

# Constitution Day Stuff



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## Hooray For Constitution Day!

Here are some easy and fun activities to do with your children/students.



### Constitution Activities for younger citizens:

I keep things very simple as I'm teaching Y5's. An easy definition of what the constitution is, followed up with everyone signing their name to our classroom constitution works well.

One of our standards is learning to write our name so this is a nice overlap of that standard.



I also make tea-stained paper and explain to the children that during that time period people wrote on parchment paper with feather pens called quills.

I collect seagull and goose feathers all summer, from area beaches so I have enough for each child to write their name with a quill dipped in black paint. They can then take it home with their parchment-paper signature.

They really enjoy this and wonder how in the world anyone wrote anything of any length with a feather!



These ideas and templates can be found in my FREE 10-page [Activities For Constitution Day](#) unit.

### More Writing:

I've also made a "*Happy Constitution Day!*" Trace & Write skill sheet.

The Constitution delegates responsibility. Even younger students can understand this if you break it down for them and give specific real-world examples.



A perfect way to do this is by making a class book entitled ***We're Responsible***. A sample booklet is included in my [\*\*Activities For Constitution Day Packet\*\*](#).

Also included in this packet is a ***My Constitution Fact Booklet*** that students can easily read as they cut and glue a matching picture for the text. It's an easy way for young children to learn about the basic facts of the Constitution, while practicing the skills of cutting, matching, tracing, reading and writing.

Plus students have a nice booklet to take home at the end of Constitution Day, that they can share with their families, to once again review what they have learned.

The packet also includes Constitution picture cards as a fun way to review. Print the cards twice and turn them into a Memory Match Game that can be used as an independent center activity. Encourage students to say the names of the picture to increase their new "Constitutional vocabulary".

There's also a set for the original 13 states, which helps students understand that things were different during the time the Constitution was written.

So that I can answer any questions my students may have, I researched basic facts about the Constitution.



I show my students a **poster** I made of the 3 parts of our government.

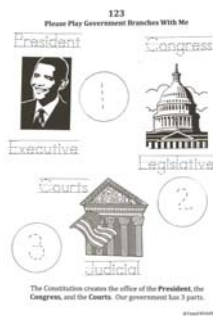
You can turn the poster into a labeling lesson for older students and I've included this skill sheet as well.

## Gross Motor and Story Time:

To get the wiggles out we march around to some Sousa music and I settle them down by reading several America-themed books including **We The Kids**. It's the perfect book for explaining the constitution in kid-friendly language. I also read a variety of pop up books and show pictures from other stories as well. Be sure and check out the bibliography of great books for Constitution Day

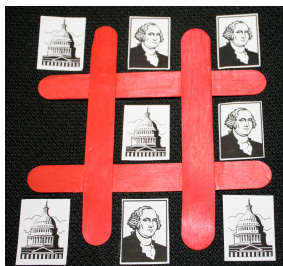
**Show & Share:** I was fortunate to visit Washington D.C. and able to purchase a parchment copy of the Constitution. It's a nice "Show & Share" item for my students. FunBrain.com sells nice reproductions for only \$2.95.

## Games:



Reinforcing learning by taking just 5-minutes to play a game, is a fun way to culminate your Constitution Day lessons.

To review the 3 parts of the Constitution as well as the 3 branches of our government, play my 123 dice game.



I also made up a Constitution Day **tic tac toe game**.

To save paper, simply glue 4 large Popsicle sticks together to make permanent playing boards.

Use flag erasers, red, white and blue flat marbles, or my Constitution Day game pieces. Print off the page, laminate and then cut out the individual pieces. Store in Snack Baggies to use each year.

A math game for older students would be for them to find out how many years ago the Constitution was signed. Write today's year on the board. To find the answer, subtract 1787 from it. Give a flag sticker to the student who finds out the correct answer first.

[Apples4Teachers](#) offers 14 Constitution Day coloring pages. I use these to make bingo-dot-a-pattern center sheets, toppers for mazes, dot-to-dots, and headers for my word finds. My students also enjoy practice writing their name and tracing Constitution Day themed words that I write under these pictures.

A nice culmination to the day's activities is to graph your students feelings about the Constitution and Constitution Day. I made up four for you to choose from.



### **Related Constitution Day Activities: Our Flag**

Because this is such a patriotic day, I also review a few geography related things with my students, such as: the **city** where they go to school, the **state** they live in, the **country** they live in, as well as facts about our **flag** including **The Pledge of Allegiance**.

I have several free lessons centered on the flag, which would also make great centers for this day. Be sure and check out my [Flag Activities Book](#), and [My Pledge Definition Book](#).

The easy reader booklet [“My Flag”](#) is only \$1.29 and is a nice way to transition from story time to an independent writing activity that your students are sure to enjoy.



Finish the day off by giving everyone a few pretzels during snack time, to review the 3 branches of the government and the 3 things that the Constitution creates. See how many students remember. Take a bite out of each pretzel section as you say a word!



