we cannot fully appreciate the influences that motivated people nor can we understand how their cultures and public and private institutions evolved historically. But if we take into account how people got their news then, what was reported to them and what they did with that news, we can get closer to the knowledge and understanding we seek.

Our guiding question in this unit is: Why were the five freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment so important in our early history and why are they important today? That question engenders a number of additional questions that will be good to keep in mind to get the maximum benefit from your Newseum visit:

- How often do we think about the influence of a free press on historic events and movements?
- What might have happened if no free press had existed?
- Why do people attempt to squelch First Amendment rights in times of war and tension?
- How might the media as they exist today, and will develop in the future, affect history?
- Will the media continue to satisfy our right and need to know?

We appreciate your willingness to share with your students the benefits of viewing, hearing, reading and experiencing the First Amendment through which the Newseum brings history to life.

This unit is the result of a collaboration among the Bill of Rights Institute (billofrightsinstitute.org), the Freedom Forum First Amendment Center (firstamendmentcenter.org) and the Newseum (newseum.org).
National Standards of Learning

National Center for History in the Schools, National Standards for U.S. History (5-12)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content:</th>
<th>Standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The student understands the issues involved in the creation and ratification of the United States Constitution and the new government it established. 9-12 Compare the arguments of Federalists and Anti-Federalists during the ratification debates and assess their relevance in late 20th-century politics. [Examine the influence of ideas]</td>
<td>Era 3 Standard 3A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The student understands the guarantees of the Bill of Rights and its continuing significance. 7-12 Evaluate the arguments over the necessity of a Bill of Rights and explain Madison's role in securing its adoption by the First Congress. [Assess the importance of the individual]</td>
<td>Era 3 Standard 3B</td>
</tr>
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Center for Civic Education, National Standards for Civics and Government Grades 5-8:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content:</th>
<th>Standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal rights.</strong> Students should be able to evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues involving personal rights.</td>
<td>V.B.1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political rights.</strong> Students should be able to evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues involving political rights.</td>
<td>V.B.2.</td>
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National Council for the Social Studies, Curriculum Standards for Social Studies Middle Grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content:</th>
<th>Standard</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. describe the purpose of government and how its powers are acquired, used, and justified</td>
<td>(VI) Power, Authority, &amp; Governance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. examine the origins and continuing influence of key ideals of the democratic republican form of government, such as individual human dignity, liberty, justices, equality and the rule of law; b. identify and interpret sources and examples of the rights and responsibilities of citizens</td>
<td>(X) Civic Ideals &amp; Practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pre-Visit Activities

Dear Educator,

We are looking forward to welcoming you and your class to the Newseum for the “Framing the First Amendment … Battle for the Bill of Rights” school program. These three quick activities will introduce your students to some of the topics and concepts we will explore together in more depth during the visit. Enclosed you will find the following activities:

- **How Did the Bill of Rights Become the Bill of Rights?**
  A short essay with comprehension questions on the ratification process for the Constitution and Bill of Rights. This introduces students to the Federalist and Anti-Federalist positions.

- **Exercising My Five Freedoms**
  How do students exercise their five freedoms every day?

- **Ultimate Survivor Amendment Game**
  Using laws and writings that influenced the development of the First Amendment, students “vote off” proposed amendments from the time period. By assessing the importance of different freedoms, students gain a greater understanding of the freedoms the First Amendment protects.

We hope these activities help you and your students get excited about your upcoming field trip. We’ll see you soon!

Newseum Education Staff
How Did the Bill of Rights Become the Bill of Rights?

**Directions:** Read the essay, and answer the following questions.

After a summer of debates, the Constitution was signed in 1787. Some people hoped that meant the arguments were over. But in some ways, they had just begun.

**Who were the Federalists and Anti-Federalists?**

The Constitution was sent to the states for **ratification**. A debate began on a national level. **Federalists** such as James Madison of Virginia supported the Constitution and wanted states to approve it.

**Anti-Federalists** did not support the Constitution. They wanted stronger limits on the national government’s power. They also wanted more protection for people’s rights. They argued that the Constitution needed a bill of rights. George Mason was a famous Anti-Federalist. He helped write the Constitution but would not sign it. He famously said, “I would sooner chop off my right hand than put it to the Constitution as it now stands.”

By June of 1788, ten states had approved the Constitution. This meant it would become the law of the land for those states. But New York had not approved the Constitution.

