

## Unit 4

# Deconstructed DBQ Document Set and Teacher Context

## Teacher Resource

### Resource Overview

This document provides teacher support for implementing the Unit 4: Civic and Constitutional Life Deconstructed DBQ in the middle school classroom. It includes six documents, each designed to help students explore connections to the DBQ question while understanding the relevant historical context.

Use the context in this document to guide your students in making these connections and help them engage with the primary sources effectively.

**Scaffolding note:** For students who need additional support, you can assign or allow them to choose 2-3 documents. For students who need more of a challenge, provide all documents and require them to use each source at least once in their analysis.

### Document Exposure Table

This table shows where each primary source in the Deconstructed DBQ appears throughout the unit. Use this overview to help with lesson planning, reinforce key concepts, or activate prior-knowledge before students engage with the full DBQ.

**Teacher note:** As students move through the curriculum, they encounter more documents overall, but each one appears fewer times. This gradual decrease in exposure is intentional—it helps shift the responsibility for document analysis to the student, supporting the development of independent thinking and source analysis skills over time.

Document	New or Repeated Exposure	Unit Resources Using the Document
<b>Document A:</b> Excerpt from the Preamble of U.S. Constitution (1787)	Repeated	1. <i>Constitution and Ratification Deconstructed DBQ</i>
<b>Document B:</b> Excerpt from First Amendment (1787)	Repeated	1. <i>Limiting Government Through the Bill of Rights Lesson Plan</i> 2. <i>Grouping Rights Lesson Plan</i>

<b>Document C:</b> Excerpt from Tenth Amendment (1787)	New*	1. <i>Grouping Rights Lesson Plan</i>
<b>Document D:</b> Excerpt from <i>Federalist #51</i> , James Madison (1788)	Repeated	1. <i>Constitution and Ratification Deconstructed DBQ</i>
<b>Document E:</b> <i>Miranda v. Arizona</i> (1966) - U.S. Supreme Court Decision	Repeated	1. <i>Learning to Read Supreme Court Decisions Lesson Plan</i>
<b>Document F:</b> <i>Engel v. Vitale</i> (1962) – U.S. Supreme Court Decision	Repeated	1. <i>Learning to Read Supreme Court Decisions Lesson Plan</i>

\*Items are marked as new because they are mentioned or introduced but not examined in detail.

## Documents

Each Deconstructed DBQ document is accompanied by background information to enhance teacher understanding of each source. The information is organized by key concepts in the DBQ question.

**Scaffolding note:** You may choose to share some or all of this information with your students to support their understanding of the documents.

### **Document A: Excerpt from the Preamble of U.S. Constitution (1787)**

<p>We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic <b>Tranquility</b>, provide for the common defence[defense], promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our <b>Posterity</b>, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.</p>	<p><b>Tranquility:</b> A state of peace and calm.</p> <p><b>Posterity:</b> Future generations of people.</p>
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## Historical Context

- The Preamble was written in 1787 as part of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.
- After the failure of the Articles of Confederation, the Founders sought to create a stronger national government while preserving individual rights and preventing tyranny.

- The Preamble reflects the goals of the new Constitution: to unite the country, provide stability, ensure justice, protect the country, promote the common good, and safeguard liberty for future generations.

## **Constitutional Principles**

- **Popular Sovereignty**—The phrase “We the People” establishes that the authority of the government comes from the people, not from a monarch or ruling class.
- **Justice**—The goal to “establish Justice” reflects the importance of a fair legal system where laws are applied equally to all citizens.
- **Liberty**—Securing freedom for current and future generations reflects the constitutional commitment to protecting individual rights.

## **Connection to Democratic Participation**

- **Empowerment through Popular Sovereignty**—“We the People” means that citizens have a direct role in shaping the government through voting, advocacy, and civic engagement.
- **Ensuring Justice and Domestic Tranquility**—Citizens can hold leaders accountable through elections, petitions, and peaceful protests to promote fairness. Citizens practice civic virtues to encourage social stability.
- **Promoting the General Welfare**—Citizens can engage with their communities, support public programs, and volunteer to help improve the well-being of others.
- **Defending Liberty**—Understanding constitutional rights enables citizens to challenge unjust laws and advocate for protection of freedoms.
- **Building a More Perfect Union**—Civic participation, compromise, and respecting the rights of all people help strengthen the nation and improve democratic processes over time.

## Document B: Excerpt from First Amendment (1787)

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.

**establishment:** The act of officially creating or recognizing a religion (in this case, the government cannot establish a national religion).

