



The U. S. Constitution Series
In Partnership with the National Constitution Center

AP[®] Comparative Government and Politics

Civil Liberties and Rights Worldwide



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About the National Constitution Center

The National Constitution Center was established by Congress to “disseminate information about the United States Constitution on a non-partisan basis in order to increase the awareness and understanding of the Constitution among the American people.” The Center hosts interactive exhibitions, constitutional debates, and other activities to increase awareness and understanding of the United States Constitution.

National Constitution Center & the College Board

In partnership with the National Constitution Center, the College Board has developed a series of classroom lessons and materials related to the Founding Documents. This series includes resources to support instruction in AP US Government and Politics, AP Comparative Government and Politics, AP US History, and AP English Language and Composition. These lessons and resources are available to AP teachers via the course homepages at AP Central and to all teachers through the National Constitution Center's website.

Acknowledgements

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Civil Liberties and Rights Worldwide

Plan

This lesson will provide students the opportunity to analyze and compare civil liberties and rights around the world using the National Constitution Center's Rights Around the World interactive site. Students will compare particular civil liberties and rights (i.e., expression, press, petition, religion, due process, and double jeopardy) found in the U.S. Constitution with those written in foundational documents of core countries in the course (Great Britain, Mexico, Iran, Nigeria, Russia, and China), analyzing the wording of these rights using the interactive site. Using current events and other contemporary sources, students may also extend their investigations of how many of these rights/liberties among core countries are protected in practice.

Using the National Constitution Center Resources: Rights Around the World

The National Constitution Center developed the Rights Around the World interactive website to provide users the opportunity to compare rights in the U.S. Constitution to corresponding rights in national constitutions in force across the world. For more information about the Rights Around the World interactive site, visit <http://constitutionalrights.constitutioncenter.org/app/home/world>

Learning Goals

Students will be able to:

- ▶ Compare civil liberties and rights (i.e., expression, press, petition, religion, due process, and double jeopardy) as described in foundational documents from core countries to determine how similar or different they are to each other and to those written in the U.S. Constitution.
- ▶ Analyze and interpret the text of the right or liberty described in a foundational document of the core countries, as well as contemporary sources to determine the degree to which each right or liberty is actually protected.

Key Takeaways

- ▶ Civil liberties and rights are protected by constitutions, laws, and judicial/legal institutions.
- ▶ Mexico, Great Britain, Russia, China, Nigeria, and Iran protect civil liberties and rights to varying degrees based on the interaction of regime type and political participation.

Materials

- ▶ Student handouts
- ▶ National Constitution Center's Rights Around the World interactive: <http://constitutionalrights.constitutioncenter.org/app/home/world>

Essential Questions:

1. What are the differences in how governments define and protect civil rights/liberties?
2. Why are civil rights and liberties important factors when comparing governments?

Civil Liberties and Rights Worldwide

This lesson will provide you the opportunity to analyze and compare civil liberties and rights in other countries around the world using the National Constitution Center's *Rights Around the World* interactive site. You will compare particular civil liberties and rights (i.e., expression, press, petition, religion, due process, and double jeopardy) found in the U.S. Constitution with those written in foundational documents of other countries including those core to the course (Great Britain, Mexico, Iran, Nigeria, Russia, and China), analyzing the wording of these rights using the interactive site. Using current events and other contemporary sources, you may also extend your investigation of how many of these rights/liberties among core countries are protected in practice.

Share the handout with students, noting what skills and knowledge the lesson intends to build. Be sure to explain this lesson is just one part of their exploration of this content and development of these analytical skills. They will return to these ideas in future lessons.

Teach

Focus

Begin the lesson by leading students in a discussion of one or more of the following questions:

- ▶ Are we born with certain rights and liberties, and do governments exist to defend such rights, or are all of our rights given to us by a government?
- ▶ Is it possible some rights are natural rights (rights we have by virtue of being humans), while others are granted to us by the government? If so, how do we know which rights are derived from which source? What would be some examples of each type?
- ▶ If the government says we have a right but then does not protect it or restricts it for some people, is it really a right?

Next, direct students to read the excerpt and respond to the questions with a partner. Ask several students to share their ideas with the entire class.

The excerpt provides students with information about the religious majority and minorities in Iran. Iran provides an example of a country which has a constitutional right to freedom of religion, but in reality that right is not always protected for religious minorities. By considering the case of Iran, we prepare students to evaluate a country's protection of a right/liberty.

