

9. Taxes, Voting Rights, and More | Worksheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

To Amend, or Not To Amend

New Civilization Name: _____

Your scenario title:

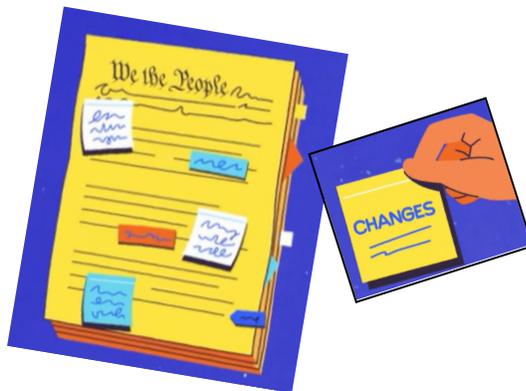
What is the proposed amendment? (briefly summarize)

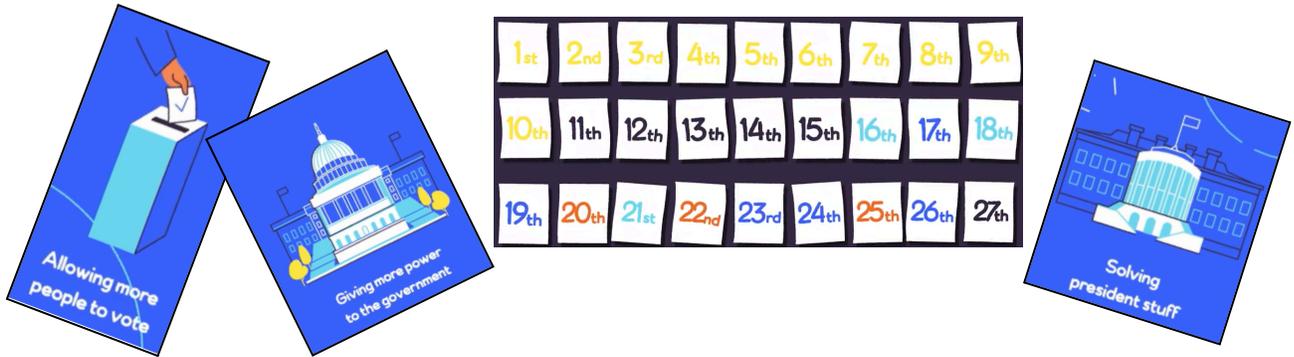
What problem is the amendment trying to solve?

Decide as a group what you will do. Will you amend? Or will you not? Explain your reasoning.

- Yes, we choose to amend.
- No, we choose not to amend.

Reasoning (explain the benefit or the problem if amended):





Comprehension Questions

1. About how many amendments have been proposed in American history?

2. How many amendments have actually been added to the Constitution?

3. What are the first ten amendments called? _____

4. What are the three main categories of amendments discussed in the video?

- _____
- _____
- _____

5. Give one example of an amendment that expanded voting rights.

6. Give one example of an amendment that changed government power.

7. Give one example of an amendment that deals with the president.

8. What did the 16th Amendment allow the government to do?

9. What happened with the 18th Amendment, and why was it later undone?

10. What does the 22nd Amendment say about how long a president can serve?

11. What problem does the 25th Amendment help solve?

12. Why do you think the Founders made it difficult to amend the Constitution?

13. What does the story of Prohibition (the 18th and 21st Amendments) teach us about changing the Constitution?

Answer Key | Voting Rights, Taxes, and More

To Amend, or Not To Amend

Answers will vary by group. Grade primarily for students' ability to evaluate whether an idea belongs in the Constitution and to clearly explain their reasoning.

Students should show they can:

- Identify the problem
- Weigh the benefits and drawbacks
- Decide whether the idea is important and lasting enough to belong in the Constitution (students may agree that they should; if this happens, they should give clear reasons)

Scenarios:

- **Scenario 1 - No Homework Nationwide**

Most strong responses will conclude that this should NOT be an amendment.

