



North Carolina
CIVIC EDUCATION
CONSORTIUM

Constitution Day Resources

What is Constitution Day?

In 2005, the United States Department of Education implemented Constitution Day and Citizenship Day based on legislation passed by Congress in December 2004 stating, "Educational institutions receiving Federal funding are required to hold an educational program pertaining to the United States Constitution on September 17th of each year" (118 Stat. 2809, 3344-45, Section III).

Why September 17th?

Constitution Day is held on September 17th to commemorate the September 17th, 1787 signing of the Constitution; however, school will not always be in session on September 17th. When September 17th falls on a Saturday, a Sunday, or a holiday, Constitution Day shall be held during the preceding or the following week.

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Constitution Day: North Carolina Competency Goals in Social Studies

When celebrating Constitution Day with North Carolina's students and when teaching students the history of the United States Constitution and its legacy, the following objectives can help guide a standards-based lesson or unit of study.

- **Kindergarten and First Grade**
 - Competency Goal 2: The learner will identify and exhibit qualities of responsible citizenship in the classroom, school, and other social environments.
- **Second Grade**
 - Competency Goal 2: The learner will evaluate relationships between people and their government.
- **Third Grade**
 - Competency Goal 1: The learner will characterize qualities of good citizenship by identifying people who made a difference in the community and other social environments.
 - Competency Goal 3: The learner will understand how individuals can initiate change in families, neighborhoods and communities.
- **Fourth Grade**
 - Competency Goal 4: The learner will analyze social and political institutions in North Carolina such as government, education, religion, and family and how they structure society, influence behavior, and respond to human needs.
- **Fifth Grade**
 - Competency Goal 2: The learner will analyze social and political institutions in North America and examine how these institutions respond to human needs, structure society, and influence behavior.
 - Competency Goal 3: The learner will examine the roles various ethnic groups have played in the development of the United States and its neighboring countries.
 - Competency Goal 4: The learner will trace key developments in United States history and describe their impact on the land and people of the nation and its neighboring counties.
- **Sixth Grade**
 - Competency Goal 7: The learner will assess connections between historical events and contemporary issues.
 - Competency Goal 13: The learner will describe the historic, economic, and cultural connections among North Carolina, the United States, South America, and Europe.
- **Seventh Grade**
 - Competency Goal 10: The learner will compare the rights and civic responsibilities of individuals in political structures in Africa, Asia, and Australia.
 - Competency Goal 13: The learner will describe the historic, economic, and cultural connections among North Carolina, the United States, Africa, Asia, and Australia.
- **Eighth Grade**
 - Competency Goal 2: The learner will trace the causes and effects of the Revolutionary War, and assess the impact of major events, problems, and personalities during the Constitutional Period in North Carolina and the nation.
- **World History**
 - Competency Goal 4: Revolution and Nationalism - The learner will assess the causes and effects of movements seeking change, and will evaluate the sources and consequences of nationalism.
 - Competency Goal 6: Patterns of Social Order - The learner will investigate social and economic organization in various societies throughout time in order to understand the shifts in power and status that have occurred.
 - Competency Goal 8: Patterns of History - The learner will assess the influence of ideals, values, beliefs, and traditions on current global events and issues.
- **Civics and Economics**
 - Competency Goal 1: The learner will investigate the foundations of the American political system and explore basic values and principles of American democracy.
 - Competency Goal 2: The learner will analyze how the government established by the United States Constitution embodies the purposes, values, and principles of American democracy.
 - Competency Goal 4: The learner will explore active roles as a citizen at the local, state, and national levels of government.
 - Competency Goal 10: The learner will develop, defend, and evaluate positions on issues regarding the personal responsibilities of citizens in the American constitutional democracy.
- **United States History**
 - Competency Goal 1: The New Nation (1789-1820) - The learner will identify, investigate, and assess the effectiveness of the institutions of the emerging republic.



- **Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics**

- Competency Goal 1: The learner will examine the constitutional underpinnings of United States government.
- Competency Goal 2: The learner will understand and critique political beliefs and behaviors.
- Competency Goal 9: The learner will examine and understand the development of civil rights and civil liberties and their impact on citizens.