Directions

Read the excerpt below and respond to the questions which follow.

Iran's Constitution defines the regime as an Islamic State based on the tenets of Jafari Shi'a Islam. However, in addition to Shi'a Muslims, Iran is home to sizable Sunni Muslim, Christian, Jewish, Baha'i and Zoroastrian communities, and the population is accustomed to the participation of non-Muslims in society. The Constitution guarantees the rights of protected religious minorities to practice their faith and even allots five seats in the parliament for representatives of recognized minority religions. However, despite official recognition, religious minorities face discrimination in practice. For example, non-Shi'a Muslims often struggle to gain entrance to universities and face institutional barriers in finding jobs, and since the government views the Baha'i as an apostate sect of Islam*, unlawful arrests, imprisonments and arson of Baha'i property in recent years have in some cases been ignored.

Nigeria also has Constitutional safeguards protecting freedom of religion: "Every person shall be entitled to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, including freedom to change his religion or belief..."¹ However, in recent years the government's inability and alleged unwillingness to effectively address the country's sectarian violence have allowed discrimination and hostilities against religious minorities to go unchecked. The government has failed to take legal action in the vast majority of 12,000 deaths linked to ethno-religious violence since the country's transition to democracy in 1999.

*Apostate: in Islam, relating to the deliberate abandonment of Islam by a Muslim in words or actions.

Sources: <http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/essays/religious-freedom-in-iran>
<http://berkeleycenter.georgetown.edu/essays/religious-freedom-in-nigeria>

¹National Constitution Center's Rights Around the World Interactive website: <http://constitutionalrights.constitutioncenter.org/app/home/world>

Questions

1. How would you characterize religious freedom in both Iran and Nigeria?
There is a degree of religious freedom in Iran, but it is not complete. Some religious minorities are allowed to practice their faiths, but not all religions are permitted to be practiced in Iran. Also, religious minorities can face discrimination and even repression, which means that they are not fully free. Like Iran, Nigeria formally recognizes freedom of religion, but in practice there appears to be little government protection against sectarian discrimination and violence, particularly between Muslims and Christians in the north and south. So, the degree of religious freedom is also incomplete.
2. How are non-Shi'a Muslims treated relative to followers of Jafari Shi'a Islam? Why are followers of Baha'i faith singled out for harassment?
Non-Shi'a Muslims face job discrimination and may find it difficult to gain acceptance at universities. Followers of the Baha'i faith are singled out because they are viewed as having abandoned Islam.
3. Why is it difficult to assess the level of protection of civil liberties and rights or liberties in a given country based solely on constitutions and other legal documents?
Although a government may identify civil liberties and rights in its laws and constitution, those rights and liberties may not be protected in practice. It is possible for some individuals to have their rights or liberties violated by the government, and depending on the government, they may or may not be able to seek remedy for the violation of their rights/liberties.

Acquire

Introduce students to the National Constitution Center's Rights Around the World interactive site (<http://constitutionalrights.constitutioncenter.org/app/home/world>). Engage students in a brief discussion of what they see. You may want to ask students what they think the site can be used for and why it is designed as it is. Next show students how to navigate the site.

- ▶ Select a right and demonstrate for students how to see the text associated with that right. Also point out the countries highlighted in yellow that have a right/liberty comparable to a right in the U.S.
- ▶ Click on one of the countries with a comparable right/liberty. Demonstrate how to compare the text of the U.S. right with the text of the right in the chosen country. Also point out: when choosing a specific country, some of the rights/liberties listed remain highlighted in white while some are grayed out. Explain the highlighted ones are the rights/liberties that are comparable to rights/liberties in the U.S.

Now examine one country which has some rights and liberties similar to the U.S.

- ▶ Turn students' attention to the graphic organizer. Explain that you will use the site to compare liberties and rights between the U.S. and Brazil.
- ▶ Click on Brazil. Note for students the liberties and rights that are highlighted. Click on Expression and read the U.S. version of the right. Direct students to explain the right in their own words in the appropriate box in the organizer. Ask a few students to share their responses. Correct responses as needed. Repeat the same procedure with Brazil's version of Expression. Ask students how the rights are similar and how they are different.