Happy

Constitution

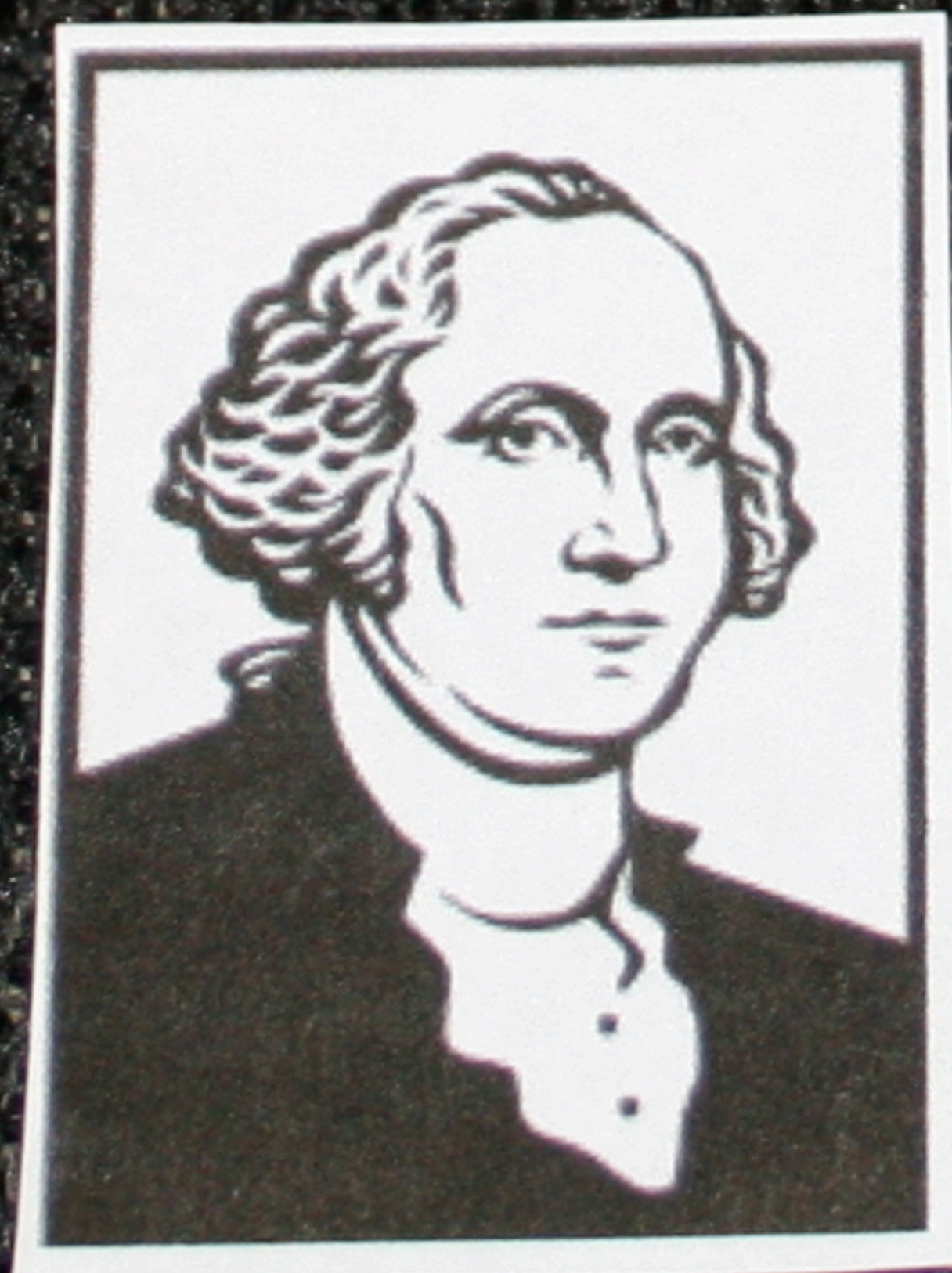
