

A More Perfect Union: The USCIS Civics Test Guide to the Monuments and Memorials on the National Mall



U.S. Citizenship
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George Mason Memorial

Welcome to the *George Mason Memorial* in Washington D.C.

Read the following information about the George Mason Memorial.

The words that are in **bold** will help you answer questions from the Civics part of the Naturalization Test

The words that are underlined are vocabulary words from the Reading and Writing parts of the Naturalization Test.

Civics Test Questions are highlighted for quick reference.



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George Mason

This memorial honors the contributions that George Mason made during the founding of the United States of America.

He is not as famous as other Founding Fathers, like George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, or Benjamin Franklin.

One reason George Mason is important because he fought to add the Bill of Rights to the U.S. Constitution.

The Founding Fathers and the Constitutional Convention

The U.S. Constitution was written in 1787.

66. When was the Constitution written?

The Constitution was written at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia.

65. What happened at the Constitutional Convention?

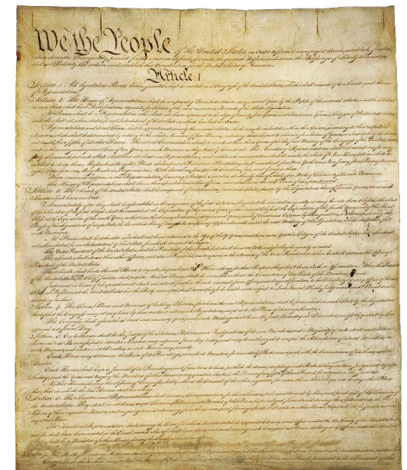
George Washington attended the Constitutional Convention. After the Constitution was signed, **George Washington became the first President of the United States.** George Washington is known as the **“Father of Our Country.”**

69. Who is the “Father of Our Country?”

70. Who was the first President?

Benjamin Franklin also attended the Constitutional Convention. **One thing that Benjamin Franklin is famous for is being the oldest person at the Constitutional Convention.**

68. What is one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?



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George Mason attended the Constitutional Convention, but he did not sign the Constitution.

One reason that George Mason did not sign the Constitution is that he believed the Constitution should have a Bill of Rights.

A Bill of Rights is a document that lists the rights that individuals have.

Passage of the Constitution

After the Constitution was signed, the supporters of the Constitution had to convince other people in the United States to approve it.

John Jay, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton were the writers of the Federalist Papers. They wrote the Federalist paper to support the passage of the U.S. Constitution.

67. The Federalist Papers supported the passage of the U.S. Constitution.

Name one of the writers.

There was also a group of people called the Anti-Federalists. They did not support that passage of the U.S. Constitution. George Mason was an Anti-Federalist.

Amendments and the Bill of Rights

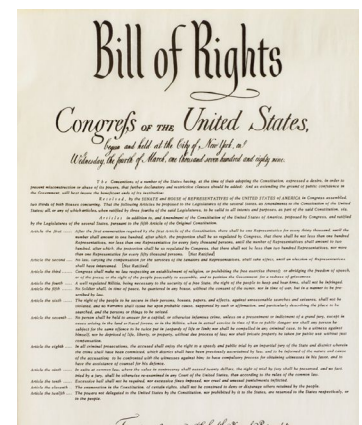
George Mason convinced James Madison that the Constitution should be changed to include a Bill of Rights.

A change to the Constitution is called an amendment.

4. What is an amendment?

In 1791, 10 amendments were added to the Constitution. **We call the first ten amendment to the Constitution the Bill of Rights.**

5. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?



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Each amendment in the Bill of Rights identifies different rights or freedoms for individuals. For example, **there are 5 rights or freedoms in the First Amendment:**

- **Speech**
- **Religion**
- **The Press**
- **Assembly (to gather)**
- **Petition the Government**

6. What is one right or freedom in the First Amendment?

The word “petition” means “to write to” or “to request.”

“Petition the government” means that individuals have the right to make requests to the government or elected officials.

Freedom of speech and freedom of religion are examples of 2 rights of everyone living in the United States.

51. What are two rights of everyone living in the United States?

Freedom of religion means you can practice any religion, or not practice a religion.

10. What is freedom of religion?

Once the Bill of Rights 1791 was added, George Mason supported the Constitution.

Many years before the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution, George Mason wrote a document called the Virginia Declaration of Rights. Many of the rights that George Mason included in the Virginia Declaration of Rights were also included in the Bill of Rights.

This is why George Mason is known as the author of America’s first Bill of Rights.



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George Mason died in 1792, just 1 year after the Bill of Rights was added to the Constitution.

The George Mason Memorial

The George Mason Memorial opened in 2002. It is one of four memorials located around the Tidal Basin.

The other monuments located around the Tidal Basin are the:

- Thomas Jefferson Memorial
- Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial



The George Mason Memorial is located closest to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial as a symbol of how important both men believed that individual rights, especially the freedom of religion, are to people.



Vocabulary for the Reading and Writing Parts of the Naturalization Test

The table below contains the underlined words from the information you just read about George Mason and the George Mason Memorial. They are some of the vocabulary words for the Reading and Writing parts of the Naturalization Test.

Vocabulary for the Reading Test	Vocabulary for Both the Reading and Writing Test	Vocabulary for the Writing Test
America Bill of Rights Government Many U.S.	Father of Our Country First George Washington/Washington One People President Right/Rights State/states United States Vote	Freedom of speech

To see a full list of the 100 questions on the Naturalization Civics Test, and a full list of the vocabulary on the Reading and Writing Test, please visit the USCIS Citizenship Resource Center: www.uscis.gov/citizenship.