

## THE AMENDMENTS

***The Bill of Rights, 1791: Amendments VII–X***

(See Amendments VII, VIII, IX, X)

The final section of the Bill of Rights deals with legal rights and also with powers given to the states.

The Seventh Amendment guarantees Americans the right to a trial by a jury in any case involving more than twenty dollars. In today's society, there are many lawsuits going through the court system. It is our right to have our case decided by a group of our peers, a *jury*. Or, it is our right to not have a jury and have only a judge decide the case.

The Eighth Amendment protects us from having to pay excessive *bail* or be punished in cruel and unusual ways. Bail is money that is given in order to be released from jail. The money is returned when the accused appears in court for the trial. Protection from paying excessive bail means that one wouldn't have to pay one million dollars to be released from jail for stealing a candy bar! Cruel and unusual punishment is being tortured or punished in ways that are not humane. There are many different opinions as to what is cruel and unusual punishment.



**The Seventh Amendment guarantees the right to a trial by jury.**

The Ninth Amendment is the “etcetera” amendment. Under this amendment, other rights not listed in the Constitution are also given to the people. The rights in the Constitution are not the only rights Americans have—they are just a few. The Ninth Amendment protects other rights that might not have been listed.

Finally, the Tenth Amendment gives all powers not specifically listed in the Constitution to the states and their people. For example, education is not mentioned in the Constitution; therefore, it is the job of the individual states to educate their people. What is not written in the Constitution is given to the states and the people.

The Bill of Rights is an important addition to the Constitution. Without the statement of these rights, certain freedoms like religion, speech, or public trials might have been lost in the passage of time.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE AMENDMENTS**

***The Bill of Rights, 1791: Amendments VII–X***  
**Challenges**

1. What is a jury? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What does the Seventh Amendment guarantee? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is excessive bail? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What would you consider cruel and unusual punishment? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. From what does the Eighth Amendment protect us? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What does the Ninth Amendment say about rights not listed in the Constitution?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. The power to set up school districts is not stated in the Constitution. Who has the authority to create schools? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
What amendment gives them that power? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. How many amendments are contained in the Bill of Rights? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## THE AMENDMENTS

**1798–1870: Amendments XI–XV**

(See Amendments XI, XII, XIII, XIV, XV)

After the Bill of Rights became part of the Constitution, other changes were made by other amendments.

The Eleventh Amendment was added to the Constitution in 1798. Under the amendment, people in one state, or foreigners, cannot sue another state in a federal court.

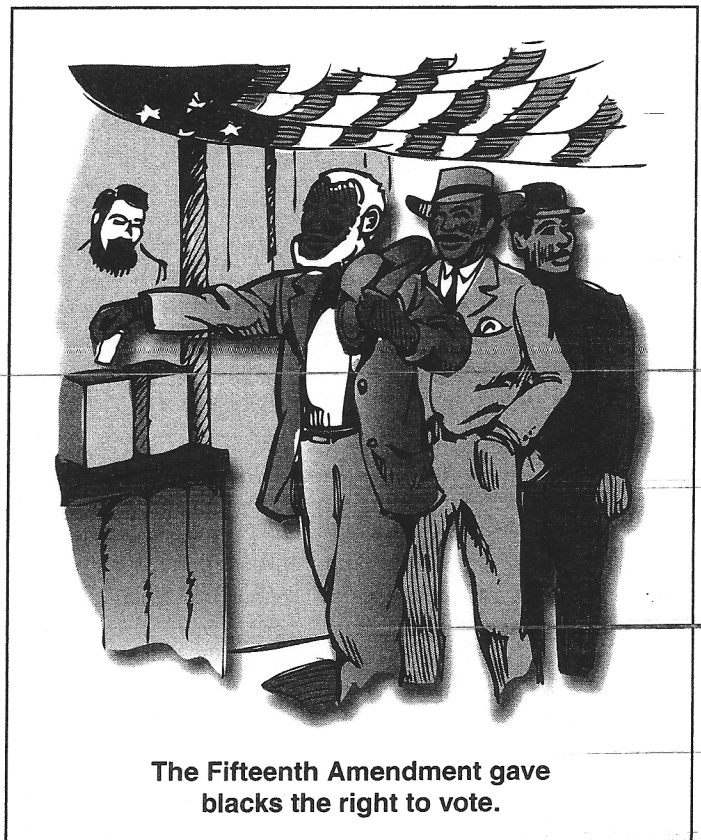
The Twelfth Amendment, concerning presidential elections, was ratified in 1804. Before the Twelfth Amendment, the person who received the most votes was the president, and the person with the second most votes was the vice president. But by the election of 1800, political parties had developed, and it was clear that having two people from different parties was not a good leadership situation. The Twelfth Amendment allowed voters to vote for the president and vice president on separate ballots so that members of the same political party would not be running against each other for the presidency.

The Thirteenth Amendment was a result of the Civil War. Passed in 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery. Slavery had been a part of the United States since the 1600s, and it took a civil war to end the practice.

The Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, was part of the Reconstruction Era. Under this amendment, all Americans, regardless of race, were guaranteed the rights listed in the Constitution. This amendment also included blacks in population counts for the census. Finally, the Fourteenth Amendment prohibited Confederate officers from holding government positions and refused to pay Confederate war debts or reimburse owners for their now-freed slaves.

Finally, the Fifteenth Amendment, ratified in 1870, gave blacks *suffrage*, or the right to vote. Before 1870, many states had prohibited blacks from voting. But with the end of the Civil War and the passage of the Fourteenth Amendment, the next step was to give black males the right to vote.

Between 1791 and 1870—eighty years—only five changes had been made to the Constitution. In the next lesson, you will study the changes made from 1900 to 1950.



The Fifteenth Amendment gave blacks the right to vote.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE AMENDMENTS**

**1798–1870: Amendments XI–XV  
Challenges**

1. In what years were the following amendments ratified?

a) Amendment XI \_\_\_\_\_

b) Amendment XII \_\_\_\_\_

c) Amendment XIII \_\_\_\_\_

d) Amendment XIV \_\_\_\_\_

e) Amendment XV \_\_\_\_\_

2. How does the Twelfth Amendment change how the president and vice president are elected? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. The Thirteenth Amendment was a result of what war? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What does the Thirteenth Amendment abolish? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Under the Fourteenth Amendment, who is guaranteed the rights listed in the Constitution? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What is suffrage? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Who was given suffrage with the Fifteenth Amendment? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Between what years were the Eleventh to Fifteenth Amendments ratified? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_