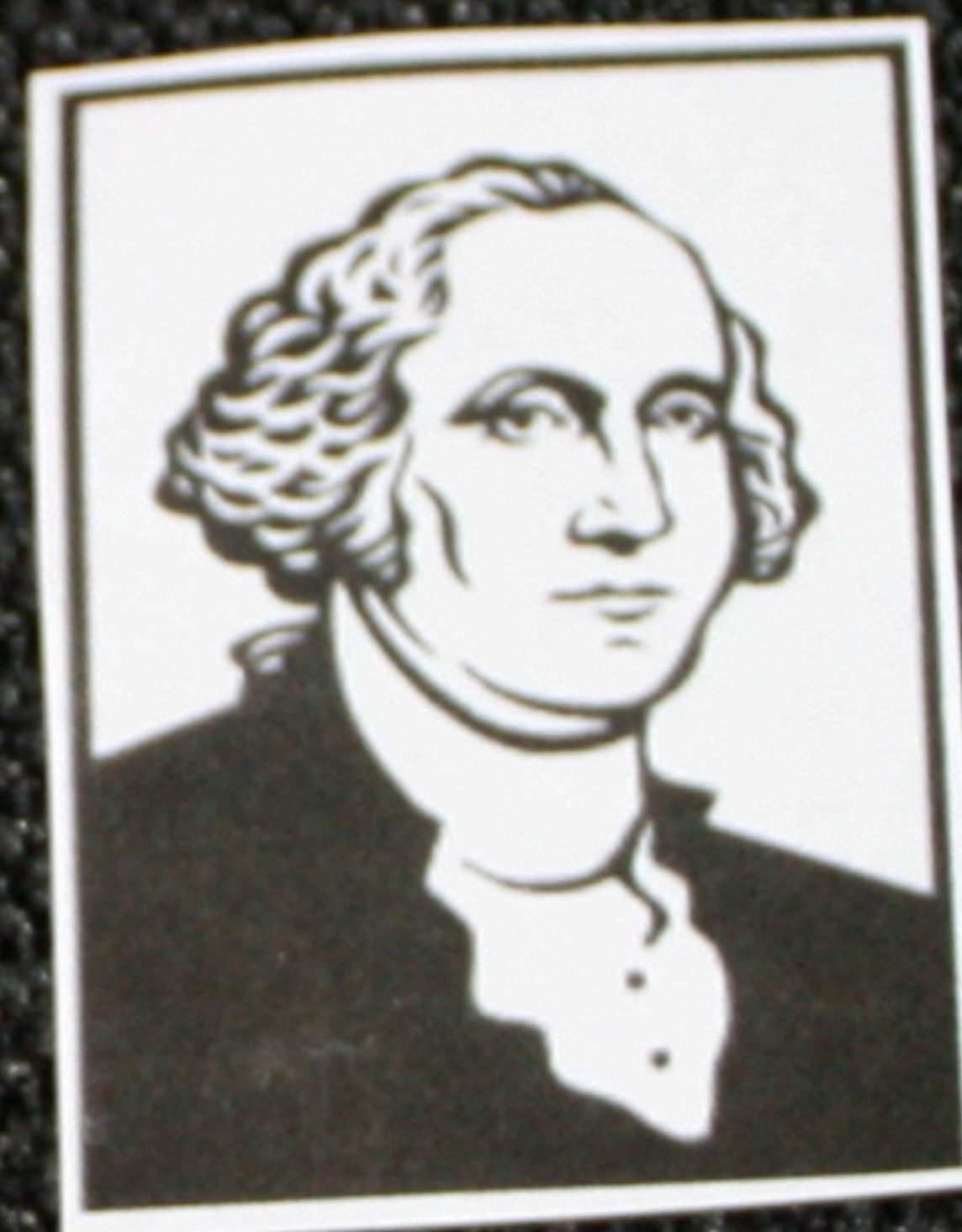
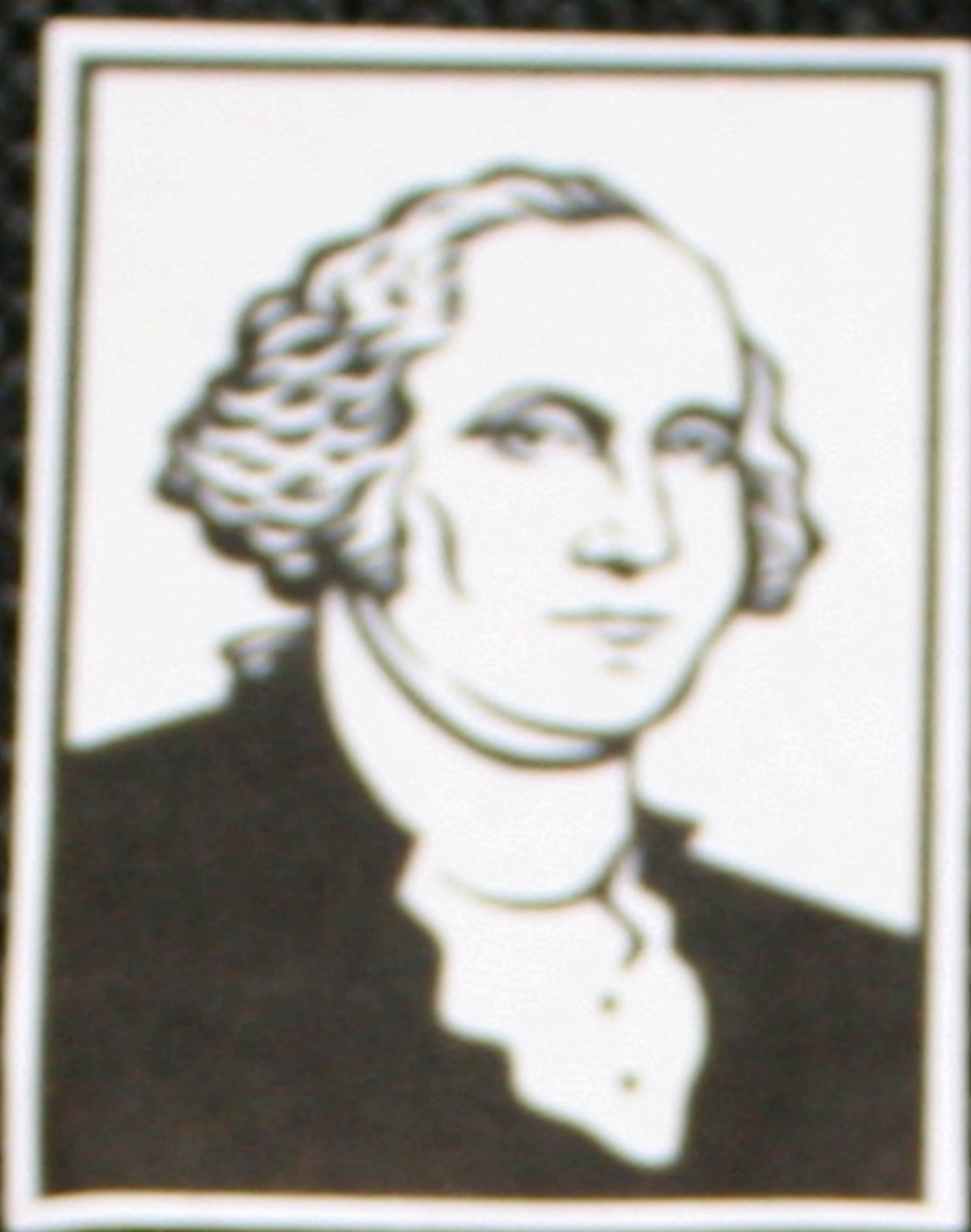
Day!

