

Why the Preamble

Identify the goals that guide the Constitution.

CE.1.d “describing the purpose of the Constitution of the United States as stated in its preamble;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline each of the six purpose phrases from the Preamble, then number them 1 through 6 in the order the passage explains them. Your markings will show the Constitution's main goals.

A Plan for the Nation

- ① The Constitution begins with a short introduction called the Preamble. It opens with “We the People,” showing that the government receives its authority from the people of the United States. Written in 1787, the Preamble explains why the Constitution was created. It does not list the powers of Congress or the President. Instead, it states broad goals for the new national government. Those goals describe what Americans hoped their government would help do for the country and its people.
- ② The Preamble names six purposes. To form a more perfect Union means bringing the states together more successfully than they had been under the Articles of Confederation. To establish Justice means creating fair laws and courts. To insure domestic Tranquility means keeping peace and order within the country. To provide for the common defence means protecting the nation from outside threats. These purposes focus on unity, fairness, peace, and safety, rather than on the needs of one state alone.
- ③ The final two purposes look beyond immediate problems. To promote the general Welfare means supporting conditions that benefit the country as a whole, such as public well-being. To secure the Blessings of Liberty means protecting freedom for the people living then and for future generations. The Preamble does not promise that every problem will disappear. It sets a direction for the Constitution and the government it creates. When you explain its purpose, connect each goal to the kind of nation it was meant to build.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does the phrase “We the People” show about where the government gets its authority?

2 What does forming a more perfect Union mean, according to the passage?

3 Which purpose is about peace and order inside the country? Explain what it means.

4 How do the last two purposes of the Preamble look beyond immediate problems?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Imagine that a new country is writing its own constitution. Write four sentences that name two purposes from the Preamble, describe one government action for each purpose, and explain how each action would serve the people.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline each of the six purpose phrases from the Preamble, then number them 1 through 6 in the order the passage explains them. Your markings will show the Constitution's main goals. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does the phrase “We the People” show about where the government gets its authority?	It shows that the government gets its authority from the people of the United States.
2	What does forming a more perfect Union mean, according to the passage?	It means bringing the states together more successfully than they had been under the Articles of Confederation.
3	Which purpose is about peace and order inside the country? Explain what it means.	To insure domestic Tranquility. It means keeping peace and order within the country.
4	How do the last two purposes of the Preamble look beyond immediate problems?	They focus on public well-being for the whole country and on protecting freedom for people living then and for future generations.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The new country should promote the general Welfare by building clean water systems in every community. This action would support public well-being across the country. It should also secure the Blessings of Liberty by protecting peaceful speech. This action would help people keep an important freedom.

Accept accurate explanations that connect two Preamble purposes to sensible government actions and their benefits. Students may choose any two of the six purposes, as long as each action matches the purpose.