

Activity #5: Mission: Save the Constitution

Distribute this challenge to your class or group:



Help! The Constitution is in jeopardy and you may be the **only person to save it!** A mysterious thief named **Silence Dowrong** has **stolen the Constitution** from the National Archives and has threatened to destroy

it within 24 hours. Silence claims that Americans no longer value the Constitution and deserve to have it taken away unless they can **justify its existence** and make an argument for why it is still relevant. **You, and other bright young Americans** who represent

the future of the nation, have been called upon to present him with a list of reasons why that is not true. **The nation's future is on your shoulders** — the President has

called you personally and asked for your help. This situation is critical. Your job is to write a letter to Silence describing **why the Constitution is important** and why **the**

United States still needs it. Silence is also a wordsmith and likes creative writing and argumentation, so be sure to bring your sharpest writing to bear as you struggle to save our nation's founding words. **Good luck!!**

Bonus: Silence Dowrong is the arch-nemesis of a real person in history who used a similar alias. Who is this person?



Fun Fact:

After the Constitutional Convention, an onlooker named Mrs. Powell approached Benjamin Franklin and asked what kind of government had been formed. Franklin replied, "A republic, madam, if you can keep it."

Resources

Books

Appleby, Joyce. *Inheriting the Revolution: The First Generation of Americans* (Harvard University Press, 2001).

Berlin, Ira. *Generations of Captivity: A History of African-American Slaves* (Harvard University Press, 2004).

Ellis, Joseph. *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation* (Knopf, 2002).

Hakim, Joy. "From Colonies to Country, 1735-1791," from *A History of US* (Oxford University Press, 2003).

Maestro, Betsy and Giulio Maestro. *A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution* (William & Morrow, 1991).

Patterson, Thomas E. *We the People, A Concise Introduction to American Politics* (McGraw-Hill, 2003).

Sobel, Sly. *The U.S. Constitution and You*. (Barron's Educational Series, 2001).

Wood, Gordon. *The Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787* (University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

Websites

HISTORY site on The U.S. Constitution
www.history.com/topics/constitution

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt's Education Place
<http://www.eduplace.com>

1For All: Building Awareness of the First Amendment
<http://1forall.us/>

Constitution Day Resources from the Library of Congress
<http://thomas.loc.gov/teachers/constitution.html>

The National Archives: Charters of Freedom
This informative online exhibit highlights the founding document and includes helpful links and contextual background.
<http://www.archives.gov/national-archives-experience/charters/charters.html>

The National Constitution Center
An excellent resource which includes activities, primary sources, and background information on the nation's founding documents.
<http://constitutioncenter.org/>