

WORKSHEET

FIRST AMENDMENT - FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

YOUR GROUP HAS BEEN ASSIGNED THE TOPIC OF FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. TO ANSWER QUESTIONS 1-3, YOU WILL NEED TO DO SOME RESEARCH. SEE IN DEFENSE OF LIBERTY, CHAPTER 4 (STARTS ON PAGE 43) THE COBBLESTONE ISSUE OF OUR FIRST AMENDMENT FREEDOM OF THE PRESS PAGES 1-12 OR CLASSROOM TEXTBOOKS OR ENCYCLOPEDIAS THAT DEAL WITH THE LIFE IN THE COLONIES AND CREATION OF THE BILL OF RIGHTS. INTERNET SOURCES WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL, PARTICULARLY THE NATIONAL CONSTITUTION CENTER (INTERACTIVE CONSTITUTION) [HTTP://WWW.CONSTITUTIONCENTER.ORG/INDEX.ASP](http://www.constitutioncenter.org/index.asp) AND NEWSEUM [HTTP://WWW.NEWSEUM.ORG/EDUCATIONCENTER/TEACHINGTOOLS/INDEX.HTM](http://www.newseum.org/educationcenter/teachingtools/index.htm). WRITE YOUR ANSWERS ON THE BACK OF THE PAGE OR ATTACH A SHEET OF PAPER.

1. WHAT IS "FREEDOM OF THE PRESS"? WHY WAS IT IMPORTANT TO THE COLONISTS?

2. DESCRIBE THE MAIN EVENTS AND THE DECISION IN THE FAMOUS CASE OF JOHN PETER ZENGER IN 1734.

3. REWRITE THE MEANING OF THIS QUOTE BY THOMAS JEFFERSON IN YOUR OWN WORDS "THE BASIS OF OUR GOVERNMENT BEING THE OPINION OF THE PEOPLE, THE VERY FIRST OBJECT SHOULD BE TO KEEP THAT RIGHT; AND WERE IT LEFT TO ME TO DECIDE WHETHER WE SHOULD HAVE A GOVERNMENT WITHOUT NEWSPAPERS, OR NEWSPAPERS WITHOUT A GOVERNMENT, I SHOULD NOT HESITATE A MOMENT TO PREFER THE LATTER."

4. READ THE FOLLOWING SUMMARY OF THE SUPREME COURT CASE HAZELWOOD SCHOOL DISTRICT V. KUHMEIER 484 U.S. 260, 108 S.Ct. 562 (1988)

KATHY KUHMEIER AND TWO OTHER STUDENTS WROTE ARTICLES DEALING WITH SENSITIVE TOPICS SUCH AS DIVORCE FOR THEIR SCHOOL NEWSPAPER. THE NEWSPAPER WAS WRITTEN AND EDITED BY THE JOURNALISM STUDENTS AND WAS PART OF THE SCHOOL'S REGULAR CURRICULUM. THEIR TEACHER SUBMITTED PAGE PROOFS TO THE PRINCIPAL FOR APPROVAL. THE PRINCIPAL OBJECTED TO THE ARTICLES BECAUSE HE FELT THAT EVEN THOUGH FALSE NAMES WERE USED, THE STUDENTS THAT WERE DESCRIBED COULD BE IDENTIFIED. THE PRINCIPAL ALSO FELT THAT SOME OF THE LANGUAGE USED WAS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR YOUNGER STUDENTS. WHEN THE NEWSPAPER WAS PRINTED, TWO PAGES CONTAINING THE ARTICLES IN QUESTION AS WELL AS FOUR OTHER ARTICLES APPROVED BY THE PRINCIPAL WERE DELETED.

THE STUDENTS WHO WROTE THE ARTICLES FILED A CASE IN THE DISTRICT COURT TO PROTEST THE PRINCIPAL'S ACTION. THE DISTRICT COURT SAID THAT THERE WAS NO VIOLATION OF THE STUDENTS FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS. THE STUDENTS APPEALED AND WON AND THEN THE SCHOOL FILED A CASE IN THE SUPREME COURT.

HOW WOULD YOU DECIDE THIS CASE?