

NEWSEUM POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Would You Fight for All Five? Weighing Our First Amendment Freedoms

Purpose/Key Idea/Concept: In this activity, students explore the interplay among the five First Amendment freedoms – religion, speech, press, assembly and petition – drawing on their own lives and examples they saw at the Newseum. They play an elimination game as a class, voting to determine which freedom their group believes is the most important.

Time: 50 minutes

Materials: None

Procedure:

- Tell your students you're going to talk about the First Amendment – the law that's written six stories tall on the front of the Newseum. So far their preparation for visiting the Newseum and the actual visit probably focused heavily on freedom of the press, but ask the students if they can also remember the other four freedoms in the First Amendment (they may have come across them during their visit). After guesses/discussion, write the five freedoms on the board and make sure your students understand what each one means:
 - **Religion** – You can believe what you want, belong to any religion or no religion.
 - **Speech** – You can voice your opinions using words, symbols or actions.
 - **Press** – The government cannot censor information in newspapers, online news sources, TV news broadcasts, etc.
 - **Assembly** – You can gather in a group.
 - **Petition** – You can criticize the government, and you can complain about policies that affect you negatively and ask for change.
- Ask students for examples of using each of these rights. Tell them to think about their own lives and what they may have seen in the Newseum or in the news.