Constitution Day: Suggested Discussion Questions

- What is a Constitution?
- What is a Preamble?
- What rights are guaranteed in the Bill of Rights?
- What is government?
- Why did the United States want to write a Constitution?
- What Supreme Court Cases have upheld rights which are guaranteed in the United States Constitution?
- Who wrote the Constitution?
- Did North Carolina have any representation at the Constitutional Convention?
- How many days were the delegates at the Constitutional Convention?
- Where does the United States keep the original copy of the United States Constitution?
- How can Americans make changes to the Constitution?
- When was the United States Constitution signed?
- How many men signed the United States Constitution?
- Why didn't any women sign the United States Constitution?
- Who is known as the "Father of the Constitution"?
- How does the Constitution affect citizens in Hillsborough, NC?
- What is the difference between the Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution?
- Why do we celebrate Constitution Day?
- What type of pen was used to sign the United States Constitution?
- What is the difference between rights and responsibilities? How are they similar? How are they different?
- What is a document?
- What is a primary source?
- What are the essential characteristics of limited and unlimited government?
- Does the United States have a strong central government?
- What role did debate play in forming the United States Constitution?
- The preamble to the Constitution mentions "a more perfect Union." What is meant by "a more perfect Union"?
- Why do you think delegates from large states felt they should have more representatives than small states?
- Why do we need rules? How do rules help keep us safe? Do all people need rules? What would happen if everyone had the same rules? What would happen if everyone had different rules? Who should decide what the rules should be?
- What are the roles and functions of the three branches of government?
- How do separation of powers and checks and balances affect the U.S. Government?
- What are the rights, liberties, and responsibilities of U.S. citizens?
- How is the Constitution a living document?
- Why is it important to understand the history of the Constitution?
- Who were the oldest and youngest members of the Constitutional Convention?
- How many amendments to the Constitution have been repealed?
- How is the national government organized and what does it do?
- What does it mean when someone says, "that's unconstitutional"?



Elementary School Activity Ideas

- Discuss the parts of the Constitution; create a class Constitution.
- Using a Venn diagram with two circles, identify the powers that belong to the state government and the powers that belong to the federal government.
- After studying the three branches of government, have students create a Venn diagram outlining the powers granted to each branch of government.
- Compare the rights of Americans with the rights of citizens in other countries.
- Using pictures from newspapers and magazines, create a class bulletin board illustrating basic rights guaranteed in the United States Constitution.
- Identify a person who has lived in another country. Invite this person to serve as a guest speaker to your class, and have him/her describe the difference between “rights” in their native country and in the United States.
- Have a Birthday Party to celebrate the signing of the Constitution and have each student sign a reproduced copy of the Constitution using a quill pen and ink while discussing some of the more famous signers of the Constitution (i.e., Ben Franklin).
- Write poems about specific freedoms.
- Draw a picture/illustrate one right found in the Bill of Rights.
- Using an outline map, have students color the original thirteen colonies.
- Learn the Preamble by viewing *School House Rock* or by listening to the song at <http://www.school-house-rock.com/Prea.html>.
- Interview your parents and ask why the U.S. Constitution is an important document?
- Conduct a class play on the creation of the U.S. Constitution.
- Make Tricorn Hats and wear the hats while discussing the U.S. Constitution.
- Have students trace and cut out their handprint in red or white. On each handprint, have students write ways they can be good citizens. Use the handprints to make a large flag with teachers writing statements on the stars.
- Work with students to develop a K-W-L chart.
- Read the fable about the boy who cried wolf and apply it to classroom situations. Note: A more recent version of this story is the new movie titled *Chicken Little*. Students can view a clip from the movie and discuss the Freedom of Speech.
- Write a thank you card to one of the signers of the Constitution.
- Using clay or other materials, create a monument in honor of the United States Constitution and its birthday.
- Make a T-Chart illustrating “rules” on one side and “reasons” on the other side.
- Construct a wheel or web, listing rights as the hub and related responsibilities as the spokes.
- Read and discuss a book(s) about people throughout history who were denied basic freedoms.
- Discuss why it is important to protect our rights and why we should honor those who fight to protect our rights.
- Ask students to keep a journal of good citizenship they observe in their family, neighborhood, school, community, etc.
- During the morning announcements, have a student read a Constitutional fact Monday-Friday, during Constitution Week.
- Conduct a poster contest (i.e., Create a theme or have students illustrate one of the amendments).
- Have students think of an amendment that would benefit kids their age.
- Have students play “Who Wants to Be a Million Dollar Citizen?” This interactive game is available online at <http://www.uscourts.gov/outreach/MDC/index.htm>.
- Ask students to answer questions from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Test.



