

We the People the musical

Book by Pat Cook
Music and lyrics by Bill Francoeur

© Copyright 2003, PIONEER DRAMA SERVICE, INC.

PERFORMANCE LICENSE

The amateur and professional acting rights to this play are controlled by PIONEER DRAMA SERVICE, INC., P.O. Box 4267, Englewood, Colorado 80155, without whose permission no performance, reading or presentation of any kind may be given.

On all programs and advertising this notice must appear:

1. The full name of the play
2. The full name of the playwright and composer
3. The following credit line: "Produced by special arrangement with Pioneer Drama Service, Inc., Englewood, Colorado."

COPYING OR REPRODUCING ALL OR ANY PART OF THIS BOOK IN ANY MANNER IS STRICTLY FORBIDDEN BY LAW.

All other rights in this play, including those of professional production, radio broadcasting and motion picture rights, are controlled by PIONEER DRAMA SERVICE, INC. to whom all inquiries should be addressed.

 **Pioneer**
DRAMA SERVICE

For preview only

WE THE PEOPLE—THE MUSICAL

Book by PAT COOK
Music and lyrics by BILL FRANCOEUR

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Characters involved in the entire show:

SAM	ABBY
MARTHA	TOM
GEORGE	BETSY
CHORUS (See Production Notes.)	

Additional characters in each scene*:

PROLOGUE

THREE MINUTEMEN

ACT ONE

Scene One

“We the people of the United States”

TAXPAYER	TRUCK DRIVER
TEACHER	MOTHER

Scene Two

“In order to form a more perfect union”

DAUGHTER	DAD
----------	-----

Scene Three

“Establish justice”

HUSBAND	POLICE OFFICER
WIFE	BACK UP SINGERS

Scene Four

“Insure domestic tranquility”

MOTHER	BARRY
FATHER	POLICE OFFICER
MARK	

Scene Five
“Provide for the common defense”

MOTHER	HOUSEWIFE
PROFESSOR	CONGRESSMAN

ACT TWO
Scene One
“Promote the general welfare”

REPORTER	WOMAN
MAN	

Scene Two
“And secure the blessings of liberty”

MAN ONE	IMMIGRANT
MAN TWO	

Scene Three
“To ourselves and our posterity”

TEACHER ONE	TEACHER FOUR
TEACHER TWO	TEACHER FIVE
TEACHER THREE	TEACHER SIX

Scene Four
“Do ordain and establish this Constitution”

LARRY	WIFE
NED	

Scene Five
“For the United States of America”

SAM	ABBY
MARTHA	TOM
GEORGE	BETSY

*The same ensemble of six can portray all the additional roles if you desire a cast size as small as 12 (plus the CHORUS). The cast can be any size up to 39 with as many roles as you want, played by separate actors.

SYNOPSIS

TIME: The present.

PLACE: A bare stage.

SEQUENCE OF MUSICAL NUMBERS*

PROLOGUE

MC 1 We the People Entire Cast

ACT ONE

MC 2 Only in America Truck Driver, Taxpayer,
Teacher, Mother,
Chorus

MC 3 The Good Ol' U.S. of A. Dad, Daughter, Chorus

MC 4 It's Your Constitutional Right Wife, Backup Singers

MC 5 Relaxin' in the Noonday Sun Father, Mother, Barry,
Mark, Chorus

MC 5a American Hymn Montage—
Underscore Chorus

MC 6 Together We Must Stand Abby, Committee
Members, Chorus

ACT TWO

MC 7 Entr'Acte—God Bless America Soloist, Committee
Members, Chorus

MC 8 People Helping People Reporter, Man, Woman,
Chorus

MC 8a The Immigrant—Underscore Instrumental

MC 9 Oh, Freedom! Woman, Chorus

MC 9a 911—Underscore Instrumental

MC 10 The Future of America Teachers One-Six

MC 11 I Have a Dream George, Abby,
Committee Members,
Chorus

MC 11a Military Hymns/
The Star Spangled Banner Entire Cast/Audience

MC 12 We the People—Epilogue Entire Cast

MC 13 Curtain Call Instrumental

MC 13a Together We Must Stand—
Reprise Entire Cast

*If desired, the CHORUS can be added to any musical number. See

Production Notes.