Happy

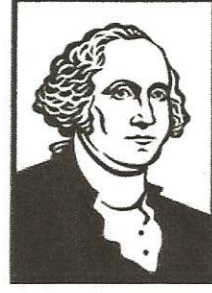
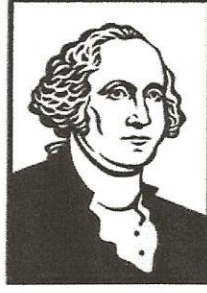
Constitution

Day!













Franklin



Franklin



Franklin



Franklin



Franklin



Franklin



Franklin



Franklin



Franklin



Franklin



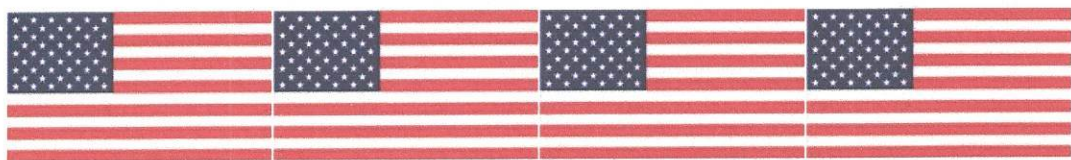
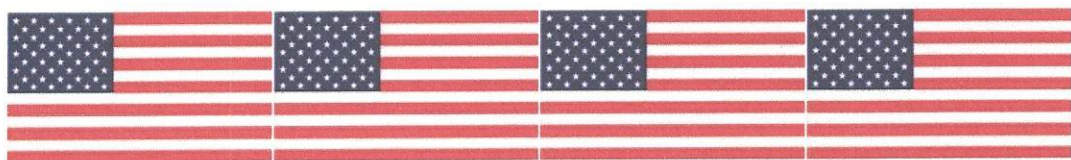
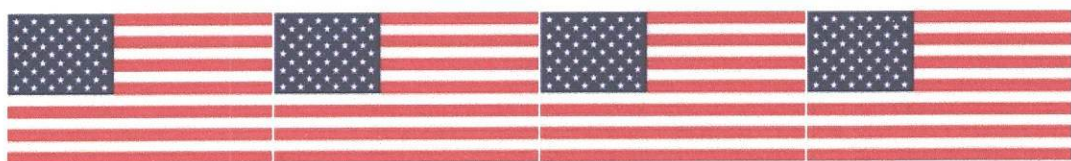
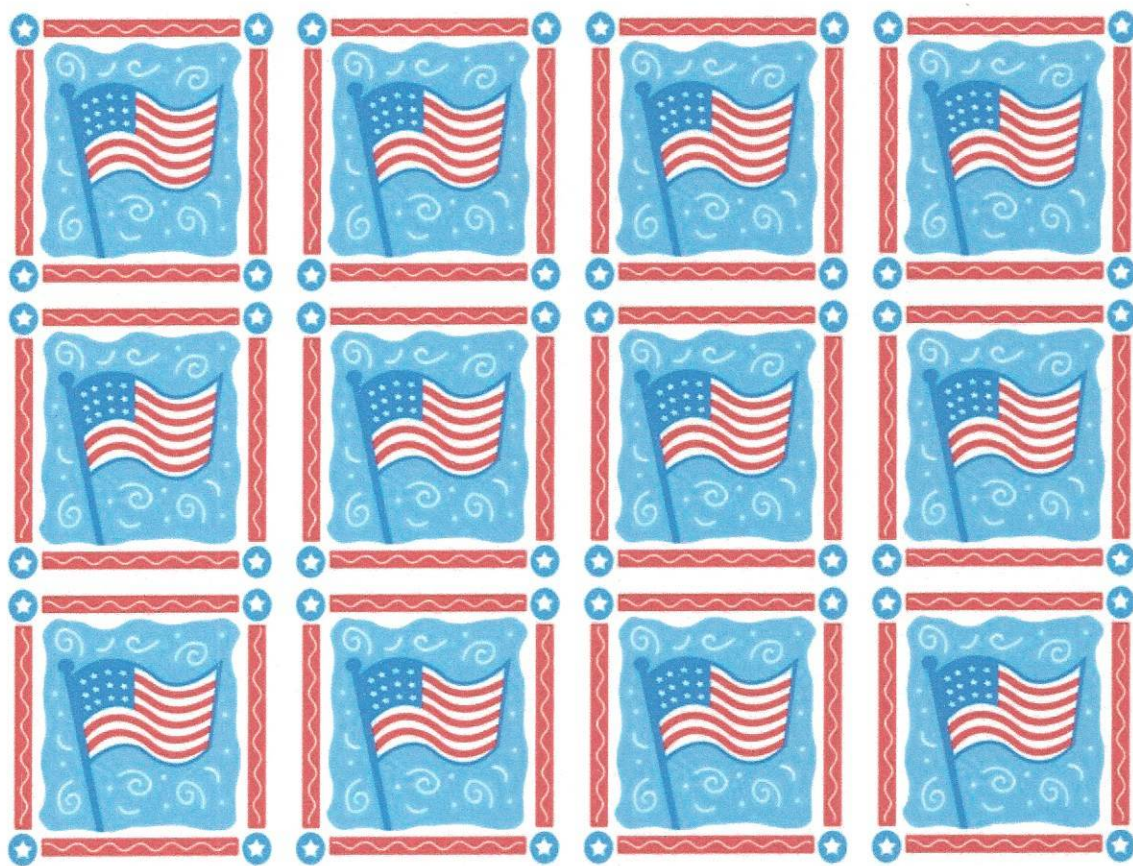
Franklin