Constitution Day: Middle and High School Teaching Strategies

- Discuss the parts of the Constitution; create a class Constitution.
- Compare and contrast the State Constitution with the United States Constitution.
- Using a Venn diagram with two circles, identify the powers that belong to the state government and the powers that belong to the federal government.
- After studying the three branches of government, have students create a Venn diagram outlining the powers granted to each branch of government.
- Compare the rights of Americans with the rights of citizens in other countries.
- Re-enact a debate between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists.
- Write a research paper about one of the delegates, or one of the NC Delegates, to the Constitutional Convention.
- Identify a person who has lived in another country. Invite this person to serve as a guest speaker to your class, and have him/her describe the difference between “rights” in their native country and in the United States.
- Hold a class debate on one of the rights guaranteed in the Constitution. For specific cases, see <http://www.landmarkcases.org/>
- Have students write an essay titled, “What it means to be an American.”
- If freedom is not absolute, then what circumstances justify a limitation? Use the following resources from the Freedom Forum to have students address the question, “When may speech be limited?” <http://www.freedomforum.org/templates/document.asp?documentID=13588>
- Lead a discussion about Common Good: Ask students, “What is the common good, and who defines it.”
- Discuss why it is important to protect our rights and why we should honor those who fight to protect our rights.
- Ask students to keep a journal of good citizenship they observe in their family, neighborhood, school, community, etc.
- During the morning announcements, have a student read a Constitutional fact Monday-Friday, during Constitution Week.
- Compare and contrast the Articles of Confederation with the United States Constitution; have students explain in their own words why a new constitution was needed.
- Read and discuss a book(s) about people throughout history who were denied basic freedoms.
- Conduct a poster contest (i.e., Create a theme or have students illustrate one of the amendments).
- Have students think of an amendment that would benefit kids their age.
- Have students play “Who Wants to Be a Million Dollar Citizen?” This interactive game is available online at <http://www.uscourts.gov/outreach/MDC/index.htm>.
- Have students analyze Marbury v. Madison. The 200th anniversary educational materials are available at <http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/marbury.pdf>.
- Ask students to answer questions from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Test.



Constitution Day: Key Terms

Term	Definition
Amendment	
Anti-Federalist	
Articles of Confederation	
Balance of Power	
Bill of Rights	
Citizen	
Citizenship	
Civic Participation	
Civil Rights	
Compromise	
Congress	
Consensus	
Constitution	
Constitutional Convention	
Constitutional Democracy	
Constitutional Rights	
Debate	
Democracy	
Due Process	
Executive Branch	
Federalists	

Freedom	
Government	
Injustice	
Judicial Branch	
Justice	
Laws	
Legislative Branch	
Liberty	
Patriotism	
Preamble	
Representative Democracy	
Responsibility	
Revolution	
Right	
Self-Government	
Welfare	

The United States Constitution, a Condensed Version

Why do we have a United States Constitution?

On July 4th, 1776, the United States declared its independence from Great Britain; in 1783, the United States won the Revolutionary War and became its own nation.

Fearing the Articles of Confederation were too weak to serve the great United States, state representatives met in 1786 and concluded an entirely new constitution was needed. Over the next couple of months, Congress met and wrote the United States Constitution. It was signed on September 17, 1787, adopted by the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, ratified by 3/4 of our 13 states in 1789, and took effect in 1790.

Now over 200 years old, the United States Constitution is the oldest federal constitution in use. Describing both the structure of the federal government and the rights of the people, the United States Constitution has stood the test of time and has undergone only 27 changes or additions. [actual document]

The preamble to the Constitution

"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 of the United States of America." [We the People]

Article I: The Legislative Branch

Section 1

- A United States Congress makes the laws.
- Congress is made up of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

Section 2

- The United States House of Representatives is composed of members of each state; each state has at least 1, and the number of representatives is based on population.
- These representatives are elected by qualified voters in their state.
- Members of the House of Representatives are elected to 2 year terms.
- Qualifications:
 - Must be at least 25 years old
 - Must live in the state elected to represent
 - Must have been a citizen for at least 7 years
- Members of the House select a Speaker of the House, who presides over them.
- The House of Representatives, alone, has the power to impeach federal officials.

Section 3

- The United States Senate is composed of members of each state; each state has 2.
- These senators are elected by qualified voters in their state.
- Members of the Senate are elected to 6 year terms.
- Qualifications:
 - Must be at least 30
 - Must live in the state elected to represent
 - Must have been a citizen for at least 9 years
- The Vice President is president of the Senate, but votes only to break a tie; the Senate elects a President Pro Tempore to preside in the Vice President's absence.
 - The Senate tries all impeachment cases, and the Vice President presides over these trials; however, the Chief Justice of the United States presides over impeachment trials of the President. [star and text "Only two presidents have been impeached, Andrew Johnson and William J. Clinton; both were acquitted."]
 - A person who is impeached and convicted is removed from office, may never fill another federal office, and can be prosecuted.

