

### Focus Question:

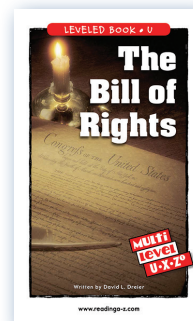
*What is the Bill of Rights, and why is it important?*

### Book Summary

Text Type: Nonfiction/Historical

What is the highest law of the land? *The Bill of Rights* explores how changes to the Constitution have allowed it to remain a “living document” that provides important protections for all Americans. This book can also be used to teach students how to determine an author’s purpose and the proper use of possessive nouns.

The book and lesson are also available for levels X and Z1.



### Lesson Essentials

#### Instructional Focus

- ☐ Determine author’s purpose
- ☐ Summarize to understand text
- ☐ Describe information provided by a glossary
- ☐ Recognize and use possessive nouns
- ☐ Place words in alphabetical order

#### Materials

- ☐ Book: *The Bill of Rights* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Summarize, possessive nouns, alphabetical order worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

#### Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on [VocabularyA-Z.com](http://VocabularyA-Z.com).

##### • Words to Know

**Story critical:** *amendment* (n.), *Bill of Rights* (n.), *Constitution* (n.), *freedoms* (n.), *guarantee* (v.), *rights* (n.)

**Enrichment:** *citizens* (n.), *Founders* (n.), *freedom of speech* (n.), *lawsuit* (n.), *revolution* (n.), *slavery* (n.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *allow* (v.), *approve* (v.), *document* (n.), *individual* (adj.), *necessary* (adj.), *protect* (v.)

### Guiding the Reading

#### Before Reading

##### Build Background

- Ask students to share what they know about laws and rights. Then, have them discuss how these are helpful in society.
- Direct students to the photographs on page 5. Ask students if they are familiar with the words “We the People” and the images on the page, and have them share what they know. Explain to students that the phrase “We the People” is from the U.S. Constitution. Explain that this document contains the basic laws of the United States. However, after it was drafted, many of the Founders wanted a separate set of statements added that would protect the rights of all citizens and limit the power of the federal government.

##### Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *The Bill of Rights*. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author’s name).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

##### Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

##### Author’s purpose

- Explain to students that authors have a purpose, or reason, for what they write. Write the words *inform*, *entertain*, and *persuade* on the board. Explain to students that to inform means to provide information, to entertain means to amuse, and to persuade means to convince another to act or feel a certain way. Remind students that authors can sometimes have more than one purpose for writing.

### Guiding the Reading (cont.)

- Review with students a book the class has previously read. Have students work in groups to determine the author's purpose, and guide students to a class consensus. Have students work with a partner to predict the author's purpose for *The Bill of Rights*.

### Introduce the Reading Strategy: Summarize

- Explain to students that one way to understand and remember information in a book is to think about or write a summary, or brief overview, of the most important information in a section of the book. Point out that a summary often answers the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*.
- Create a chart on the board with the headings *Who*, *What*, *When*, *Where*, and *Why*. Read pages 8 and 9 aloud and model summarizing those pages while writing information in the corresponding columns on the chart.

### Vocabulary

Have students turn to the "Words to Know" box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book, and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word and its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

### Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about the Bill of Rights. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer.
- Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in a future discussion.

### During Reading

#### Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *What are amendments, and why are they important?* (level 2) page 4
- *What led to the Constitution's approval?* (level 3) pages 6–11
- *Who is James Madison, and why is he important?* (level 1) pages 8 and 9

- *How does the Bill of Rights protect individual rights?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *What is the Second Amendment, and what is unclear about it?* (level 2) page 11
- *How are the Fifth Amendment and the Eight Amendment related?* (level 2) page 12
- *How would things be different if there were no amendments added to the Constitution?* (level 3) multiple pages

### Text Features: Glossary

Explain that a glossary helps readers define the words that are in the book. Have students work with a partner to review the glossary on page 16. Ask students: *Where in the book can you find the vocabulary words listed on this page? How would you define the word lawsuit? On what page can you find the word citizens?* Have students review other vocabulary words in the glossary and discuss in groups where they would be found and how they know. Invite volunteers to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

### Skill Review

- Have students work in groups to periodically summarize what they have read. Have them focus the discussion on what the text says but also on the effects the text has on the reader. Have groups discuss their opinion on the author's purpose for writing.
- Model evaluating details to determine the author's purpose.  
**Think-aloud:** *The book is presenting many details about the Bill of Rights: its history related to the Constitution, its guarantee of citizens' rights, and so on. All of these facts give me new information on the topic, so I believe the author's purpose is to inform. Still, I will read to the end of the book, examining each detail, to see if he has a different main purpose or more than one.*
- Model for students how you summarize as you read, fill in the chart on the board, and direct them to stop at several points during reading to answer the questions *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, and *why*.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read pages 4 and 5 with a partner. Ask students to summarize what they read in groups. Invite volunteers to share their summaries with the rest of the class. Assign student pairs a section from the table of contents to summarize.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [summarize worksheet](#). If time allows, discuss their answers.

### After Reading

Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

### Guiding the Reading (cont.)

#### Skill Review

##### Worksheet: **Summarize**

Review the summarize worksheet with students. Have students share their ideas in groups. Invite volunteers to share with the rest of the class the details they chose.

#### Comprehension Extension

**Discussion cards** covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided for extension activities.

#### Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Sample: *The Bill of Rights is a document of amendments to the U.S. Constitution. It is important because it protects citizens' freedoms.*)

#### Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

### Book Extension Activities

#### **Build Skills**

##### Grammar and Mechanics: **Possessive nouns**

- Write the following sentence on the board: *The Founders wanted to make a new government that would protect people's rights.* Read the sentence aloud, pointing to the word *rights*. Ask a volunteer to explain whose rights the sentence is referring to (*people's*). Explain that the word *people's* shows that the rights belonged to the people because it includes an apostrophe and the letter *Ss*.
- Review or explain that words like *people's* are called **possessive nouns**. A possessive noun is formed by adding *-s* (or just an apostrophe if the word already is a plural noun and ends in an *s*) to the end of a word to show ownership, or possession.
- Direct students to page 9. Have them find a possessive noun in the third paragraph (*citizens'*). Ask a volunteer to read aloud the sentence containing the possessive noun *citizens'*. Ask another volunteer to explain what belongs to citizens (*rights*).
- Have students find another possessive noun on page 11 (*someone's*). Repeat the process, explaining the placement of the apostrophe.
- Remind students that a contraction using *-s* is not the same as a possessive. A contraction does not show ownership.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students find and circle all the possessive nouns in the book and underline the item that each one owns.

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **possessive nouns worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

#### Word Work: **Alphabetical order**

- Write the words *crimes* and *criminals* on the board. Point out that the words begin with the same letter. Review the process of putting a list of words in alphabetical order. Remind students that, when alphabetizing words, if the first letter of two words is the same, they must compare the second letters instead. Explain that if the second letters of the two words are the same, they continue on to compare the third letters, and so on, until they find two letters that are different. Model how to list these words in alphabetical order.
- Write the words *power* and *powerful* on the board. Have a volunteer explain which word would appear first in alphabetical order (*power*) and why. Point out that all of the letters in *power* and *powerful* are the same until the sixth letter. Point out that the letter *Ff* in *powerful* comes after the end in *power*, so *power* comes first alphabetically.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the words *refused* and *remove* on the board. Have students write the words in alphabetical order and explain their thinking on a separate piece of paper. Discuss their answers with the class.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **alphabetical order worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

#### Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.