

We the People

CELEBRATING OUR CONSTITUTION

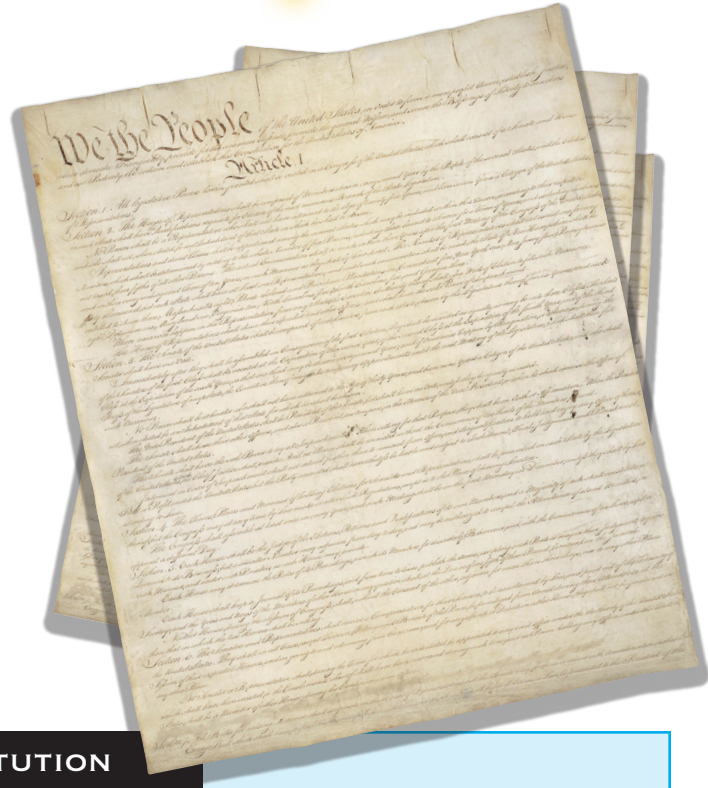
September 17, 1787

This was the day the delegates at the Philadelphia Convention signed the Constitution. The Constitution is the law of the land and the document that created our form of government.

Our constitution is the oldest written constitution of any democratic country.

Although the Constitution was not ratified by the necessary nine of 13 states until May 29, 1790, we celebrate every **September 17 as Constitution Day** in the United States.

In 2005, the Congress passed a bill and the President signed it making it a law requiring schools to celebrate Constitution Day. Public schools in this country were founded to teach young people the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.



10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION

- 1 The Constitution consists of four sheets, approximately 28-3/4 by 23-5/8 inches. It has 4,543 hand-written words.
- 2 Because it was hand-written, there are some spelling and grammar errors. Most common is "Pensylvania," and the use of "it's," British spellings, such as "chuse," "defence," "controul," and "labour."
- 3 The original Constitution is on display at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, it was moved to Fort Knox for safekeeping.
- 4 The Constitution is considered so valuable that it is stored in a bullet-proof case, with helium and water added to protect the paper.
- 5 At 81, Benjamin Franklin of Pennsylvania was the oldest delegate at the Constitutional Convention, and at 26, Jonathon Dayton of New Jersey was the youngest.
- 6 George Washington was unanimously chosen as president of the Constitutional Convention. He was the only founding father who did not go to college.
- 7 The Constitution is called the "living document" because it can be changed by amendments to meet any challenges that may arise.
- 8 More than 11,000 amendments have been introduced in Congress. Thirty-three have gone to the states to be ratified and 27 have received the necessary approval from the states to actually become amendments to the Constitution.
- 9 Established on Nov. 26, 1789, the first national "Thanksgiving Day" was originally created by George Washington as a way of "giving thanks" for the Constitution.
- 10 John Adams said the Constitution is "the greatest single effort of national deliberation that the world has ever seen."

