



FIRST AMENDMENT: PT II

I. GOALS

- Understand that their conduct, words, and expressions are greatly protected by the First Amendment
- Understand the meaning of each protection of the First Amendment
- Recognize that the government generally cannot punish you for having an unpopular opinion

II. METHODOLOGY AND TIMING

A. ACTIVITY ONE

- ***“I am going to pass out an activity now. There are 6 different kinds of cases we are handing out. When you get your activity, read through it, and try to answer on your own whether or not the First Amendment has been violated or not. The top of every page is just a refresher of the relevant information you learned from the powerpoint slides. It is there to assist you when considering the constitutionality of your assigned hypothetical/situation/case.***
- After 5 minutes of individual time, you’ll form a group with the other classmates who received your same activity.
- You’ll have 10 minutes to discuss the activity with your group. Make sure you write down which clause is applicable, what your ruling was, and your reasons why or why not a violation occurred.
- After 5 minutes, we’ll come back as a class and you’ll present your problem and your decision. Afterward, I will tell the class what a court has or might decide.

B. ACTIVITY TWO

- Which freedoms could you live without – Elimination Game
 - Now that you have become familiar with all of the clauses, we’d like to know if the class thinks any one of the freedoms could exist alone, without the support of the other five.
 - Would freedom of speech be as powerful if there was no freedom of the press?
 - How would freedom to petition be different if we didn’t also have freedom of assembly?
 - Ask the students for examples of how the freedoms work together.
 - How would you choose which freedom to give up if you had to? Tell students you are going to do five rounds of voting to determine which freedom the group thinks is the most important. Ask the students to decide which of the freedoms they would



eliminate if they had to pick one. Then have your students show which freedoms they chose using a show of hands. After the first vote, cross out on the white board the freedom that received the most votes for elimination. Then ask some students who voted for that freedom to explain why they picked it.

- Repeat the process 4 more times.
- Once one freedom remains, ask the students if they agree that this right is most important and why or why not. Ask them how this right would be different if it didn't have the other four rights for support? Would it still be useful? How would people exercise it? Would people have to change how they exercise it if they didn't have the other five?
- Discuss as a class: If you only had freedom of _____ (the winner from the votes), would the events below have been possible?
 - Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a Dream" speech on the National Mall.
 - *The Washington Post* writing an article about each presidential candidate's negative qualities
 - Women gaining the right to vote.
 - An all-night prayer vigil in memory of a fallen soldier
 - The Occupy Wall Street Movement
- If you find that the federal constitution doesn't protect your First Amendment rights as much as you'd hope, check out your STATE CONSTITUTION

III. MATERIALS

- First Amendment Handout

IV. FEEDBACK