Section 4

- State legislatures decide when and where to hold Congressional elections.
- The US Congress must meet at least once a year.

Section 5

- A majority of the members of each house must be present for a vote.
- Each house makes its own rules, punishes its members for poor behavior, and has the power to expel a member.
- Each house must keep a journal on its proceedings.
- When Congress is in session, neither house can adjourn for more than 3 days.

Section 6

- Members of Congress receive a salary.
- Members of Congress cannot be arrested in House or Senate chambers.

- Members of Congress cannot be prosecuted for spoken or written words relating to their duties.
- Members of Congress cannot hold a federal office while serving in Congress.

Section 7

- All tax bills must originate in the House, but the Senate may amend these bills.
- Bills passed by both houses are presented to the US President; if the President signs a bill, it becomes a law; if the President does not sign a bill, he vetoes it.
 - If 2/3 of both houses still approve the bill, it passes despite the President's veto.
- If the President fails to return a bill to Congress within 10 days, excluding Sundays, it automatically becomes a law.
- If Congress adjourns before 10 days pass, preventing the President from returning it, the bill does not become a law; this is known as a *pocket veto*.
- All orders, resolutions, or votes that require the agreement of the House and the Senate must be presented to the President; if the President disapproves, a 2/3 vote of both the House and the Senate overrides the President.

Section 8

Congress has the power to perform the following duties:

- Determine and collect taxes
- Borrow money
- Regulate national and international trade
- Establish rules for naturalization, or rights to citizenship
- Print money, make coins, set the value, and punish counterfeiters [coin]
- Establish post offices and post roads
- Encourage science and the arts by granting patents and copyrights
- Set up federal courts
- Punish piracy and crimes committed at sea
- Declare war
- Raise and support military forces
- Raise and support a navy [naval sign]
- Establish rules for military forces
- Call on the National Guard to enforce laws and to suppress rebellions
- Support, organize, arm, and discipline the National Guard
- Make all laws necessary and proper for carrying out its Constitutional powers

Section 9

Congress does not have the power to perform the following acts:

- Migrate or import "such persons as any of the states now existing shall think proper to admit" until 1808
- Suspend habeas corpus, unless required for public safety
- Pass a law that singles out a particular group for punishment (Bill of Attainder)
- Pass a law that punishes people for actions before a law was passed (Ex post facto)
- Pass a head tax, unless it is in proportion to the census
- Pass a tax on items exported from any state
- Pass trade laws that favor one state over another
- Pass laws requiring ships to pay taxes as they pass from state to state
- Spend government money without the consent of Congress
- Grant titles of nobility or permit federal officials to accept gifts or titles without Congress's consent

Section 10 [outline of NC]

The states are unable to perform the following acts:

- Enter into any treaty or alliance
- Approve private military action
- Coin money
- Give out bills of credit
- Pass any bill of attainder or ex post facto law
- Grant titles of nobility
- Tax imports or exports, except for small inspection fees, without the approval of Congress
- Keep troops or ships of war in peacetime without the approval of Congress
- Make treaties without the approval of Congress
- Make war without the approval of Congress, unless invaded

Article II: The Executive Branch

Section 1

- All federal executive power is given to the President of the United States.
- The US President and Vice President are elected to 4 year terms.

- Each state appoints electors equal in number to the state’s senators and representatives; electors from each state vote for President and Vice President in a process known as the Electoral College.
- A presidential election resulting in a tie is decided by the House of Representatives.
- Qualifications for Presidency:
 - o Must be at least 35 years old
 - o Must be a 14-year resident of the US
 - o Must be a natural-born citizen
- If the President leaves office for any reason, the Vice President will assume his duties.
- The President receives a salary, and this salary will not change during his term of office.
- The President must take the Oath of Office. [hand on the Bible]

Section 2

- The President is the Commander in Chief of the US Army, the US Navy, and the National Guard when called into service by the federal government. [US Army]
- The President can grant reprieves and pardons.
- The President can make treaties with 2/3 Senate approval.
- The President appoints ambassadors, Supreme Court justices, and other federal officers with the Senate’s consent.
- The President can make temporary appointments to offices requiring Senate confirmation when the Senate is not in session.

Section 3

- The President provides Congress with information on the state of the Union.
- The President ensures that laws are “faithfully executed.”

Section 4

- The President, the Vice President, and other federal officials can be impeached for and convicted of treason, bribery, and other high crimes.