Franklin







TicTacToe Game Pieces





## **Basic Facts About The Constitution**

- The Constitution is a set of rules that Americans live by.
  - It is the highest law of the land.
  - The Constitution creates the office of the president, the Congress, and the courts.
  - Rights are things that all people have.
  - The Constitution was written in 1787
  - The Framers were a group of men who wrote the Constitution.
  - The Bill of Rights are the first ten amendments to the Constitution.
  - These are changes that were made.
  - The Congress makes the laws.
  - The people elect the members of Congress.
  - The president enforces the laws.
  - The courts decide what the law means when there are questions about them.
- The Constitution was created so that all people would be treated fairly.  
Thirteen states worked to create the Constitution.  
The Constitution is a basic plan that helps people live together in peace and happiness.
- The Constitution helps people make laws and enforce them.
  - The government has three parts—the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.
  - The legislative branch makes the law.
  - The executive branch enforces the law.
  - The judicial branch is the court.
  - Congress is divided into the Senate and the House of Representatives.
  - The three branches check and balance power.
  - Amendments are changes to the Constitution.
  - The Bill of Rights guarantees freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of speech.
  - The Constitutional Convention took place in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.





## Types Of Responsibilities

### Responsibility Discussion:

*What does responsibility mean?* It is an obligation or duty to do or not do something. People depend on you to follow through. You have the authority to act responsibly.

1. There are several types of responsibilities or reasons WHY we are responsible.
2. Can you think of some?
3. I'll start.
4. I'm responsible because of my job or occupation.
5. I am your teacher and it's my responsibility to teach you.
6. Let's list that on the board.
7. As a student what are you responsible for?  
Hopefully they will say homework, which you can list as assignments.
8. What are you responsible for as a friend? (Promising to keep secrets, be a good friend, share etc.)
9. List these on the board and have students think of examples.
10. Students will choose 1 and write a sentence about it and then illustrate their sentence for their page for the class book.

- **Job:** Each occupation has specific responsibilities; my job as a teacher is to help you learn. What are some of the jobs that your parents do? What responsibilities do they have?
- **Assignments:** Students are often assigned responsibilities at home, such as doing chores, at school such as doing homework assignments. Your parents are given daily tasks or assignments to accomplish at work.
- **Promises:** When you make a promise to another person, that individual takes on the responsibility of keeping their promise. Sometimes these are formal and written down. I owe you's, and



contracts. Sometimes they are verbal and sealed with a handshake, or for young children a “pinkie-promise”. You “give your word” that you will live up to your responsibility of keeping that promise.

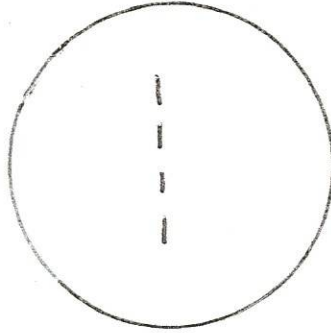
- **Laws/Rules:** Because our Constitution has a body that makes laws, we as citizens have the responsibility to obey those laws. In school, we have rules. We have the responsibility to obey those rules so that things run smoothly, we stay safe, and everyone’s rights are respected. What are some of our rules?
- **Customs:** Some of our students’ families come from different countries. They have traditions that they have a responsibility to follow, practice and celebrate. Call on some students to ask them to give specific examples.
- **Personal Values or Moral Principles:** This is how we behave because we know something is right or wrong, honest and good, appropriate and proper. Using good manners, being polite, sharing, treating a person like you’d like to be treated, not hitting someone, not cutting in line etc. are examples of this. Can you think of others?
- **Appointments/Elections/Memberships:** People are appointed or elected to jobs or committees, or are a member of a group and they have specific responsibilities that they need to carry out to help benefit that membership as well as a larger body of people. In middle school and high school we have Student Council. These students are elected to that post and have responsibilities to the rest of the students and school. If you are a member of a group, club or organization like being a cheerleader, you are representing your school and have certain responsibilities while on the team. Can you think of other examples?





