

## The Civics Curriculum Must Return to Our Schools

That curriculum must always start with a refrain of our Bill of Rights and end with a citizenship exam. Why? Because Americans have become constitutionally illiterate.

### **Our Rights**

Not just us simple folks but Government leaders and politicians alike, who are also ill-informed. All our leaders take an oath to uphold, support and defend the Constitution against “enemies foreign and domestic,” however their lack of education about our fundamental rights often causes them to be enemies of the Bill of Rights.

### **In Simple Language**

**First Amendment** protects the freedom to speak your mind, assemble and protest nonviolently without being bridled by the government. It also protects the freedom of the media, as well as the right to worship and pray without interference. In other words, Americans should not be silenced by the government. To the founders, all of America was a free speech zone.

**Second Amendment** guarantees “the right of the people to keep and bear arms.” Essentially, this amendment was intended to give the citizenry the means to resist tyrannical government.

**Third Amendment** reinforces the principle that civilian-elected officials are superior to the military by prohibiting the military from entering any citizen’s home without “the consent of the owner.”

**Fourth Amendment** prohibits government agents from conducting surveillance on you or touching you or encroaching on your private property unless they have evidence that you’re up to something criminal. In other words, the Fourth Amendment ensures privacy and bodily integrity.

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**Fifth Amendment** and the **Sixth Amendment** work in tandem. These amendments ensure that you are innocent until proven guilty, and government authorities cannot deprive you of your life, your liberty or your property without the right to an attorney and a fair trial before a civilian judge.

**Seventh Amendment** guarantees citizens the right to a jury trial.

**Eighth Amendment** is similar to the Sixth in that it is supposed to protect the rights of the accused and forbid the use of cruel and unusual punishment.

**Ninth Amendment** provides that other rights not enumerated in the Constitution are nonetheless retained by the people. Sovereignty—the belief that the power to govern flows upward from the people rather than downward from the rulers, is clearly evident in this amendment.

**Tenth Amendment** says the people and their State representatives retain every authority that is not otherwise mentioned in the Constitution.

### Civics 101

We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity, do ordain and establish this CONSTITUTION for the United States of America.

Together with the Bill of Rights are designed to make the government play by the rules which the people agreed to. We are *supposed to be* the masters and they—the government and its agents—are the servants.

We the American people—the citizenry—are *supposed to be* the arbiters and ultimate guardians of America's welfare, defense, liberty, laws and prosperity.

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And don't you let anyone tell you otherwise.

**\*\* Disclaimer. Some of the wording above came from others but we concur with their beliefs.**

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