



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

BILL OF RIGHTS CREST AND MOTTO

By Jim Bentley

Teacher's Guide

Lesson Overview

The Bill of Rights is arguably one of the most important “lists” in our nation’s history. The goal of this lesson is to encourage students to view the first ten amendments to our constitution as more than a list. Students will study the Bill of Rights using primary and secondary sources, select their favorite, create a crest with images related to the amendment, then craft a motto that connects to the Amendment they’ve chosen. They will also be introduced to the concept of “text coding.”

Suggested Grade Level

Middle-grade elementary students through high school

Estimated Time to Complete

One 60-minute class period; this could vary depending upon availability of computers with Internet

Lesson Objectives

Students will

- become familiar with the Bill of Rights;
- select one amendment for which they will create a motto;
- select one amendment for which they will create a coat of arms.

Materials Needed

- *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution* texts, Level 1 or 2
- Computers with Internet access
- Coat of Arms handout
- Motto Direction” handout
- The Bill of Rights at a Glance handout

Before the Lesson

1. Direct students to open their *We the People* texts to the Bill of Rights.
 - Level 1 text, pp. 215–216
 - Level 2 text, pp. 293–294

2. Tell students the first ten amendments to our constitution are called the Bill of Rights. Give them five to ten minutes to skim the Bill of Rights in small groups. Ask each group to select one amendment to describe using words, phrases, symbols, or pictures. Tell them they will share this with the rest of the class.
3. Allow students to share their descriptions of the amendment they chose.
 - Big picture: Ask students to share any confusing words, phrases, or ideas they encountered while reading the Bill of Rights. Since this is a legal document written more than two-hundred years ago, there are bound to be many strange or confusing parts. Tell students that when reading an actual document from history as it was written word for word, they are reading what historians would call a “primary source document.”
 - Share with students The Bill of Rights at a Glance handout. Tell students this is a “secondary source document” they will be reading which breaks the Bill of Rights down into simplified, modern-day English.

Lesson Procedures

1. Give each student their own copy of the “The Bill of Rights at a Glance.” Tell students they will read through this secondary source in small groups.
2. As they read, tell students they will “text code.” They should write a “?” next to any phrase that is confusing. They should circle any words they do not know. They should underline words or phrases or ideas they would like to discuss with the group or with the whole class.
4. As student groups complete their reading, have them come back together as a whole class to discuss any of the text coding that took place in small groups.
Note: Student groups who finish early can start brainstorming images that could be used to represent their favorite amendment from the Bill of Rights.
5. As a whole class, systematically go through the amendments, asking groups to summarize the “big idea” of each by describing the basic right(s) protected.
6. Once all ten amendments have been discussed, tell students they will now pick their own favorite amendment for which they will create a motto and coat of arms.
7. Pass out the “Coat of Arms” handout to students. Tell students they must pick their one favorite amendment from the Bill of Rights. In each of the four sections of the shield, they must create an image that connects to the amendment. Suggestions for the art might be:
 - the image must be colorful with no white space;
 - the image must graphically relate to the amendment selected;
 - the image should be easily interpreted by the viewer (simple, clean images communicate more effectively than complex, cluttered ones);
 - the image might incorporate a date of significance; and
 - the image might incorporate text but very little.
8. Pass out the “Motto Directions” handout. Tell students once they have selected their favorite amendment from the Bill of Rights, they should look through both the primary source text (the original amendment) and the secondary source text (“The Bill of Rights at a Glance” handout) to extract powerful words or phrases.

These words or phrases should be written down on the “Motto Directions” handout. They can be crafted into a motto. Tell students a motto is a short statement that summarizes or refers to a big or bold idea.

- Review the sample mottos at the bottom of the handout.
 - Ask students to share other mottos they may have heard before. Examples might be:
 - “I’m lovin’ it” (McDonalds)
 - “Just do it” (Nike)
 - “Is it in you?” (Gatorade)
 - “Swing big or go home” (baseball saying)
 - “No pain, no gain” (athletic saying)
 - “You snooze, you lose” (common saying)
9. Once students have crafted a motto or collected several important words or phrases they’d like to display on the banner of their coat of arms, they need access to a computer with the Internet to translate their motto into Latin. If computer access is not available, or time is limited, they can write their mottos in English.

Students should follow the directions for the Latin translator given on the “Motto Directions” handout. The directions are as follows:

- a. Go to <http://www.nd.edu/~archives/latgramm.htm>
 - b. This website is hosted by the University of Notre Dame.
 - c. Look for the **English to Latin** link. Press it.
 - d. You can now start translating words in English into words in Latin by typing in one word at a time. You’ll have to search for the Latin word that fits best.
- 1.

