



We the People THE CITIZEN AND THE CONSTITUTION

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UNIT V

HOW DOES THE CONSTITUTION PROTECT OUR BASIC RIGHTS?

Congress has formed a congressional committee. This committee will examine the U.S. Constitution and the purposes of government. The members of your group are expert witnesses who will appear before the committee. You will be asked to testify on the following questions.

2. Due process of law has been called the “primary and indispensable foundation of individual freedom” because it protects the individual from government wrongdoing.
 - What is the right to due process? Where in the Constitution is due process protected and how is the meaning of due process applied?
 - How does the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment prevent state governments from practicing unfair discrimination?
 - Should young people under the age of eighteen have the same due process rights as adults? Why or why not?

3. The First Amendment states that laws shall not be passed that abridge freedom of speech.
 - Why did the Founders think freedom of speech was so important?
 - Do you believe there are times when freedom of expression should be limited? Explain your response.
 - Should a public speaker who calls for violent action be protected by the First Amendment whereas an audience member who performs the action can be sent to prison? Why or why not?