

MY DOG ATE THE CONSTITUTION

A Puppet Play for Young Audiences

by

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Cast of Characters

CALLIE	A ten-year old girl
MADISON	Callie's dog
WASHINGTON	George Washington
FRANKLIN	Ben Franklin
ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION STATES	A weak, nerdy little document
DELEGATE # 1	An angry offstage voice
DELEGATE # 2	An angry offstage voice
DELEGATE # 3	An angry offstage voice
DELEGATE # 4	An angry offstage voice
DELEGATE # 5	An angry offstage voice
DELEGATE # 6	An angry offstage voice
DELEGATE # 7	An angry offstage voice
NEW JERSEY	A small feisty state with a thick New Jersey dialect
VIRGINIA	A large uppity state with a southern drawl
CONNECTICUT	A happy and helpful state with a southern New England dialect
PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER	A robot
LEGISLATIVE	The Capitol Building
EXECUTIVE	The White House
JUDICIAL	The Supreme Court Building
ANNOUNCER	An enthusiastic offstage voice

BILL OF RIGHTS	A proud jovial document
REDCOAT	A corrupt, but kooky officer with a British accent
FALSE	A large "F", slick and smarmy, and not to be trusted
TRUE	A large "T", honest as can be
DAD	Offstage voice of Callie's father

* A Note on Double Casting: In order to have a cast of four, the female actor should play CALLIE. The first male actor should play MADISON, STATES, CONNECTICUT, and JUDICIAL. The second male actor should play WASHINGTON, ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION, DELEGATE #1, DELEGATE #3, DELEGATE #5, DELEGATE # 7, VIRGINIA, EXECUTIVE, ANNOUNCER, REDCOAT, FALSE, and DAD. The third male actor should play FRANKLIN, DELEGATE #2, DELEGATE #4, DELEGATE #6, NEW JERSEY, PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER, LEGISLATIVE, BILL OF RIGHTS, and TRUE.

Setting

Can be a bare stage.

SETTING: Can be a bare stage. Ideally, there should be a projection screen to display song lyrics, the Preamble, key vocabulary words, and quiz questions. If projections are not available, posters may be utilized or song lyrics can be printed in the program.

AT RISE: CALLIE sits in front of an open history textbook. Her hand covers the book.

CALLIE
Legislative. Executive. Annnnd uhhhhh...
(She peeks at the book.)
Judicial. Man! I am never going to remember all this junk.
(She yawns.)

MADISON
(Running in.)
Ruff! Ruff! Ruff!

CALLIE
Not now, boy. I'm trying to study.

MADISON
Ruff?

CALLIE
Madison, I can't play right now. I've got a huge test on the Constitution tomorrow.

MADISON
Ruff! Ruff! Ruff!

CALLIE
I don't know why we have to learn this silly stuff anyway. It's soooooo boring.

MADISON
Ruff! Ruff! Ruff!
(MADISON chases his tail and then runs offstage.)

CALLIE

Legislative.

(Yawn.)

Executive.

(Bigger yawn.)

Judicial.

(CALLIE lays her head down on the book. MADISON runs back in carrying the Constitution in his mouth and drops it in front of CALLIE. MADISON licks CALLIE's face.)

CALLIE

Madison!

MADISON

Ruff! Ruff! Ruff!

CALLIE

I told you, I have to study for my test on the-

MADISON

Ruff?

(MADISON picks up the Constitution and playfully growls. CALLIE tries to take it back in a tug-of-war match.)

CALLIE

Hey, what is that you have, Madison? Wait a second. That's the Constitution! Where'd you get that? That's a very important historical document- at least my teacher says it is- and I bet they don't want doggy drool on it!

(MADISON runs offstage with the Constitution. CALLIE chases after MADISON, taking her textbook with her.)

CALLIE

Hey! Drop it! Bad dog!

(WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN enter from the other side of the stage. CALLIE runs onstage and runs smack into WASHINGTON. She falls down.)

WASHINGTON

Whoa. Where did she come from?

FRANKLIN

Young lady, are you all right?

WASHINGTON

Who are you? You don't belong here.

CALLIE

You're telling me! Where am I?

FRANKLIN

The Pennsylvania State House, of course.

WASHINGTON

Little girl, I am afraid you need to-

CALLIE

Hey! Wait a second. I know who you are.

(She rummages through her pockets,
pulls out a crumbled dollar bill,
and holds it up to WASHINGTON.)

Yep. You're George Washington!

WASHINGTON

Indeed, I am.

FRANKLIN

Do you recognize me? My face is as well known as the moon.

CALLIE

Aren't you on the oatmeal box?

FRANKLIN

What? No! I'm on money, too.

CALLIE

Not on any of mine, you're not.

FRANKLIN

I am on the one-hundred dollar bill. I'm Ben Franklin.

CALLIE

Wow! Really? I've never seen a hundred dollar bill before.
Do they actually make those?

WASHINGTON

See, I told you Ben. It's better to be on the lower bills, the ones people actually use.

FRANKLIN

What are you talking about? Ask anybody. They'd take money with my picture on it over yours any day.

CALLIE

Man! I am burning up! I'm going to open a window.

WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN

No!

CALLIE

Why not? It's like a million degrees in here.

FRANKLIN

We don't want anyone out there to know what we are doing in here.

WASHINGTON

This is a private meeting. I'm sorry, little girl, but you are going to have to leave.

CALLIE

I'm just looking for Madison.

FRANKLIN

Oh, Madison. Of course. He's here.

CALLIE

Oh, good!

(MADISON enters wearing a white powdered wig.)

FRANKLIN

Awh, James, my good man. This young lady has been looking for you.

MADISON

James Madison, at your service.

CALLIE

That's just my dog... in a wig.

MADISON

I bark your pardon!

WASHINGTON

Little girl, in my lifetime I have owned thirty-six dogs. I think I know a thing or two about canines and that is not a dog.

FRANKLIN

Poor dear. She must have hit her head pretty hard.

CALLIE

Just ask all the kids out there.

(To the audience.)

That's my dog, right?

WASHINGTON

No, no. This is preposterous. That is James Madison, Father of the Constitution.

(MADISON chews on WASHINGTON's shoe.)

CALLIE

He's chewing on your shoe.

(WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN turn to look, but MADISON is back on two legs and has assumed an air of properness.)

MADISON

Well, I never!

(MADISON spins around in circles three times and sits down.)

CALLIE

(To audience.)

You guys saw that right?

FRANKLIN

I saw no such thing.

CALLIE

Okay. Whatever. But you better not let him near any trees or fire hydrants.

WASHINGTON

She can't be here, Mr. Madison. You know this is a top-secret meeting.

CALLIE

Top-secret?

WASHINGTON

How did you get past the guards?

CALLIE

Guards?

MADISON

Well, never you mind. I'm sure she won't want to stay anyway. She thinks what we are doing here is not important.

FRANKLIN

What?

WASHINGTON

How dare you!

CALLIE

I never said it wasn't-

MADISON

You said it was boring.

FRANKLIN

Boring! Good gracious me!

WASHINGTON

You think starting a new nation is boring?! How many countries have you founded?

CALLIE

None.

WASHINGTON

How many constitutions have you written?

CALLIE

None.

WASHINGTON

Well, then-

CALLIE

Wait a second. Constitutions. Hey! Is this the Constitutional Convention?

FRANKLIN

Shhh!

MADISON

Yes, history will later call it that, but right now we prefer to call it the Grand Convention or the Federal Convention.

CALLIE

Why? That just seems confusing. You know for kids that will have to learn this stuff for tests later.

WASHINGTON

You see, when we delegates came to this historical meeting, we weren't planning on writing a new Constitution.

FRANKLIN

Oh, no! In fact, that's exactly what we did not want to happen.

