THE CONSTITUTION WITH CARL | VOLUME 2 | THE FIRST AMENDMENT

# Five Freedoms in One with Carl

What five freedoms does the First Amendment protect, and who does it protect them from?





## Meet Carl

Hello! I am Carl the Cardinal. In this book you will find me at a printing press, because the press is where one of our five freedoms does its work in ink.

In Volume 1 you learned how the Constitution is built. This book opens the Bill of Rights and stays with its very first amendment for the whole visit. By the end you will be able to name all five freedoms, say what each one protects, and tell the difference between the amendment itself, its history, and what courts have said about it later.

**OUR BIG QUESTION**

What five freedoms does the First Amendment protect, and from whom? Keep that question in mind on every page. Notice the second half. These freedoms are not gifts from the government. In this series, rights are God given and protected by the Constitution. The amendment tells the government to keep its hands off them.

For ages 7 to 11 reading with a grown up. Level Up boxes stretch to age 13. Low ink edition: white pages, print in color or grayscale. Nothing in this book depends on color alone.

START HERE

# One Amendment, Five Freedoms, One Limit

The First Amendment is the first of the ten amendments ratified together as the Bill of Rights in 1791, and it packs five freedoms into a single sentence. It does not hand those freedoms to you. It forbids the government from taking them away. Read its first five words and you will see who is being limited: Congress shall make no law.

That matters. A neighbor who disagrees with you is not breaking the First Amendment. A shop owner who asks you to leave is not breaking it either. The amendment is a limit on government power, first on Congress, and, as courts later held through the Fourteenth Amendment, on state and local governments too. That later step is court interpretation, and this book labels it that way every time.

1 RELIGION | 2 SPEECH | 3 PRESS | 4 ASSEMBLY | 5 PETITION

| Freedom | In one line | Pages |
|---|---|---|
| **Religion** | The government may not set up an official church or otherwise establish religion by law, and may not stop you from following your faith. | Pages 5 and 6 |
| **Speech** | You may speak, write, and witness to what you believe without government punishment for your message. | Page 7 |
| **Press** | Newspapers, books, and other publishers may print without asking the government for permission first. | Page 8 |
| **Assembly** | People may gather together peaceably for worship, learning, protest, or celebration. | Page 9 |
| **Petition** | You may ask the government to fix a wrong without punishment simply for making the request. | Page 10 |

### HOW THIS SERIES READS: THE FOUR STRANDS

**THE WORDS** gives the amendment itself, in two labeled parts: Original Words and Plain Language Explanation. The explanation is never the Constitution, and it never pretends to be.

**THE HISTORY** gives sourced evidence for why and when the words were added.

**COURTS HAVE SAID** gives named cases with years. These are interpretations by judges, labeled as interpretation.

**STILL DEBATED** appears only where a real dispute is still open. It states the sides fairly and decides nothing for you.