CARDINAL COMPASS - CIVICS NO. 8 - HANDS-ON LEARNING - WITH CARL THE CARDINAL

How the Constitution Changed with Carl

VOL. 8

Civics - Volume 8 - Version 8

New Pages on the Big Rulebook. Can the country's rules change, and how?



Cover illustration: a long parchment scroll unrolling across a grassy field.

Read together | **Do together** | **Grown-up with you**



Meet Carl - Scroll Carl

Carl the Cardinal is your guide. For this book, Carl unrolls a very long scroll across the grass. New pages curl at its end, ready to be added. Carl is learning how the Constitution grew, one careful change at a time. His green neckerchief and gold compass medallion stay on. Color your own Carl on the last page.

How to use this book

Read pages 2 to 5 together first. Then build the timeline, sort what was promised from what was practiced, and, last, try amending your own family constitution.

You will need: a long strip of paper or pages taped together for a timeline, cards, tape, and pencils.

How a rulebook grows

What you already know: In Book 1, you wrote a family constitution and gave it a rule for changing it. The country's Constitution has that kind of rule too. This book follows six amendments and one law, and what happened after each one.

Amendment: a change or addition to the Constitution, made in the way the Constitution allows.

Ratify: to approve formally. For an amendment, at least three fourths of the states must say yes. Today that means at least 38 of the 50 states.

Enforce: to make sure a rule is carried out.

The amendment rule, in plain words

Congress proposes an amendment with two thirds of both houses. Then at least three fourths of the states must ratify it. Today that means at least 38 of the 50 states. Only then is it part of the Constitution.

That Congress-to-states road is the one used for every amendment in this book. Article V says Congress shall call a convention when two thirds of state legislatures apply. Ratification is by state legislatures or by state conventions, whichever Congress specifies.

The President does not sign or veto an amendment proposal. That is different from an ordinary bill in Book 5, which is presented to the President.

That is a hard road on purpose. The big rulebook changes slowly and carefully, not on a quick vote or one person's say.

Read this book straight: a change's words can be law before everyone's daily life matches them. This book tells both parts: what each change promised, and what practices remained, and when they changed.

Amendment or law? A quick check you will use all through this book.

An **amendment** changes the Constitution itself. It travels the Article V road on this page, and when enough states ratify it, its words become part of the big rulebook.

An ordinary **law** does not change the rulebook's words. Congress passes it, and usually the President signs it, the way Book 5 teaches. A signature is the usual route, not the only one: Congress can override a veto with two thirds of both houses. A bill also becomes law if the President does not sign or return it within ten days, excluding Sundays, unless Congress's adjournment prevents its return. A law can enforce a promise the Constitution already made.

Keep the labels straight: six amendments, and one law, the Voting Rights Act of 1965.