## Please Play Government Branches With Me

President



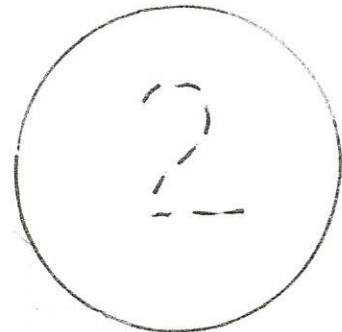
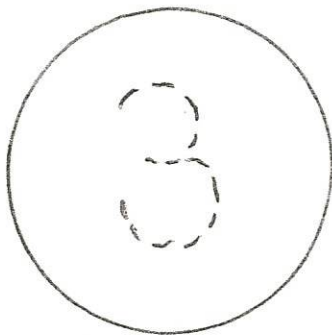
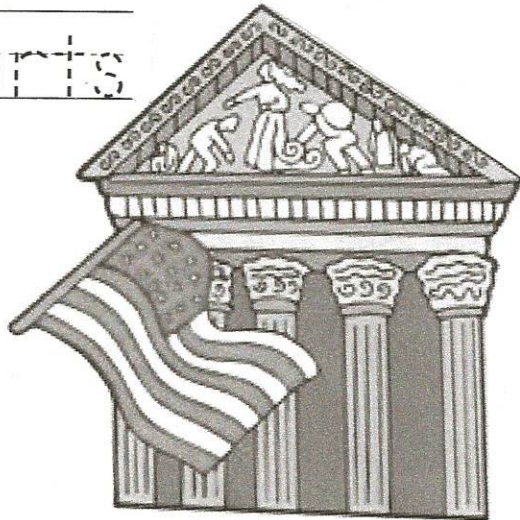
Congress



Executive

Legislative

Courts



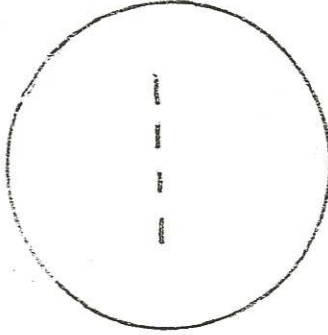
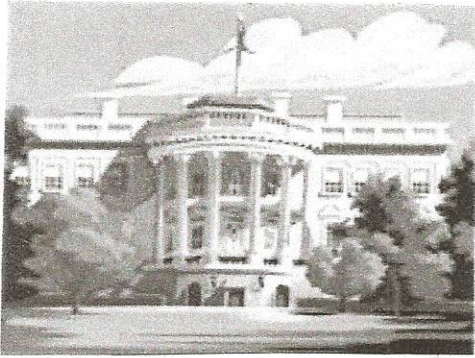
Judicial

The Constitution creates the office of the **President**, the **Congress**, and the **Courts**. Our government has 3 parts.



## Please Play Government Branches With Me

President



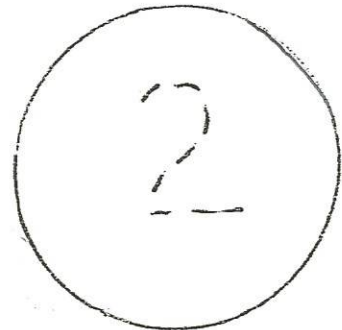
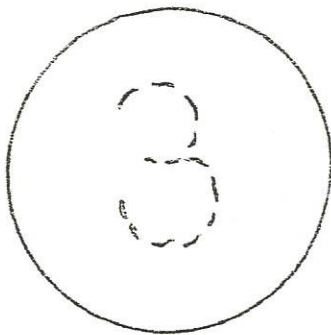
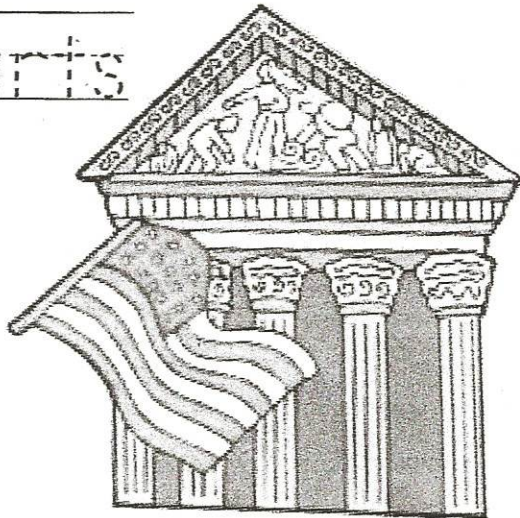
Congress



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Judicial

The Constitution creates the office of the **President**, the **Congress**, and the **Courts**. Our government has 3 parts.



# 1-2-3

## Play Government Branches With Me



### **Directions:**

- After you have discussed and explained the 3 branches of the government to your students, have them play this dice game to reinforce those facts in a fun way.
- Students work in groups of 2-4
- Students take turns rolling one dice.
- Children roll the dice to see who goes 1<sup>st</sup>. The lowest number goes first.
- Children must roll a 1 to color in the circle of the president. Currently it is President Obama, to keep the game current as years pass, incase I can not get clipart, I have also included a template of the White House representing the Presidential Branch.
- Students TRACE the words and numbers.
- Since this is a patriotic game, have students use red, white and blue crayons.
- Run the game papers off on buff, tan or light yellow paper so that the white crayon shows up.
- Students must roll at 2 to color in the circle for the Congress and a 3 to color in the circle for the Courts.
- If they roll a 4 or a 6 they simply pass the dice to the next person.
- If they roll a 5 they get to roll again.
- To make the game last longer, you can tell the students they have to roll the dice and color in the circles in the correct numeric order. i.e., they have to roll a 1 first before they can color in a two etc.
- The first child to have all of their circles colored in is the winner.
- You can give flag or star stickers to everyone for participating and two stickers to the winner.



