

Lesson Building Toolkits

Browse by grade level

Lessons, activities, and clips are grouped by what you need them to do. Pick one that fits your grade and lands at least two core Constitutional ideas.

JUMP TO YOUR GRADE BAND:

[ELEMENTARY \(K-5\)](#) | [MIDDLE SCHOOL \(6-8\)](#) | [HIGH SCHOOL \(9-12\)](#)

Elementary (K-5)

How to use this: Pick the format you'd most enjoy running and choose any lesson under it. Not sure? The ★ marks the easiest lesson to run in each format — take it and go. Everything here is built for K-5 and needs nothing beyond standard classroom AV. Each notes the core ideas it teaches — aim to land at least two in your visit. Watch the grade tags — a few options are upper-elementary (4-5) only.

Want a sure thing?

Use the WSBA sample lesson plan: [The Constitution Belongs to You!](#) Built around familiar fairness scenarios, student discussion, and a conversation about you and legal careers. When in doubt, that's your visit — nothing to source or prep.

Read aloud and discuss

The lowest-lift session — the story hooks them in the first half; your job is just to spark the conversation that follows. Keep your intro and wrap-up short so there's time for both the read and the talk. Source the book yourself from a library or bookstore ahead of time.

★ **Books for Read-Aloud and Discussion (K-3).** Bring a short civics-themed picture book, read it aloud, then spark discussion with a few “was that fair?” / “what would you do?” questions tied to a core idea. *Core ideas: varies by book; 2 We the People, 3 Rights and liberties.* (Source: Modeled on the Rendell Center's [Constitution Day Read-Aloud program](#)).

RECOMMENDED TITLES:

- We the Kids: The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States - David Catrow
 - We the People: The Story of Our Constitution - Lynne Cheney
 - A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution - Betsy and Giulio Maestro
 - Saving the Liberty Bell - Megan McDonald
 - Carl the Complainer - Michelle Knudsen
 - NoodlePhant - Jacob Kramer and K-Fai Steele
 - What Can a Citizen Do? - Dave Eggers
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Talk through a big idea

A guided discussion that makes one founding idea click in kid-friendly terms.

- ★ **Sample Lesson Plan: [The Constitution Belongs to You!](#) (3-5, Washington State Bar Association).** Ready-to-run lesson using familiar fairness scenarios and student discussion, plus a conversation about legal careers, to make the case for why rules and legal protections work the way they do. *Core ideas: The rule of law, We the People, Equality and fairness, Civic agency.*
 - ★ **[Our School Rules](#) (K-2, PBS LearningMedia).** Students discuss why rules exist, connect their school rules to the Preamble's promise to "establish justice," then collaborate to create a Classroom Constitution — voting on rules the same way the founders did. A simplified Preamble with phrase-by-phrase breakdowns is built into the lesson. *Core ideas: The rule of law, We the People, Equality and fairness.*
 - **[Our Rights & Responsibilities](#) (K-3, PBS LearningMedia).** Single-period discussion connecting the Bill of Rights to real-life examples — students identify a right (e.g., freedom of expression under the First Amendment) and its corresponding responsibility. *Core ideas: Rights and liberties, Equality and fairness.*
 - **[Fourteenth Amendment – Brown v. The Board of Education Lesson](#) (3-6, American Constitution Society).** Tells the true story of Linda Brown's fight to desegregate her neighborhood school. Presenter note: skip the closing discussion questions about present-day school segregation — focus on "what does equal mean to you?" questions. *Core ideas: Equality and fairness, The rule of law.* [Note: Page opens with ACS's advocacy mission — this is not part of the lesson.]
 - **[Understanding Procedural Justice](#) (4-7, WA Courts).** Why a fair process matters as much as the verdict — connects directly to how students experience fairness in their own lives. *Core ideas: The rule of law, Equality and fairness.*
 - **[Rights and Responsibilities](#) (4-6, WA Courts).** What we owe one another, and why fair rules matter — a discussion that connects directly to students' daily lives. *Core ideas: The rule of law, We the People.*
 - **[An Introduction to the Bill of Rights](#) (4-8, WA Courts).** Story-driven — you share real examples of rights in action and ask students what life would be like without them. *Core ideas: Rights and liberties, Civic agency.*
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Run a mock trial

Students take the courtroom roles; you're the judge. Putting a fairy-tale villain on trial turns the whole room into the courtroom, and they love it.

★ **Sample Lesson Plan: [State v. Mary Witch — Scripted Mock Trial](#) (3-5, WA Courts).** A fairy-tale trial students act out; fully scripted, almost no prep, and it shows what courts do. *Core ideas: The rule of law, Rights and liberties, Equality and fairness.*

[State v. Shenzi, Banzai and Ed — scripted mock trial](#) (3-5, WA Courts). A "Lion King"-themed courtroom drama: the hyena trio stands trial for their role in Mufasa's death, with 15 speaking roles carrying the case from opening statement to verdict. Presenter note: heavier stakes than Mary Witch's fairy-tale plot, and the full script runs a 50-minute period — probably a better fit

for a return visit, once the teacher knows you and can help assign parts ahead of time. Core ideas: The rule of law, Rights and liberties.

Solve a problem or build something

Hands-on reasoning and invention.

Rules, Rules, Rules Lesson (K-5, American Bar Association). “Pass the Eraser” game makes students feel, firsthand, why clear and consistent rules matter — before you ever say the words “rule of law.” Rules change without warning as the eraser gets passed around, then students rebuild and vote on their own version. Keep the discussion concrete: “What happened when the rules kept changing? Was that fun or fair?” Try the rulebook metaphor — recess with no rules isn’t fun for anyone. *Core ideas: The rule of law, We the People.*

Video clips to breakup your lesson

A quick drop-in to help anchor the discussion — not a full activity on its own. Match the clip to your grade.

- **PBS KIDS – Together We Can: What Is the U.S. Constitution? (K-2)**. A gentle, animated intro to the Constitution as a set of rules we make together — pitched right at the youngest rooms. *Core ideas: We the People, The rule of law.*
 - **Quizlet – U.S. Constitution Explained for Students (3-5)**. In under 5 minutes, this video breaks down what the Constitution is, why it was created, what it includes, and how it works today — a strong overview to open any visit. *Core ideas: We the People, The rule of law.*
 - **TED-Ed – A 3-Minute Guide to the Bill of Rights (3-5)**. A fast, clear run through the first ten amendments — a strong setup before a rights discussion or mock trial. *Core ideas: Rights and liberties, Checks and balances.*
 - **Facts of Congress: The Bill of Rights (1-minute video) (4-6)**. A one-minute, student-friendly clip to open or close the visit. *Core ideas: Rights and liberties, Checks and balances.*
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