At the Virginia Ratifying Convention, the delegates were split. Madison made a promise he hoped would help. He promised that a bill of rights would be added to the Constitution. Virginia did finally approve the Constitution. It also sent Congress a list of changes it wanted to the Constitution.

By June of 1788, ten states had approved the Constitution. By June of 1788, ten states had approved the Constitution. But New York had not approved the Constitution. Madison made a promise he hoped would help. He promised that a bill of rights would be added to the Constitution. Virginia did finally approve the Constitution. It also sent Congress a list of changes it wanted to the Constitution.

New York ratified, too. But it also sent proposed amendments to Congress as Virginia and Massachusetts had done. North Carolina and Rhode Island would not approve the Constitution at all without a bill of rights.

**Why Did Madison Change His Mind?**

Madison wrote to his friend Thomas Jefferson about the Constitution. Jefferson told Madison that he thought a bill of rights was needed. Jefferson wrote, “A bill of rights is what the people are entitled to against every government on earth ... and what no just government should refuse or rest on inferences.” Madison respected his friend’s views. The letter made him think.

Public pressure was growing, and James Madison knew that amendments to the Constitution were needed. Madison had been elected to the House of Representatives. In a speech on June 8, 1789, Madison suggested amending the Constitution.
He said that the Congress should “expressly declare the great rights of mankind secured under this Constitution.” These changes would “limit and qualify the powers of government.”

Madison saw the chance to bring the country together. He wanted to gain support for the new government. Congress would have to act carefully. The House formed a committee to consider amendments. The amendments would be in a list at the end of the Constitution.

The committee proposed 17 amendments. Congress approved 12 of these. The amendments were then sent to the states for approval. The states ratified 10. Because the states did not ratify the first two amendments, the third amendment became the First Amendment. The Bill of Rights was at last part of the Constitution.

**Comprehension and Critical Thinking Questions**

1. Did the Constitution have a bill of rights when it was first written? _______________

2. What did the Federalists and Anti-Federalists believe about the Constitution? ______

3. What change did the Anti-Federalists want made to the Constitution? ____________

4. Name two reasons why James Madison might have changed his mind to support a bill of rights. _____________________________

5. How many amendments did Congress approve and send to the states, and how many did the states ratify? _____________________________
How Did the Bill of Rights Become the Bill of Rights?
Extensions

Post-Reading Extension Activities
Have students work in pairs or trios to create a timeline of the events leading up to the ratification of the Bill of Rights.

Using a historical map of the United States, have students shade in the states that had ratified the Constitution as of June 1788. Which states are not shaded in (indicating they had not ratified)? With a copy of the shaded map on the board or overhead, conduct a large group discussion about how James Madison might have felt going into the Virginia Ratifying Convention.
Exercising My Five Freedoms

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

**Directions:** Think about the five freedoms of the First Amendment that you learned about on your visit to the Newseum. How can you exercise each of the rights protected in the First Amendment? In the boxes below, write two or three sentences explaining how you personally exercise this right, or create a drawing with a one-sentence caption.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Freedom to Petition</th>
<th>Freedom of the Press</th>
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<th>Freedom of Speech</th>
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<th>Freedom of Religion</th>
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<tr>
<th>Freedom of Assembly</th>
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Exercising My Five Freedoms
Prompts and Possible Responses

Religion
- Choose my own religion.
- Go to a church of my own choosing.
- Be free from paying taxes to support a church I don’t believe in.

Speech
- Share my ideas with others.
- Say what I believe about political issues.
- Criticize leaders or government policies.

Press
- Write letters to the editor.
- Work on my school newspaper or one day become a reporter.
- Start my own Web site, Facebook or MySpace page, or blog in which I share my opinion on issues in my school or community.

Assembly
- Gather with people who agree with me for demonstrations on public property.
- Attend community meetings.
- Join private clubs and other voluntary organizations (and they can choose to exclude certain members).

Petition
- Circulate a petition on an issue I care about.
- Sign a petition.
- Write letters to officials and government leaders.
Ultimate Survivor Amendment Game

- Let students know they will be playing a game to select the **Ultimate Survivor Amendments**. They will listen to several “draft” amendments and will need to narrow them down to three, in order to form a rule that will protect freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly and petition.

- Ask students to explain what each of these freedoms protects and allows.

- Copy the proposed amendments for each student and pass them out. Select 12 students to come to the front of the class — each of these students will read and then lobby for the class to choose their proposed amendment. The remaining students in the class should stay in their seats and assume the role of the jury.

