

***The First Amendment***  
**Law and Individual Rights in the U.S.**  
**Mr. Krieger**

**Background**

More than 200 years ago, when the United States was just getting organized, there was a lot of debate over whether the Bill of Rights should be added to the U.S. Constitution. People in favor of a Bill of Rights believed that writing it down ensured that everyone would know the rights they had so they could protect themselves. They also wanted a permanent guarantee that the government would not violate certain rights. People who were against a Bill of Rights didn't think the government had the power to infringe on individual rights in the first place. In the end the Bill of Rights was added to the U.S. Constitution giving us the First Amendment.

**Discussion Questions**

1. How different might our country be if we hadn't added the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution?
2. Do you think we would still have First Amendment rights if they weren't listed in the Constitution? Please explain your response.
3. In keeping with the fears of those who opposed a Bill of Rights, are there any rights you think should be added to the First Amendment? What would you add if you were able to add to the First Amendment?  
Hint: Please don't answer "no" to this question.

***Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.***