

Comparing Constitutions

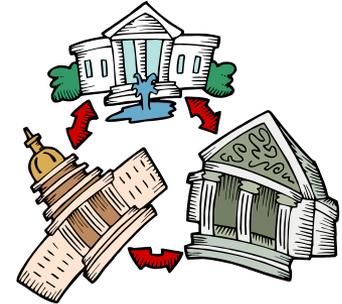
Comparing the U.S. and
Florida Constitutions

Benchmarks

SS.7.C.3.13 Compare the
constitutions of the United
States and Florida.

What is a constitution?

- Provides a framework for government
 - Outlines responsibilities and powers
- Limits government authority
- Protects the rights of the people



Think of a constitution as a rule book for government.

Structural Similarities

The U.S. and Florida Constitutions

- Both documents have:
 - A Preamble
 - *An introduction; outlines the intent of the constitution*
 - Articles
 - *Provides for the structure of government*
 - Amendments
 - *Changes to the document*
 - Rights of the people/individual freedoms

What similarities and differences can you find?

Using the outlines of the U.S. and Florida Constitutions, compare the documents on your *How Do They Compare?* Handout.

U.S. Constitution

Write the differences under the correct label.

Write the similarities in the center.

Florida Constitution

Write the differences under the correct label.

Hint –

Look for:

- Structural differences
- Content differences
- Dates
- Responsibilities
- Services

Some differences

United States Constitution

- Written in 1787
- Sets up structure of federal government
- The Bill of Rights and other amendments are included after the Articles
- Provided for the coinage of money

Florida Constitution

- Current constitution approved in 1968
- Sets up structure of state and local government
- Declaration of Rights are in Article I
- Names education as one of the rights of the people
- Made English the official language

There are also different methods for amending the Constitutions of the United States and Florida

Comparing the Amendment Processes

AMENDING CONSTITUTIONS

Changes to the Constitutions

United States Constitution

- 27 amendments ratified
 - Over 10,000 amendments have been proposed
 - The U.S. Constitution has been amended only **17 times** since the first 10—which make up the Bill of Rights—were ratified in 1791.

Florida Constitution

- Over 100 amendments since 1968
 - Florida has more ways to amend the constitution than any other state

Two Part Process

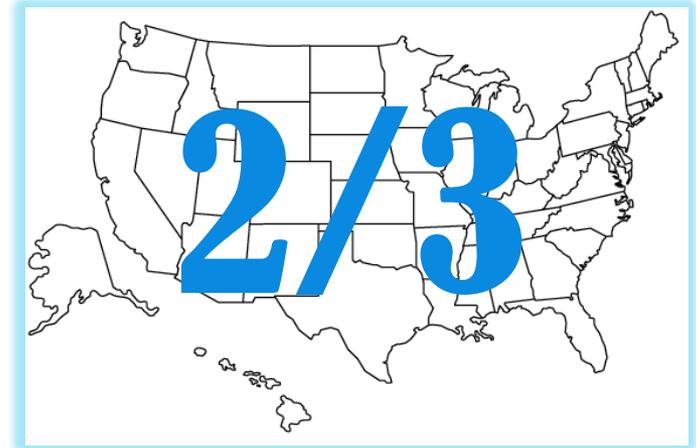
There are two parts to the constitutional amendment process. See Article 5 of the US Constitution.

