

Theme : The United States Bill of Rights

Task1

Read the text

Throughout America's history and the birth of the United States Constitution, there are ten amendments that have proved vital to the country's development as the greatest nation in the world.

These ten amendments are known as the [Bill of Rights](#). As the first and most significant amendments to the US Constitution, the Bill of Rights focus solely and squarely on the individual rights and freedoms of the American people, acting as a safeguard against any potential overreach perpetrated by the federal or state government.

Below, we'll examine the Bill of Rights, the [reason for its existence](#), and why it was created in the first place.

What is the Bill of Rights?

The Bill of Rights, simply put, are the first ten amendments added to the [US Constitution](#), first enacted in 1791. They include the following:

First Amendment – The Freedom of Speech

The First Amendment is considered the most important amendment throughout the entirety of the Bill of Rights and the Constitution as a whole. It protects the American people from governmental sanctions and attacks for expressing unpopular or offensive opinions and from persecution due to their particular religious or faith-based beliefs.

The First Amendment similarly protects the rights of journalists from persecution by the government, allowing them to serve as watchdogs for [corruption](#) or an abuse of power.

The Freedom of Speech is our most vital freedom. It allows citizens the right and ability to freely communicate thoughts and ideas, regardless of what the governmental powers deem to be allowed at that period in time.

Second Amendment – The Right to Bear Arms

A somewhat divisive amendment with multiple interpretations, the [Second Amendment](#) essentially states that the people have the right to bear arms in defense of a free state. This sentiment has been considered and interpreted in multiple ways depending on a person's personal views surrounding guns and gun control.

Advocates for guns argue that the Second Amendment's final line on "the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed" clearly states that the right to carry guns is guaranteed.

Meanwhile, those who advocate for gun control and gun safety contend that the line "A well-regulated militia" implies that only an established militia should be allowed to carry guns and only guns that are appropriately regulated.

Third Amendment – The Freedom Against Quartering of Soldiers

A reasonably simple amendment, the Third Amendment, states that no citizen is legally required to allow a member of the military or armed forces to reside in their home or private property.

While not as contentious as the others on this list, this freedom is important, particularly considering the British parliament's Quartering Acts, which forced military men into private homes during the Revolutionary War.

Fourth Amendment – The Freedom Against Search & Seizure

Considered by many to be either unnecessarily broad or a freedom that is constantly ignored by many police and governmental officials, the Fourth Amendment is stated to protect against illegal search and seizure, especially without probable cause.

Because this has been interpreted multiple ways, many police may abuse the inclusive statement of “probable cause” to perform unlawful searches in homes or of a person's property.

Fifth Amendment – The Right to Due Process

The [Fifth Amendment](#) guarantees an American the right to due process. It can also be invoked to avoid self-incrimination when speaking on trial. This is primarily because, while a person is under oath, they are bound to speak honestly. By invoking the Fifth Amendment, they can prevent themselves from potentially incriminating themselves while not committing perjury.

The Sixth Amendment – The Right to a Speedy Trial

The [Sixth Amendment](#) is pretty straightforward as it guarantees the accused a trial as quickly as possible while also in public and among a jury of their peers. This is because, before its introduction, the accused could be placed in holding for their trial indefinitely or given “secret trials” where there may not be fairness or [impartiality](#).

Seventh Amendment – The Right to a Jury Trial in Civil Suits

The Seventh Amendment states that all accused are guaranteed a jury trial, regardless of the severity of the crime.

The Eighth Amendment – The Freedom Against Cruel & Unusual Punishment

[Eighth Amendment](#) ensures that those convicted of a crime are not forced to pay excessive fines, given unjust jail time sentencing, or given cruel or unusual forms of punishment.

This was in response to the more gruesome methods of performing capital punishment by those convicted of a crime, both in the early Americas and throughout British history.

Ninth Amendment – The Enumeration of Certain Rights Shall not be Used Against Others

The Ninth Amendment guarantees that Americans are protected outside of the specific first ten amendments. This is because it is impossible to go over every single right and freedom a person is entitled to.

Tenth Amendment – Rights Reserved by States or People

Finally, the Tenth Amendment ensures that people and states are guaranteed any powers not expressly given to the federal government. This was meant as a way to ensure that the federal government's power never extended beyond the **checks and balances** put into place by the Constitution.

Why was the Bill of Rights created?

The Bill of Rights was first implemented largely due to the **Articles of Confederation's weakness** and the proposed overall strength of the US Constitution.

However, while the Constitution was widely regarded as a superior structure compared to the Articles because many feared a potential abuse in power granted to the federal government, it was advised that a Bill of Rights be included.

This Bill of Rights was drafted by **James Madison** and currently sits as the benchmark for all civil rights and liberties given to free people.

Task2

Questions:

1. What is the Bill of Rights?
 - A. The first ten amendments added to the US Constitution
 - B. The American declaration of independence
 - C. A separate document declaring the rights of the American people
 - D. A text written by James Madison about civil rights and liberties

2. What is the primary focus of the Bill of Rights?
 - A. The individual rights and freedoms of the American people
 - B. The powers and responsibilities of the federal government
 - C. The structure and organization of the state governments
 - D. The rights and obligations of the President of the United States

3. What does the First Amendment protect?
 - A. The right to bear arms

- B. The right to a speedy trial
- C. The freedom of speech and the rights of journalists
- D. The freedom against cruel and unusual punishment

4. What does the Second Amendment primarily deal with?

- A. The right to bear arms
- B. The right to a fair trial
- C. Freedom against quartering of soldiers
- D. Freedom of speech

5. Which amendment protects citizens from illegal search and seizure?

- A. Second Amendment
- B. Third Amendment
- C. Fourth Amendment
- D. Fifth Amendment

6. What does the Fifth Amendment guarantee?

- A. The right to a speedy trial
- B. The right to due process and protection against self-incrimination
- C. The freedom against quartering of soldiers
- D. The right to bear arms

7. What is the purpose of the Tenth Amendment?

- A. To protect citizens from illegal search and seizure
- B. To ensure any powers not given to the federal government are reserved for the people and states

- C. To guarantee the right to a fair and speedy trial
- D. To protect against cruel and unusual punishment

8. Why was the Bill of Rights created?

- A. To protect the rights of the federal government
- B. To replace the Articles of Confederation
- C. To act as a safeguard against potential overreach by the federal or state government
- D. To establish the structure of the US government

Task 3

Statements:T/F

1. The Bill of Rights consists of the first ten amendments to the US Constitution.
2. The First Amendment protects the American people from persecution due to their particular religious or faith-based beliefs.
3. The Second Amendment states that only an established militia should be allowed to carry guns.
4. The Third Amendment requires citizens to allow a member of the military or armed forces to reside in their home or private property.
5. The Fourth Amendment protects against illegal search and seizure, especially without probable cause.
6. The Fifth Amendment can be invoked to avoid self-incrimination when speaking on trial.
7. The Sixth Amendment guarantees the accused a trial as quickly as possible while also in public and among a jury of their peers.
8. The Seventh Amendment states that all accused are guaranteed a jury trial, only for severe crimes.
9. The Eighth Amendment ensures that those convicted of a crime are not forced to pay excessive fines, given unjust jail time sentencing, or given cruel or unusual forms of punishment.
10. The Bill of Rights was drafted by George Washington.