MADISON

We were sent here to patch up the Articles of Confederation.

CALLIE

Articles of Confederation? But I have a test on the Constitution tomorrow. So if you guys don't mind, let's talk about that instead.

WASHINGTON

But the Articles of Confederation was the set of rules that came before the Constitution.

MADISON

To understand history you must know why things happen, not just that they happened.

WASHINGTON

Not very long ago, there was no United States of America. Instead there were thirteen-

CALLIE

Original colonies!

WASHINGTON

Do you want me to tell it or do you?

CALLIE

I'll give it a try.

WASHINGTON

Be my guest, Miss Smarty Pants.

CALLIE

And the colonies were ruled by the King of England.

MADISON

That's right. King George the Third.

CALLIE

But for some reason you guys didn't like that.

WASHINGTON

He over-taxed us. Oh, how he over-taxed us!

FRANKLIN

He wouldn't let us vote for our leaders. That's taxation without representation!

MADISON

It was ruff!

WASHINGTON

We weren't allowed to hold public meetings.

MADISON

He put soldiers in our homes.

FRANKLIN

He threw innocent people in jail.

WASHINGTON

We wrote letters to the King, asking him to be fair.

FRANKLIN

I even traveled to England to try to reason with King George. But he wouldn't listen. Deborah, my dear wife, died while I was overseas.

CALLIE

That's so sad.

WASHINGTON

The King did not treat us like true English subjects, so we did not want to be English subjects any more.

CALLIE

So you guys wrote the Declaration of Independence, declaring your independence from Great Britain and went to war to fight to be your own country.

(FRANKLIN falls asleep.)

MADISON

And which war was that?

CALLIE

I forget. There's been so many.

WASHINGTON and MADISON

The Revolutionary War.

CALLIE

Oh, right.

WASHINGTON

And who was the General of the Army?

CALLIE

I don't know.

WASHINGTON

I was! It made me a national hero.

(FRANKLIN snores loudly.)

CALLIE

(Whispering.)

Mr. Franklin, wake up. We're talking about history.

FRANKLIN

Huh?

WASHINGTON

So our new nation needed some new rules.

CALLIE

Rules? Why do we need more rules? Didn't that king make too many rules for you guys?

WASHINGTON

Well, his rules were unfair.

CALLIE

Teachers are always making rules. Parents are always making rules. Rules make things not fun.

MADISON

Maybe you're right. We've been working too hard. Let's just play a game.

WASHINGTON

James, we really don't have time for-

CALLIE

I love games.

MADISON

Okay. I want everyone to play this game.

(To audience.)

That means all of you out there too. Everyone stand up. Okay here we go. Let the game begin.

CALLIE

Wait! How do you play this game?

MADISON

(As rapidly as possible.)

If you have brown hair, raise your left hand. Keep your hands raised. If you are a boy, raise your right hand. If you like pudding, touch your nose. Everyone in the second row, sit down. You're out.

CALLIE

What? Wait! What did they do wrong?

MADISON

If you tied a key to a kite and flew it during a lighting storm, shout "Lucky to be alive!"

FRANKLIN

Lucky to be alive!

MADISON

If you are named Sarah, sit down.

CALLIE

Why? That's not nice.

MADISON

If you are named David, jump up in the air. If you have a brother, snap your fingers. If you are taller than the person standing next to you, sit down. If your hand is still raised, put it down. If your hand is not raised, put it up. Clap your hands.

(FRANKLIN falls asleep. WASHINGTON
claps his hands.)

CALLIE

Who?

MADISON

Oh! You didn't clap your hands. You're out.

CALLIE

But I didn't know if I was supposed to- Ben Franklin didn't clap his hands either.

MADISON

Well, he is not out.

CALLIE

That's not fair!

MADISON

If your birthday is in February, shout "Hedgehog".

WASHINGTON

Hedgehog!

CALLIE

This game makes no sense.

MADISON

Make a scary face. Hey! You didn't make a scary face.

CALLIE

Because you said I was out.

MADISON

Now you're back in. Now you're out again.

CALLIE

What?

FRANKLIN

(Waking back up.)

Huh? What?

MADISON

If you have a cat, pat your stomach. Oh no! You're all out!
You patted your stomach!

CALLIE

But you just told them to-

MADISON

If you're wearing blue shout "Red!". Everyone who shouted
"red" is out. Everyone who stayed quiet is out.

CALLIE

But that would mean everyone is out.

MADISON

That's right. I win.

CALLIE

That's not fair!

MADISON

Wasn't that a fun game?

CALLIE

No.

MADISON

Why not?

CALLIE

Because everyone had no idea what they were supposed to do.
It was just total craziness.

MADISON

Because there were no rules?

CALLIE

Yeah. I guess so.

MADISON

Rules make things fair. Rules help us know what we are supposed to do. Rules make sure that everyone gets to have fun.

CALLIE

Okay, so maybe you are right. Maybe we need rules. But didn't you say that the U.S. already had some rules. The Particles of Cornflower or whatever.

FRANKLIN

Articles of Confederation.

CALLIE

Right. So what's wrong with the Articles of Confederation?

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

(Offstage.)

There's nothing wrong with me, um, right guys?

MADISON

Oh, no. Not him.

FRANKLIN

Hide!

(MADISON, FRANKLIN, and WASHINGTON
dive for cover. ARTICLES OF
CONFEDERATION enters.)

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

You guys are going to patch me up, good as new, right? Um, guys? Where'd they go?

CALLIE

Just when I thought this day couldn't get any weirder.

ARTICLE OF CONFEDERATION

Oh, hello, there. I'm, um, the Articles of Confederation, the um, laws for um, the national government.

CALLIE

Hi. I'm Callie.

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Well, Callie, I'm, um, looking for my delegates.

(To audience.)

Excuse me. Has anyone, um, seen my state delegates? They don't show up to my meetings a lot of the time and, um, you know there's not really much I can do about that.

CALLIE

Well, if you're in charge, can't you make them-

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

(Calling.)

Oh, states! States! Are you listening to me? So, um, you know we just fought this war-

CALLIE

The Revolutionary War.

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Yeah, that one. And well, you know, we, um, owe other countries a lot of money, so, um, if you states don't mind, it'd be great if could, you know, give me, the federal government, some, um, money, you know, um, some taxes.

STATES

(Offstage voice.)

Do we have to?

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Well, no, um, I mean I can't make you if you don't want to, but I'd, um, appreciate it if-

STATES

(Offstage voice.)

We don't want to.

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Okay, yeah, sure. I, um, understand. But if you change your mind-

STATES

(Offstage voice.)

We won't.

CALLIE

My dad complains a lot about paying taxes. I don't think he would pay taxes if it wasn't the law. Maybe you could make it the law that they have to-

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Oh, no, um, I couldn't do that. I don't want to seem too pushy.

CALLIE

You don't seem pushy at all. Maybe if you were a little pushier, you might actually get something done.

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

I, um, can get things done. Just watch this. So, um, since all the kids out there in the audience have been so good, I was, um, thinking of maybe getting everybody a little treat. Should we, um, have brownies or cookies? If you want brownies, um, raise your hand. Any votes for brownies? Okay, um, everybody who wants cookies instead, raise your hand. Oh, gee, well, um, shucks. That's too bad. See I got to have a unanimous vote.

CALLIE

What's that mean?

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Unanimous? Oh that means, um, everybody has to agree. If just one person says "no", then I, um, can't do anything.

CALLIE

So we don't get a treat?

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Gee, I guess not. Sorry. I, um, really wish I could, you know, do more. But I, um, have to have everybody agree. And it's really really hard to get everybody to agree on anything. Besides I don't have, um, any money to buy food anyway.