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[illegible]



Total:	Total:	Total:
		



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## Bibliography For Constitution Day



***The Star Spangled Banner, America The Beautiful, & The Pledge of Allegiance*** All by Calvert Gamwell

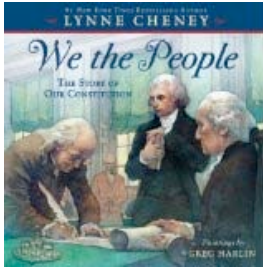
These are awesome pop up books. I use these to show my students “symbols” of America and we discuss what it is to be an American.



***America the Beautiful*** By Robert Sabuda

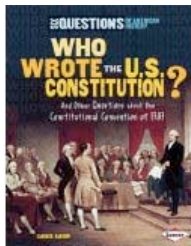
My Y5's LOVE pop up books. They grab and hold their attention. It allows me to introduce a variety of vocabulary to them including why we are studying and celebrating Constitution Day.





We the People: The Story of Our Constitution by Lynne Cheney and Greg Harlin

This book has many colorful illustrations, and explains how delegates from the thirteen original states debated issues and made compromises before signing the US Constitution.



Who Wrote the U.S. Constitution? and Other Questions About the Constitutional Convention of 1787 (Six Questions of American History) by Candice F. Ransom

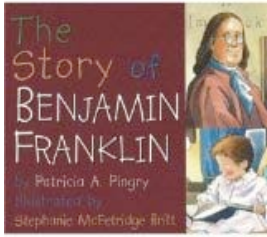
Throughout the summer of 1787, representatives from the 13 states and leaders argued, shouted, and wrote and rewrote articles. By September, they had produced a new document, the U.S. Constitution. What were the new country's problems? Who came up with the solutions? How did the states work out disagreements to create a new system of government? Readers can discover these facts and what took place at the Constitutional Convention.



If You Lived When Women Won Their Rights

Uses a question and answer format. This is part of the acclaimed *If You Lived...* history series which tells the exciting story of how women worked to get equal rights with men. This culminates in the 19th amendment to the Constitution.

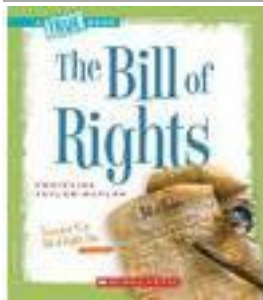




The Story of Benjamin Franklin: Amazing American (Dell Yearling Biography) by Margaret Davidson

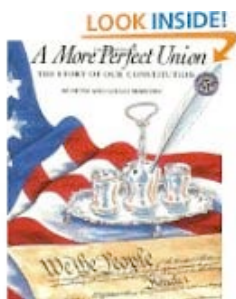
This is a board book and can even be read to a toddler. Franklin was the only man to sign the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Treaty of Paris. This book covers a few of his many accomplishments: his discovery of electricity with a kite, his invention of the Franklin stove, his vocation as a printer; his hometown of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and his contributions to the American Revolution.

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The Bill of Rights by Christine Taylor-Butler

In this book, learn about the United States Constitution and its first ten amendments known as the Bill of Rights. This book is part of the “*American History*” series and has a helpful “*Words to Know*” glossary and a Learning More” section.

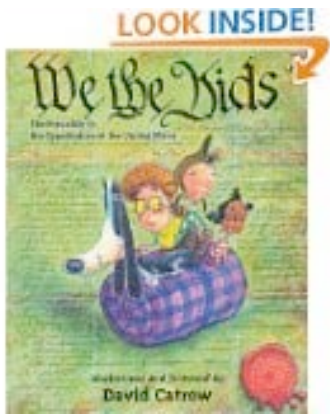


A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution by Betsy Maestro and Giulio Maestro

This book covers the birth of the Constitution from the initial decision to hold the convention, through the summer meetings in Philadelphia, the ratification struggle, the first election, and the adoption of the Bill of Rights. The focus is on the decisions on the organization of the government, which resulted in the Great Compromise. A final section

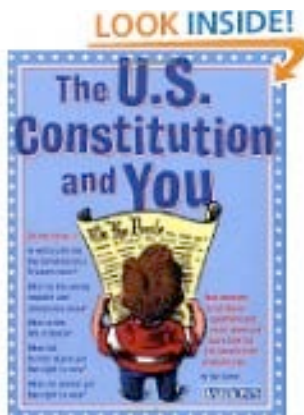


includes lists of the signers as well as all those who attended; chronologies of events and the dates of ratification; and simple summaries of the Articles of the Constitution and amendments to it.



*We the Kids: The Preamble to the Constitution of the United States of America* By David Catrow Helps students understand the Constitution in a fun and whimsical way. Three wacky kids and their goofy dog show readers what the Constitution means to them.

by David Catrow



*U.S. Constitution and You, The* by Syl Sobel

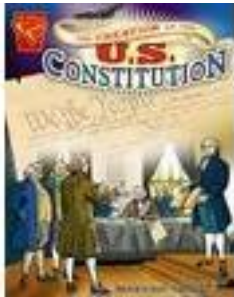
It tells students about the Constitution itself--explaining exactly what it does, as well as how it affects and protects people today. Kids discover how the Constitution provides for the federal government's three branches. Then they see how it gives all citizens many rights. The language is clear and easy to understand. It gives many examples that directly relate to young people.



