

Rights and Reasons

Explain why the Bill of Rights was added and why it matters.

5.14.C “explain the reasons for the creation of the Bill of Rights and its importance.”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Number two reasons the Bill of Rights was created, then underline two parts that explain why it is important today.

A Promise of Protection

- ① When the Constitution was being considered in 1787 and 1788, many Americans supported a stronger national government. Others worried that the new government could become too powerful. These people, often called Anti-Federalists, asked for clear protections for individual freedoms. They wanted limits that would prevent government leaders from taking away important rights without a fair reason or lawful process.
- ② To win support for the Constitution, Federalists promised to add amendments after the Constitution was approved. In 1791, the states ratified the first ten amendments, which became the Bill of Rights. These amendments did not create the Constitution. Instead, they added written guarantees and limits, helping people know which freedoms the national government had to respect in everyday life and public debate.
- ③ The Bill of Rights remains important because it protects people from unfair government actions and gives them ways to speak up. For example, it protects freedom of speech, religion, press, assembly, and petition. It also protects people from unreasonable searches and requires fair treatment in certain legal cases. These protections do not mean people can do anything they want, but they set important boundaries on government power.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What worry did some Americans have about the new national government?

2 How did the promise to add amendments help supporters win approval for the Constitution?

3 What did the Bill of Rights add to the Constitution?

4 Explain one reason the Bill of Rights is still important today. Use one detail from the passage.

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Write a four-sentence message from an Anti-Federalist to a neighbor in 1788. Explain your concern about the new government, why a Bill of Rights is needed, and name at least two freedoms or limits that should be protected.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Number two reasons the Bill of Rights was created, then underline two parts that explain why it is important today. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What worry did some Americans have about the new national government?	They worried that the new national government could become too powerful and take away important rights.
2	How did the promise to add amendments help supporters win approval for the Constitution?	The promise gave people clear protections and limits on the national government, which helped address their worries.
3	What did the Bill of Rights add to the Constitution?	It added the first ten amendments, including written guarantees of freedoms and limits on government power.
4	Explain one reason the Bill of Rights is still important today. Use one detail from the passage.	It protects people from unfair government actions, such as unreasonable searches, and protects freedoms such as speech, religion, press, assembly, and petition.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I worry that the new national government may become too powerful. Before I support the Constitution, I want written protections for the people. A Bill of Rights should protect freedom of speech and religion. It should also limit unfair searches and make sure people receive fair treatment in legal cases.

Accept answers that explain fear of an overly powerful national government and the need for written protections. For the open response, accept historically accurate wording that includes the concern, the purpose of a Bill of Rights, and at least two relevant protections or limits.