CALLIE

Can't you just make money? You're the national government!

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Oh, golly, no. The states, they, um, make their own money.

CALLIE

But how does that work? There's a bunch of states and-

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Yeah, um, it makes travel and trade, um, pretty tricky. They don't want to take money from other states and they all over-tax each other on stuff they sell. It's, um, a real mess. They call it, um, a "firm league of friendship", but they sure don't act like friends. All they do is fight and fight and fight. They're like a monster with thirteen heads.

CALLIE

But why would anybody create a government like you, Articles of Confederation? I mean, no offense.

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Well, gee, you see, you got to understand, that, um, they were fighting a long and terrible, um, war, to get rid of that rotten old King of England.

CALLIE

King George the Third.

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

Yeah, him. So everybody was real scared, see, of making a new federal government that was, um, too strong. They didn't want another mean King. They wanted a nice guy, like me. A nice guy that they could, um, push around, you know so the states could basically act like thirteen little countries, making their own rules, doing their own thing. They act like they don't even want me around.

(ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION cries
and collapses.)

CALLIE

Hey! Hey! Are you okay?

ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION

I'm just so weak. So very very weak.

(ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION faints.
CALLIE tries to lift him back up, but
he is lifeless. MADISON reappears.)

CALLIE

I don't think you're going to be able to fix this one.

MADISON

Yeah, I don't think so either.

(MADISON sniffs, growls, and gnaws at the ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION. With his paws, he tries to bury ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION, then gives up and tosses ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION offstage.)

MADISON

(To the audience.)

Gentleman, if I may-

CALLIE

(Whispering.)

Don't you mean ladies and gentleman?

MADISON

(Whispering back.)

Oh, no. All of the Framers of the Constitution were men.

CALLIE

Well, that's not fair!

MADISON

The work we are doing here today will decide forever the fate of republican government. Allow me to tell you about a plan to save this struggling young nation. I call it the Virginia Plan. We will divide the federal government into three branches- legislative, executive, and judicial.

(An uproar of surprised voices can be heard.)

DELEGATE #1

(Offstage voice.)

We are here to make changes to the Articles of Confederation!

DELEGATE #2

(Offstage voice, overlapping.)

We don't want a strong national government.

(More shouting can be heard.)

MADISON

Gentleman, please. Hear me out. There will be an executive branch led by the President who will-

DELEGATE #3

(Offstage voice.)

President? That sounds an awful lot like a king!

DELEGATE #4

(Offstage voice.)

We don't want a king!

DELEGATE #5

(Offstage voice.)

No king! No king!

(A chorus of angered agreement
can be heard.)

MADISON

In the Legislative branch, the number of representatives for each state will be based on that state's population.

DELEGATE #6

(Offstage voice.)

No! All states have equal say.

DELEGATE #7

(Offstage voice.)

More people! More votes!

(Even more furious and louder
shouting can be heard. MADISON
barks aggressively.)

CALLIE

Guys, stop fighting like cats and dogs!

(The sounds of shouting cease.)

MADISON

It went on like this for seven weeks, in the smoldering heat. Talk about your dog days of summer.

(MADISON exits. VIRGINIA and NEW
JERSEY appear.)

CALLIE

Whoa! Who are you guys?

VIRGINIA

Pleased to make your acquaintance. I am the Virginia Plan. I believe Mr. James Madison was just talking about me.

NEW JERSEY

Yeah, and it was going real great, big guy!

VIRGINIA

George Washington, James Madison, and Edmund Randolph came up with the wonderful ideas that are me. In my plan, large states, like me, have more representatives in Congress.

NEW JERSEY

No way Jose!

VIRGINIA

I have more people. I should get more votes. It's only fair.

NEW JERSEY

Are you kidding me? Fair? You wanna talk about fair? Under your plan, small states like me would be swallowed up!

VIRGINIA

Good gentleman of the audience, do me this favor. Boys, please chant, "Big states!"

NEW JERSEY

Oh, it's on. Girls, let me hear you shout "Small states" as loud as you can. Let's put this big bully in his place.

VIRGINIA

Big states! Big states!

NEW JERSEY

(Overlapping.)
Small states! Small states!

CALLIE

Wait! Stop! I don't get it. What are you fighting about?

NEW JERSEY

How many representatives each state should get in the Congress.

CALLIE

Why is the number of representatives such a big deal?

VIRGINIA

Dear child, the more representatives you have, the more votes you have and the more power you have over every other decision that is made by the government.

NEW JERSEY

It's all about power, baby!

CALLIE

Oh. I guess that is pretty important.

NEW JERSEY

You bet your bottom it's important and there is no way I am supporting the Virginia Plan.

CALLIE

Well, do you have a better plan?

NEW JERSEY

Oh yeah. Mr. William Patterson from the great state of New Jersey proposed me, the New Jersey Plan. In my plan, each state gets the same number of representatives. That's the way it was in the Articles of Confederation and that's the way it should stay. One state. One vote. We are all equal.

VIRGINIA

The same number of votes for little states as big states! That's just plain silly!

NEW JERSEY

Maybe me and the other small states will just leave then. You'd like that, huh? Maybe we'll just find some other country who appreciates us and sign a treaty with them.

VIRGINIA

Now you are being downright ridiculous, my tiny friend.

NEW JERSEY

You think you're so big and tough? Huh?
(NEW JERSEY shoves VIRGINIA.)

CALLIE

Hey! Hey! Cut that out. There's got to be a way that you can both be happy.

VIRGINIA

I simply can't imagine how.

CALLIE

My teacher- Mrs. Rumsby- says that when you and your friend can't agree on something you have to *compromise*. My best friend Regina wanted to play dolls, but I wanted to play ponies. Then we came up with a compromise. Our dolls can ride ponies!

VIRGINIA

Now, that's not a bad idea.

(CONNECTICUT pops up.)

CONNECTICUT

I think it's a great idea!

CALLIE

Who are you?

CONNECTICUT

I'm the Connecticut Compromise, also known as the Great Compromise!

NEW JERSEY

Why are you here?

CONNECTICUT

To save the day! To put an end to all this bickering.

CALLIE

It's about time.

CONNECTICUT

Roger Sherman of Connecticut came up with a way to give both the large states and the small states what they wanted. The Congress will be bicameral.

CALLIE

What? What about buying caramel?

CONNECTICUT

No. Bicameral. It means two houses. The Congress has two houses, the Senate and the House of Representatives. In the Senate each state will get two votes regardless of their size.

NEW JERSEY

Yeah. That's what I'm talking about.

CONNECTICUT

And in the House of Representatives, the number of representatives will be based on the state's population. So the bigger states-

VIRGINIA

Like me.

CONNECTICUT

Will get more votes than the smaller states.

VIRGINIA

Like him.

CALLIE

Hm, the Senate and the House of Representatives. This is so confusing. How am I ever going to remember which is which?

CONNECTICUT

Here's an easy trick. The House of Representatives has a longer name and it has more people in it. And why does it have more people in it?

CALLIE

Because the House of Representatives is based on the state's population and in the Senate every state gets two votes, no matter what.

CONNECTICUT

Exactly!

NEW JERSEY

Hey! You're one smart cookie!

CONNECTICUT

I'm so glad we were able to work that out. It makes me so happy I feel like singing. Virginia, New Jersey, my good states, would you join me in song?

VIRGINIA

Most certainly, my friend.

NEW JERSEY

Eh, only if all the kids out there do it too.

CONNECTICUT

You heard him, kids. Everyone sing along.

CALLIE, VIRGINIA, NEW JERSEY, and
CONNECTICUT

(To the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb".)

Madison had the Virginia Plan,
The Virginia Plan, the Virginia Plan,
Madison had the Virginia Plan,
Big states would get more votes.