WE THE PEOPLE — THE MUSICAL

PROLOGUE

After the HOUSE LIGHTS DIM, we hear a faint MARCHING DRUM from the back of the auditorium. Soon after, we hear a FIFE playing the familiar tune of “Yankee Doodle.” OPTIONAL: A SPOTLIGHT reveals THREE MINUTEMEN at the back of the auditorium. MINUTEMEN may be dressed similarly to the famous painting, “The Spirit of ’76”—one plays a marching drum, one carries an American flag circa 1776 and the third plays a fife. (If using the accompaniment CD, the instruments can be mimed, of course.) They proceed slowly down the aisle, followed by the CHORUS. (See PRODUCTION NOTES.) When they reach the front of the auditorium, the MINUTEMEN proceed onto the STAGE DOWN CENTER and face the AUDIENCE while the CHORUS moves onto risers or chairs located on the floor on each side of the STAGE. MUSIC CUE 1: “We the People—Prologue.”

ENSEMBLE: (*Sings.*)

We the people of the United States,
We the people of America!
We the people of the United States,
We the people of America!
We the people of the United States,
We the people of America! America!

America, America, lift your voice in song,
Walking hand in hand,
Proudly 'cross the land,
With “Old Glory” waving high!

America, America, keep your spirit free!
Spread your wings and fly,
Sounding freedom’s cry.
America! America! America!
God bless America!

End of PROLOGUE

ACT ONE
Scene One

“We the people of the United States”

AT RISE: A COMMITTEE of townspeople, consisting of MARTHA, GEORGE, ABBY, TOM and BETSY, are seated in chairs on a bare stage. The chairs should be placed to face each other in two angled rows. There is one extra chair. The STAGE is empty except for the six chairs, an American flag standing DOWN RIGHT and various platforms or boxes which may be used for the ensuing scenes. COMMITTEE MEMBERS may be holding a variety of items such as pencils and notebooks. BETSY carries a purse.

ABBY: Well, I personally believe it’s a good idea, and we should really put some thought into it.

GEORGE: Of course. I think we all agree on that.

ABBY: Though sometimes I wonder if Sam is up to it. He never seems to go along with any of us. It drives me crazy!

TOM: Don’t worry about Sam. He’ll come around.

BETSY: After all, the mayor chose the six of us for a reason. Even though we’re all so different, he thought we were the right ones to pull this off.

GEORGE: I think the mayor’s idea to put on a patriotic play is great!

MARTHA: But, George, where do we start?

BETSY: We certainly have a lot to cover. (*SAM ENTERS LEFT.*)

ALL: (*Ad-lib.*) Hi, Sam. Been waiting for you. Well, if it isn’t Sam!

SAM: Sorry I’m late. I could give you a bad excuse, or do you just want to get started?

BETSY: I vote we officially get started. (*Raises hand.*) All in favor?

ALL: Aye!

GEORGE: Good. Let’s get this show on the road.

SAM: (*Resigned.*) Nobody cares about patriotism anymore.

MARTHA: I disagree, Sam. I think this will be good for the town.

SAM: But how is some play going to hold anyone’s interest?

GEORGE: Sam, I think you’d be surprised. (*Indicates TOM.*) And having the high school history teacher here will be a great help.

TOM: Glad to be of service.

MARTHA: (*Hand up.*) One question.

GEORGE: (*Points to MARTHA.*) Martha?

MARTHA: How are the six of us going to pull this off?

SAM: Exactly!

GEORGE: Well, we'll have to use our imaginations.

TOM: Maybe we could each say a few words about America. This great country of ours—

SAM: *(Rises.)* Wait a minute, Tom. *(Moves to TOM.)* We're all just going to show up and talk about America?

GEORGE: Sam has a good point. I can't see the curtain coming up, and we're all just sitting in chairs talking.

MARTHA: We could stand if we wanted to.

SAM: *(To MARTHA.)* So stand up. *(She does. Sarcastic.)* Oh, that's really exciting! *(MARTHA sits.)*

ABBY: Come on, Sam. We won't get anywhere with that attitude.

BETSY: We need to find a way to show America, not just talk about it.

SAM: *(To BETSY.)* You mean, act out stuff? That seems awfully difficult.

ABBY: That's what a play is, Sam. We "act out stuff."

SAM: What are we going to do, act like states?