- Have student readers read the Group One proposed amendments (Group One amendments all have to do with religious freedom). Review each amendment as a class as it is read to ensure students understand the language and the freedom protected. After all Group One students have presented, have the jury vote on which amendment to eliminate from the game. (Votes may be by secret ballot or by a show of hands.)

- After the vote, have the student readers whose amendments lost sit down and join the jury. Note on the board which amendment was booted first.

- Continue with Group Two (speech/press) and Group Three (assembly/petition). As time permits, you may wish to vote out more than one amendment at a time. Keep a record on the board.

- Continue until only two amendments in each group remain. At that point, have the remaining students attempt to persuade the jury that their amendment is the most worthy of being one of the Ultimate Survivor Amendments. Then have the jury conduct a final vote for three Ultimate Survivor Amendments to win the game.
After the Ultimate Survivor Amendments have been selected, write all three on the board or put a copy on the overhead. Reveal the origins of the winning amendments, and then reveal the origins of the losing amendments.

Write the First Amendment on the board (if necessary, next to the amendments the class selected). Debrief the class in a large group discussion:

- Did the class’s Ultimate Survivor Amendments fail or succeed in 1789–1791?
- Why was the first amendment voted out the first to be booted? What did students not like about it?
- Why did the ones that made it to the final round last that long?
- How did the Ultimate Survivor Amendments differ from the ones that were not from 1791?
Proposed Amendments: Which Ones Will Survive?

Group One Sources

1. The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner or on any pretext, infringed.
   — James Madison speech, U.S. House of Representatives, June 8, 1789

2. Religion or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence, and therefore all men have an equal, natural and unalienable right to the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience, and that no particular religious sect or society ought to be favored or established by Law in preference to others.
   — Amendments proposed by the Virginia Convention, June 27, 1788

3. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.
   — First Amendment, U.S. Constitution, 1791

4. The People have an equal, natural and unalienable right, freely and peaceably to Exercise their Religion according to the dictates of Conscience, and that no Religious Sect or Society ought to be favoured or established by Law in preference of others.
   — Amendments proposed by New York Convention, July 26, 1788
BATTLE FOR THE BILL OF RIGHTS

Group Two Sources

1. People have certain natural rights ... such [as] the right of speaking, writing and publishing their sentiments with decency and freedom.
   — Draft Bill of Rights, U.S. House of Representatives, 1788

2. The people shall not be deprived, or abridged of, their right to speak, to write, or to publish their sentiments.
   — James Madison speech, U.S. House of Representatives, June 8, 1789

3. Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.
   — First Amendment, U.S. Constitution, 1791

4. The people have a right to freedom of speech, and of writing and publishing their Sentiments; but the freedom of the press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty and ought not to be violated.
   — Amendments proposed by the Virginia Convention, June 27, 1788
Group Three Sources

1. Every man hath a right to petition the legislature for the redress of grievances, in a peaceable and orderly manner.
   — Amendment proposed by the Maryland Ratifying Convention, 1788

2. People have the natural right ... of peaceably assembling for the common good; and of applying to government by petition.
   — Draft Bill of Rights, U.S. House of Representatives, 1788

3. Congress shall make no law abridging the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.
   — First Amendment, U.S. Constitution, 1791

4. The people have a right peaceably to assemble together to consult for the common good, or to instruct their Representatives; and that every freeman has a right to petition or apply to the legislature for redress of grievances.
   — Amendments proposed by the Virginia Convention, June 27, 1788
Proposed Amendments: Which Ones Will Survive?

Group One

1. The civil rights of none shall be abridged on account of religious belief or worship, nor shall any national religion be established, nor shall the full and equal rights of conscience be in any manner or on any pretext, infringed.

2. Religion or the duty which we owe to our Creator, and the manner of discharging it can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence, and therefore all men have an equal, natural and unalienable right to the free exercise of religion according to the dictates of conscience, and that no particular religious sect or society ought to be favored or established by Law in preference to others.

3. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

4. The people have a right to freedom of speech, and of writing and publishing their Sentiments; but the freedom of the press is one of the greatest bulwarks of liberty and ought not to be violated.
Proposed Amendments: Which Ones Will Survive?

Group Two

1. People have certain natural rights … such [as] the right of speaking, writing and publishing their sentiments with decency and freedom.

