THE BILL OF RIGHTS — CIVICS RST

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Date _____

Grades 6–12 | Five instructional days | Ma’at Standard

ESSENTIAL QUESTION: How do constitutional freedoms limit government power, and why has equal protection required continuing civic struggle?

OBJECTIVE: Analyze the first ten amendments, historical exclusion, and later constitutional change using sources.

DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING: Four source groups, 15 multiple-choice items, and a RACE response.

NJSLS SOCIAL STUDIES: 6.3.8.CivicsPI.4; 6.3.8.CivicsPD.3; 6.1.8.CivicsHR.3.a. Adapt grade-level standards for grades 9–12.

NJSLS ELA: RI.6.1, RI.6.2, RI.6.9; W.6.1, W.6.9; SL.6.1.

CCSS LITERACY: RH.6-8.1, RH.6-8.2; WHST.6-8.1, WHST.6-8.9.

INTERDISCIPLINARY: U.S. history, argument writing, media literacy, chronological reasoning.

SOURCE REGISTER: A — U.S. Constitution, Amendments I–X (1791). B — 1789 amendment debate and early-republic exclusion. C — Fourteenth Amendment (1868). D — Tinker v. Des Moines (1969).

SOURCE NOTE: Readings are classroom-authored syntheses, not verbatim primary-source transcripts. Short quotations are identified in the readings.

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DAY 1: RATIFICATION AND RIGHTS

DO NOW: Why might a new government need written limits?

The Constitution drafted in 1787 created a stronger federal government, but it did not originally include a separate bill of individual rights. Critics feared that federal power could threaten liberty. Supporters argued that enumerated powers and checks between branches would constrain officials. Several states demanded explicit protections before or during ratification.

James Madison introduced amendments in 1789. Congress proposed twelve, and ten were ratified in 1791. These became the Bill of Rights. They protect freedoms, regulate legal procedures, and reserve powers. The original First Amendment begins 'Congress shall make no law.' Most of these protections later came to apply to state governments through the Fourteenth Amendment.

QUICK WRITE: Explain two reasons the Bill of Rights was adopted.

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DAY 1 · OBJECTIVE & DEMONSTRATION OF LEARNING

Objective: Examine why the Bill of Rights was adopted and interpret First Amendment freedoms.

DOL: Identify and explain three First Amendment freedoms using evidence from the readings.