MARTHA: Can I be Wisconsin? I've always wanted to be a "cheese-head!" *(ALL laugh except SAM.)*

SAM: *(Aside.)* She's already in a state of confusion.

BETSY: Let's get back to business here. How about brainstorming some ideas? *(Thinks.)* What is America?

GEORGE: *(Stands.)* The United States. The land of the free.

ABBY: *(Stands.)* The noble experiment.

MARTHA: *(Stands.)* Made up of people from all over the world.

BETSY: *(Stands.)* It's "Old Glory."

TOM: It's the Constitution! *(This catches BETSY'S attention. She searches in her purse as the dialogue continues.)*

GEORGE: Purple mountain majesties...

ABBY: *(Sings.)* ...above the fruited plain.

SAM: We know all that. But I'm going to say it again. *(Stands.)* Where do we start? *(They look at each other. ALL but SAM sit.)* We need some sort of outline. A plan.

BETSY: All right, everyone, I have something that might help us. *(Holds up a sheet of paper, which she found in her purse, and hands it to*

ABBY.)

ABBY: Hmm. Now this might help us get some ideas. (*Passes sheet to GEORGE.*)

GEORGE: (*Speaks as he looks over the sheet.*) I think we may have something here, Betsy.

TOM: What is it?

ABBY: The Preamble to the Constitution.

SAM: (*Incredulous.*) You carry the Preamble to the Constitution in your purse?!

BETSY: Only when I'm coming to meetings that might need patriotic motivators. (*SAM rolls his eyes.*)

TOM: So give it a shot, Sam.

SAM: Huh?

MARTHA: Can you recite it?

SAM: Sure. It's... "We the people of the United States, in order to... something, something... to insure something... and establish something..." (*ALL laugh.*)

MARTHA: Well, I probably couldn't do any better.

GEORGE: Why don't you read the whole thing, Betsy?

BETSY: (*Stands. Reads.*) "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."

ABBY: Boy, that's a mouthful, isn't it?

GEORGE: (*Rises.*) But wait. Betsy's right, there's a lot in here to work with. This might be a good outline for the show.

SAM: How do you mean?

TOM: Let's take a little at a time—break it into phrases.

ABBY: I like that! (*To BETSY.*) Let's start from the very beginning.

BETSY: (*Reads.*) "We the people of the United States."

MARTHA: Hey, I have an idea! We could show a variety of different people... you know, all from the United States.

GEORGE: (*Moves LEFT.*) Okay, how about this? The stage is dark over here. Then, we have the lights come up on several different types of Americans. Can you see it?

ABBY: I like it!

MARTHA: And they tell about themselves, their lives.

TOM: They tell us about their own unique experiences as Americans.

BETSY: How they are the ones who make up “We the people.” (*LIGHTS FADE OUT on the COMMITTEE and COME UP LEFT. [NOTE: In each scene when the LIGHTS FADE OUT on the COMMITTEE, it is at the director’s discretion whether they should remain as still as possible in the background or EXIT and RE-ENTER at the beginning of the next scene. Either way, the transitions must be fast and smooth to keep the show moving.]*) A TAXPAYER is seated at a table with a pile of papers in front of him. Near him are a TEACHER holding a book, a TRUCK DRIVER and a MOTHER. During these interwoven monologues, the TAXPAYER, TEACHER, TRUCK DRIVER and MOTHER each freeze when not delivering lines. They do not react to or interact with each other.)

TAXPAYER: (*Reads from form.*) “Filling out your personal income tax form can be easy.” (*Looks at AUDIENCE.*) Right.

TEACHER: Teaching is a huge challenge. I was so scared my first year. It was overwhelming standing in front of those twenty-eight faces the first day. And there was one face in particular that really stood out. His name was James.

MOTHER: It isn’t easy being a single mom, raising two kids all by myself. It’s so frustrating trying to juggle my time. I want to spend more time with Rachel and Jeff, but it’s impossible to work forty hours a week and keep up with their busy lives.

TRUCK DRIVER: Some people think that the life of a truck driver can be pretty tough. It definitely can throw you some curves. (*Smiles at own pun, then sincere again.*) Being away from the family... on the road sixteen hours a day all by myself.