Using the *Rights Around the World* Interactive Site

Rights Around the World

The National Constitution Center developed the Rights Around the World interactive website to provide users the opportunity to compare rights in the U.S. Constitution to corresponding rights in national constitutions in force across the world. For more information about the Rights Around the World interactive site, visit <http://constitutionalrights.constitutioncenter.org/app/home/world>

Using the National Constitution Center's *Rights Around the World* interactive site, we will investigate some of the civil liberties and rights that might be similar in the United States and Brazil.

First, let's look at the interactive site, which can be found at (<http://constitutionalrights.constitutioncenter.org/app/home/world>).

Then, we will use it to complete the chart below.

Directions:

Using the National Constitution Center's *Rights Around the World* interactive site, complete the organizer and respond to the questions the follow.

Civil Liberties and Rights	U.S.	Brazil
Expression	<i>U.S. 1st Amendment:</i> Congress cannot make a law that limits the freedom of speech.	<i>Brazil Title II:</i> Brazilians and others living in the country have a right to free expression, as long as it is not anonymous; expression cannot be censored. <i>Brazil Title VIII:</i> expression of thought or speech in any form cannot be restricted; the government can regulate entertainment to ensure it is appropriate for different ages and times of the day.
Due Process	<i>U.S. 5th & 14th Amendments:</i> The government cannot take away your life, liberty, or property without going through the appropriate legal processes.	<i>Brazil Title II:</i> Brazilians and others living in the country cannot have their liberty or property taken away without going through the appropriate legal process.

COMPARATIVE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS		STUDENT EDITION
Civil Liberties and Rights	U.S.	Brazil
Right to Bear Arms	<i>U.S. 2nd Amendment: The government cannot prevent people from owning or having arms.</i>	N/A
Freedom of Religion	<i>U.S. 1st Amendment: Congress cannot make a law establishing a religion or preventing people from exercising their religion.</i>	<i>Brazil Title II: Brazilians and others living in the country can practice their beliefs and cannot be denied their rights because of their religion unless they invoke religion to avoid a legal obligation imposed on everyone and refuse an alternative.</i>
Examine Witness	<i>U.S. 6th Amendment: In criminal cases, the accused has the right to know who witnesses are and to obtain favorable witnesses.</i>	N/A

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- ▶ Repeat the same procedure for the other rights listed in the organizer (due process, bear arms, religion, examine witness, and birthright citizenship). Release responsibility for reading and explaining the rights if students appear to grasp the procedure and concepts.
- ▶ Direct students to complete the questions that follow the organizer in pairs.
- ▶ Lead a discussion about the answers to questions about the types of rights and liberties as well as why some countries place restrictions on certain ones while other countries do not. Ask the class how one might distinguish between civil liberties and civil and political rights.

Explain that “civil rights” often refers to equal treatment of individuals regardless of age, gender, race, or other qualifications, and political rights focus more on political access and participation such as voting. Though there is often overlap, “civil liberties” refers to broad freedoms and protections, even from the government. So, freedom of religion and birthright citizenship could definitely be labeled civil liberties. Examining witnesses, while certainly less broad, also can be referred to as a civil liberty if viewed as protecting one against government’s interference with a fair and impartial trial. Develop a class consensus on other possible distinctions among these terms. Emphasize the importance of their relationship to rule of law and a constitution.

Civil Liberties and Rights	U.S.	Brazil
Birthright Citizenship	<p>U.S. 14th Amendment: Individuals born in the U.S. or one of its territories and individuals who go through a naturalization process are citizens. No state can make laws that limit the rights of citizens. No one can be imprisoned or lose their property without due process. All citizens are equal under the law.</p>	<p>Brazil Title II: Brazilians become citizens by being born in Brazil, even if their parents are from another country and are not serving their home country in some official capacity. They can also become citizens if they are born outside of Brazil to a parent who is Brazilian and is serving in an official capacity. If they are born outside of Brazil to a Brazilian parent, they can become citizens if they register at a governmental office or move to Brazil and choose to be a citizen.</p> <p>Brazil Title III: The legislature has the power to make other laws about citizenship and naturalization.</p>

Questions

1. Would you consider any of these liberties and rights to be natural rights, which are rights that people are born with and which no individual or government can deny? Why or why not?

Answers may vary. Students may say birthright citizenship is a natural right because people cannot choose where they are born; it makes sense that they would be citizens of the place where they are born. Other students may say no, governments should be allowed to decide who is and is not a citizen. Other students might say that expression and religion are natural rights.

