

*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.*

## **Five for the First**

### **A Short Daily Lesson Plan About the First Amendment**

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**Title of Lesson Plan:** What ARE those 45 words?

#### **Overview and Rationale**

A McCormick Foundation study in 2006 showed 22 percent of those surveyed could name the five Sumpsons but only 1 in 1,000 could name the five freedoms on the First Amendment.

#### **Goals for Understanding**

- Essential Questions
  - Do YOUR students know the five freedoms?
  - How many can they name?
  - What do they forget or substitute? (Many use the 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment – the right to bear arms – or, as I had a student answer on a quiz once, the right to bare arms.....Maybe she was thinking about dress codes.

#### **Resources/Materials**

Students only need a paper and writing utensil, though they might enjoy reading the article about the survey – at the link below.

#### **Activity**

- Ask students to list the five freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment.
- Self-score and compare answers. Did anyone get them all right? Which ones were most often missing?

## **Assessment**

- Take scores from the quiz

OR

- Use this as a springboard for students to begin memorizing the First Amendment. Look for tricks to help such as singing it to the tune of “Row, row, row your boat,” as the students of adviser Polly Dierkens of Streetsboro (Ohio) High School did.  
<http://new.jmc.kent.edu/csj/Images/FA-rowboat.avi>
- Here’s another way Keith Esala, a fellow at the ASNE High School Journalism Institute at Kent State in 2010 and also a band director, learned it. <http://ksutube.kent.edu/playback.php?playthis=11088t09u>

## **References Recommended**

Here’s a link to the Associated Press article about the study.

[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11611015/ns/us\\_news-life/t/doh-more-know-simpsons-constitution/#.Tz71eswWVAk](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/11611015/ns/us_news-life/t/doh-more-know-simpsons-constitution/#.Tz71eswWVAk)