

We the People

Thomas Jefferson had written a wonderful introduction to the Declaration of Independence. When it came time to write an introduction to the Constitution, the delegates at the Convention wanted something just as memorable. They must have succeeded because most of us today recognize the words of this introduction, or Preamble, to the U.S. Constitution.

Let's take a closer look at the Preamble . (Use your copy of the Preamble to help you .)

*******We the People of the United States,*******

Why do you think the Preamble begins this way?

Why didn't the delegates mention the names of the individual States?

*******in order to form a more perfect Union,*******

What was wrong with the Union?

*******establish justice,*******

How does the Constitution "establish justice?"

*******insure domestic tranquility,*******

What do you think "tranquility" meant in 1787?

What might "domestic tranquility" mean today?

*******provide for the common defense *******

What did “the people” need defense from in 1787?

How has our need for a “common defense” changed since then?

How has it stayed the same?

*******promote the general welfare *******

What are some examples of the “general welfare” in America today?

*******and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity*******

What are some of the “blessings of liberty?”

Do you think the delegates succeeded in achieving this goal? Explain.

*******do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.*******

Why do you think the Preamble begins and ends by mentioning “the United States?”