TAXPAYER: (*Reads.*) “Enter your deductions if they are itemized or take the standard deduction but see instructions to find if you qualify for the standard deduction if you checked any box on 35a or 35b.” (*To himself.*) Where the heck is 35a? (*To AUDIENCE.*) I’m getting more gray hairs by the minute!

TEACHER: James could barely read. He was so far behind, I was afraid he would never catch on. I wasn’t sure how to get through to him. Some days I felt he wasn’t even listening to me, and I was just talking to myself.

MOTHER: But I must say, I’m so thankful for the support I’ve gotten. I don’t know where I’d be without my church. They’ve been like a

second family to me and my kids.

TRUCK DRIVER: But let me tell you something. I feel so free out there on the open road. Driving a truck, I have the blue skies above me and the whole country in front of me. What a great way to see America!

TAXPAYER: (*Reads.*) "For each real estate property listed did you or your family use it during the tax year for more than the greater of fourteen days or ten percent of the total days rented at fair rental value?" (*Mutters to himself.*) That's the last time I take a vacation for a while. (*Sighs and works on the form for a moment. To himself.*) Wait a minute here... (*Gasps and smiles. To AUDIENCE.*) Oh, my gosh! A refund! I'm getting a refund!

TEACHER: But I just couldn't... and wouldn't lose faith in him. (*Smiles.*) Then one day something clicked! He started to enjoy reading. I would give him a book (*Shows book to AUDIENCE.*), and he would come back the next day with a smile on his face. It was incredible! Yes, being a teacher is a challenge. I would never give it up... not for the world!

MOTHER: Without help, I may not be able to give my kids everything they need, but I know that I'll always have enough love to give them. And isn't that what being a family is about?

TRUCK DRIVER: I've been everywhere and seen everything. From the skyline of Seattle to the wide open skies of Nebraska to the rocky coastline of Maine. Yes, I've been everywhere... (*MUSIC CUE 2: "Only in America." Speaks.*) ...from sea to shining sea!

TEACHER/MOTHER/TRUCK DRIVER/TAXPAYER: (*Sing.*)
Oh, beautiful for spacious skies for amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties above the fruited plain!

SOLOISTS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)
America, America, God shed his grace on thee,
And crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining...
...sea! Ah! (*A shout.*) America!

TAXPAYER: (*Sings.*)
Only in America can you see the autumn leaves of New England.

TEACHER: (*Sings.*) Only in America can you taste a Georgia peach.

TRUCK DRIVER: (*Sings.*)
You can feel the heart of America on the shores of California.

MOTHER: (*Sings.*)
You can touch the soul of America, walkin' 'long Virginia Beach.

TAXPAYER: (*Sings.*)
Only in America can you climb the highest peaks of the Rockies.

TEACHER: (*Sings.*) Only in America can you run through Kansas grain.

TRUCK DRIVER: (*Sings.*)

You can feel the heart of America in the Black Hills of Dakota.

MOTHER: (*Sings.*)

You can touch the soul of America when you cruise the coast of Maine.

SOLOISTS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)

It's all here in America, the land of milk and honey.

It's all here in America, from "sea to shining sea."

It's all here in America, come taste the fruit of plenty.

It's all here in America, it's yours, it's mine, it's free!

(*NOTE: For background CHORUS "sha doo bee doos," refer to piano score, vocal score or rehearsal CD.*)

TAXPAYER: (*Sings.*)

Only in America can you ride a burro down the Grand Canyon.

TEACHER: (*Sings.*) Only in America can you see Old Faithful blow.

TRUCK DRIVER: (*Sings.*)

You can feel the heart of America in the wilds of Alaska.

MOTHER: (*Sings.*)

You can touch the soul of America at the Texas Alamo.

TAXPAYER: (*Sings.*)

Only in America can you steamboat down the great Mississippi.

TEACHER: (*Sings.*) Only in America can you sail the five Great Lakes.

TRUCK DRIVER: (*Sings.*)

You can feel the heart of America when you raft the Colorado.

MOTHER: (*Sings.*)

You can touch the soul of America when you cross the Golden Gate.

SOLOISTS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)

It's all here in America, the land of milk and honey.

It's all here in America, from "sea to shining sea."

It's all here in America, come taste the fruit of plenty.

It's all here in America, it's yours, it's mine, it's free!

It's yours it's mine, it's free!

It's yours, it's mine, it's free!