2. The people shall not be deprived, or abridged of, their right to speak, to write, or to publish their sentiments.

3. Congress shall make no law … abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press.

4. The people have a right peaceably to assemble together to consult for the common good, or to instruct their Representatives; and that every freeman has a right to petition or apply to the legislature for redress of grievances.
Proposed Amendments: Which Ones Will Survive?

Group Three

1. Every man hath a right to petition the legislature for the redress of grievances, in a peaceable and orderly manner.

2. People have the natural right ... of peaceably assembling for the common good; and of applying to government by petition.

3. Congress shall make no law abridging the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

4. The people have a right peaceably to assemble together to consult for the common good, or to instruct their Representatives; and that every freeman has a right to petition or apply to the legislature for redress of grievances.
Post-Visit Activities

Dear Educator,

We hope you enjoyed your recent visit to the Newseum. Below are suggested activities that may extend the experience and allow you to apply concepts that were presented in the “Framing the First Amendment … Battle for the Bill of Rights” lesson.

- **Original First Amendments**
  This activity gives students an opportunity to explore laws and writings that influenced the development of the First Amendment. Students write an original amendment and evaluate the protections of the First Amendment.

- **Blogging the Bill of Rights**
  This activity asks students to consider how the framers of the First Amendment might have used the Internet and modern communication to spread their ideas and messages. Students create a mock blog for one of the framers.

- **Freedom Stations**
  What are some modern-day First Amendment issues?

Newseum Education Staff
Original First Amendments

This activity gives students an opportunity to explore similar laws and writings that influenced the development of the First Amendment.

- Copy the Original Bill of Rights worksheet for each student.
- Divide the class into groups of four, and give each group a copy of each worksheet.
- To guide group discussion, write the following questions on the board or overhead:
  
  - What freedom or freedoms are protected in each document?
  - Is that freedom presented as a complete freedom, or does it have limits?

- Review the worksheet as a class to ensure that students understand the language and the freedom protected.

- Using these declarations as inspirations that they may either adopt or reject, have students work in their group to write an original “First Amendment” protecting any or all of those freedoms.

- Have groups present their rules in turn. Write each amendment on the board or overhead, and allow time for class discussion of each. If time allows, conduct a vote on which rule to “ratify,” and write it on the board or overhead.

- After each group has shared their original “First Amendment,” distribute copies of the real First Amendment or put a copy on the overhead. Ask students to read it carefully, and then as a large group, discuss the following questions:
  
  - How did class versions compare to the First Amendment?
  - What similarities are there between the protection of the freedoms in the declarations and the protections found in the First Amendment?
  - What differences do you see?
  - Does the First Amendment protect more or less freedom than the class originals?
  - Does the First Amendment protect more or less freedom than the laws in these documents?
  - Does the First Amendment stand the test of time, or is it outdated?
Original Bill of Rights

1. The Virginia Declaration of Rights
   Freedom of the press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty and can never be restrained but by despotic governments.

2. The Virginia Declaration of Rights
   Religion, or the duty which we owe to our Creator and the manner of discharging it, can be directed only by reason and conviction, not by force or violence; and therefore, all men are equally entitled to the free exercise of religion, according to the dictates of conscience; and that it is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other.

3. The English Bill of Rights (1689)
   That it is the right of the subjects to petition the king, and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning are illegal.

4. The English Bill of Rights (1689)
   That the freedom of speech and debates or proceedings in Parliament ought not to be impeached or questioned in any court or place out of Parliament.
The First Amendment (1791)

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.
Blogging the Bill of Rights

This activity asks students to consider how the framers might have used the Internet and modern communication to spread their ideas and messages.

Have students assume the persona of either James Madison, Thomas Jefferson or George Mason. Tell them they will be using modern technology from today’s world to express that individual’s message from 1789.

Distribute the student handout “Blogging the Bill of Rights,” and review the directions.

After students have completed their assignments, have them present their Web pages and blog entries. Ask them to explain why they chose the symbols they did and to elaborate on anything they believe is significant about their projects.

Have students post their Web pages around the room, and attach blank pieces of paper to each one. Give students time to view them all. Encourage students to stay in character and write comments on blogs in response to the points of views presented.

Finally, as a large group, discuss the following questions:

- What ideas do you think were most important in the debate on a bill of rights?
- The Internet did not exist in 1789. Does that mean that protections for free speech and press should not apply to Web pages?
- Do you think the framers of the First Amendment would have used the Internet to get their messages out to people? Why or why not?
Blogging the Bill of Rights

Directions: Imagine that you are (circle one)

Thomas Jefferson                James Madison                George Mason

Even though it is 1789, you have access to modern technology, and therefore you have a computer and Internet access. You have decided to start a Facebook page, MySpace page or blog to get people thinking and talking about a bill of rights — and especially to get your point of view heard.