Small states didn't like what this meant,
What this meant, what this meant,
Small states didn't like what this meant,
And so they argued "No!"

Patterson had the New Jersey Plan,
The New Jersey Plan, the New Jersey Plan,
Patterson had the New Jersey Plan,
All states would have fair say.

The delegates did scream and shout,
Scream and shout, scream and shout,
The delegates did scream and shout,
They fought for many a day.

Sherman had the Great Compromise,
Great Compromise, Great Compromise,
Sherman had the Great Compromise,
The Congress split in two.

In the House, it's based on size,
Based on size, based on size,
In the House, it's based on size,
In the Senate, all states get two.

(VIRGINIA, NEW JERSEY, and
CONNECTICUT exit.)

CALLIE

Hey! This making a new government thing isn't so hard. All
we have to do is find a way to work together and compromise
to make everybody happy.

(WASHINGTON, FRANKLIN, and MADISON
reenter.)

CALLIE

So now that we've got all that big state, small state stuff figured out, there'll be no more arguing, right?

FRANKLIN

Oh good heavens no! There was plenty of more arguing at the Constitutional Convention.

CALLIE

About what?

WASHINGTON

There was much disagreement about the issue of slavery.

(Outraged bursts of arguments can
be heard.)

CALLIE

That's easy. Do away with it. It so disgusting, it makes me want to puke. Get rid of it right now.

FRANKLIN

I wish we could, young lady. I wish we could.

CALLIE

You can. You're writing the Constitution. You're making the laws and the people have to do what you say.

WASHINGTON

No, we are representing the people. We have to do what the people say.

CALLIE

Well, everybody knows that slavery is wrong. So what's the problem?

MADISON

People in the South relied on slaves to pick their crops on their plantations. Farming is how they made their living.

CALLIE

Is everything always about money?

FRANKLIN

Yes, most of the time, it is.

WASHINGTON

But the delegates were not just fighting about whether or not to keep slavery. They were also fighting about whether or not the slaves should be counted in the population.

FRANKLIN

Remember the population count determines how many representatives the state gets to have in the House of Representatives.

(Sounds of arguing can be heard.)

MADISON

I propose the Three-Fifths Compromise. For the sake of representation and taxation, a slave will be counted as three-fifths a person.

(More sounds of arguing can be heard.)

CALLIE

Madison! You dirty dog! How can you say that any human being is three-fifths of a person? You make me sick!

WASHINGTON

Please, calm down, little girl.

CALLIE

I will not calm down. This is something worth getting angry about. All men are created equal. It says so in the Declaration of Independence. Didn't you guys write that?

FRANKLIN

I did.

MADISON

Remember how you just heard so much arguing about how many representatives each state should have? The people in the South wanted their slaves to be counted as full people.

CALLIE

What? But why is that when they didn't want to treat them like people?

MADISON

You see if the slaves are counted in the population, then the slave-holding states get more representatives and more votes so they can keep voting to keep slavery legal.

WASHINGTON

And it encourages them to buy more slaves to make their population count higher and their number of representatives more.

CALLIE

Oh. So I guess I get why you guys don't want the slaves counted as full people for the population count. But if you just get rid of slavery right now, then that will make everything better.

WASHINGTON

There was much debate about this matter, but the Southern States would not agree to abolish or get rid of slavery.

CALLIE

Well, make them, doggone it!

MADISON

Remember what you just said about compromises.

CALLIE

Some things should never be compromised!

FRANKLIN

I agree with the young lady.

MADISON

Well, at the Constitutional Convention in 1787, the Founding Fathers did compromise. Slavery was outlawed in the Northwest Territories, the new land to the west of the thirteen states. But the slave trade was allowed to continue in the states for twenty more years.

CALLIE

I'm not so sure about this Constitution anymore.

MADISON

The word slavery is never used in the U.S. Constitution.

CALLIE

Still...

WASHINGTON

We know that the Constitution is not perfect. That's why we put in a way to make changes or amendments to it.

CALLIE

Oh, this slavery thing is going to get changed. I'm going to make sure of it.

MADISON

Despite disagreements, the Founding Fathers pushed forward to create the government that we have today. Once everyone had decided on how they wanted the new government to run, the Committee of Details worked to do the actual writing of the Constitution while the rest of the delegates took a much-needed vacation.

WASHINGTON

I'm going fishing. Care to join me, Ben?

FRANKLIN

No, thank-you, my good man. I think I'll just go home, read a book, and take a nap.

(WASHINGTON and FRANKLIN exit.)

MADISON

Then the delegates returned, discussed and debated some more-

CALLIE

Man! More fighting!

MADISON

And the Committee of Style and Arrangement reworked the Constitution to make sure every one of those famous words was exactly how they wanted it. The beginning of the Constitution, its most famous words, is called the Preamble.

CALLIE

That makes sense because "pre" means before, like a preview for a movie or preschool where little kids go before elementary school.

MADISON

Absolutely! The Preamble says why the Constitution is written. These words are so powerful and so beautiful that I think we should all say them together.

CALLIE

Okay.

(To audience.)

Everybody ready?

MADISON and CALLIE

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

MADISON

Excellent!

CALLIE

You're right, Madison. That does sound pretty fancy, but I don't know what all those fancy words mean.

(PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER appears.)

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

I am Preambler Descrambler. Give me Preamble. I will decode for you, human.

CALLIE

Wow! Cool! Okay.

MADISON

Let's begin at the beginning. "We the People."

CALLIE

Well, I know what that means.

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

Goodbye.

CALLIE

No, wait. Stay, Preambler Descrambler. We need you.

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

Preambler Descrambler happy.

CALLIE

"We the people."

MADISON

The Constitution does not start "We the Government" or "I the King". It begins "We the People". This is a set of rules for the people by the people.

CALLIE

Next up we have "In Order to form a more perfect Union." Preambler Descrambler, work your magic.

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

(After a series of beeping sounds.)

To make our country better.

CALLIE

"Establish Justice."

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

(A few short beeps.)

Make things fair.

CALLIE

"Insure domestic Tranquility"

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

(A few short beeps.)

Have peace at home.

MADISON

Remember how all the states were fighting with each other? Well, we are saying we don't want that to happen anymore.

CALLIE

"Provide for the common defense."

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

(Many beeps.)

Work together to keep the United States safe from foreign attacks.

CALLIE

"Promote the general Welfare."

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

(Beeps.)

Help make happiness for everyone.

CALLIE

"And secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our
Posterity"

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

(Long series of beeps.)

We want these freedoms to be enjoyed not only by us but by
future generations, our children's children's children.

CALLIE

Hey! That means me. I'm the posterity.

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

Affirmative.

CALLIE

"Do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United
States of America". I got this one.

(PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER makes sad
beeping sounds.)

CALLIE

Wait! What does "ordain" mean?

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

(Happy beeping sounds.)

Order.

CALLIE

We order and setup this Constitution for our country.

(PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER beeps approval.)

MADISON

Indubitably.

CALLIE

So basically, the Preamble says that the people will work
together to make this country the best it can be by being
fair, getting along, and protecting the country, to make it
a good place for us and the people that come after us.

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

Affirmative.

MADISON

Indeed.

CALLIE

One last question, oh wise, all-knowing Preambler
Descrambler. That's a dog, right?

PREAMBLER DESCRAMBLER

Dog. Canine. Affirmative.

CALLIE

Ha! I knew it!

(MADISON barks and chases PREAMBLER
DESCRAMBLER offstage. PREAMBLER
DESCRAMBLER beeps wildly. LEGISLATIVE,
EXECUTIVE, and JUDICIAL enter.)

CALLIE

Hey! I know you. You're the White House! What are you doing
here? Aren't you supposed to be in Washington, DC?