Article III: The Judicial Branch

Section 1

- Judicial power rests with the US Supreme Court and other federal courts established by Congress. [scales]
- Supreme Court and Federal Court Judges serve for life on good behavior.
- Supreme Court and Federal Court Judges receive a salary.

Section 2

- The judiciary decides cases of US Constitutional law and cases involving federal laws.
- Cases involving ambassadors and states go directly to the US Supreme Court; other cases can be appealed to the US Supreme Court. [gavel]
- All criminal trials are by jury, and criminal cases are heard in the state where the crime was committed.

Section 3

- Acts of treason include declaring war on the US and aiding its enemies.
- One can be convicted of treason if there is a court confession or if there are two witnesses to the act of treason.
- Congress determines the punishment for treason.

Article IV: Duties of the States

Section 1

- Each state honors the public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of all other states.

Section 2

- Citizens visiting other states are entitled to the rights and privileges of citizens in the state they are visiting.
- If an individual charged with a crime flees to another state, the criminal’s state can demand his return.

Section 3

- Congress can admit new states to the Union.
- A new state cannot be formed by joining or dividing any existing states without the consent of Congress and the legislatures of the concerned States.
- Congress disposes of and regulates all US property.

Section 4

- The US guarantees every state a representative government. [voting box]
- The US will protect all states from invasion.

Article V: Amending the US Constitution

- Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed when 2/3 of both the House and the Senate deem it necessary.
- Amendments to the Constitution may be proposed when 2/3 of all state legislatures ask Congress to call a convention to do so.



- Amendments to the Constitution must be ratified by legislatures in 3/4 of the states or by conventions in 3/4 of the states.

Article VI: The US Constitution is the Law of the Land

- The US honors all debts incurred prior to the US Constitution's ratification.
- The Constitution, federal laws, and federal treaties are the law of the land; the judges in every state are bound to these laws.
- Federal and State officials must loyally support the Constitution.
- No religious test shall ever be required to hold a public office.

Article VII: Ratifying the Constitution

Nine of the thirteen states had to ratify the US Constitution before it was established.

- Delaware, December 7, 1787
- Pennsylvania, December 12, 1787
- New Jersey, December 18, 1787
- Connecticut, January 9, 1788
- Georgia, February 2, 1788
- Massachusetts, February 6, 1788
- Maryland, April 28, 1788
- South Carolina, May 23, 1788
- New Hampshire, June 21, 1788
- Virginia, June 25, 1788
- New York, July 26, 1788
- North Carolina, November 29, 1789
- Rhode Island, May 29, 1790

The Bill of Rights

The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments to the Constitution, all of which were ratified on December 15, 1791 to guarantee the following Constitutional rights:

- First Amendment: To establish and practice a religion, to speak or write your thoughts freely, to assemble peacefully, and to petition the government
- Second Amendment: To keep and bear arms in certain situations
- Third Amendment: To refuse to let soldiers stay in your home unless required by law
- Fourth Amendment: To be secure against "unreasonable" search and seizures
- Fifth Amendment: To be prosecuted for a capital or "infamous" crime only when indicted by a Grand Jury, to not be tried for the same crime twice, to not incriminate yourself, to not have the government remove your "life, liberty, or property without due process of law," and to not have the government take your personal property for public use without compensation
- Sixth Amendment: (If charged with a crime, you have rights) To have a "speedy and public trial," to have an "impartial jury" from the state where the crime was committed, to know the charges against you, to confront the witnesses speaking against you, to compel a witness to speak on your behalf, and to have an attorney represent you.
- Seventh Amendment: To have a trial by jury in most civil cases
- Eighth Amendment: To not have excessive bail, excessive fines, or "cruel and unusual" punishment imposed
- Ninth Amendment: To know you have other rights in addition to those identified in the Constitution
- Tenth Amendment: To have the powers not delegated to the federal government by the Constitution

Other Amendments

- Eleventh Amendment: States cannot sue other states in federal court.
- Twelfth Amendment: Members of the Electoral College cast separate ballots for president and vice president.
- Thirteenth Amendment: Slavery is abolished; Congress has the right to enforce abolition.
- Fourteenth Amendment: Provides due process and equal protection under the law to citizens, who are all persons "born or naturalized in the US"
- Fifteenth Amendment: Prohibits the federal and state governments from denying individuals the right to vote based on race, color, or prior servitude
- Sixteenth Amendment: Creates the income tax
- Seventeenth Amendment: Establishes the direct election of senators
- Eighteenth Amendment: Bans alcohol; Prohibition begins
- Nineteenth Amendment: Gives women the right to vote



