

Name _____

Date _____

Rightly Speaking

The Bill of Rights states the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution. These amendments guarantee the basic freedoms that citizens—including you—enjoy today!

Read through the summary of the Bill of Rights below. Then read each situation and decide which amendment applies. Write that number in the blank. Next, mark a ✓ in the ink bottle if a right is being exercised or an ✗ if a right is being taken away.

Amendment 1

You have freedoms of religion, speech, and the press. You also have the right to meet together peacefully and to let the government know if you disagree with its actions.

Amendment 2

You have the right to own and bear arms (weapons).

Amendment 3

The government cannot force you to keep soldiers in your home during peaceful times.

Amendment 4

You or your property cannot be searched or seized without a warrant based on a good reason.

Amendment 5

You can't be held for a crime without an indictment from a grand jury. You can't be tried twice for the same crime. You don't have to testify against your self in court. You have the right to due process of the law. Your property cannot be taken for public use without payment.

Amendment 6

You have the right to a fair trial. You have the right to find witnesses to support you and to have a lawyer to defend you.

Amendment 7

In civil cases, you have the right to a trial by jury.

Amendment 8

Excessive fines, excessive bail, or cruel and unusual punishment are not allowed.

Amendment 9

You have other rights that are not specifically listed in the Constitution.

Amendment 10

The federal government may have only the powers given to it by the Constitution. Any other powers belong to the states and to the people.



- _____ Mr. Porter decides to start going to church.
- _____ Officer Smith breaks into Maggie's car to see if his daughter's CD player is inside.
- _____ Mr. Jones asks for a lawyer as soon as he is arrested.
- _____ Judge Harper tells Mr. Jones he may not have a lawyer at his criminal trial.
- _____ Jenna and a group of students meet to discuss changes they would like to see in the cafeteria menu.
- _____ Every Thursday, Principal Carter uses wire cutters to open student lockers to check for illegal items.
- _____ A reporter prints accurate information he has received about local officials breaking laws.
- _____ Officer Johnson shows the suspect a search warrant before entering his home.
- _____ Mrs. Davenport writes a letter to her congressman concerning recently passed taxes.
- _____ The warden made cruel statements to his prisoners.

Writing Idea: Choose one of the amendments above. On another sheet of paper, write a paragraph giving your opinion of the amendment. Tell why you think it is or is not an important right for citizens to have and what the right is for the without it.