Only in America! (*MUSIC OUT. BLACKOUT.*)

End of Scene One

(Note: Scene breaks are indicated for rehearsal purposes only. The play should flow continuously.)

Scene Two

“In order to form a more perfect union”

LIGHTS UP: The COMMITTEE stands near the flag DOWN RIGHT.

GEORGE: What do you think?

SAM: I think we have a long way to go. Like Abby said, the Preamble is a real mouthful.

ABBY: I don't see you spouting ideas.

GEORGE: Okay, everyone, let's settle down. Sam, let's keep using the Preamble as the outline, the plan you were looking for. What's the next line, Betsy?

BETSY: Let's see. *(Reads.)* “We the people of the United States... *(With emphasis.)* in order to form a more perfect union...”

TOM: Notice that it doesn't say a perfect union, but a more perfect union. Our forefathers knew we could never be perfect, that America is always a process we're working on. That is why 27 amendments have been added since the ratification of the Constitution.

ABBY: *(Excited.)* America... the noble experiment I was talking about.

MARTHA: I don't get it. What is the noble experiment?

GEORGE: Democracy. Every state has a voice, made up of our own individual voices.

SAM: Then why doesn't anyone listen to me?

GEORGE: What I'm saying is that we can vote.

SAM: I vote to adjourn early. *(Turns to leave but is brought back by ABBY and MARTHA.)*

BETSY: Come on, guys, we all need to work together on this.

TOM: Ahem. Getting back to business. Voting is how the voice of the people is heard.

MARTHA: Yes. Well, as long as we're getting a civics lesson here, what do the colors of the flag stand for? Why red, white and blue?

SAM: Everybody knows that.

BETSY: Then you tell us.

SAM: They stand for blood, sweat and tears.

ABBY: That's a rock group. *(ALL laugh, except SAM.)*

SAM: No! Really, blood, sweat and tears!

TOM: Yes. That's right. The red of blood fought for freedom, the white of sweat working to keep our liberties and the blue of tears shed in its perseverance.

SAM: Yeah. What he said.

BETSY: *(Looks at the flag.)* "In order to form a more perfect union."
(LIGHTS FADE OUT on COMMITTEE and COME UP on DAD and DAUGHTER sitting at a table. DAD is reading a NEWSPAPER, and DAUGHTER is looking at her history book.)

DAD: *(Sets down newspaper.)* What are you studying tonight, Katie?

DAUGHTER: *(Looks up.)* American history.

DAD: Really. So, what exactly?

DAUGHTER: The Constitution.

DAD: *(Thinks.)* The Constitution. Let's see. "We the people..."

DAUGHTER: *(Interrupts.)* "...of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union..."

DAD: *(Smiles.)* You mean, like local seven fourteen?

DAUGHTER: *(Rolls eyes and smiles.)* Dad. *(Serious.)* You know what kind of union I mean.

DAD: Maybe. Why don't you give me a little quiz?

DAUGHTER: Are you up to it?

DAD: Sure, give me a try.

DAUGHTER: Okay. What's a "union"?

DAD: *(Raises hand. Like enthusiastic student.)* Miss Katie! Miss Katie! I know! I know!

DAUGHTER: Yes, Dad. *(Laughs.)* I mean "Tim."

DAD: *(Thinks.)* That's when two or more things are joined together. Connected.

DAUGHTER: Go on. What does that have to do with America?

DAD: Well, this country is made up of a group of states. And they all got together to form this union, the United States of America. How am I doing?

DAUGHTER: Not bad. But how do you explain Alaska and Hawaii? They're not connected.

DAD: *(Jokes.)* Do I get extra credit for this one?

DAUGHTER: Sure.

DAD: A union can be a group that's related to each other even if they're not all together.

DAUGHTER: Right. But what makes them a union? Can you give me an example?

DAD: Think of it this way. Your Grandpa Fred came from Kentucky. And he married your Grandma Lil, who was from New York. Now, your Grandpa Nathan was from Tennessee and he married Grandma Margaret who was from California. And you know I was born in Texas and your mother...

DAUGHTER/DAD: *(Laugh.)* In Alaska!

DAD: That's right! We're all from different states, but we all belong to one big happy family.

DAUGHTER: I like that part!

