

Constitutional Work-Out

Teachers at our school were asked to talk to students about the U.S. Constitution in remembrance of Constitution Day. These stations were a hit! I used them with 2-5 graders in stations. There are 14 stations (2 sets of 7 stations) and I had between 4 and 6 students in each station.

1- **Constitution:** A team shoots baskets. Every time a player scores, the player runs to the table, writes one of the letters of the word and returns to the game. The team that spells out the word first, wins. (Spelling, Basketball shooting skills, writing)

2 – **Dissenters:** 3 delegates dissented and did not sign the Constitution. Run 3 laps around the set of cones. (Endurance)

3 – **Oldest and shortest:** The oldest and the shortest students of the team will be the first in line to score baskets. (Math skills, measuring, comparing, months of the year)

4 – **Old Benjamin:** Toss 81 beanbags from one bucket to another. (Underhand toss, counting, accuracy, hand/eye coordination)

5 – **Youngest Jumping Delegate:** Do 26 consecutive jump ropes. If done early, try for Ben Franklin's age.

6 – **1788 :** Add the four numbers and do curl ups (alternatives: superman's, jumping jacks, push-ups, etc.) (Addition, strength, power, endurance)

7 – **The Bill of Rights:** Make 10 baskets as a group. If done early, go for the age of the youngest delegate.

Luisa V. Meyer / September 15, 2011

How it all worked out...

This was a great opportunity to tie in Social Studies concepts with our Physical Education class. I had originally planned to do it only for 3-5 grades, but decided to include the 2nd graders, explaining facts of the Constitution at a different level. Many of the students didn't seem to have an idea of what "Constitution" meant, so it was great to feel I was contributing to their understanding of the "real world".

For the younger grades I compared it with having a new Tree House and having to write the rules of whoever was going to come inside the house. Children came up with mostly "no" rules (no boys allowed, no girls allowed, no shoes allowed), but later were guided to include "yes" or allowed activities or "rights" like: "Everyone that comes in has the right to play with my toys". I explained that it was similar with how a government was run, with rules, and rights and responsibilities for all.

Many said, when asked, that the First Amendment was: "The right to do whatever I want". Talk about a great teaching moment!

ANECDOTES: When talking to 5th graders I said: " So, everyone has rights and...." Answer: "wrongs" 😊. A 4th grader said: "Will we do more "constipation" activities tomorrow?"

Constitution

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**Write a letter for each
basket a team member
scores**

**55 Delegates attended
the Constitutional
Convention, 39 signed
and 3 dissented**

2

**Jog 3 laps around the
cones**

Of the written national constitutions, the U.S. Constitution is the oldest and shortest

The oldest and the shortest players get in line first to shoot baskets, followed by the rest of the team members.

**At 81, Benjamin Franklin
was the oldest delegate at
the Constitutional
Convention**

**There are 81 beanbags in the
bucket. Toss them one by
one to the other bucket**

**At 26, Jonathon Dayton was
the youngest delegate at the
Constitutional Convention**

5

**Each player has to jump 26
times IN A ROW with their
jump rope**

1788

Year the Constitution was ratified

Add the four numbers
and do that number of
curl-ups

The first 10⁷

amendments became known as the

BILL OF RIGHTS

Make 10 baskets as a
group