

WRITE YOUR OWN CONSTITUTION

Learning Objectives: The student will

1. Synthesize the essence of the U.S. Constitution by creating a personal constitution for an emerging world democracy.
2. Answer the guiding questions as the framework for the new constitution.

Materials: Copies of the questions for each student; copies of the U.S. Constitution if needed

TEKS/TAKS: 6.22; 7.21; 7.22; 8.26; 8.31; U.S. 26; WH. 26

Teaching Strategy:

1. Go over the directions to the questions to help set the stage for the task.
“Many countries around the world are attempting to create a democratic form of government for the first time in history. These countries are often referred to as emerging democracies. Because it is their first attempt at self-government, a written constitution setting down the basic principles of democracy is often needed. Therefore, the task will be to create a model constitution for one of these democracies.”
2. Distribute the handout of the following questions that must first be answered independently in preparation for writing the constitution. Note to the teacher: Each of the questions corresponds to a part of the U.S. Constitution.
 - A. What are the general goals of the democracy? (include a minimum of three). PREAMBLE
 - B. Who will make the laws for the country? How will the laws be made? ARTICLE ONE-LEGISLATIVE BRANCH
 - C. Who will be in charge of carrying out the laws of the country? ARTICLE TWO-EXECUTIVE BRANCH
 - D. What will happen if there are questions or problems with the laws or their enforcement? ARTICLE THREE-JUDICIAL BRANCH
 - E. What will happen if someone does not follow the laws? ARTICLE THREE-JUDICIAL BRANCH
 - F. What are the qualifications needed to be an officer in each part of the government and how they are chosen? (ARTICLES I, II, AND III)
 - G. How will the new government protect the citizens of the country? (ARTICLE II)
 - H. What are the rights of each citizen of the country? (BILL OF RIGHTS)
3. Place the students in groups of three or four and have them share their answers to the questions. Each group should decide on the best answer for each question.
4. After each group has decided on its answer for the questions, they should write their constitution using the following format:

Preamble-answer to question “A”
Sections of the constitution-answers to questions “B-G”
A list of guaranteed rights-answer to question “H”

