

Constitution Day and Citizenship Day

Constitution Day and/or Citizenship Day is an American federal observance that recognizes the adoption of the United States Constitution and those who have become U.S. citizens. It is normally observed on September 17, the day in 1787 that delegates to the Constitutional Convention signed the document in Philadelphia. When Constitution Day falls on a weekend or on another holiday, schools and other institutions observe the holiday on an adjacent weekday. Arkansas Baptist College observes Constitution Day on September 17, or on the Thursday proceeding the weekend on which it falls.

The law establishing the present holiday was created in 2004 with the passage of an amendment by Senator Robert Byrd to the Omnibus spending bill of 2004. Before this law was enacted, the holiday was known as "Citizenship Day". In addition to renaming the holiday "Constitution Day and Citizenship Day," the act mandates that all publicly funded educational institutions, and all federal agencies, provide educational programming on the history of the American Constitution on that day. In May 2005, the United States Department of Education announced the enactment of this law and that it would apply to any school receiving federal funds of any kind.

On the day Constitution Day is observed, ABC encourages students to participate in classroom and library activities concerning the Constitution of the United States. Those students participating in the activities are given incentives of being selected to win a prize or some classes even offer academic incentive(s) for participation. Students are notified of this event ABC email and classroom announcements. Students may also receive pocket-sized copies of the Constitution.

Some informational resources pertaining to the Constitution are listed below. •

The National Archives web site provides Constitution Day activities and materials.

<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/constitution-day/> and
<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/constitution-workshop/>

- The Library of Congress American Memory site provides numerous resources on the Constitution. These two links provide access:
<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/lawhome.html> and
<http://thomas.loc.gov/teachers/constitution.html>
- The National Endowment for the Humanities provides content on the Constitution through the EDSITEMENT web site: <http://edsitement.neh.gov/constitution-day>
- The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has put relevant materials on its Web site at http://opm.gov/constitution_initiative. Note: The information on the OPM website is archived.
- The U.S. Senate has posted material from the Legislative Branch:
<http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/ConstitutionDay.htm>
- We also encourage you to access information about the Constitution on the National History Education Clearinghouse (NHEC) site at www.teachinghistory.org. The NHEC is funded by the U.S. Department of Education under contract no. ED-07-CO-0088. The NHEC homepage features special, highlighted information on teaching resources for Constitution Day.