

How It Works ...

The facilitator arrives early to prepare the room, setting up the lectern and informational literature. The Constitution is printed on 61 cards. Once those volunteering to read are identified, the cards are evenly divided between them. The readers also receive a badge indicating their order in the reading.



Reading amended portion

The facilitator offers opening remarks and always reads the first cards so everyone can watch the process in action, then reader number two steps in and picks up where reader number one left off. That continues until everyone has read and we've all heard the entire

Constitution.

Some words on the cards are italicized, representing an amended portion. When reading italicized portions, the reader holds up their hand with fingers crossed to indicate that this is no longer valid.

At pubs, the brewmaster is always invited to read the 21st amendment,



Brewmaster reads 21st amendment

repealing Prohibition. After amendment 21, everyone often cheers. Of course there are always cheers for women's suffrage, and often applause at the end of the longest sentence in the Constitution.

During the reading, the facilitator emphasizes that this is a living document open to change and new understanding. The participants are reminded that the founders saw this as a great experiment, as a revolutionary risk. That is why the facilitator always closes the discussion with an enthusiastic:

Long live the revolution!



Voice the Constitution audience at *Tattered Cover Bookstore* in Denver, CO

It's About the Constitution

Lots of different people with different views show up at our readings. Some like smaller government and some favor a more active and progressive government. We've had self-professed Marxists and Chicago School economists read. Democrats, Republicans and Independents have read. Town activists and quiet dress shop owners have read. The process is designed to assure that the Constitution alone is the focus of the reading.

From time to time, a frustrated reader or audience member may utter a partisan critique and it is the job of the facilitator to remind everyone that we are discussing the Constitution, and not current affairs. The cautions are issued calmly and light-heartedly but are always effective at returning the reading to the Constitution only.

None of our readers are without a personal opinion regarding the effectiveness of the current government, but the reading is all about understanding our founding document. The facilitator must be dedicated to gently assuring that this goal is always primary by occasionally injecting the historical background of particular clauses or by starting a discussion about the different ways a clause might be understood.

It's Open Source

Voice the Constitution is available as a kit. Go to <https://thegreatcollaboration.org> to download it. Included in the kit are the 8" by 5.5" cards, a sample opening statement by the facilitator, essential historic and judicial facts about the Constitution and even a clever sentence diagram for the first words in the Constitution.

These can all be downloaded and printed. The cards are to be printed on 8 1/2" by 11" card stock and then cut in half to form the cards that are read by the participating audience members.

The only item not included is a poster depicting Columbia, which is fairly easy to find online (The Columbia Beer poster is very popular). You can be a part of the revolution by hosting your own Voice the Constitution in your home or favorite public venue.

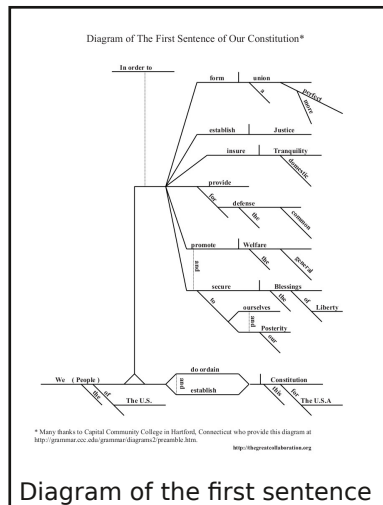


Diagram of the first sentence

Origin Story

Some time in 2007, Julian Taylor heard a radio show host say that according to the U.S. Constitution, after being impeached a Federal officer could not serve on the board of directors of a U.S. corporation. That sounded suspicious, so he looked up a copy and tried to read the Constitution for the first time in his life.

The old style of writing and punctuation was unusual and a little confusing, so Julian converted it into a script and made an audio recording. He was surprised to find that the whole recording with all amendments and even the names of the signers was just one hour long.



Constitution readers at Blue Owl Books in Nederland, CO

It became clear that the Constitution doesn't need to be as obscure and inaccessible as it often seems. In fact, reading it out loud and then listening had made it much more understandable, so Julian formatted his script into a set of 8" by 5.5" cards so that everyone in the room could read it.

The first public reading took place at Blue Owl Books in Nederland, Colorado. Everyone read and there was a thirty minute discussion afterwards. Several citizens who attended that first reading came back to subsequent readings at local libraries and pubs. Each reading brings new insight into this founding document.

Upcoming Celebrations

For more information or to schedule a reading in or near Rochester, NY, contact Julian at:

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Voice the Constitution®

A Celebration Event

Our U.S. Constitution is written for
"We the people of the United States"

Join your friends & neighbors and
together rediscover our founding
document.

Be the first
on your
block to be
able to
answer
these
questions:



- Who is Columbia and do we see too much of her?
- What did Congress promise not to talk about for twenty years?
- Who is required to swear on a Bible?
- How many people is a Representative required to represent?
- What is the longest sentence in the Constitution? *Article 1*