- Twentieth Amendment: Changes conditions of presidential and congressional terms and of presidential succession
- Twenty-First Amendment: Prohibition is repealed
- Twenty-Second Amendment: The President cannot serve more than two terms.
- Twenty-Third Amendment: Gives presidential electors to the District of Columbia
- Twenty-Fourth Amendment: Prohibits the federal and state governments from requiring payment of a poll tax as a qualification for voting
- Twenty-Fifth Amendment: Changes conditions of presidential succession, allows temporary removal of a president, and allows the replacement of a vice president
- Twenty-Sixth Amendment: Grants citizens eighteen years and older the right to vote
- Twenty-Seventh Amendment: Limits congressional pay raises

See also the North Carolina Civic Education Consortium's US Pocket Constitutions; class sets are available for purchase at <http://shopping.netsuite.com/s.nl/c.433425/it.A/id.948/f>

The North Carolina Constitution, a Condensed Version

What is the history of North Carolina's Constitution?

North Carolina has had three Constitutions in her history as a state. The North Carolina Constitution of 1776 and its Declaration of Rights outlined the new state government and ensured the basic rights of North Carolina citizens. This Constitution was replaced in 1868 when the United States required all states to eliminate slavery and to swear allegiance to the American Union. Our current Constitution was adopted in 1970 and took effect in 1971. [NC seal]

The preamble to North Carolina's Constitution

"We, the people of the State of North Carolina, grateful to Almighty God, the Sovereign Ruler of Nations, for the preservation of the American Union and the existence of our civil, political and religious liberties, and acknowledging our dependence upon Him for the continuance of those blessings to us and our posterity, do, for the more certain security thereof and for the better government of this State, ordain and establish this Constitution."

Article I: Declaration of Rights

The Declaration of Rights recognizes the "essential principles of liberty and free government," many of which are identified in the Bill of Rights. Below are highlights selected from the 37 sections.

- Section 1: All persons are created equal and endowed with "inalienable rights."
- Section 6: Three branches of state government exist: legislative, executive, and judicial.
- Section 15: Citizens of NC have the right to an education. [school house]
- Section 26: No individual will be excused from jury service on account of "sex, race, color, religion, or natural origin."

Article II: The Legislative Branch

The legislative power lies in the General Assembly, which is made up of a Senate and a House of Representatives.

- The Senate
 - o Senators are elected from 50 districts; each senator represents approximately the same number of citizens.
 - o Senators are elected to 2 year terms.
 - o Qualifications for Senate:
 - Must be at least 25 years old
 - Must be a qualified voter in NC
 - Must have lived in NC for at least 2 years
 - Must have lived in his district for at least 1 year
 - o The Lieutenant Governor of NC presides as President of the Senate, but votes only to break a tie; the Senate elects a President Pro Tempore to serve in the Lt. Governor's absence.
 - o The Senate tries all impeachment cases; however, the Chief Justice of NC presides over impeachment trials of the Governor or the Lt. Governor.
- The House of Representatives
 - o Members of the House are elected from 120 districts; each member represents approximately the same number of citizens.
 - o Members of the House are elected to 2 year terms.
 - o Qualifications for House:
 - Must be a qualified voter in NC
 - Must have lived in his district for at least 1 year
 - o Members of the House select a Speaker of the House, who presides over them.
 - o The House, alone, has the power to impeach a state officer.
- Powers and Duties of the NC General Assembly
 - o Members of the General Assembly receive a salary.
 - o Both houses keep a journal of their proceedings.
 - o Each house determines if its members are qualified to serve and fairly elected.
 - o Bills can be introduced in either the Senate or the House; bills passed by both houses are presented to the Governor; if the Governor signs a bill, it becomes a law; if the Governor does not sign a bill, he vetoes it.
 - o If 3/5 of both houses still approve the bill, it passes despite the Governor's veto.
 - o If the Governor fails to return a bill to Congress within 10 days, excluding Sundays, it automatically becomes a law.
 - o If the General Assembly adjourns without a specified day for reconvening or for more than 30 days before the bill is returned, the Governor must ask them to reconvene to consider the bill; if he does not ask them to reconvene, the bill shall become law on the 40th day of adjournment.
 - o All revenue bills must be read three times on different days and pass all three readings in each house.



Article III: The Executive Branch

All North Carolina executive power is given to the Governor of the State.