### How the U.S. Government Works by Syl Sobel

This is a good classroom supplement as it is a solid information source for kids writing social studies reports, or teachers who want to explain things to their students in an easy-to-understand way. The book explains the federal system as it works today. All 3 branches of the government are covered. Young readers learn how officials are elected or appointed and how government agencies work for everyone's benefit. A complex process is simply explained in interesting terms that young readers can comprehend. Ages 9-12  
Great as a teacher resource.

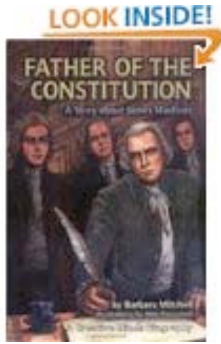
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### The Creation of the U.S. Constitution by Michael Burgan, illustrated by Gordon Purcell and Terry Beatty

The book concentrates on the struggle among the framers to resolve the delicate issue of how their new country could reach a balance between putting all power in one leader's hands and the chaos that might come of a loose union of independent states. The illustrations are done in comic-book style with attention to period detail. The book also includes a glossary, bibliography, and Internet resources that are age appropriate.





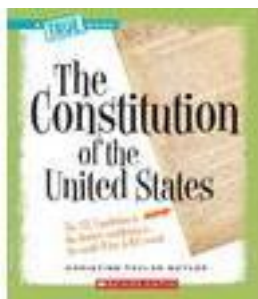
The Father Of The Constitution: A Story About James Madison by Barbara Mitchell

James Madison discovered ways to influence and educate others even though he was an extremely shy person. Because what went on at the Constitutional Conference was kept secret, we owe much of what we know about what took place then, to Madison, as he took excellent notes at every meeting.



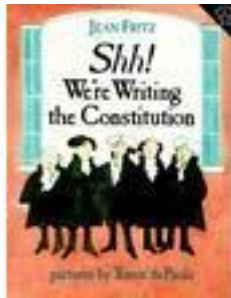
If you Were There When They Signed The Constitution by Elizabeth Levy, illustrated by Joan Holub

This is a unique presentation of American history that takes readers into the locked rooms of the Philadelphia State House when the Constitution was being drafted in 1787.



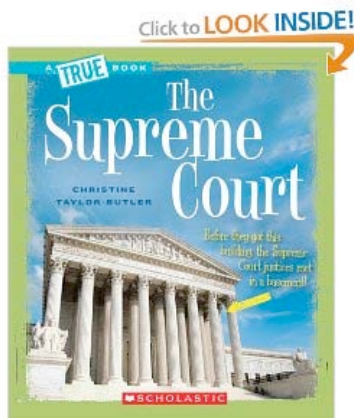
The Constitution of the United States by Christine Taylor-Butler

Creating the U.S. Constitution was a huge undertaking. This book tells you about the route the framers took as they crafted this important document of the United States. This book is also part of the *“American History”* series.



### Shh! We're Writing the Constitution by Jean Fritz

The author takes us on a journey back in time to behind-the-scenes moments at the Constitutional Convention of 1787. It's a fun way to learn about the people and events that shaped the creation of one of our nation's most important documents. Readers learn how this valued work was written and ratified. Also included, is the full text of the 1787 Constitution.

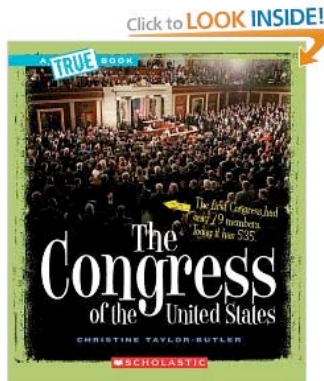


### The Supreme Court (True Books: American History)

#### Christine Taylor-Butler

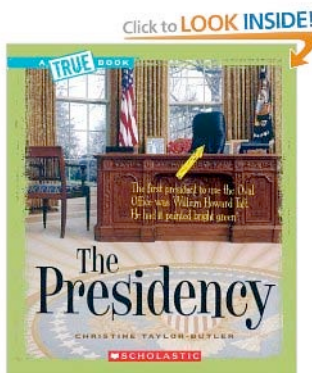
This is an excellent overview of the Supreme Court. It is very well researched and set up in an easy to follow format. The book includes interesting facts, informative sidebars, photographs, illustrations, a court circuit map (1790) and a timeline of famous justices. In the back of the book there is a statistics page, a list of important words, + additional recommended book and website resources. This book is also part of the “**American History**” collection.





The Congress of the United States (True Books: American History) By Christine Taylor-Butler

This is a clear, concise overview of Congress. It's easy to read and laid out in a very interesting manner. The book challenges the student to figure out which of two statements presented is true. The book includes fun facts, informative sidebars and great photographs. In the back of the book are "important words," a page of true statistics and additional recommended book, organization and website resources. This book is also part of the ***"American History"*** series.



The Presidency (True Books: American History) Christine Taylor-Butler

This is a great nonfiction book about the presidency and extremely informative. It begins by covering who can qualify for being president, the job of a president, the executive branch, and the first president. From there it goes into some of the most important jobs and crises the presidents have faced over the years and how they performed their jobs during those times. It's a nice resource for teachers and is part of the ***"American History"*** series.