EXECUTIVE

We're here to tell you about the next part of the
Constitution.

LEGISLATIVE

After the Preamble, comes the Articles. The Articles lay
out the foundation for the federal government and describe
how it works.

JUDICIAL

The Articles set up three branches of government.

LEGISLATIVE

Legislative!

(Takes a bow.)

EXECUTIVE

Executive!

(Takes a bow.)

JUDICIAL

And Judicial.

(Takes a bow.)

LEGISLATIVE

I'm the law-making branch, the Legislative, also known as Congress.

CALLIE

Oh right! You're the one with two houses- The House of Representatives and the Senate!

LEGISLATIVE

Job well done! My two houses meet in the Capitol Building. The members of Congress are elected directly by the people.

EXECUTIVE

I am the Executive Branch of the federal government.

CALLIE

The White House.

EXECUTIVE

Yes, and who lives in the White House?

CALLIE

The President.

EXECUTIVE

Why?

CALLIE

Because he or she is the leader of the Executive Branch.

EXECUTIVE

Correct! The Executive Branch also includes the Vice President, Cabinet, and Staff. My job is to enforce the laws made by the Congress. I cannot make laws, but I can suggest them.

JUDICIAL

And I'm the Judicial Branch. I am headed up by the Supreme Court.

CALLIE

The judges.

JUDICIAL

Yes.

CALLIE

That's easy to remember because Judicial sounds like judges.

JUDICIAL

Right. My job is to interpret or explain the laws. You see, cities, states, and the federal government can make more laws, but they must always agree with the laws of the U.S. Constitution because it is the highest law in the land.

CALLIE

Hey! That's just like in school. The teachers make special rules for their classrooms, but all the rules must agree with the principal's rules for the whole school.

JUDICIAL

Certainly! The nine members of the Supreme Court are not elected by the people.

EXECUTIVE

They are chosen by the President.

LEGISLATIVE

But must be approved by Congress.

JUDICIAL

And they can serve as Supreme Court Judges for the rest of their lives.

CALLIE

Wow! I want to be a Supreme Court Judge!

EXECUTIVE

You know what I want to do? I want to sing a song.

LEGISLATIVE

Me too.

JUDICIAL

Me three. And I want all the kids out there to sing with us.

CALLIE, LEGISLATIVE, EXECUTIVE,
and JUDICIAL

(To the tune of "She'll be Coming
Round the Mountain")

Our government has three branches, yes it does.
Our government has three branches, yes it does.
Our government has three branches. Our government has three
branches.
Our government has three branches, yes it does.

Legislative makes the laws, yes it does.
Legislative makes the laws, yes it does.
Legislative makes the laws. Legislative makes the laws.
Legislative makes the laws, yes it does.

Executive enforces, yes it does.
Executive enforces, yes it does.
Executive enforces. Executive enforces.
Executive enforces, yes it does.

Judicial interprets, yes it does.
Judicial interprets, yes it does.
Judicial interprets. Judicial interprets.
Judicial interprets, yes it does.

Our government has three branches, yes it does.
Our government has three branches, yes it does.
Our government has three branches. Our government has three
branches.
Our government has three branches, yes it does.

CALLIE

But what's the point of having three branches? Wouldn't it
be easier if there was just one?

LEGISLATIVE

The purpose of the three branches is a separation of power,
so no one person or part of the government can become too
strong. That's called-

LEGISLATIVE, EXECUTIVE, JUDICIAL

Checks and balances.

CALLIE

Checks and balances?

LEGISLATIVE

For example, the Legislative Branch makes the laws-

EXECUTIVE

But the President has to approve them and if he-

CALLIE

or she.

EXECUTIVE

-doesn't like the new law, he-

CALLIE

or she.

EXECUTIVE

-can veto it.

CALLIE

Veto? That's a funny sounding word.

EXECUTIVE

It's Latin and means "I forbid". Uh, oh! I feel another song coming on.

LEGISLATIVE

Is everybody ready?

JUDICIAL

Because here we go!

CALLIE, LEGISLATIVE, EXECUTIVE,
and JUDICIAL

(To the tune of "B-I-N-G-O".)

Our president has a special power

And Veto is its name-o.

V-E-T- (Beat)-O!

V-E-T- (Beat)-O!

V-E-T- (Beat)-O!

And Veto is its name-o.

Our president has a special power

And Veto is its name-o.

(Clap) E-T- (Beat)-O!

(Clap) E-T- (Beat)-O!

(Clap) E-T- (Beat)-O!

And Veto is its name-o.
Our president has a special power
And Veto is its name-o.
(Clap, Clap) T- (Beat)-O!
(Clap, Clap) T- (Beat)-O!
(Clap, Clap) T- (Beat)-O!
And Veto is its name-o.

Our president has a special power
And Veto is its name-o.
(Clap, Clap, Clap, Beat)-O!
(Clap, Clap, Clap, Beat)-O!
(Clap, Clap, Clap, Beat)-O!
And Veto is its name-o.

Our president has a special power
And Veto is its name-o.
(Clap, Clap, Clap, Beat, Clap)!
(Clap, Clap, Clap, Beat, Clap)!
(Clap, Clap, Clap, Beat, Clap)!
And Veto is its name-o.

CALLIE

So if the President has this extra-special veto power, then
wouldn't that make him or her all powerful?

LEGISLATIVE

Oh no. With a two-thirds vote from both the House and the
Senate, Congress can override the President's veto.

JUDICIAL

And the Supreme Court can decide that the law is
unconstitutional, which means it is not allowed by the
rules of the Constitution.

EXECUTIVE

That's what Checks and Balances is all about.

CALLIE

So everyone has to work together and no one side can become
too powerful?

LEGISLATIVE, EXECUTIVE, and
JUDICIAL

Exactly!

EXECUTIVE

Well, I believe our work here is done.
(LEGISLATIVE, EXECUTIVE, and
JUDICIAL exit.)

CALLIE

Bye. I'll see you when I come to work for you someday.

(WASHINGTON, FRANKLIN, and MADISON
reenter. WASHINGTON holds the U.S.
Constitution and a quill. MADISON
carries an inkwell.)

WASHINGTON

Gentlemen, it is time to sign the U.S. Constitution.

(WASHINGTON lifts the quill. CALLIE
grabs it from his hand.)

CALLIE

But wait! There's no Bill of Rights yet. I know that's part
of the Constitution. I studied it in school.

MADISON

Five days before the end of the Constitutional Convention,
George Mason asked for a Bill of Rights to be added to the
Constitution. Some delegates agreed with him, but most were
ready to go home.

FRANKLIN

I am tired. I'm eighty-one years old. We've been at this
for months in this horrible heat with these horrible flies
buzzing about.

MADISON

I've been working like a dog.

WASHINGTON

I want to get back to Mount Vernon and my dear Martha.

CALLIE

But how are we going to get the Bill of Rights?

WASHINGTON

In Article Five of the Constitution, we explain how the Constitution can be changed with Amendments. So if the people demand a Bill of Rights, they can add one on later. But if we don't sign this Constitution now, we will end up with no government and no rights at all!

MADISON

Besides each state has its own Bill of Rights as part of its State Constitution.

FRANKLIN

No Bill of Rights could ever list all the rights of the people. That's absurd. Are we going to list the right to roll over in bed at night? The right to wear a wig? The right to dance a jig?

CALLIE

Fine. I see your point.

(CALLIE hands the quill back to
WASHINGTON.)

WASHINGTON

The Constitution of the United States of America is little short of a miracle. I am proud to be the first to sign it.

(WASHINGTON signs the Constitution
and hands the quill to MADISON.
MADISON dips his paw in the inkwell
and puts a paw print on the Constitution.
MADISON hands the quill to FRANKLIN.)

