



SCHOOL VIOLENCE PREVENTION DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM

## **WALK OR WALL OF FREEDOM**

By Julie Schultz

### **Activity Description**

Students create a public art installation. Students choose or are assigned a phrase from the preamble, articles, or amendments to the U.S. Constitution, make preliminary sketches, transfer their favorite sketch to a ceramic tile, then paint it. When tiles are dry, teachers can give each one a coat of polyurethane. When this coat dries, tiles can be installed in a public space as a Walk of Freedom or a Wall of Freedom. This can also be done on poster board, or paper if ceramic tiles are not a possibility.

### **Suggested Grade Level**

Fourth and above

### **Estimated Time to Complete**

Four class periods including homework in between (see Procedures, below, for sample breakdown)

### **Objective**

- Students will interpret a phrase from the U.S. Constitution and illustrate its significance.

### **Materials Needed**

- Phrases from the preamble
- Sketching paper
- Pencils
- 12-by-12 inch ceramic floor tiles
- Gesso primer
- Acrylic paints
- Paintbrushes
- Polyurethane

### **Activity Procedures**

A suggested four class periods could include:

1. For the first session, choose or assign phrases and begin sketching—fold one piece of sketching paper in fourths, and encourage students to illustrate four different interpretations of what their phrase means. Students can consult resources in the classroom and at home before the second class session.

2. For the second class session, students must decide which sketch will be used for the tile. Provide opportunity for sharing interpretations verbally and allow discussion among students to deepen understanding of what their phrase means as opposed to what it says. Students lightly transfer sketch to the tile using pencil. Some erasing can be done if needed. The tile is larger than the image that has been sketched. Some alterations may be necessary for this adjustment.
3. For the third class session, students paint. The teacher applies polyurethane over completed painted tiles before the next class session.
4. For the fourth class session, students display, share, and present their tiles in an installation. This can happen with an audience of other students, parents, and community members. The tiles at this point are able to be walked upon—student artists can be the first to walk across, reminding the audience that the document used for inspiration protects every step Americans take. Depending on space, tiles may be affixed to a wall instead of on the floor or ground.