1. Part One: Proposal Process
2. Part Two: Ratification Process



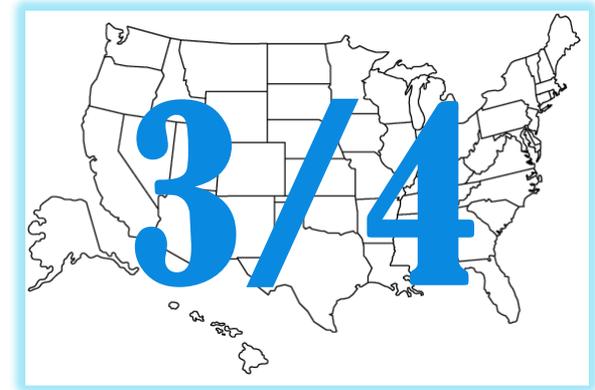
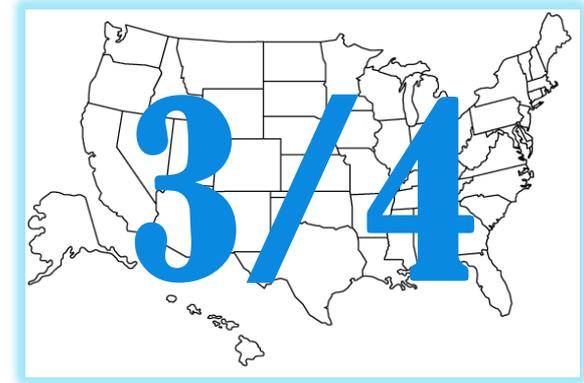
Proposing Amendments to the U.S. Constitution

- Consent of 2/3 of Congress
- Constitutional convention (never been used)
 - 2/3 of the legislatures of the states call a convention



Approving (Ratifying) Amendments to the U.S. Constitution

- Ratified by $\frac{3}{4}$ of state legislatures
- Ratified by $\frac{3}{4}$ of constitutional conventions



Amending the Florida Constitution

- Florida has more ways to amend its Constitution than any other state.
- **5 ways to amend the Florida Constitution (Article XI):**
 1. Proposal by legislature
 2. Revision commission
 3. Voter initiative
 4. Constitutional convention
 5. Amendment or revision election

Amendments (Changes) to the Constitutions

United States Constitution

- Proposing amendments:
 1. Consent of 2/3 of Congress
 2. Constitutional convention (never been used)
 - 2/3 of the legislatures of the states call a convention
- Ratifying Amendments
 - Ratified by $\frac{3}{4}$ of state legislatures
 - Ratified by $\frac{3}{4}$ of constitutional conventions

Florida Constitution

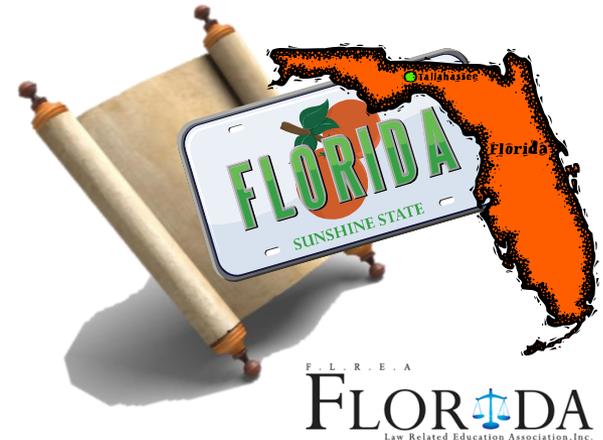
- Proposing amendments:
 1. Proposal by legislature
 2. Revision commission
 3. Voter initiative
 4. Constitutional convention
 5. Amendment or revision election
- All proposals must pass with 60% voter approval

Cite the Source!

- Read the selected quote.
- Your group will need to decide:
 - Which document it is from - the U.S. or Florida Constitution
 - Where in the document this quote is found



Work together and
use your outline to
make your best
decision!



Where is this quote from?

The...power to establish post offices...

United States Constitution



Florida
Constitution



Where is this quote from?