FRANKLIN

Thus, I consent, Sir, to this Constitution, because I expect no better, and because I am not sure it is not the best.

(FRANKLIN signs the Constitution.
FRANKLIN and WASHINGTON shake hands.)

CALLIE

Madison, shake.

(MADISON puts his paw in CALLIE's
hand. She feeds him a treat from
her pocket.)

MADISON

And so on September 17th, 1787 thirty-nine delegates signed the U.S. Constitution.

CALLIE

Oh, so then everybody finally agreed it was the best?

MADISON

Oh, no. Three delegates refused to sign and others just plain didn't show up to the meeting. Originally there were fifty-five delegates.

CALLIE

Still thirty-nine out of fifty-five isn't too bad. So that's it then! You guys did it. Now we have a new government!

FRANKLIN

Now slow down there, whippersnapper.

WASHINGTON

Oh, no, no, no. We've barely begun. Now we need to get the word out to the people so they can decide if they want this Constitution to become the law.

CALLIE

But I thought that's what you guys just did, when you signed it.

MADISON

No. Remember we are just representatives for the people. Now the people must choose. Each state holds a special convention to decide if they want to ratify the Constitution.

CALLIE

Ratify?

MADISON

Ratify means accept.

WASHINGTON

We need nine of the thirteen states-

FRANKLIN

Or a two-thirds majority.

WASHINGTON

-to ratify the Constitution in order for it to become the highest law in the land.

CALLIE

Okay, so let's do this, guys. We got to let the people know about this great new government.

FRANKLIN

That's the spirit!

CALLIE

We're going to need TV commercials, news reports, a website, a Facebook page, a MySpace page- Oh, and I'll call everybody I know and tell them to vote yes.

FRANKLIN

I think she's off her rocker.

MADISON

Callie, none of those things exist in 1787.

CALLIE

Radio commercials then? Radio has been around for a really long time, right?

MADISON

Not that long. Communication during the writing of the Constitution was very different than what you are used to.

FRANKLIN

Newspapers were the main way of getting information to the people.

CALLIE

Oh yeah, newspapers. I forgot about those.

MADISON

Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and I wrote the Federalist Papers, eighty-five essays urging the States to ratify the Constitution.

CALLIE

Good dog! I mean good job.

(CALLIE scratches behind MADISON's ear.)

WASHINGTON

But it took weeks for information to reach different states.

CALLIE

Okay, okay, I get it. You had to be patient back then because everything was way slow! But once the people finally found out about the Constitution, everybody wanted to ratify it, right?

FRANKLIN

Oh good gracious no!

WASHINGTON

Many people are very afraid of a strong national government.

CALLIE

Still? But you put in all those checks and balances and stuff!

WASHINGTON

The people who supported the Constitution and wanted a strong federal government were called Federalists.

CALLIE

Makes sense.

FRANKLIN

And the people who were against it were called Anti-Federalists. Anti-Federalists favored strong states.

MADISON

The biggest argument was about the lack of Bill of Rights.

CALLIE

Looks like you guys messed up on that one, huh?

FRANKLIN

We failed to recognize how important a Bill of Rights would be to the people, yes.

MADISON

I need everyone to sing along with me to help convince the states to ratify the Constitution.

CALLIE, WASHINGTON, FRANKLIN, and
MADISON

(To the tune of "Row, Row, Row your Boat".)

Cast, cast, cast your vote,
For the best solution.
Ratify, ratify, ratify, ratify,
The U.S. Constitution!

FRANKLIN

That was mighty fine, but why don't we sing it as a round?
I sure do fancy a rousing good round.

MADISON

Okay, everybody on this side-
(MADISON raises his paw to split
the audience in half and gestures
to his right side. He then moves
over to the middle of the right
side of the stage.)
follow me. We're going to go first.

FRANKLIN

(Gesturing to his left and then
moving over to the middle of the
left side of the stage.)
And everybody on this side, follow me. We're going to start
the song after they sing "Cast, cast, cast your vote".

MADISON and CALLIE

Cast, cast, cast your vote,
(They continue with the rest of
the song.)

FRANKLIN and WASHINGTON

(Joining in the round.)
Cast, cast, cast your vote,
For the best solution.
Ratify, ratify, ratify, ratify,
The U.S. Constitution!

MADISON

That was fantastic! And you know what? It worked. After a
year and lots of debates, the States ratified the
Constitution.

CALLIE

It's about time.

FRANKLIN

But all the votes were very close.

MADISON

And many States included a list of Bill of Rights with their "yes" votes. They sent in over two hundred amendment ideas!

CALLIE

Wow! It looks like they are pretty serious about having a Bill of Rights.

WASHINGTON

So now we can finally put this new government into place.

CALLIE

Let me guess who they voted to be the first president. You!
(CALLIE points to WASHINGTON.)

WASHINGTON

Unanimously! In my first speech to the Nation, I asked the Congress to add a Bill of Rights.

MADISON

And I went to work on it, using the Bill of Rights from Virginia's State Constitution as my model. In 1790, at the first meeting of the new Congress, I introduced twelve amendments. On December 15th, 1791, the States adopted ten.

(WASHINGTON, FRANKLIN, and MADISON exit.)

ANNOUNCER

(Offstage voice.)

Ladies and gentleman, boys and girls! Here by popular demand. Put your hands together for the one, the only, Bill of Rights.

(Thunderous applause can be heard
as BILL OF RIGHTS enters.)

BILL OF RIGHTS

Thank-you! Thank-you so much. Thrilled to be here.

CALLIE

How's it going, Bill?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Wonderful! Couldn't be happier!

CALLIE

A lot of people worked really hard to get you here. Tell me. What makes you so special?

BILL OF RIGHTS

I've got ten - Count them! Ten!- amendments to protect the rights of the American people! My First Amendment says that people have the right to Freedom of Religion, Freedom of Assembly, Freedom of Speech, and Freedom of Press.

CALLIE

Wow! That's a lot of freedom.

BILL OF RIGHTS

You bet it is! Freedom of Religion means-

CALLIE

Wait! I know this one!

BILL OF RIGHTS

Go ahead.

CALLIE

Freedom of Religion means you can worship anyway you want.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Or you can choose not to worship at all. It says that the U.S. has no official church. In England, people could be denied a job or thrown in jail if they didn't go to the Church of England.

CALLIE

Whoa! Really?

BILL OF RIGHTS

That's why a lot of settlers came to Colonial America, to have religious freedom. Next up is Freedom of Assembly.

CALLIE

We have assemblies at my school sometimes.

BILL OF RIGHTS

And what is an assembly?

CALLIE

Well, everybody in the school goes to the auditorium and someone talks about something.

BILL OF RIGHTS

That's what Freedom of Assembly is all about. It means people are allowed to get together publicly in groups to share ideas. We have the right to say what we think about our government- even about things that we think are wrong with it and ways that we can make it better.

CALLIE

Hey! We're having an assembly right now, aren't we?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Yep. There are plenty of things about the government that make a lot of people pretty mad, but in this country, the people have the right to tell their elected officials what is bothering them. They can write letters, sign petitions, and hold peaceful protests.

CALLIE

So then there's Freedom of Speech. That means you have the right to say anything to anybody any time?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Well... not exactly. You can't say something that will put people in danger. For example, you can't yell
(Inaudible whisper.)
fire in a crowded theatre if there isn't one.

CALLIE

You can't yell what?

BILL OF RIGHTS

(Whispering.)

Fire.

CALLIE

What?

BILL OF RIGHTS

(Louder whisper.)

Fire.

CALLIE

What? I can't hear you.

BILL OF RIGHTS

(Yelling.)

Fire! You can't yell fire in a theatre! Oops.