2. Are there restrictions or limitations placed on any of the liberties and rights in either country based on the information from the site? Explain using evidence from the texts.

Yes, in Brazil, the legislature can make laws about citizenship and naturalization. They could place restrictions on citizenship.

3. Why do you think a country might want to restrict or limit some liberties and rights?

Answers may vary. Students may say governments want to restrict liberties and rights in some cases for safety and health reasons. In other cases they may want to protect the rights and liberties of the majority or of the minority.

4. Unlike in the U.S., Brazilian citizens do not have a right to examine witnesses in criminal cases. Identify three core countries in the course, which, like Brazil, have no right to examine witnesses. Why might allowing people to examine witnesses in criminal cases be a good idea? Why might it not be a right which is protected?

Other countries that do not have a right to examine witnesses in criminal cases are Russia, China, and Iran. The right to examine witnesses allows the person charged with a crime to confront the witness and try to discredit the witness or otherwise undermine the witness. If the witness is lying, the accused may be able to show that the witness is unreliable or incorrect and prevent the accused from being wrongly convicted. However, countries like Iran, which are more authoritarian, may not protect the right because the government does not want the accused to be able to undermine the witness and/or the witness' testimony.

Checking for Understanding

To check understanding of how to use the interactive site and find the appropriate texts, ask students to briefly explain how they would:

- ▶ Find a country which also has a right to petition the government.
- ▶ Determine which rights France has in common with the U.S.
- ▶ Explain what criminal jury trial means in Australia.

Practice

Together as a class, use the interactive site to investigate how the U.S. defines the right to assemble, right to counsel, and right to bear arms. Direct students to write the explanation of each right in the appropriate place in the graphic organizer. Next, divide the class into six groups. Assign each group one of the following countries:

- ▶ Great Britain
- ▶ Russia
- ▶ China
- ▶ Mexico
- ▶ Nigeria
- ▶ Iran

Using the Rights Around the World interactive site, have students complete the organizer for their assigned countries.

- ▶ Students should read the text of each right (assembly, counsel, and bear arms) and describe the rights in their own words on the graphic organizer for their assigned countries. If the country does not have a comparable right, students should note that on their organizers.
- ▶ Then, allow each group to choose one of the other core countries to investigate. They should repeat the same procedure to complete the graphic organizer.
- ▶ Circulate around the room while students work in groups. Check in with each group to see their progress, respond to questions, and check for understanding.
- ▶ Have students discuss and answer the questions that follow the graphic organizer.
- ▶ Once all of the groups finish, have each student find a partner who investigated different countries. Direct students to share information about each of the three rights in their assigned countries. You may wish to give each student an additional copy of the organizer so they can take notes about their partners' countries.

Directions:

Using the National Constitution Center's *Rights Around the World* interactive site, complete the organizer and respond to the questions that follow.

Country	Assembly	Right to Counsel	Right to Bear Arms
U.S.			
Comparison Country I			
Comparison Country II			

Questions

- 1. Which of the three rights is most clearly protected in your assigned country? Support your answer using evidence from the interactive documents.

Answers will vary depending on country assigned.

- 2. Which of the three rights is most clearly protected in the other country your group chose to investigate? Support your answer using evidence from the interactive documents.

Answers will vary depending on country assigned.

- 3. Are there restrictions or limitations placed on any of these rights and liberties in either country? Why or why not?

Answers will vary depending on country assigned.

- ▶ Once students finish sharing, ask students to share their responses to the questions with the whole class.
- ▶ Discuss what patterns or gaps students notice and explanations as to why differences exist among countries in defining, limiting, or qualifying these rights.

Direct students to return to their groups.

Using the Rights Around the World interactive site, have student groups complete the organizer on an expanded list of rights/liberties for an assigned country.

- ▶ Students should read the text of each right/liberty and describe them in their own words on the graphic organizer for both the U.S. and their assigned countries. If a country does not have a comparable right, students should note that on their organizers.
- ▶ Once students finish, have one student from each group present their findings. As needed, based on students' presentations and questions, provide additional information and correct misunderstandings.
- ▶ Discuss what patterns or gaps students notice and explanations as to why differences exist among countries in defining, limiting, or qualifying these rights.