**Counties may be created,
abolished or changed by
law...**

United States Constitution



**Florida
Constitution**



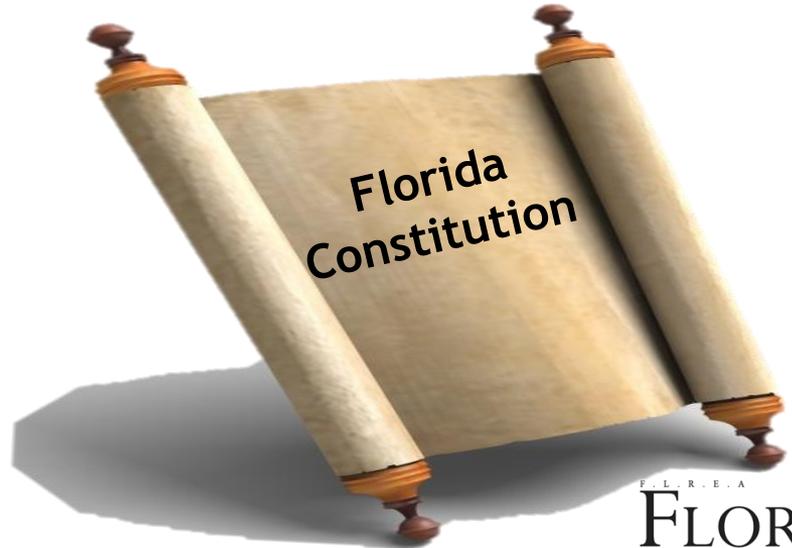
Where is this quote from?

It is a paramount duty...to make adequate provision for the education of all children residing within its borders...

United States Constitution



Florida
Constitution



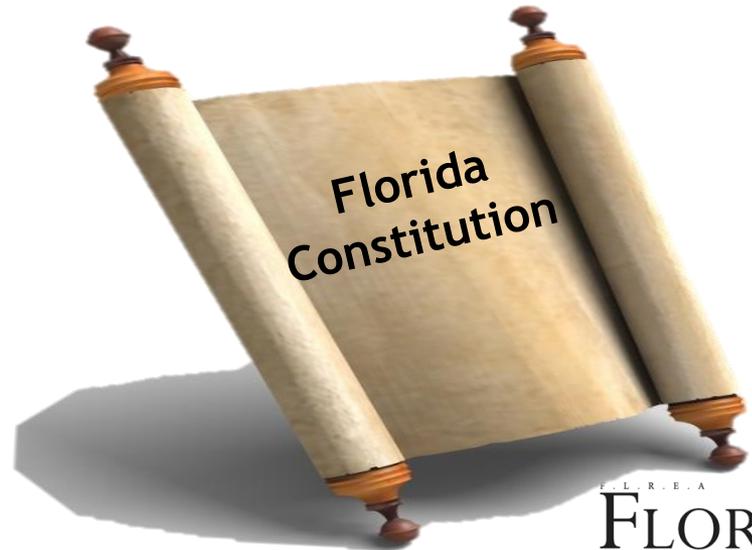
Where is this quote from?