(To audience.)

Shhh!

CALLIE

So how do you know what the First Amendment says you are allowed to say and what it says you are not allowed to say?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Well, sometimes you don't know. And when people disagree over whether saying or doing something is protected under their First Amendment rights, they go to the Supreme Court.

CALLIE

The Judicial Branch, because they interpret the laws.

BILL OF RIGHTS

You're sharp as a tack. So lastly, my First Amendment gives us the right to Freedom of Press.

CALLIE

We have the right to squish things?

BILL OF RIGHTS

What?

CALLIE

You know to squeeze, to press things.

BILL OF RIGHTS

No, press means the media- newspaper, TV, radio, online new stories.

CALLIE

Silly Billy, there weren't TVs, radio, and the Internet when the Constitution and the Bill of Rights were written.

BILL OF RIGHTS

That's true. It used to mean just the written word, like newspapers and books, but now the word "press" means all the different ways in which people report news. And Freedom of Press means they can report their news stories without approval from the government.

CALLIE

So newspapers can print stuff. What's the big deal?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Are you kidding me? A lot of countries don't have this right. It's a very big deal. In a country where the government controls what news reaches the people, the people don't always get to learn the truth.

CALLIE

Like the truth about what their government is really doing?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Exactly.

CALLIE

Does the First Amendment protect my right to sing?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Of course.

CALLIE

Good, because I've got a song to sing.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Can I sing it too?

CALLIE

Definitely! I want everybody to sing it!

CALLIE and BILL OF RIGHTS

(To the tune of "If You're Happy
and You Know It".)

If you have Freedom of Religion, clap your hands.

(Clap, Clap.)

If you have Freedom of Religion, clap your hands.

(Clap, Clap.)

You have freedom, you know. The Bill of Rights says so.

If you have Freedom of Religion, clap your hands.

(Clap, Clap.)

If you have Freedom of Assembly, stomp your feet.

(Stomp, Stomp.)

If you have Freedom of Assembly, stomp your feet.

(Stomp, Stomp.)

You have freedom, you know. The Bill of Rights says so.

If you have Freedom of Assembly, stomp your feet.

(Stomp, Stomp.)

If you have Freedom of Speech, shout "Hurray". Hurray!
If you have Freedom of Speech, shout "Hurray". Hurray!
You have freedom, you know. The Bill of Rights says so.
If you have Freedom of Speech, shout "Hurray". Hurray!

If you have Freedom of Press, do all three.
(Clap, Clap, Stomp, Stomp.)

Hurray!
If you have Freedom of Press, do all three.
(Clap, Clap, Stomp, Stomp.)

Hurray!
You have freedom, you know. The Bill of Rights says so.
If you have Freedom of Press, do all three.
(Clap, Clap, Stomp, Stomp.)

Hurray!

CALLIE

That was a ton of fun! It was nice to meet you, Bill.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Wait! I still have nine more amendments.

CALLIE

Really? There's more? But your First Amendment does so much.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Yes and most people believe that it is the most important.

CALLIE

It does seem pretty important.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Now my Second Amendment says that to keep a trained Militia, people have the right to bear arms.

CALLIE

Bear arms? Why would anybody want those? I don't want a bear. Especially not only his arms. That's just gross. I'd rather have a pony.

BILL OF RIGHTS

No, bear arms means keep guns.

CALLIE

But guns are bad!

BILL OF RIGHTS

Many people feel the way you do, but others feel it is their right to protect their homes and families.

CALLIE

So let me guess. More arguing?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Yep. The Second Amendment is one of the most debated amendments.

CALLIE

So people go to the Supreme Court to argue about what it means?

BILL OF RIGHTS

You better believe it! My Third Amendment says-

(REDCOAT rushes in and grabs CALLIE.)

CALLIE

Help me, Bill!

REDCOAT

Callie J. Summers, you are under arrest!

CALLIE

What? Why?

REDCOAT

I don't have to tell you why.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Yes you do.

REDCOAT

I need a place to keep me soldiers. So I'm putting them in your house. And there's not a blooming thing you can do about it.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Not so fast!

REDCOAT

Oh! A nosey parker! And just who do you think you are?

BILL OF RIGHTS

I'm the Bill of Rights, the protector of the people.

REDCOAT

So?

BILL OF RIGHTS

My Third Amendment says that no one can be forced to keep soldiers in their home during times of peace.

REDCOAT

Oh, fiddle sticks! Well, then I am going to go to your house anyway and just take anything I want. I bet you have some smashing toys.

CALLIE

No! Not my ponies!

BILL OF RIGHTS

Hold on, hotshot! You've got to have probable cause.

REDCOAT

I've got to have what?

BILL OF RIGHTS

My Fourth Amendment prohibits "unreasonable searches and seizures". That means that you must have "probable cause" or a good reason to search someone's home or take their stuff.

CALLIE

Yeah, buddy, I know my rights. You got to have a warrant to search my place! I heard them say that on TV.

REDCOAT

Oh! Forget about the blasted house! I'm just going to take you to jail and lock you up forever! You'll never see your precious ponies again because you are guilty! Guilty! Guilty! Guilty!

CALLIE

Nooooo!

BILL OF RIGHTS

Wait! My Fifth Amendment says a person is innocent until proven guilty. Callie has the right to a fair trial.

REDCOAT

Fine. We'll have your daft little trial, but if you get off, I'll just try you again and again and again until they find you guilty.

BILL OF RIGHTS

You can't do that! A person cannot be tried for the same crime twice.

REDCOAT

Confess your crimes, Callie, or else. What did you do?

BILL OF RIGHTS

Callie, you don't have to answer. According to my Fifth Amendment, you cannot be forced to testify against yourself. You have the right to remain silent.

REDCOAT

I'll set your trial date for ten years from now and come alone. Tell no one. It's going to be a secret trial, it is.

BILL OF RIGHTS

I don't think so. My Sixth Amendment says that a person accused of a crime has the right to a lawyer and a speedy and public trial by jury.

REDCOAT

Cor blimey mate! How many of these amendments do you got?

CALLIE

Ten.

BILL OF RIGHTS

My Seventh Amendment says that Civil Cases, lawsuits about money or property, may also have a trial by jury.

REDCOAT

Well, Callie, you're never ever going to get out of jail because I'm going to set your bail at one million billion trillion gazillion-

BILL OF RIGHTS

No, you're not.

REDCOAT

And what's going to stop me, bloke?

BILL OF RIGHTS

My Eighth Amendment. It says bail cannot be set too high.

REDCOAT

Then I'm just going to hold you upside down and tickle you until you piddle your pants.

CALLIE

That sounds terrible!

BILL OF RIGHTS

No, you can't do that. The Eighth Amendment also says there can be no cruel and unusual punishment.

REDCOAT

I give up! I'm going. I am. You're lucky, little girl, that you have that Bill of Rights to protect you.

(REDCOAT exits.)

CALLIE

Yes, I am! Thanks, Bill! You're my hero! You sure do give people a lot of rights.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Well, my Ninth Amendment says that people have even more rights than just the ones listed in the Bill of Rights.

CALLIE

Like the right to roll over in bed!

BILL OF RIGHTS

My Tenth and final Amendment says that any power not given to the national government goes to the states or the people.

CALLIE

Oh, I bet they put that one in there so that all those Anti-Federalists who were scared of a strong national government would feel better.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Yes siree!

CALLIE

So that's all the amendments to the Constitution then. All ten of them.

BILL OF RIGHTS

Well, no, there have been more than ten changes to the Constitution since it was written in 1787, but only the first ten are called the Bill of Rights. The first ten Amendments are extra-special, if I do say so myself.

CALLIE

It's your First Amendment right to say so!