- The Governor and the Lieutenant Governor of NC
 - The Governor and the Lt. Governor are elected to 4 year terms.
 - The Governor and the Lt. Governor are elected by the qualified voters of NC.
 - Qualifications for Governor and Lt. Governor:
 - Must be at least 30 years old
 - Must be a NC citizen for at least 5 years
 - Must be a NC resident for at least 2 years immediately prior to election
 - The newly-elected Governor and Lt. Governor take an Oath of Office.
 - The Governor and the Lt. Governor are limited to 2 consecutive terms of office.
 - If the Governor leaves or is removed from office, the Lt. Governor becomes Governor.
- Duties of the Governor
 - The Governor reports to the General Assembly on the affairs of the State.
 - The Governor recommends a budget.
 - The Governor ensures that the laws of the US and NC are faithfully executed.
 - The Governor is Commander in Chief of the state's military forces, except when these forces are called into service by the US.
 - The Governor has the power to grant reprieves and pardons.
 - The Governor nominates and appoints state officers with the Senate's consent.
- Other Elected Officers in NC
 - A Secretary of State, a State Auditor, A Superintendent of Public Instruction, an Attorney General, a Commissioner of Agriculture, a Commissioner of Labor, and a Commissioner of Insurance are all elected and known as the Council of State.
 - These individuals are elected by the qualified voters of NC.
 - These individuals are elected to 4 year terms.

Article IV: The Judicial Branch

The North Carolina judicial power is given to a General Court of Justice composed of an Appellate Division, a Superior Court Division, and a District Court Division.

- The Appellate Division consists of the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals.
 - The Supreme Court reviews cases appealing decisions made in lower courts.
 - The Supreme Court has exclusive authority to make rules for the appellate division.
 - The Court of Appeals hears cases appealing decisions made in superior and district courts.
- The Superior Court Division has "original jurisdiction" throughout the state.
- The District Court Division represents the local courts. [courthouse]
- The General Assembly makes rules for the Superior and District Courts.

Article V: Finance

- No poll tax can be levied by the General Assembly, a county, a city, or a town.
- The income tax rate cannot exceed ten percent.
- The General Assembly cannot contract debts dependent on a tax or the State's credit without the support of qualified voters, except for certain purposes.
- The General Assembly cannot give or lend money without the support of qualified voters, except for certain purposes.
- The Constitution ensures that local governments have the same limitations.
- Every act of the General Assembly that levies a tax must state the reason for the tax, and the revenue cannot be applied to any other purpose. [dollar bill]

Article VI: Suffrage and Elections

- Qualifications for Voting in NC:
 - Must be a US citizen
 - Must be at least 18 years old
 - Must have lived in NC for at least 1 year
 - Must have lived in the election district for at least 30 days preceding the election
 - Must be free of a felony conviction
 - Must be registered as required by law
 - Must be able to read and write any section of the Constitution in the English language
- Elections
 - All elections are by ballot. [ballot]
 - Every qualified voter in NC who is at least 21 years old is eligible for election to public office, except as identified in the NC Constitution.



- o All persons elected to a public office must take and Oath of Office.

Article VII: Local Governments

- The General Assembly organizes and sets the boundaries of counties, cities, and towns.
- The General Assembly gives powers and duties to counties, cities, and towns as allowed by the NC Constitution and as it sees fit.
- The General Assembly adheres to restrictions on the incorporation of cities and towns.
- The Constitution requires that a sheriff be elected in every county in NC.
- A local government formed by the merger of a county and a city has the powers of both.

Article VIII: Corporations

- The General Assembly provides for the chartering and organization of all corporations, except those permitted by special act.
- The General Assembly can repeal the charter of any corporation at any time.

Article IX: Education

- NC provides for a “general and uniform system of free public schools.”
- NC schools must be in operation at least 9 months of every year.
- NC schools must provide equal opportunities for all students.
- The General Assembly may assign local governments responsibility for the financial support of NC schools.
- The governing boards of local governments may use local revenues to supplement any NC school.
- All children in NC should attend public school unless educated in another school.
- The State Board of Education is made up of the Lt. Governor, the NC Treasurer, and 11 other members appointed by the Governor.
 - o The Superintendent of Public Instruction is the secretary and chief administrative officer of the State Board of Education.
 - o The State Board of Education supervises the public school system and manages the funds provided for its support.
- The General Assembly maintains a public university system.

Article X: Homesteads and Exemptions

- You have the right to keep a certain amount of real and personal property despite your debts.
- Individuals who perform work on your property have the right to sell your property if you do not pay them for the work performed.
- Married women can own and dispose of property just as their husbands can.