Strong Reasoning Might Include:

- Recognizing reduced stress and more free time as benefits
- Explaining that learning, practice, and responsibility could suffer
- Noting this is a school policy issue, not a constitutional issue

Example Response:

- This would give students more free time, but it could hurt learning and responsibility. This is not important enough to be in the Constitution and should be decided by schools.

- **Scenario 2 - Only Five School Subjects**

This one might be debatable, but most responses would see it as NOT an amendment to the Constitution, but perhaps something the states themselves might consider.

Strong Reasoning Might Include:

- Acknowledging the benefit of focus and consistency
- Explaining that it is too rigid and limiting for the whole nation
- Recognizing that education must adapt over time

Example Response:

This keeps education simple, but it limits what students can learn and does not allow for change. This is too restrictive to be a permanent rule in the Constitution.

- **Scenario 3 - Politicians Stay Forever**

Most strong responses will conclude this should NOT be an amendment.

- Recognizing the benefit of experienced leadership
- Explaining the danger of too much power over time
- Connecting to the need for limits on government authority

Example Response:

This could keep good leaders in power, but it gives too much power to one person and could lead to corruption. The Constitution should limit power, not allow it to grow without limits.

- **Scenario 4 - No Age Limit for Voting**

Most strong responses will conclude this should NOT be an amendment.

- Recognizing the value of giving people a voice, however
- Explaining that children may not understand important issues
- Identifying risks like manipulation, confusion, or instability
- Concluding that this is not appropriate for a permanent constitutional rule

Example Response:

While having a voice is important, children are highly impressionable and can be easily influenced by emotion, rewards, or peer pressure. Voting requires maturity and the ability to make informed decisions about complex issues. Removing age limits could make elections less stable and easier to manipulate, so this should not be a constitutional amendment.

- **Scenario 5 – People Need to Go to Church**

Strong Reasoning Might Include:

- Recognizing the goal of improving moral behavior
- Explaining that belief and religious practice cannot be forced
- Identifying the problem of government controlling conscience or religion
- Noting this violates individual freedom and could lead to abuse of power

Example Response:

This could encourage good behavior, but it forces people to act in a certain way and violates freedom of conscience. The government should not control religious practice, so this should not be a constitutional amendment.

Comprehension Questions | Answers

1. About how many amendments have been proposed in American history?
About 11,000 (or "over 11,000")
2. How many amendments have actually been added to the Constitution?
27
3. What are the first ten amendments called?
The Bill of Rights
4. What are the three main categories of amendments discussed in the video?:
 - **Voting**
 - **Government power**
 - **The presidency**
5. Give one example of an amendment that expanded voting rights.
Acceptable answers include:
 - **17th Amendment (direct election of senators)**
 - **19th Amendment (women's right to vote)**
 - **23rd Amendment (D.C. gets electoral votes)**
 - **24th Amendment (ended poll taxes)**
 - **26th Amendment (voting age lowered to 18)**

6. Give one example of an amendment that changed government power.
Acceptable answers include:
- 16th Amendment (income tax)
 - 18th Amendment (banned alcohol)
 - 21st Amendment (repealed Prohibition)
7. Give one example of an amendment that deals with the president.
Acceptable answers include:
- 20th Amendment (start date of presidency moved to January)
 - 22nd Amendment (term limits)
 - 25th Amendment (presidential succession)
8. What did the 16th Amendment allow the government to do?
Collect income tax
9. What happened with the 18th Amendment, and why was it later undone?
It banned alcohol (Prohibition), but it caused problems (such as crime and people ignoring the law), so it was later repealed by the 21st Amendment
10. What does the 22nd Amendment say about how long a president can serve?
A president can serve only two terms
11. What problem does the 25th Amendment help solve?
It explains what happens if the president cannot do the job, allowing the vice president to take over
12. Why do you think the Founders made it difficult to amend the Constitution?
To keep the Constitution stable and ensure that only serious, lasting changes are made (answers may also include preventing too many changes or avoiding decisions based on emotion)
13. What does the story of Prohibition (the 18th and 21st Amendments) teach us about changing the Constitution?
Not every idea works in practice; even good intentions can fail, so the Constitution should be changed carefully, and some amendments may need to be reversed