GRADES 2–3

What Is the US Constitution

Name / chosen name: _____

The US Constitution sets out the structure and powers of the federal government. It was signed in 1787 and took effect through state ratification. It has been changed by amendments.

The federal government has legislative, executive and judicial branches. Their powers are divided, with checks on one another. State governments also have important powers. This is the US system, not the Australian system.

1. What is the main idea of the text?

2. What is one detail that supports it?

3. What would you check in the source?

Sources: National Archives — US Constitution

GRADES 2–3

US Three Branches Matching

Name / chosen name: _____

Match each numbered term to a lettered description. Write the letter beside the term.

1. Congress _____

2. President and executive branch _____

3. Federal courts _____

Description bank

A. Carries out federal laws

B. Interpret and apply federal law in cases

C. Makes federal laws

Sources: National Archives — US Constitution

GRADES 4–5

Checks and Balances Connections

Name / chosen name: _____

Match each numbered term to a lettered description. Write the letter beside the term.

1. President _____

2. Congress _____

3. Senate _____

4. Federal courts _____

Description bank

A. Can review whether government actions fit the Constitution

B. Considers confirmation of many presidential appointments

C. Can veto a bill passed by Congress

D. Can override a veto with two-thirds in each House

Sources: National Archives — US Constitution

GRADES 4–5

Bill of Rights Scenarios

Name / chosen name: _____

Match fictional situations to a Bill of Rights idea. These examples introduce concepts; real legal questions depend on details.

speech / press · religion · fair criminal trial · protection from unreasonable searches

1. A community newspaper publishes criticism of a government decision.

2. A person chooses a religious practice.

3. A person accused of a crime receives a public trial and can have assistance from a lawyer.

4. Officials consider whether a search needs legal authority.

Sources: National Archives — Bill of Rights

GRADES 4–5

Constitutional Convention Timeline

Name / chosen name: _____

Put the cards in time order by writing 1–4, or cut and arrange. “Today” is an ongoing period, not a single dated event.

1789 · The new federal government begins operating.
Order: _____

1788 · The ninth state ratifies, meeting the requirement for the Constitution to take effect.
Order: _____

1791 · The first ten amendments, the Bill of Rights, are ratified.
Order: _____

1787 · Delegates meet in Philadelphia; the Constitution is signed on 17 September.
Order: _____

1. One question about a milestone

Sources: National Archives — US Constitution · National Archives — Bill of Rights

GRADES 4–5

Preamble Ideas

Name / chosen name: _____

The Preamble is the introduction to the US Constitution. It describes purposes such as justice, domestic peace, common defense, general welfare and liberty. It is not a list of every detailed government power.

Discuss these ideas in your own words. How could a group make fair rules and resolve disagreements? A classroom example is a learning model, not a legal interpretation of constitutional rights.

1. What is the main idea of the text?

2. What is one detail that supports it?

3. What would you check in the source?

Sources: National Archives — US Constitution

GRADES 4–5

What Is an Amendment

Name / chosen name: _____

An amendment is a change or addition to the Constitution. Article V sets out ways to propose and ratify amendments. It is harder than passing an ordinary federal law.

The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments, ratified in 1791. Amendments have also changed rules about slavery, voting and other important matters. Research a specific amendment in the National Archives rather than guessing its meaning.

1. What is the main idea of the text?

2. What is one detail that supports it?

3. What would you check in the source?

Sources: National Archives — US Constitution · National Archives — Bill of Rights

GRADES 2–3

US Civics Word Search

Name / chosen name: _____

Find 12 words across, down, diagonally or backwards. Circle each whole word.

Z	C	S	F	X	J	Q	V	N	R	E	T	A	B	E	D
E	T	A	T	S	X	R	Z	T	O	J	W	A	L	N	D
R	Y	B	I	V	C	S	N	S	G	G	D	N	G	R	S
V	C	M	Z	M	T	H	O	M	P	A	O	X	H	T	C
O	X	V	V	D	D	P	I	A	B	I	H	K	P	J	N
T	J	T	F	O	A	G	T	S	N	Z	P	Z	K	S	U
P	A	N	Y	N	M	S	U	U	C	H	P	F	J	S	Y
R	X	I	U	P	E	T	T	U	T	K	C	P	Z	E	B
E	V	Z	M	E	N	A	I	T	S	Q	O	R	N	R	O
S	O	K	O	Z	D	V	T	M	X	C	U	E	C	G	K
I	T	H	N	S	M	R	S	T	K	T	R	A	L	N	P
D	E	T	N	T	E	W	N	N	D	Y	T	M	Z	O	K
E	B	Q	Q	H	N	C	O	K	N	D	S	B	M	C	B
N	C	D	X	G	T	L	C	T	D	U	N	L	M	N	S
T	Y	J	Z	I	Q	X	L	C	S	C	S	E	A	E	C
T	A	Z	X	R	X	O	I	S	D	A	J	W	C	X	J

CONSTITUTION · CONGRESS · PRESIDENT · COURTS · RIGHTS · AMENDMENT · PREAMBLE · LAW · VOTE · DEBATE · STATE · UNION

1. Use one word in your own sentence

_____

_____

GRADES 4–5

US Civics Quiz

Name / chosen name: _____

Use the Constitution learning sheets or National Archives sources. These questions concern the United States.

1. Which branch makes federal laws?

2. Which branch carries out federal laws?

3. Which branch interprets and applies federal law in cases?

4. What is an amendment?

5. What is the Bill of Rights?

6. Name one check one branch has on another.

Sources: National Archives — US Constitution · National Archives — Bill of Rights

GRADES 2–3

Design a Fair Group Constitution

Name / chosen name: _____

Design a fair group constitution as a learning model. Explain rules, roles and ways to make changes. It is not a legal document.

Our group's purpose

Clear rights and responsibilities

Roles and checks on decisions

How to propose and agree a change