Your job is to design a Web page template and write the first entry of your blog. You don’t want your readers to get bored, so make sure your Web page looks appealing and user-friendly. You should also keep your entry short, no more than two paragraphs. Why did your framer support a bill of rights? What did he do to promote it? How did he counter arguments against a bill of rights? Think back on your experience at the Newseum. You may need to do some additional research.

You can create your Web page using computer software or on paper using colored pencils.

Make sure your Web page includes:

- A title.
- A specific URL (for example, MasonsMusings.com).
- For Facebook, the Facebook groups that you would belong to.
- At least three pictures or symbols, which you should be prepared to explain.
- A two-paragraph entry explaining your point of view on the importance of protection for free religion, speech, press, assembly and petition in the form of a bill of rights.
Freedom Stations

This activity asks students to learn about modern day First Amendment issues and state an opinion on these issues.

Have students visit the First Amendment Center and Bill of Rights Institute’s Web sites and locate a newspaper article relating to a First Amendment protection.

Headlines can be found at:

- firstamendmentcenter.org
- billofrightsinstitute.org/headlines
- newseum.org/news/index.aspx?item=news_index&style=f#fawatch

Have students write a one-paragraph summary of the Bill of Rights connection in their articles and bring their summaries and articles to class with them next time.

Create five “freedom stations” — one poster for each freedom — and place them in various locations around the room. Label each with one of the five freedoms of the First Amendment: freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly and petition. Each freedom station should also include a blank piece of paper and several pens.

Ask students, one at a time, to read their story’s headline to the class, and then place their newspaper stories and summaries on the corresponding freedom station.

Have students travel in groups of three or four to visit each freedom station and read over the articles. In their groups, they should use one of the pens to write a sentence or two on the blank paper responding to one of the articles. Responses may address:

- Is this article an example of someone exercising a First Amendment freedom?
- Is this article an example of the government abridging a First Amendment freedom?
- If the article described a conflict, which individual or group do you support?
- What do these articles reveal about the state of this freedom in the United States?
After writing their responses, student should fold the paper to cover what they wrote. After all of the freedom stations have been visited, reconvene the class and discuss student responses. Lead a class discussion based around these questions:

- Which of the five freedoms do we have the most articles about?
- Why do you think that freedom is in the news the most?
- Many of these articles revealed different points of view on First Amendment freedoms. What does this tell us about the First Amendment?
- How can citizens find common ground on matters about which they disagree?
Framing the First Amendment in the Newseum

Now that you know some of the history of the Bill of Rights, it’s time to learn more in the Newseum.

Visit the Great Books Gallery (Level 5)
The books on display here represent some of the great cornerstones of democratic writing. Find a book that you like — it might be because of the book’s size, the writing on the page or because you recognize the name — whatever makes you gravitate toward that book. You can “flip” through some of the pages of your book using the monitors next to the cases. Answer the questions below about your book.

Title of book: __________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

Author: _________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

Date published: _______________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

Why did you choose this book? __________

_________________________________________________________________________________

Do you think this book might have influenced those arguing for or against a Bill of Rights? How might it have influenced the authors of the Bill of Rights? Do you think it supports individual rights or argues against them?

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

Take a look at the printing press model outside the News History Gallery. Watch some of the video and be sure to touch the type on the railing. It took much longer to print things using a printing press than it does with a computer.

Why are the letters backward in the type on the railing? _________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

What do you think would be the hardest part about printing using a press?

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________________________

What would be the coolest thing about printing using a press? _________________

_________________________________________________________________________________
NEWSEUM

BATTLE FOR THE BILL OF RIGHTS

Name ___________________________ Date ______________________

Visit the News History Gallery (Level 5)
Head to the timeline in the center of the gallery. Find the cases with artifacts from 1775 to 1789. Take a look at the newspapers and magazines displayed here. Pick one of the artifacts and answer the questions below.

Name of publication: ___________________________

Date of publication: ___________________________

Place of publication: ___________________________

What is the publication? Magazine? Newspaper? ___________________________


Can you read the publication or at least some of it? Is it written in modern American English? ___________________________

What type of person do you think would have read this? ___________________________

______________________________

______________________________