**abridging:** Limiting or reducing (in this case, limiting freedoms like speech or press).

**redress:** A way to set right or fix a problem.

### Historical Context

- The First Amendment was part of the **Bill of Rights**, ratified in **1791** as the first ten amendments to the Constitution.
- After the Constitution was drafted, some states were hesitant to ratify it without explicit guarantees of individual liberties.
- The Bill of Rights was added to secure these protections and limit the power of the federal government over citizens' rights.
- The First Amendment reflects the Founders' commitment to protecting individual freedoms essential for self-governance and active political participation.

### Constitutional Principles

- **Individual Rights** – The First Amendment protects core freedoms (speech, religion, press, assembly, and petition) that empower individuals to express themselves and influence government decisions.
- **Limited Government** – The restriction on Congress's ability to pass laws limiting speech, religion, and assembly reflects the principle that government power must be checked to protect individual freedoms.
- **Rule of Law** – These rights are protected equally for all citizens under the law, ensuring that no government action can arbitrarily limit them.

## Connection to Democratic Participation

- **Freedom of Speech** – Citizens can openly express their opinions, engage in public debate, and criticize government policies without fear of punishment.
- **Freedom of the Press** – A free press ensures that citizens have access to information about government actions, helping them make informed decisions.
- **Freedom of Assembly** – Citizens can organize and participate in peaceful protests, rallies, and political movements to advocate for change.
- **Freedom of Petition** – Citizens can directly engage with the government by submitting petitions, lobbying, or contacting representatives to seek policy changes.
- **Freedom of Religion** – Citizens have the natural right of freedom of conscience that the government cannot violate.

## Document C: Excerpt from Tenth Amendment (1787)

The powers not **delegated** to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are **reserved** to the States respectively, or to the people.

**delegated:** Given or assigned.

**reserved:** Kept or set aside for a specific purpose.

## Historical Context

- The Tenth Amendment was part of the **Bill of Rights**, ratified in 1791 to address concerns about the balance of power between the federal government and the states.
- After the Constitution was drafted, **Anti-Federalists** feared that a strong national government would infringe on the states and individual freedoms.
- The Tenth Amendment reassured states and citizens that powers not explicitly granted to the federal government would remain with the states or the people, reinforcing the principle of **federalism**.
- This amendment reflected the Founders' effort to create a government that was strong enough to function effectively but limited enough to prevent tyranny.

## Constitutional Principles

- **Federalism** – The Tenth Amendment establishes the division of power between the national and state governments.
- **Limited Government** – By reserving certain powers to the states and the people, the Constitution prevents federal overreach.

- **Popular Sovereignty** – The reference to powers being “reserved to the people” reinforces the idea that government authority ultimately comes from the citizens.

### Connection to Democratic Participation

- **Engaging with State and Local Governments** – Citizens can influence policy not only at the federal level but also at the state and local levels through voting, attending public meetings, and contacting state representatives.
- **Understanding the Role of State Governments** – Knowing that certain powers are reserved for the states helps citizens understand where to focus their advocacy on issues like education, infrastructure, and public safety.
- **Holding State and Local Officials Accountable** – Citizens can participate in state and local elections, advocate for policy changes, and engage in grassroots organizing to influence state-level decision-making.
- **Exercising Popular Sovereignty** – By reserving certain powers to the people, the Tenth Amendment encourages citizens to take an active role in shaping laws and policies that affect their daily lives.

### Document D: Excerpt from *Federalist* #51, James Madison (1788)

Ambition must be made to counteract ambition. The interest of the man must be connected with the constitutional rights of the place. It may be a reflection on human nature that such devices should be necessary to control the abuses of government. But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary.

### Historical Context

- *Federalist* #51 was written by **James Madison** in **1788** as part of the *Federalist*, a series of essays advocating for the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.
- At the time, there was significant debate between Federalists (who supported a strong central government) and Anti-Federalists (who feared federal overreach).

- Madison argued that a system of **checks and balances** and **separation of powers** was necessary to prevent any one branch of government (and the government generally) from becoming too powerful.
- This essay was part of the Federalist effort to reassure Americans that the new Constitution would protect individual freedoms by limiting government power.

### **Constitutional Principles**

- **Separation of Powers** – Madison argues that dividing power among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches prevents any one branch from dominating the others.
- **Checks and Balances** – Each branch of government has the ability to check the power of the other branches, ensuring that no branch becomes too powerful.
- **Rule of Law** – The idea that government must operate within a defined set of laws reflects Madison's belief that human nature makes power prone to abuse if left unchecked.
- **Limited Government** – Madison reinforces that the Constitution creates mechanisms to prevent the concentration of power, protecting individual liberties.

