



We the People

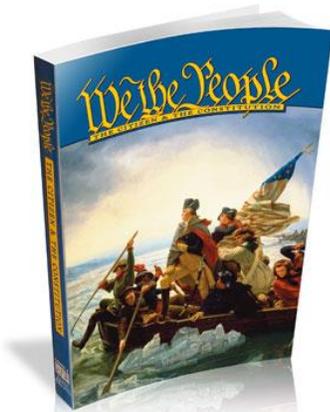
The Citizen and the Constitution

We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution was developed in 1987 and adopted by the Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, as the principal education program of the federal Constitution's bicentennial. The program's success led Congress to continue its funding through the U.S. Department of Education from 1993 to 2011 as an authorized program of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Today, the *We the People* program is administered in Indiana by the **Indiana Bar Foundation** (<http://inbf.org/>), through funding from the state as well as numerous charitable contributions. Nationally, the *We the People* program is managed by the Center for Civic Education (<http://www.civiced.org/>).

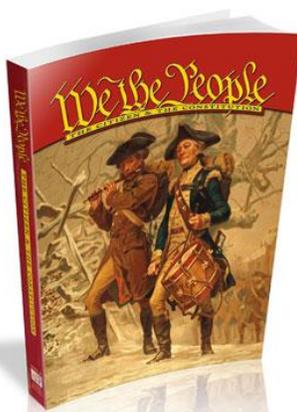
The *We the People* Curriculum

The foundation of the *We the People* program is the classroom curriculum. It complements the regular school curriculum by providing upper elementary, middle, and high school students with an innovative course of instruction on the history and principles of U.S. constitutional democracy. The high school text covers these six units:

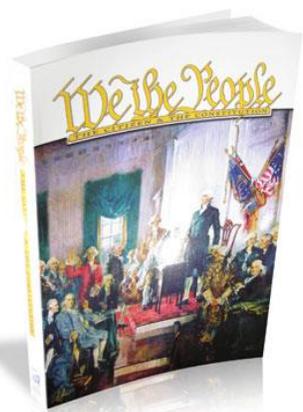
- **Unit One:** What Are the Philosophical and Historical Foundations of the American Political System?
- **Unit Two:** How Did the Framers Create the Constitution?
- **Unit Three:** How Has the Constitution Been Changed to Further the Ideals Contained in the Declaration of Independence?
- **Unit Four:** How Have the Values and Principles Embodied in the Constitution Shaped American Institutions and Practices?
- **Unit Five:** What Rights Does the Bill of Rights Protect?
- **Unit Six:** What Challenges Might Face American Constitutional Democracy in the Twenty-first Century?



Upper Elementary Textbook



Middle School Textbook



High School Textbook

The **Indiana Bar Foundation** provides one class set of textbooks per year for a nominal shipping fee (\$50 – 100) to any teacher who teaches the program. An enhanced e-book edition is now available for both high schools and middle schools. The e-book makes the Constitution and American government accessible to a new generation of learners with its engaging visuals and interactive technology that illustrates the fundamental principles of American democracy. The e-book is cloud-based and accessible on desktops, laptops, and mobile devices, including Apple iPads and iPhones, Android tablets and smart phones, and Windows 8 touchscreen devices. Teachers or schools who order the e-book do not have to pay shipping costs.

Simulated Hearings

The *We the People* program's culminating activity is a simulated congressional hearing in which students "testify" before a panel of judges acting as members of Congress. Students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles by evaluating, taking, and defending positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues. The hearing not only deepens student knowledge of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, but it builds important 21st-century skills and dispositions, such as working cooperatively, public speaking, managing conflict, and reaching consensus. Teachers may engage their students in either non-competitive simulated congressional hearings or various Regional and State competitions.



Implementing *We the People*

The **Indiana Bar Foundation** works with a network of Regional Coordinators who promote the program to teachers and schools within their geographic region. Indiana has a long history of widespread implementation, success, and growth of the program statewide. The State and Regional Coordinators work with members of Congress, their staffs, state and local legislators, local attorneys, law professors, and other prominent members of the community, engaging them in various aspects of the program. Often, these community leaders volunteer during the student hearings or speak at award ceremonies and teacher professional development workshops. Many serve as judges in Regional or State Competitions.

Professional Development



The **Indiana Bar Foundation** sponsors the Indiana *We the People* Summer Institute. This free professional development seminar brings upper elementary, middle, and high school teachers together to interact with constitutional scholars and mentor teachers to learn about our government, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights. Participating teachers will receive:

- tuition
- classroom set of *We the People* textbooks or eBooks
- classroom resources
- teacher library worth \$75
- 32 hours of professional growth points

What the Research Says

A research team from Georgetown University conducted independent studies of *We the People*'s implementation in the state of Indiana. Those studies were confirmed by the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse, which maintains the highest standards for research scholarship. The report shows that *We the People* students scored significantly higher on tests of both civic knowledge and civic dispositions than their peers. These dispositions include:

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| (1) respect for the rule of law; | (4) community involvement; | (6) the norms of political efficacy |
| (2) political attentiveness; | (5) commitment to government | and political tolerance. |
| (3) civic duty; | service; and | |

Additional information and studies can be found at www.civiced.org/research.

We the People changed my life. It's as simple as that. Any and all academic, personal, or professional success I've enjoyed can, in some way, be traced to my participation in *We the People* as a high school student 16 years ago. *We the People* taught me the history of our country and our Constitution. It taught me how our government works—and how it might work better. *We the People* taught me constitutional law and political philosophy. Even more importantly, it taught me how to learn, how to think, how to work on a team, how to be a friend, how to speak in public, how to listen, how to write, how to take constructive criticism, how to give it, how to believe in myself, how to rely on others, how to compete with dignity, and how to...you name it. *We the People* taught me more than any other class I've taken—in high school, college, and law school. *We the People* taught me that our government serves—and responds to—the People. *We the People* taught me that writing Congress isn't a futile gesture. *We the People* taught me that citizens—of all ages, from anywhere—can shape national policy. ***We the People taught me to believe in this country.*** — Benjamin Glickman, Attorney