BILL OF RIGHTS

(To audience.)

Raise your hand if you are important. Every single one of you should be raising your hand. In fact, raise both your hands! You are important and that is what the Bill of Rights is all about. It says that everyone matters. You don't have to be a king or a queen or a president to have rights. Every single person has rights!

(Thunderous applause can be heard,
as BILL OF RIGHTS exits.)

CALLIE

Okay, so we've written the U.S. Constitution. The states ratified it, making it the law of the land and then we got the Bill of Rights to protect the rights of the people. So finally everything is perfect now!

(MADISON enters.)

MADISON

Not so fast, Callie. There is still slavery and Native Americans have no rights.

CALLIE

But wait a second! I thought the whole point of the Bill of Rights was to protect the rights of the people.

MADISON

Sadly, the people in this case were defined only as citizens of the United States. So slaves and Native Americans did not enjoy the freedoms of the Bill of Rights when it was first written.

CALLIE

Well, that's not fair!

MADISON

Also, women couldn't vote or run for office.

CALLIE

Well, that doesn't work because I'm planning to be President someday.

MADISON

Me too.

CALLIE

Well, Madison, how are we going to fix this mess?

MADISON

How do we fix or change things in the Constitution?

CALLIE

With Amendments. So we need more amendments!

MADISON

That's right. The Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery in 1865.

CALLIE

It's about time.

MADISON

And the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870 said that no one can be denied the right to vote because of the color of their skin.

CALLIE

Thank goodness.

MADISON

The Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote in 1920.

CALLIE

I can't wait until I'm old enough to vote.

MADISON

But these amendments didn't just magically appear. People, like you, who believe in making things right had to work very hard to bring about change. So there you have it. The U.S. Constitution. The first constitution to limit the power of the government. The oldest and shortest constitution in the world. Shall, we sing?

CALLIE

We shall!

MADISON and CALLIE

(To the tune of "I'm a Little Teapot".)

I'm the Constitution, short and old
Here's my Preamble, here's my Articles.
Add the Amendments, changes to the rules,
Hip hip hooray for Democracy's tools!

(TRUE and FALSE enter.)

TRUE

That was splendid. Wonderful work kids!

FALSE

That was horrible, positively dreadful.

TRUE

That's false! They are terrific singers. You know it's true.

FALSE

Allow me to introduce myself, True, here to help you.

TRUE

No, no. That's False. And I'm True.

FALSE

Who you going to believe, kid?

TRUE and FALSE

We hear you have a test on the Constitution.

CALLIE

Oh, no! My test. I forgot all about it. I'm not ready.

FALSE

No, you are not.

MADISON

I think you are.

TRUE

I think so too and we are here to help you review.

MADISON

And all those smart kids in the audience are going to help too.

TRUE and FALSE

Pop quiz time!

(MADISON holds up an Applause-O-Meter.)

MADISON

I'm going to ask Callie some True and False questions and then I'll hold up this Applause-O-Meter over True and then over False and-

FALSE

And then you're going to clap and cheer like crazy for me, because I'm always right.

TRUE

That's not true.

MADISON

And I'll measure your applause to help Callie decide which answer to pick.

CALLIE

Cool!

MADISON

Okay. Is everybody ready?

FALSE

No.

TRUE

Yes.

MADISON

First question. The thirteen colonies fought in the Civil War to gain their independence from Great Britain and become the United States of America.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. TRUE shakes his head "No". MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE. FALSE wildly tries to hush the crowd. CALLIE cheers for FALSE. With CALLIE cheering for the correct answer and with TRUE and FALSE behaving accordingly, the majority of the audience should select the correct answer. However, if they do not, the following lines should be adlibbed as necessary, with CALLIE sometimes disagreeing with the audience and with CALLIE sometimes giving the audience's wrong answer and MADISON correcting her.)

MADISON

Well, Callie. The crowd has spoken. What's your answer going to be?

CALLIE

I'm going to have to agree with the audience. The answer is False. It was the Revolutionary War!

FALSE

Oh, you figured me out that time.

MADISON

Good girl!

FALSE

But just you wait. I'll trick you kids yet.

MADISON

After the Revolutionary War, Congress created a weak national government with the Articles of Confederation.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. TRUE jumps up and down enthusiastically. CALLIE cheers for TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE. FALSE dances about and eggs on the crowd.)

CALLIE

True!

MADISON

Correct! Next question. The first words of the U.S. Constitution are "We the Government".

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE. FALSE runs away from the Applause-O-Meter. CALLIE cheers for FALSE.)

CALLIE

False! The first words are "We the People"!

MADISON

That's right. The Constitution divides the national government into three branches: legislative, executive, and judicial.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. CALLIE cheers for TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE.)

CALLIE

True!

FALSE

Man! I thought I had you on that one for sure.

TRUE

Nope. These kids are just too smart for you.

MADISON

The Legislative branch or the Congress is bicameral, which means it is divided into five parts.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE. CALLIE cheers for FALSE.)

CALLIE

False! The Congress is bicameral, which means it is divided into two parts. Bi- means two, like two wheels on a bicycle.

TRUE

How clever!

MADISON

Indeed. Next question. The two parts of Congress are the House of Representatives and the Senate.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. CALLIE cheers for TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE.)

CALLIE

True.

TRUE

Hurray!

MADISON

The President is the head of the Executive Branch.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. CALLIE cheers for TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE.)

CALLIE

True.

MADISON

The Judicial Branch is made up of the Supreme Court and the federal courts.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. CALLIE cheers for TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE.)

CALLIE

True.

FALSE

When are there going to be some more false questions?

MADISON

Thomas Jefferson is called the "Father of the Constitution".

CALLIE

False. It's you, James Madison.

MADISON

You've got it. Thomas Jefferson wasn't even at the Constitutional Convention. He was an ambassador to France at the time. Next true or false question. The U.S. Constitution was signed on September 17, 1787.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. CALLIE cheers for TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE.)

CALLIE

True.

MADISON

The first ten amendments to the Constitution are called the Preamble.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE. CALLIE cheers for FALSE.)

CALLIE

Oh, trick question!

FALSE

My favorite kind!

CALLIE

The beginning of the Constitution is called the Preamble, but the first ten amendments are the Bill of Rights. So the answer is False!

TRUE

See! There's just no stumping this girl.

FALSE

Well, she does have the help of all those smart kids in the audience.

MADISON

Next up. The Bill of Rights protect the rights of the national government.

(MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above TRUE. MADISON holds the Applause-O-Meter above FALSE. CALLIE cheers for FALSE.)

CALLIE

False! The Bill of Rights protect the rights of the people!

FALSE

I quit!

(FALSE storms offstage.)

TRUE

Great work Callie! Great work audience!

(TRUE grabs the Applause-O-Meter and exits.)

CALLIE

I am so going to rock on this test. I got all this stuff memorized.

MADISON

I am sure you will do well on your test, Callie. But I want you to remember, studying history is not just about memorizing dates and names for tests. It's about learning from the injustices of the past and righting those wrongs right now. If you look around you and you see that a group of people or a certain person is not being treated fairly, it is your duty to work to change that.

CALLIE

I will, Madison.

(CALLIE gives MADISON a big hug. A loud knocking is heard. CALLIE jumps. MADISON rips off his wig and tosses it offstage. He begins to run around in circles, barking wildly.)

MADISON

Ruff! Ruff! Ruff! Ruff!

DAD

(Offstage voice.)

Callie, honey. It's time to get up for school.

CALLIE

Huh? What? George Washington is that you?

DAD

(Offstage voice.)

No silly, it's your father. Have you been up all night studying?

CALLIE

Well... you could say that.

MADISON

Ruff! Ruff! Ruff!

(Lights down.)

(END OF PLAY.)