

# The Preamble



The Preamble is a 52-word sentence that introduces the Constitution. This very long sentence explains the purpose for writing the Constitution. Read the Preamble; then follow the directions below.

“We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect **Union**, establish **justice**, insure **domestic tranquility**, provide for the **common defense**, promote the **general welfare**, and **secure** the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our **posterity** do **ordain** and **establish** this Constitution for the United States of America.”

Find the meaning of each word below in a dictionary. Use the context of the Preamble above to pick the best definition for each word. Write the definitions in the appropriate boxes.

1. Union: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. tranquility: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. general: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. posterity: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. justice: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. common: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. welfare: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. ordain: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. domestic: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. defense: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. secure: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. establish: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Now it's your turn to update the Preamble. Use the definitions above to help you write a more modern version of the Preamble in the space below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Bonus Box:** Write a preamble for your classroom rules on the back of this page. Be sure your preamble represents the goals and needs of your class.

## **Answer Key for “The Preamble”**

1. Union—a political unit such as the thirteen former colonies
2. justice—rights according to the law
3. domestic—originating from our own country
4. tranquility—a state of calmness
5. common—relating to the community at large
6. defense—protecting oneself
7. general—involving the whole
8. welfare—referring to good fortune, happiness, well-being, and prosperity
9. secure—guarantee
10. posterity—all future generations (offspring)
11. ordain—to establish by law
12. establish—to institute permanently by enactment or agreement

### **Updating The Preamble**

(Answers will vary.)

Americans want to work together. Everyone should be treated fairly. We want to get along with each other and defend ourselves. We want freedom for ourselves and our children. These are the reasons for writing the Constitution of the United States of America.