DAD: And everyone in our extended family is different but related... united. We all have our own personalities, our own beliefs, our own traditions.

DAUGHTER: Like when we go to Aunt Julie's house and she serves spaghetti on Thanksgiving.

DAD: That certainly is a tradition we've been trying to change for years. But you see what I mean? It's part of what she believes, and we respect that, even though we may not feel the same way.

DAUGHTER: Would you call her spaghetti "a noble experiment"?

DAD: *(Laughs.)* It's as close as they come. But we're getting off track.

DAUGHTER: Back to the quiz! Continue, please.

DAD: Okay. Just like our family, the states are unique in their traditions and beliefs, rich in their own heritage and history. Each individual. But as a union they can learn and rely on the others for their strength, endurance and capabilities. *(MUSIC CUE 3: "The Good Ol' U.S. of A.")*

DAUGHTER: *(Speaks.)* That's right, Tim. And the way that union originated is also very unique in itself.

DAD: *(Speaks.)* The way it originated?

DAUGHTER: *(Speaks.)* You know...

(Sings.) The people came from all over the world

To the march of the drum and fife.

From the pilgrims to the entrepreneurs,

They longed for a new way of life.

They settled in the East, the North and the South,
They traveled West by the streams.
With traditional customs and other beliefs,
They sought the American dream.

And they all struggled to forge a path
Down the great American way.
They became a part of the melting pot
Called the good ol' U.S. of A.

DAD: (*Sings.*) Now, the "Spirit of '76" is alive
In the fifty United States.
Though divided, they're a part of the whole,
That's what makes this country so great.

And every state has a voice of its own,
And the freedom to make its own laws.
But they all stand together, united as one,
Part of a national cause.

And they all struggled to forge a path
Down the great American way.
And they're all a part of the melting pot
Called the good ol' U.S. of A.

DAD/DAUGHTER: (*Sing.*) And we all travel the freedom trail
Down the great American way.

DAD/DAUGHTER/CHORUS MEMBER(S): (*Sing.*)
And we're all a part of the melting pot
Called the good ol' U.S. of A.

DAD/DAUGHTER/FULL CHORUS: (*Sing.*)
Yes, we're all a part of the melting pot...

DAD/DAUGHTER/CHORUS MEMBER(S): (*Sing.*)
...called the good ol'...

CHORUS: (*Sings.*) Good ol'...

DAUGHTER/DAD/FULL CHORUS: (*Sing.*) U.S. of A. (*MUSIC OUT.*)

DAUGHTER: Great job on the quiz, Dad!

DAD: I couldn't have aced it if you weren't such an incredible teacher.

DAUGHTER: But now I better hit the books so I can be an incredible student. (*DAD smiles, and they give each other a hug. BLACKOUT.*)

End of Scene Two

Scene Three

“Establish justice”

LIGHTS UP: COMMITTEE MEMBERS are back in their seats.

MARTHA: That was a nice idea for a scene. Now what?

BETSY: (*Reads.*) “We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union... (*With emphasis.*) establish justice...” Establish justice. Now, what can we say about that?

ABBY: It’s such a broad area.

BETSY: Exactly.

SAM: Are we talking about lawyers? (*Shudders.*)

GEORGE: Lawyers are only a small piece of the puzzle.

BETSY: George is right. We can’t show justice in our play by only talking about lawyers. Tom, do you have any ideas?

TOM: Let’s start with the basics. Justice is a fundamental part of our three branches of government: executive, legislative and judicial. The legislative makes the laws, the executive signs them into law and the judicial upholds and interprets the laws.

SAM: I have an example of justice. We used to have this old car. It never ran right, used way too much oil and was forever in the shop. Tell you the truth, it reminded me of my brother-in-law. You know, cantankerous, unreliable, never worked. So, you know what I did? (*Smiles broadly.*) I sold the car to my brother-in-law. Now that’s justice!

GEORGE: (*Laughs.*) That seems like something you’d do.

BETSY: But seriously, justice is more than that. Let’s toss out some ideas. (*Thinks.*) A big part of it is that everyone in this country has a right to be tried in a court of law.

MARTHA: Also to know that if you’re charged with a crime, you have the right to an attorney.

SAM: It’s getting what’s coming to you. Whenever you dance, you have to pay the piper.

TOM: It’s equal representation for all.

ABBY: And treating everyone equally.

