

Bill of Rights Essay

As you know, the first ten amendments to the Constitution are known as the Bill of Rights. Even though the Bill of Rights was written over two hundred years ago, these amendments continue to have a direct impact on our daily lives. These ten amendments guarantee many of our rights as citizens of the United States, including the basic First Amendment rights of freedom of religion, speech, press, peaceable assembly, and petition for redress of grievances. Although all ten of the amendments in the Bill of Rights are important to citizens, you will write a multi-paragraph, thesis-controlled essay discussing the **three** *amendments which you consider to be the most important.

For amendments which include a number of aspects (such as the First, Fifth, and Sixth), focus on a **single aspect of the amendment. You may choose to research one or more aspects the First, Fifth or Sixth if you would like. For instance, you could possibly write your research essay on just the First but addressing three different aspects.*

➤ **Include in your introduction:**

- An attention grabber/hook
- Describe the purpose of the Constitution (see notes)
- Define social contract (see notes)
- Explain the purpose of the inclusion of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution (see notes)
- A thesis statement which lists and explains the amendments which you will discuss

➤ **Include in each body paragraph:**

- 1. A clear topic sentence stating the amendment/aspect which you will discuss in the paragraph.**
- 2. An explanation of what the amendment means to the common citizen.**
(What may citizens do or what are citizens protected from due to the amendment?)
- 3. An explanation of why this amendment is so important to citizens.**
(What is the government prevented from doing to citizens and/or what must the government protect citizens from due to the amendment?)
- 4. An explanation/summary of at least one court case per amendment or aspect of the amendment including the ruling (verdict) and an explanation of how the ruling was important in interpreting the amendment/aspect. Did the ruling help citizens understand any better or clarify the amendment/aspect for certain groups, etc.** (The significance/impacts/further understanding of the amendment/aspect is your analysis.)

Requirements

Students may earn up to an A+ if they meet the following requirements:

- use a **minimum of six to eight sources**; **four** of them must be primary; students must use a **variety of different types of sources** such as **websites**, books, pamphlets, journal articles/newspaper articles, documents, reference books (encyclopedias) court case transcripts and interviews.
- demonstrate **originality and thorough analysis** throughout the project.
- provide a **MLA style annotated bibliography** of all sources used.
- write a **multi-paragraph, thesis-driven paper**, and in **MLA format**.
- write **at least three body** paragraphs plus the introductory and concluding paragraphs.
- choose **at least three amendments/aspects**.
- use at least **two different cases** for two of your amendments/aspects. That means two of your three body paragraph will have two cases per paragraph, and one will have one case.

Students may earn up to a B+ if they meet the following requirements:

- use a **minimum of five sources**; **three** of them must be primary; students must use a **variety of different types of sources** such as **websites**, books, pamphlets, journal articles/newspaper articles, documents, reference books (encyclopedias) court case transcripts and interviews.
- demonstrate **originality and analysis** throughout the project.
- provide a **MLA style annotated bibliography** of all sources used.
- write a **multi-paragraph, thesis-driven paper**, and in **MLA format**.
- write **three body paragraphs** plus the introductory and concluding paragraphs.
- choose **three amendments/aspects**.
- use **at least one court case** per amendment/aspect.

Students may earn up to a C+ if they meet the following requirements:

- use a **minimum of three sources**; **one** of them must be primary; students must use a **at least two different types of sources** such as **websites**, books, pamphlets, journal articles/newspaper articles, documents, reference books (encyclopedias) court case transcripts and interviews.
- demonstrate **the ability to supply a minimal level of analysis** throughout the project.
- provide a **MLA style annotated bibliography** of all sources used.
- write a **multi-paragraph, thesis-driven paper**, and in **MLA format**.
- write **two body paragraphs** plus the introductory and concluding paragraphs.
- use **one court case** per amendment/aspect.

Here is the breakdown:

Requirement	A paper	B paper	C paper
Body Paras.	at least 3	3	2
Amendments/Aspect	at least 3	3	2
Court Cases	5(1 to 2 per amend./aspect)	3 (1 for each amend./aspect)	2 (1 for each amend./aspect)
Sources	6 -8	5	3
Types of Sources	a variety	a variety	at least two different
Primary Sources	at least 4	3	1
Bibliography	Annotated	Annotated	Annotated