

# Socratic Seminar Resource Set: Preamble to the Constitution

| Resource Set Overview:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Resource-Specific Outcomes:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
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| <p>This resource set on the Preamble to the Constitution is meant to be paired with Street Law's <a href="#">Socratic Seminar Facilitation Guide</a>. In pairing the set with the guide, students will first be introduced to the Socratic Seminar strategy and discussion norms. Then, they will learn more about the Framers of the U.S. Constitution before reading the Preamble to the Constitution. Students will then engage in a Socratic Seminar discussion to collaboratively explore and analyze the Preamble. Finally, students will reflect on new learning and their experience participating in the discussion.</p> | <p>As a result of this lesson, participants will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Closely analyze the Preamble to the Constitution,</li><li>• Discuss the Framers of the Constitution and their impact on the text,</li><li>• Assess the promises set forth in the Preamble and draw connections to today,</li><li>• Use evidence to support their interpretations of the text,, and</li><li>• Reflect on participation in the discussion.</li></ul> |

## Instructional Materials and Preparation Notes

- **Hook resource:** [Creating a Constitution](#)
- **Text resource:** [Preamble to the Constitution](#)
- **Preparation resources:**
  - [Preamble to the Constitution Vocabulary](#)
  - [Introduction: The Framers of the Constitution](#)
- **Seminar Questions resource:** [Preamble to the Constitution](#)
- **Extension resource:** [A Modern Day Preamble](#)

## Instructor Notes

- This resource set is meant to be paired with Street Law's [Socratic Seminar Facilitation Guide](#). The guide includes a lesson outline, handouts, note-catchers, and a basic structure for implementing the lesson. Teachers should integrate the topic-specific materials from this resource set into the

lesson, specifically adjusting lesson timing, updating **Handout 1–Socratic Seminar Preparation** from the guide, and building out details for the “Preparation” portion of the lesson.

- If you use the **Hook resource**, transition to the introductory text by telling students that today they will be examining the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution. Explain that the preamble is the introduction. Ask students to consider what a preamble to a “classroom constitution” might say.
- Questions 2 and 3 may prompt students to discuss race and identity groups. Prior to conducting the Socratic Seminar, it is suggested that you:
  - Explicitly address norms for how students should discuss race and identity as you review the discussion norms.
  - Discuss how people’s lives were different in the 1780s based on their identity groups.
- Additional teacher background information on the Preamble to the Constitution:
  - [“Interpretation: The Preamble” by the Constitution Center](#)—read scholars’ interpretations of the Preamble to the Constitution.
  - [“The Constitution of the United States” by the National Archives](#)—use the “About the Constitution” links on the right side of the page to explore more about the meaning of the Constitution, its history, and its framers.

## Using the Resources in This Set

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Each Socratic Seminar topic resource set produced by Street Law includes five categories of resources:

- 1) **Hook resource:** This optional resource provides students with an opening hook into the lesson that helps them make connections to the text and topic for the Socratic Seminar.
- 2) **Text resource:** This required resource provides the text that is central to the Socratic Seminar discussion.
- 3) **Preparation resources:** These optional resources provide students with additional background information and context for the text they are using for the Socratic Seminar. While Street Law has provided some preparation resources to support comprehension and analysis of the paired text, teachers should be thoughtful in identifying whether students need more information beyond what has been provided.
- 4) **Seminar Questions resource:** This required resource provides the questions that students will use to discuss the text during the Socratic Seminar.
- 5) **Extension resource:** This optional resource provides an extension activity that will help students extend their learning after they have completed the Socratic Seminar discussion in class.

These resources are designed to be used flexibly and integrated into the [Socratic Seminar Facilitation Guide](#) in the place(s) that makes the most sense to the teacher.