



## **Constitution and Citizenship Day 2015** **Thursday, September 17** **Classroom Resources and Lessons**

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### **History of the Holiday** *(source: Library of Congress)*

Constitution Day and Citizenship Day is observed each year on September 17 to commemorate the signing of the Constitution on September 17, 1787, and “recognize all who, by coming of age or by naturalization, have become citizens.” This commemoration had its origin in 1940, when Congress passed a joint resolution authorizing and requesting the President to issue annually a proclamation setting aside the third Sunday in May for the public recognition of all who had attained the status of American citizenship. The designation for this day was “I Am An American Day.” In 1952 Congress repealed this joint resolution and passed a new law moving the date to September 17 to commemorate “the formation and signing, on September 17, 1787, of the Constitution of the United States.” The day was still designated as “Citizenship Day” and retained its original purpose of recognizing all those who had attained American citizenship. This law urged civil and educational authorities of states, counties, cities and towns to make plans for the proper observance of the day and “for the complete instruction of citizens in their responsibilities and opportunities as citizens of the United States and of the State and locality in which they reside.”

Finally, in 2004 under Senator Byrd's urging, Congress changed the designation of this day to "Constitution Day and Citizenship Day" and added two new requirements in the commemoration of this Day. The first is that the head of every federal agency provide each employee with educational and training materials concerning the Constitution on September 17th. The second is that each educational institution that receives Federal funds should hold a program for students every September 17th.

### **ConstitutionFacts.com**

<https://www.constitutionfacts.com/>

This is a series of free educational resources and Internet links to help educators comply with the new federal regulation requiring the development of student programming to celebrate **U.S. Constitution Day** on September 17th of each year.

### **Constitution Day**

<http://www.constitutionday.com/>

Constitution Day commemorates the formation and signing of the U.S. Constitution by thirty-nine brave men on September 17, 1787, recognizing all who are born in the U.S. or by naturalization, have become citizens.

### **Constitution Day September 17, 1787**

<http://constitutioncenter.org/constitution-day/>

The National Constitution Center Explore provides interactive resources to learn about the Constitution and Bill of Rights. Learn which documents and ideas influenced the Founding Fathers.

### **Constitution Day Resources from CRF**

<http://www.crf-usa.org/constitution-day/constitution-day-lesson-plans-kindergarten-middle-and-high-school.html>

This is a set of excellent lesson plans for Constitution Day from the Constitutional Rights Foundation. These activities span the grade levels K-12.

### **Constitution Day and Citizenship Day**

<http://www.civiced.org/resources/curriculum/constitution-day-and-citizenship-day>

This Center for Civic Education site has a set of lessons for Constitution Day and Citizenship Day classrooms to celebrate for these holidays. Federal law requires that all schools receiving federal funds hold an educational program for their students on September 17 of each year.

### **Commemorating Constitution Day and Citizenship Day**

<http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/constitutionday.html>

Here are Constitution Day resources from several federal agencies including the Library of Congress, the National Endowment for Humanities, the National Archives, and the U.S. Senate.