

**Bill of Rights: Fourth Amendment**  
**by Bev Dyrland**

Students will examine the Fourth Amendment and its importance to them through an integrated curriculum using role playing, essay questions, and letter writing.

**Students will:**

1. Understand the terminology of the Fourth Amendment.
2. Be able to rewrite the Fourth Amendment in simpler terms.
3. Apply the Fourth Amendment in selected role plays.
4. Be able to defend their interpretation of the Fourth Amendment as it relates to their daily lives.

**Materials Needed:** Copies of: **Student Handouts: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5**  
**Student Handout: ROLELAY TASK CARDS**  
(4 for each group)  
**OVERHEAD:** Fourth Amendment  
Overhead Projector  
paper for posters  
Supreme Court Justices names and address of court (NOT INCLUDED)

**Time needed:** 7-8 days

**Grade level:** Elementary 5th - 6th grades

**Procedure:**

**DAY 1**

1. List selected vocabulary words on chalkboard or overhead
2. Discuss their understanding of the vocabulary and use in sentences.
3. Have students complete **Student Handout 1** and **Student Handout 2**.

**DAY 2**

1. Discuss the completed vocabulary worksheet.

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**Procedure cont.**

2. Display the Fourth Amendment on the overhead and have students discuss what it means to them as written.
3. Distribute **Student Handout 3** to everyone with an incomplete Fourth Amendment on bottom.
4. Have students complete the Fourth Amendment using the selected vocabulary on previously completed worksheet

**DAY 3**

1. Review and compare the rewritten Fourth Amendment to the original amendment.
2. Discuss what this amendment may mean in their daily lives. How does it apply? (Brainstorming in groups.)
3. Full group discussion of ideas.

**DAY 4**

1. Review Fourth Amendment
2. Have students divide into groups of four. Instruct them that each person will play the role of someone involved in a search. One will be the person who is searched; one will be the person doing the search; one will be a person who thinks the search is necessary; one will be a person who doesn't think the search is necessary. The students will draw their roles by selecting a task card. (**Student Handout: Roleplay Task Cards**)
3. After each student has selected a task card, have the students roleplay the situation for a few minutes.
4. As a large group, discuss the search roleplays.
  - A. How did you feel?
  - B. What were you thinking?
  - C. Is there a need for this amendment?
  - D. When do you think it has been violated?
  - E. Should it ever be violated?

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**Procedure cont.**

**DAY 5**

1. Have guest speakers join the class to discuss searches/seizures. The school principal and/or a police officer would be excellent speakers.
2. Write thank you letters to guest speakers in Language class

**DAY 6**

1. In Art Class, design a poster about the Fourth Amendment

**DAY 7**

1. Share posters with classmates.
2. In Social Studies class, answer essay questions. (**Student Handout 4.**)
3. In Language class, write a letter using proper business letter format. (**Student Handout 5.**)

**Extension Activities:**

1. Consider intolerable acts during pre-revolutionary war period and the founder's perspectives in searches.
2. Discuss the Fourth Amendment as it relates to times of peace and times of war.
3. Search for articles in newspaper and magazine regarding search and seizure for an ongoing bulletin board.
4. Read *Souder* by W. H. Armstrong to class and discuss the legal aspects as it relates to the Fourth Amendment.

**Student Handout 1: Fourth Amendment Vocabulary**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Match the vocabulary term in Column A with the meaning in Column B.  
Write the letter in front of the word in Column A.

**Column A**

**Column B**

- |                       |                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| _____ 1. Right        | A. Unlawful                |
| _____ 2. Effects      | B. Be written              |
| _____ 3. Seizures     | C. Likely                  |
| _____ 4. Seized       | D. Personal items (things) |
| _____ 5. Unreasonable | E. Disturbed               |
| _____ 6. Secure       | F. Taking of items         |
| _____ 7. Affirmation  | G. Lawful claim            |
| _____ 8. Issue        | H. A written order         |
| _____ 9. Warrants     | I. Safe                    |
| _____ 10. Probable    | J. Taken                   |
| _____ 11. Violated    | K. Declaration             |

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**ANSWER KEY: Fourth Amendment Vocabulary**

Match the vocabulary term in Column A with the meaning in Column B.  
Write the letter in front of the word in Column A

Column A

\_\_G\_\_ 1. Right

\_\_D\_\_ 2. Effects

\_\_F\_\_ 3. Seizures

\_\_J\_\_ 4. Seized

\_\_A\_\_ 5. Unreasonable

\_\_I\_\_ 6. Secure

\_\_K\_\_ 7. Affirmation

\_\_B\_\_ 8. Issue

\_\_H\_\_ 9. Warrants

\_\_C\_\_ 10. Probable

\_\_E\_\_ 11. Violated

Column B

A. Unlawful

B. Be written

C. Likely

D. Personal items (things)

E. Disturbed

F. Taking of items

G. Lawful claim

H. A written order

I. Safe

J. Taken

K. Declaration

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**Student Handout 2**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

Fourth Amendment Word Search: In the grid, find these vocabulary words that are an important part of the Fourth Amendment.

Constitutional  
Bill of Rights  
Violated  
Effects  
Right

Unreasonable  
Probable  
Seizures  
Seized

Affirmation  
Warrants  
Preamble  
Secure

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**ANSWER KEY: WORDSEARCH**

**OVERHEAD: Fourth Amendment**

Amendment VI:

**Amendment IV:**

*The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.*

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**Student Handout 3**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amendment IV:**

*The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.*

Use your vocabulary worksheet and fill in the missing blanks with the meanings of the missing words.

The \_\_\_\_\_ of the people to be \_\_\_\_\_ in their persons,  
houses, papers, and \_\_\_\_\_, against \_\_\_\_\_ searches  
and  
\_\_\_\_\_, shall not be \_\_\_\_\_, and no \_\_\_\_\_ shall  
\_\_\_\_\_, but upon \_\_\_\_\_ cause, supported by Oath or  
\_\_\_\_\_, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and  
the persons or things to be \_\_\_\_\_.

**Student Handout 4**

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**Name**

**Amendment IV:**

*The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.*

What does the Fourth Amendment mean to you today?

Do you think the Fourth Amendment will be important to you in the future? Why or why not?

## **Student Handout 5**

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**Name**

**Amendment IV:**

*The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.*

Suppose the U.S. Supreme Court was meeting to decide whether the Fourth Amendment was necessary or should be removed from the Bill of Rights. Write a letter to one of the Justices and explain your views about what should be decided. (Remember, *explain* means to give reasons why you feel this way.)

## **Student Handout: Roleplay Task Cards**

### **Person 1**

You have just left a record store where you have been for the last forty minutes. Some of the friends who were with you purchased some CDs. You did not. As you approached the sidewalk, the store's security officer stopped you and began to question you about something he\she saw you place inside your jacket. He\she wants to search your pockets.

### **Person 2**

You are the security officer at a record store. You have just watched several young people for about forty minutes. Some of the young people have purchased CDs. One person did not buy anything. You think this person placed something inside of his\her coat. You will search the inside and outside pockets.

### **Person 3**

You own a record store. You are tired of young people stealing your tapes. You have hired a security officer to try to reduce the theft rate.

### **Person 4**

You are a student who has just purchased a CD at a local record store. You went into the store with several friends. You did not like the way the security officer was looking at you. You are tired of being suspected of causing all of the problems in the world. The security officer thinks your friend has stolen a tape.