

POP! TEACHER RESOURCE

Lesson Plan

Understanding the Bill of Rights

Lesson Plan for *James Madison*

Grade 1

Objective

To help students practice using glossaries and dictionaries to determine and compare the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases.

Things Needed

- *James Madison* book
- Whiteboard
- Dictionary

Before the Activity

Read the *James Madison* book out loud to students. Write the terms *Constitution* and *Bill of Rights* on the whiteboard.

Activity

Explain that the American colonies fought against Great Britain during the American Revolutionary War. The colonies did not want to be controlled by Great Britain any longer. Chapter 2 (“A New Country”) describes how this happened. Read pages 9 through 13 out loud to the students again. On page 10, the terms *Constitution* and *Bill of Rights* appear in blue. This shows that they are part of the book’s glossary. Choose one student to look up each of these terms in the book’s glossary, reminding students they can use the table of contents at the beginning of the book to find the glossary’s page number.

Write the definition of each term on the whiteboard. Then ask the following questions:

- How are the Constitution and the Bill of Rights similar? (Possible Answers: Both are laws. Both were created by the Founding Fathers.)
- How are the Constitution and the Bill of Rights different? (Possible Answers: The Bill of Rights is just one part of the Constitution. The Constitution was created first.)



Next, look up the word *rights* in a dictionary and write that definition on the whiteboard, too. Merriam-Webster’s definition of rights for English Language Learners is a good example:

- “something that a person is or should be morally or legally allowed to have, get, or do”

The Bill of Rights lists several things that all Americans should be able to do. The *James Madison* book lists three of them:

- freedom of speech, which means people can say what they think (p. 13)
- freedom of religion, which means people can have any religion or none (p. 13)
- the right to peacefully assemble, which means people can gather together in groups (p. 20)

Evaluation

Could students locate and read the definitions in the book’s glossary? Could they identify similarities and differences between the two terms?

Standards

This lesson plan may be used to address the Common Core State Standards’ reading standards for informational texts, grade 1 (RI 1.4, 1.5).