Article XI: Punishment, Correction, and Charities

- Death, imprisonment, fines, suspension of a jail or prison term, restitution, community service, restraints on liberty, work programs, removal from office and disqualification to hold office are the only acceptable punishments in North Carolina.
- Murder, arson, burglary, and rape are the only crimes punishable by death in NC.
- The State operates charitable, benevolent, penal, and correctional institutions and agencies necessary for the State’s public good.
- The General Assembly provides for the “poor, the unfortunate, and the orphan.”

Article XII: Military Forces

- The Governor is Commander in Chief of the State’s military forces, and the State may call upon these forces to “execute the law, suppress riots and insurrections, and repel invasion.”

Article XIII: Constitutional Amendments and Revisions

- A Convention of the People can be called if 2/3 of both the Senate and the House agree alongside a majority of qualified voters to call a Convention.
 - o Delegates to the Convention are selected by qualified voters and equal in number to the General Assembly.
 - o Every new or revised amendment adopted by the Convention is submitted to qualified voters for ratification.
- The General Assembly can propose a new or revised amendment, but only if 3/5 of both the Senate and the House adopt an act to submit the proposal to the qualified voters of the state.

Article XIV: Miscellaneous

- Raleigh is the capital of North Carolina.
- The limits and boundaries of North Carolina shall remain as they are.
- General Statutes in North Carolina are applicable to every unit of local government, unless exceptions exist.
- The laws of NC continue to apply until lawfully altered.
- It is NC policy to conserve and to protect its natural resources.

See also the North Carolina Civic Education Consortium’s US Pocket Constitutions; class sets are available for purchase at <http://shopping.netsuite.com/s.nl/c.433425/it.A/id.949/f>



Constitution Day Book Resources

- *A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution* by Betsy Maestro; illustrated by Giulio Maestro
- *Can't You Make Them Behave, King George?* By Jean Fritz; illustrated by Tommie dePaola
- *Constitution Translated for Kids* by Cathy Travis
- *...If You Were There When They Signed the Constitution* by Joan Holub and Elizabeth Levy
- *The People's Guide to the U.S. Constitution* by David Klage
- *Shh! We're Writing the Constitution* by Jean Fritz; illustrated by Tommie dePaola
- *The U.S. Constitution for Beginners* by Steven Bachmann
- *We the Kids* by David Catrow

Constitution Day Web Resources

- The Anti-Federalist Papers: <http://www.constitution.org/afp.htm>
- The Bill of Rights Institute, Constitution Day Lessons and Resources: <http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org/Instructional/Resources/ConstitutionDay/index.htm>
- Center for Civic Education, Lessons for Constitution Day and Citizenship Day: http://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=constitution_day
- The Charters of Freedom: <http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/charters.html>
- Checks and Balances: http://www.congressforkids.net/Constitution_checksandbalances.htm
- Congress for Kids: <http://www.congressforkids.net/>
- Congressional Links, Lesson Plans: http://www.congresslink.org/print_lp_contents.htm
- Constitution Day: <http://www.constitutionday.com/>
- Constitution Timeline: <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/timeline/>
- Constitutional Rights Foundation, Constitution Day Educational Resources: http://www.crf-usa.org/constitution_day/constitution_day_home.htm
- Individual Rights: <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/explore/BasicGoverningPrinciples/IndividualRights.shtml>
- Judicial Review: <http://www.abanet.org/publiced/lawday/marbury.pdf>
- Justice Learning, Constitution Day 2006: <http://www.justicelearning.org/constitutionday/index.asp>
- Landmark Supreme Court Cases: <http://www.landmarkcases.org/>
- Liberty's Kids: <http://www.libertyskids.com/>
- The Library of Congress, the Federalist Papers: <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fedpapers.html>
- National Constitution Center, Constitution Day Educational Resources: <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/explore/ForKids/index.shtml>
- National Constitution Center, Interactive Constitution: <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/constitution/>
- Popular Sovereignty: <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/explore/BasicGoverningPrinciples/PopularSovereignty.shtml>
- Self-Government: <http://etext.virginia.edu/jefferson/quotations/jeff0600.htm>
- Separation of Powers: <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/6-8/government/branches.html>
- Teaching With Documents, Observing Constitution Day: <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/constitution-day/signers.html>
- Truman Presidential Museum and Library, Three Branches of Government Interactive Teaching Unit http://www.trumanlibrary.org/whistlestop/teacher_lessons/3branches/front.htm
 - Why Study Constitution Day: http://www.pbs.org/georgewashington/classroom/constitution_day2.html