- Students might need to adjust the words in English they selected if there is no exact Latin match.
 - When students type a word in English, they will be given dozens of Latin words. They must skim through the Latin words to select the one that most closely approximates the English word for which they are searching.
10. Once students have crafted a Latin motto, tell them to neatly write it in the banner across the top of the coat of arms. Tell them they should write the motto in English on the back of the coat of arms, too.
11. To extend the activity, students can be asked to write on a separate piece of binder paper a well-written paragraph explaining why the amendment they have chosen is their favorite.
12. Conclusion
- Display students’ completed coats of arms.
 - Conduct a “gallery walk” where students walk around the room, looking at their classmates’ work.
 - Tell students to try and guess what the Latin motto means in English by using their knowledge of word roots and the images displayed on the coat of arms.
 - Once students have guessed what a motto is, tell them they may turn the coat of arms over to see what the motto is in English.

Common Core State Standards

English Language Arts Standards, Reading: Informational Text, Grade 6

Craft and Structure

4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

English Language Arts Standards, Anchor Standards, College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading

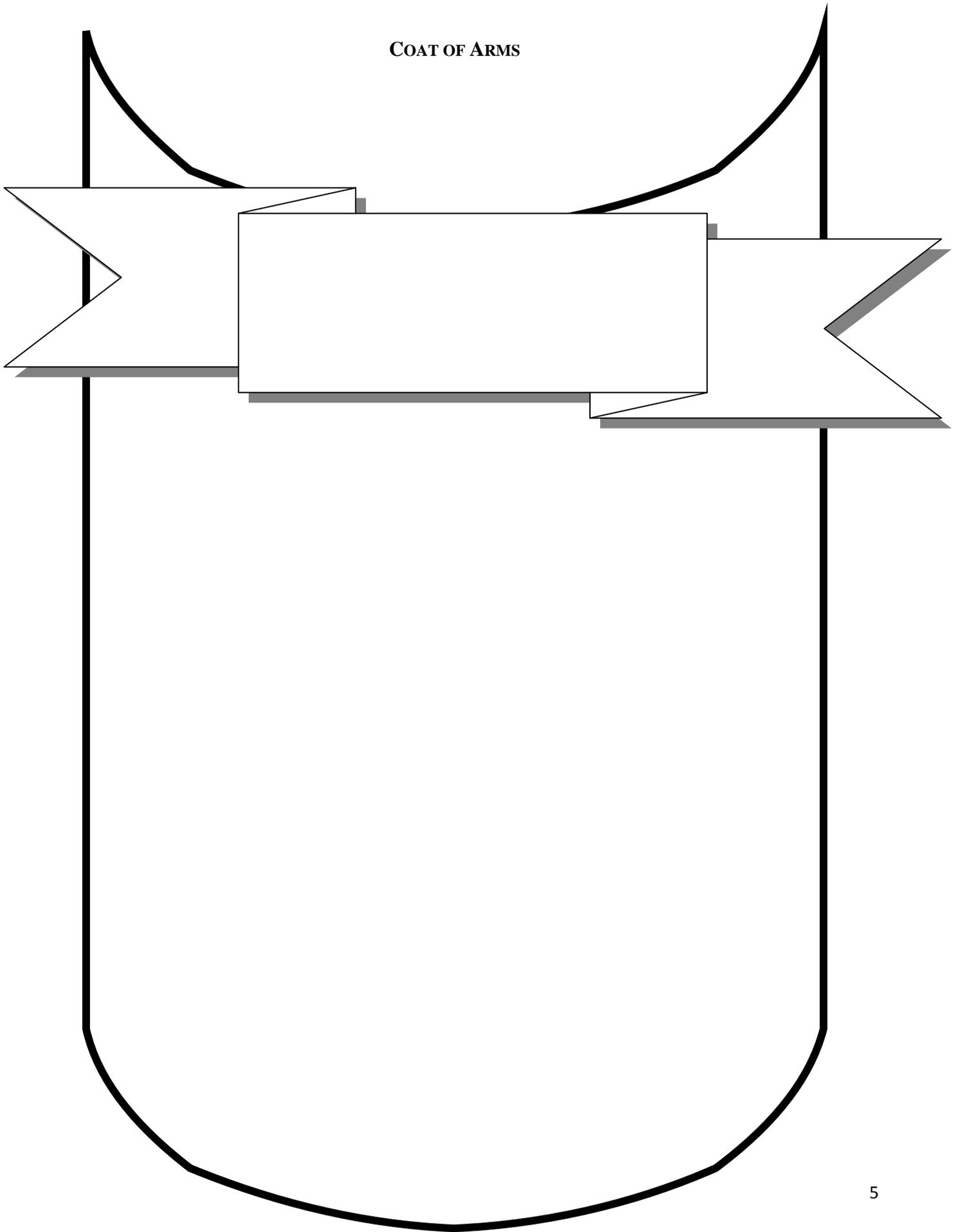
Craft and Structure

4. Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5. Analyze the structure of texts, including how specific sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text (e.g., a section, chapter, scene, or stanza) relate to each other and the whole.

Correlations to SVPDP Curricula

This activity could be used with the *We the People: The Citizen & the Constitution* text as a review or preview of the Bill of Rights.

