

Investigate All Sides

Imagine that your city's mayor asked a museum to remove all paintings by a controversial artist. Is this censorship? Carefully read the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution below. Then study the different points of view and describe why each person might have such an opinion.

FACT: First Amendment

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

POINT OF VIEW #1: Parent

"It's my right to insist that public museums not display inappropriate artwork where children can wander by and see it. I do not consider this a violation of our First Amendment rights."

What would make a parent feel this way? _____

POINT OF VIEW #2: Artist

"By banning my work from public museums, you are infringing on my First Amendment right to free expression."

What would make an artist feel this way? _____

POINT OF VIEW #3: City Official

"Our city has a responsibility to protect all of our citizens from harmful and unsafe situations, regardless of the First Amendment."

What would make a city official feel this way? _____

On a separate piece of paper, write one to two paragraphs describing your own opinion. Give reasons for your opinion.

Research and Write

The following topics relate to the freedom of expression:

- a) music videos banned from television
- b) "Parental Advisory" warnings on CDs
- c) movie rating system (General, Parental Guidance suggested, Parental Guidance for anyone under 13, Restricted)
- d) tabloid magazines

Choose a topic and write a four- to five-paragraph essay describing three different points of view. Finish your essay with a paragraph describing your own point of view. Persuade the reader to agree.

What are the reasons that young people don't participate in elections at a higher rate?

How do young voters make their decisions?

Are they more interested in what the candidate believes in, or in how effective they are?

Investigate these and other facts to use in your PSA.