**He shall have the
power to make
Treaties...**

United States Constitution



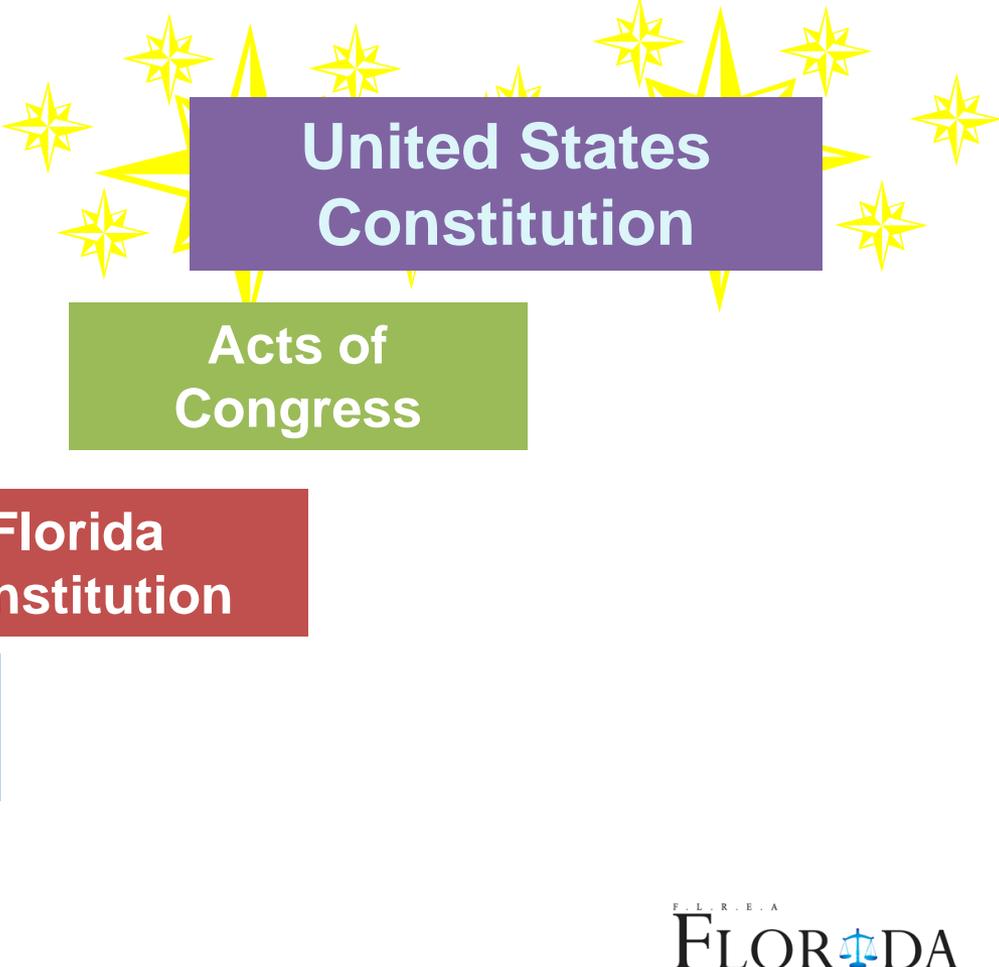
**Florida
Constitution**



The Hierarchy of Law

**The U.S. Constitution
is the “Supreme Law
of the Land.”**

Article VI



**United States
Constitution**

**Acts of
Congress**

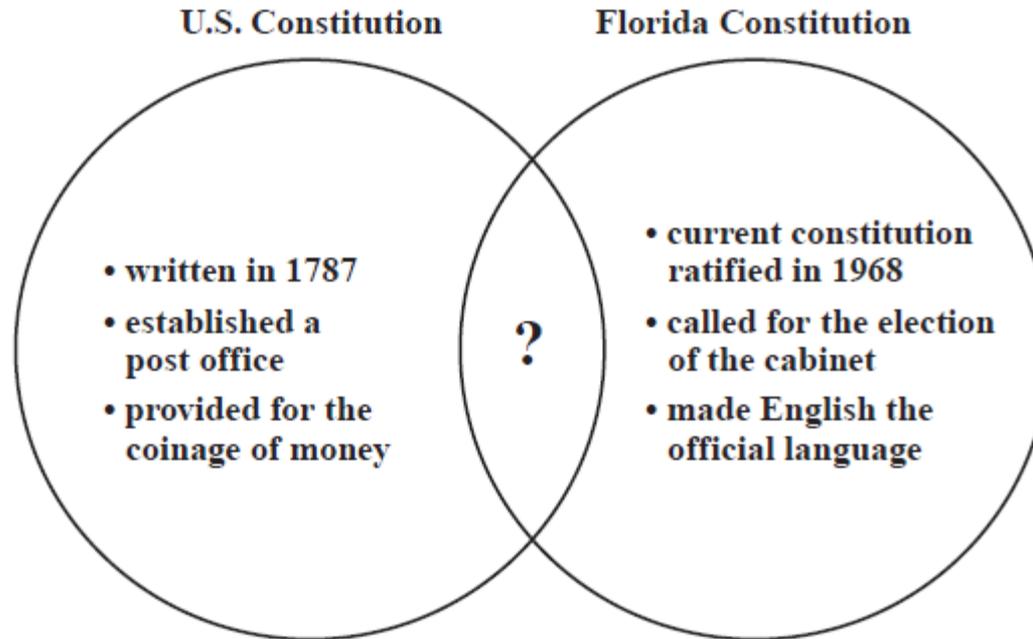
**Florida
Constitution**

**State Statutes
(laws)**

**City and County
Ordinances**

Checking for Understanding

The Venn diagram below compares some features of the U.S. and Florida constitutions.



Which feature completes the Venn diagram?

- A. created property taxes
- B. established a zoning board
- C. required a balanced budget
- D. guaranteed individual freedoms