COAT OF ARMS



Make a motto

1. Now that you've learned about the Bill of Rights, it's time to get creative.

Which is your favorite amendment? Why? What words, phrases, or ideas in the amendment are most important to you? Write those words, phrases, or ideas below.

Try to connect those words or phrases or ideas into a statement.

This will become your motto. (Stumped? Look at the examples below.)

My motto is...

2. Now turn that phrase into an intellectual Latin motto.

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Examples

(First Amendment) Freedom of speech = **Libertas ab articulo**

(Fourth Amendment) No unfair searches = **Exstinguo exploro iniquitas**

(Fifth Amendment) No double jeopardy = **Adversus judicium biformatis**

(Ninth Amendment) Rights belong to the people = **Civilis adiungo ab civis**

THE BILL OF RIGHTS AT A GLANCE

First Amendment

Religion

- Government absolutely may not tell you what to believe nor can they create an official state religion nor can they favor one religion over another—“establishment clause.”
- Government cannot unfairly limit how you practice your religion; government may place reasonable restrictions on what you can do in the name of your religion—“exercise clause.”

Speech

- You can say or print what you want with some restrictions; symbols on clothing, behavior such as marching in a picket line or even burning a flag are protected as speech.
- Speech not protected includes: obscenity, speech that incites illegal action, libel, slander, hate speech, or fighting words.

Press

- Press can write what they want as long as it’s not “libelous.”
- Framers protected the press to help spread free speech that would keep citizens informed and allowing them to participate in discussing issues and choosing representatives.

Assembly

- Government may not stop you from “hanging out” with people unless you or other members are engaging in illegal activities (i.e. a gang or terrorist group is not a protected form of assembly).

Petition

- You have the right to protest against the government, to ask for changes, and to ask that wrongs committed by the government be corrected.

Second Amendment

States have the right to “maintain” a militia.

“...the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.”

- This has been interpreted as: “Individuals can own guns.”
- This has been argued and never completely settled in courts whether or not individual people can own guns, or if it meant only members of a militia could own guns.

Third Amendment

The military cannot force private citizens to provide food and shelter to troops.

Fourth Amendment

Government cannot search your “persons, houses, papers, and effects” without probable cause” or a warrant issued by a judge.

- Warrants must describe “...the place to be searched, and the person or things to be seized.”

- Evidence obtained in an illegal search cannot be used in a court of law to convict a person.
- This amendment protects a person's right to privacy and prevents government from abusing its law enforcement powers.

Fifth Amendment

You can't be tried in court for the same crime more than once.

- Double jeopardy clause

A person can't "be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law."

- Due process clause = Government must be fair and follow the rules and not violate your rights when trying to convict you of a crime.

A person cannot have property taken from them without receiving just compensation for that which was taken.

- Eminent domain = Government can take away property from a private citizen only if they pay them a fair amount for that which was taken.
- Balances common good with individual rights

A person cannot be forced to testify against him/herself in a court of law.

- You don't have to say, "I did it."
- You don't have to help convict yourself of a crime. You can "remain silent."

A grand jury must indict you for "a capital or otherwise infamous crime."

- Government presents their evidence to a grand jury, or group of citizens.
- If the grand jury believes a person may have committed a crime, they deliver an indictment, or a statement saying the government ought to go to trial and convict a person of a crime.
- Grand juries protect common people from being harassed by the government; they have to say there is probable cause to take a person to court and try them for a crime.

Sixth Amendment

You get a trial held in public.

- This allows the public to watch to make sure the government treats you fairly.

You get a "speedy" trial.

- The government can't lock you up for years before trying you as a way to harass you.

You get a jury to listen to your case.

- A jury is a group of citizens who make a decision whether or not you're guilty; the people decide, not the government.

You have the right to know the charges, or the crime, of which you are accused.

- This allows you to prepare a proper defense.

You have a right to confront witnesses that testify against you.

- A person cannot secretly accuse you of a crime. You have the right to ask questions of them during cross-examination in a trial.

You are given the authority to “subpoena” witnesses to testify in court on your behalf.

- The government can also subpoena witnesses to testify against you, too.

You have the right to have counsel, or a lawyer, to help you prove your innocence.

Seventh Amendment

You are guaranteed a trial by jury.

A judge cannot ignore a jury’s verdict.

Eighth Amendment

The government may not fine you excessively.

The government may not punish you using cruel or unusual punishments.

Government may not charge excessive bail, and it’s not guaranteed to all.

- Bail allows the defendant to remain free prior to a trial, because a defendant is assumed innocent until proven guilty.

Ninth Amendment

The rights listed in the Bill of Rights are not inclusive.

There are many other rights people have that are not listed in the constitution.

Tenth Amendment

The national government has enumerated, or listed responsibilities.

The state governments have enumerated responsibilities, too.

Powers not delegated to the national government belong to the states or the people.

- This amendment means that the states and the people have a lot of powers—those powers not given to the national government or denied to the states or the people.