Directions:

Using the National Constitution Center's *Rights Around the World* interactive site, work with your team to complete the organizer for your assigned country, describing the rights/liberties and noting how they compare with rights/liberties found in the U.S. You will present your findings to the class and then complete the organizer when all six teams have completed their presentations. As a class, we will discuss how to apply a human rights ranking from 1-10 (with 10 being the most protective of civil liberties and rights) for each country based on the analysis of the documents.

Country	Expression	Press	Petition	Religion	Due Process	Double Jeopardy
U.S.						
Mexico						
Great Britain						
Russia						
China						
Nigeria						
Iran						

When you rank the countries, be sure to include a reason for your ranking based on the evidence you and your classmates found in the texts on the interactive site, as well as what you know about each country's regime/government type and willingness and ability to protect the selected rights and liberties

Human Rights Rankings

1. _____

 2. _____

 3. _____

 4. _____

 5. _____

 6. _____

Explain to students how to rank countries on a scale of 1-10 based on the information gathered in their investigations and from their classmates.

- ▶ Ask students to take note of the number of rights/liberties comparable to the U.S. and to think more critically about the relative importance of each based on what the texts of the documents say.
- ▶ Students should consider the extent to which the right/liberty would protect all citizens based on the wording in the document.
- ▶ They should also consider if there are any limitations placed on the right/liberty as it is written in the text (e.g., whether religious freedom only applies to the majority religion and specific minority religions as in the case of Iran).
- ▶ Students should decide to what extent each country actively and consistently protects civil rights/liberties as they are described in the country's written documents. Note: while this activity is limited to a textual analysis of foundation documents, students may later investigate how particular rights are enforced or protected in practice by surveying news articles, eyewitness reports, and other resources.
- ▶ Students should assign each country a number from 1 to 10, with 10 being the most protective of civil rights/liberties and 1 being the least protective.
- ▶ Discuss differences in country rankings in the class. Ask students about the importance of ranking and comparing countries based on the recognition of human rights and liberties.

Checking for Understanding

Ask students to construct an argument in response to the prompt below. Remind students to include a thesis, claims, and supporting details for their arguments. Also remind students to use the information they have gathered in their graphic organizers and their notes in their responses.

Prompt: Compare and contrast two regime/government types based on the degree to which civil liberties and rights are protected in written constitutions and laws. Justify your response with evidence.

Directions:

You will now draft a response to the prompt below. A chart has been included for you to gather and organize your evidence before you begin to draft your response.

Prompt: Compare and contrast two regime/government types based on the degree to which civil liberties and rights are protected in written constitutions and laws. Justify your response with evidence.

Regime/Government Type:	Examples of Countries	Examples of Rights Protected
Authoritarian	Iran	Bear Arms - possession requires permission from authorities
Democracy	Great Britain	Due Process - no one can lose their right to liberty without the government following the appropriate legal procedures.

Assess

You may choose to use one of the former AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam Free Response Questions as the basis for a summative assessment. A summative assessment would most likely occur after additional lessons and/or at the end of the unit. Immediately following this lesson, students would not be expected to answer the questions as they were originally written. However, modified versions of applicable free response questions are included at the end of this lesson plan.

Scoring guidelines for the original questions are available at:
http://apcentral.collegeboard.com/apc/members/exam/exam_information/2087.html

Supplemental Resources

For additional information about the rights students have investigated and the countries involved in this lesson, the following websites are available. You may wish to have students explore these websites for more information and additional resources related to these countries and rights.

National Constitution Center: <http://constitutioncenter.org/>

United Nations: <http://www.un.org/en/sections/what-we-do/protect-human-rights/index.html>

U.S. State Department: <http://www.state.gov/p/>

The World Factbook: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/>

Practice AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam Questions Modified from the 2003 Exam Free Response Question #1

In China, opportunities for citizen participation have increased since the initiation of reform.

- a. Support this thesis with responses to each of the following:
 - › Describe two political rights that Chinese citizens enjoy that support their participation.
- b. Dispute this thesis with responses to each of the following:
 - › Explain two ways in which the political rights of Chinese citizens are limited by the government.

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Practice AP Comparative Government and Politics Exam Questions Modified from the 2011 Exam Free Response Question #8:

Political scientists often examine political rights and civil liberties to assess regime type.

- a. Explain the difference between political rights and civil liberties.
- b. Identify one country with an authoritarian form of government and one country with a democratic form of government.
- c. Support your claims about the type of government in each country with an evaluation of the state of political rights and civil liberties in each country.

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