### **Connection to Democratic Participation**

- **Holding Leaders Accountable** – Citizens can use their understanding of checks and balances to monitor the government.
- **Understanding Government Structure** – Recognizing the separate powers of each branch empowers citizens to direct their advocacy to the right branch (e.g., petitioning Congress, challenging executive orders in court).
- **Protecting Against Abuses of Power** – An informed electorate can recognize when a branch of government is overstepping its authority and respond through democratic channels.
- **Engaging in Constitutional Processes** – Citizens can participate in civic processes like jury duty, lobbying, and public hearings to influence how government power is exercised.



## Document E: *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966) – U.S. Supreme Court Decision

The **prosecution** may not use statements, whether **exculpatory** or **inculpatory**, stemming from **custodial interrogation** of the defendant unless it demonstrates the use of **procedural safeguards** effective to secure the privilege against **self-incrimination**. [...] He must be warned prior to any questioning that he has the right to remain silent, that anything he says can be used against him in a court of law, that he has the right to the presence of an attorney, and that if he cannot afford an attorney, one will be **appointed** for him prior to any questioning if he so desires.

**prosecution:** The legal team trying to prove someone is guilty in a criminal case.

**exculpatory:** Evidence or statements that show a person is not guilty of a crime.

**inculpatory:** Evidence or statements that suggest a person is guilty of a crime.

**custodial interrogation:** Questioning by police while a person is in custody (not free to leave).

**procedural safeguards:** Legal protections to ensure fair treatment.

**self-incrimination:** To not provide evidence against oneself.

**appointed:** Officially assigned or provided (in this case, a lawyer for someone who cannot afford one).

### Historical Context

- *Miranda v. Arizona* was a landmark decision by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1966.
- Ernesto Miranda was arrested for kidnapping and sexual assault but was not informed of his rights before being interrogated by police. His confession was used as evidence, and he was convicted.
- The Supreme Court ruled that Miranda's Fifth and Sixth Amendment rights had been violated, establishing that individuals must be informed of their rights before police questioning.



- The Court's ruling given the seriousness of the crime showed that constitutional rights must be protected for everyone, no matter the crime, to ensure fairness and justice under the law.
- This decision strengthened procedural protections for suspects.

### **Constitutional Principles**

- **Due Process** – The ruling affirmed that individuals are entitled to fair legal procedures, including being informed of their rights.
- **Fifth Amendment – Protection Against Self-Incrimination** – Citizens cannot be forced to testify against themselves, and this protection applies during police questioning.
- **Sixth Amendment – Right to Counsel** – The decision affirmed that individuals have the right to legal representation, even if they cannot afford an attorney.
- **Judicial Review** – The Supreme Court's decision reflects the power of the courts to interpret the Constitution.

### **Connection to Democratic Participation**

- **Empowering Citizens** – Understanding Miranda rights helps citizens protect themselves during interactions with law enforcement.
- **Ensuring Fair Treatment Under the Law** – Knowledge of these rights helps citizens demand fair treatment and legal representation.
- **Promoting Accountability in Law Enforcement** – Citizens who know their rights can hold law enforcement accountable for misconduct or improper procedures. It also establishes clear procedures for the police to follow in questioning suspects so that their constitutional rights are protected and due process can proceed with the proper evidence.
- **Judicial Oversight and Protection** – Understanding the court's role in protecting rights encourages citizens to engage with the legal system. It also provides law enforcement and courts with clear procedures to follow to ensure due process is followed and rights protected.

## Document F: *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) – U.S. Supreme Court Decision

It is neither **sacrilegious** nor anti-religious to say that each separate government in this country should stay out of the business of writing or **sanctioning** official prayers and leave that purely religious function to the people themselves and to those the people choose to look to for religious guidance. [...] When the power, prestige, and financial support of government is placed behind a particular religious belief, the indirect **coercive** pressure upon religious minorities to conform to the prevailing officially approved religion is plain.

**sacrilegious:**

Disrespectful toward religion or religious beliefs.

**sanctioning:** Officially approving or allowing something.

**coercive:** Using pressure or force to make someone do something.

### Historical Context

- **Prior Supreme Court Rulings on Religion** – The Court had already begun interpreting the First Amendment's Establishment Clause in ways that limited government-sponsored religious activities (e.g., *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947) introduced the idea of separation of church and state).
- **New York's School Prayer Policy** – The case arose when the New York State Board of Regents, the body responsible for overseeing education in the state, encouraged a voluntary, non-denominational prayer to be recited in public schools. Some parents, including Steven Engel, argued this violated the Establishment Clause.
- ***Engel v. Vitale* (1962)** But the Supreme Court decision in *Engel v. Vitale* (1962) held that official recitation of prayers in public schools violated the First Amendment's Establishment Clause. The ruling is hailed by some as a victory for religious freedom, while criticized by others as striking a blow to the nation's religious traditions.

