



# Setting the Rules



## Essential Question

Why are rules important?

Read about how the Constitution sets the rules for our country.

Go Digitell!

The Framers met in Philadelphia to form the rules for our country.



## Who came up with the rules for our country?

Your parents vote. You can say what you think about a new law. People in your neighborhood can have a meeting. You are free to believe whatever you want. You can thank the Constitution for all of these things.

In 1787, a group of men met in Philadelphia. They thought the country needed a better government because each state had its own **rules**. They wanted to create a **united** government that would work together. They decided to **form** a new set of rules called the Constitution. Everyone in the country would follow these rules.

## Creating the Constitution

The **writers** of the Constitution included George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, James Madison, and other state leaders. They were called Framers because they framed, or planned, the rules.



### STOP AND CHECK

**Make Predictions** How do you think the Framers formed the Constitution?



The Framers didn't always agree. They often **exclaimed** loudly that they would not sign the new rules and make them official. **Finally**, after four months of debate, the Framers agreed on the rules.

The Constitution is now the highest law of the United States. It explains the rules of the country and it tells how our government works. It gives rights, or privileges, to all the people.

## The Constitution

The Constitution isn't just about our nation's **past history** or its current rules. The document has become a symbol. Like the American flag, it stands for freedom and liberty.

You can see the Constitution at the National Archives Building in Washington, D. C.

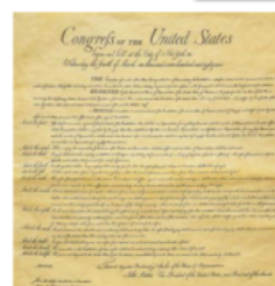
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Adults have the right to vote. You have the right to say your ideas or express your opinions. We have the right to live safely in our homes. These rights are explained in the Constitution.

## Changing with Time

Over time, the Constitution has changed. Some rules have been added to the original document to help make life better or safer for the **public**. The first ten rules added are called the Bill of Rights. They name the rights that belong to people in America. Another change gave women the right to vote. So far, there have been 27 changes to the Constitution. That's why it's known as a living document. It can be changed or updated at any time.



You can also see the Bill of Rights at the National Archives Building in Washington, D. C.

## Respond to Reading

1. How do you know "Setting the Rules" is expository text? **GENRE**
2. What caused the Framers to meet and write the Constitution? **CAUSE AND EFFECT**
3. Use what you know about multiple-meaning words to figure out the meaning of *sign* on page 482. **MULTIPLE-MEANING WORDS**
4. Why is it important to have one set of rules for the entire country? **TEXT TO WORLD**

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**CCSS** Genre • Expository Text

**Compare Texts**  
 Read about where you can find American symbols today.

# American Symbols

When you think of the United States, what image comes to mind? Do you picture the Statue of Liberty? How about the White House? These buildings and other important places and papers are national symbols. Here's a look at some famous symbols. Can you think of others?

**White House**

The White House has been the home for every U.S. president except George Washington. He laid the first stone, but the first president to move in was John Adams. The White House has become a symbol of the American president.

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**Liberty Bell**

The Liberty Bell was originally ordered as a bell for Independence Hall. That is where the people who **formed** the Constitution met. The crack in the bell is more than two feet long! Just like its name, the bell symbolizes liberty.

**Statue of Liberty**

The Statue of Liberty was a gift from France for the 100 year anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. But there wasn't enough money to complete it in time. The statue was not put up until 10 years after the anniversary. It is a symbol of freedom and hope.

**Constitution**

The Constitution is a document that tells the rights and rules of people who live in the United States. It is kept under special glass in a building that is home to many famous documents. The Constitution stands for freedom and liberty.

**Make Connections**

Why are the **rules** in the Constitution important? **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

What are some important American symbols? **TEXT TO TEXT**

**Key**

★ National Capital  
● Cities

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