SAM: All that is good. But I still don’t think there is a cut-and-dried way to explain justice.

BETSY: Sam’s probably right. Maybe it’s enough just to know it’s there.

GEORGE: Hmm. How do we show the presence of justice in America?

How about this... (*LIGHTS FADE OUT on COMMITTEE and COME UP on HUSBAND and WIFE sitting on two chairs, side by side, facing front to mime riding in a car. HUSBAND has his hands on the "steering wheel." WIFE has a map on her lap.*)

WIFE: Don't you think we should just stop and ask someone? You know we're lost.

HUSBAND: Now, hon, there's no need to be nervous. With the directions in my head and you with the map, that's all we need.

WIFE: You said that ten minutes ago, and we're already thirty minutes late! Everyone is probably wondering where I am. I've spent so much time on this speech.

HUSBAND: Don't worry, we'll get there in time for you to give your speech. I'm sure the Daughters of the American Revolution will wait for their fearless leader!

WIFE: We need to stop and ask. We don't know where we're going. Can't you slow down and let us talk to someone who knows where the place is?

HUSBAND: Don't worry. I've got everything under control. Let's see. Jim told me to take a left on Mill and go down three blocks. What does the map show? (*Grabs map from WIFE and works on reading and driving at the same time.*)

WIFE: Carl, are you nuts?! Watch the road!

HUSBAND: (*Turns map upside down.*) Where's Mill Street on this thing?

WIFE: (*Takes map back.*) I told you—I looked for it, and it's not there!

HUSBAND: I know he said "Mill." We were just talking two days ago and— (*SOUND EFFECT: SIREN. We see FLASHING LIGHTS.*) Oh, great! We didn't need this. (*HUSBAND "pulls over" and takes out his wallet, removes his driver's license. To WIFE.*) Could you get the registration out of the glove compartment? (*POLICE OFFICER ENTERS and walks to HUSBAND'S "window."*)

WIFE: (*Mimes opening glove compartment, removing registration and handing it to HUSBAND.*) Here it is. (*Points to POLICE OFFICER.*) Maybe he can give us directions.

HUSBAND: Good evening, sir.

POLICE OFFICER: Good evening. Can I see your license and registration, please?

HUSBAND: Certainly. (*Hands license and registration to POLICE*

OFFICER.) I can explain everything, officer.

POLICE OFFICER: You realize that you were driving 45 in a 30 mile per hour zone... (*Glances at license.*) Mr. Summers.

HUSBAND: Yes, sir. But we're terribly late for an important engagement. And as you can see, we were going with the flow of traffic.

POLICE OFFICER: I'm sorry. But we're not talking about anyone else. We're talking about you and what you were doing wrong.

WIFE: Not only that, we're also lost.

POLICE OFFICER: I can possibly give you directions.

WIFE: Thank you!

POLICE OFFICER: After I give your husband a ticket.

HUSBAND: A ticket? Officer, I'll slow down. Don't worry.

POLICE OFFICER: (*Writes ticket.*) I'm not worried.

HUSBAND: But, officer, I haven't had a ticket in years.

POLICE OFFICER: You have a choice. Either mail in the fine or, if you'd like to contest this ticket, you can tell your story to the judge. It's your constitutional right.

WIFE: (*To HUSBAND.*) He's absolutely right, dear. It's like I say in my speech, you know, about how wonderful it is that our forefathers fought for our rights. You have to admit that the right to defend yourself is one of the things that makes America so great. (*MUSIC CUE 4: "It's Your Constitutional Right." Three female BACKUP SINGERS ENTER and move under a SPOTLIGHT around a microphone. [OPTIONAL: BACKUP SINGERS can ENTER as if they are driving another vehicle, pulling up next to the HUSBAND and WIFE. They mime getting out of the vehicle, then move to microphone. If desired, the CHORUS can also sing this part.] Speaks.*) You have the right to be heard and counted!

(*Sings.*) It's your constitutional right to stand up, be heard and counted.

It's your constitutional right, can't nobody take it away.

It's your constitutional right to get up, be heard and counted.

It was inspirational foresight to guarantee it in the Bill of Rights!

A long, long time ago...

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) Watcha know?!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) ...the forefathers got together.

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) Mm-hmm!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) They were lookin' for political change...

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) They were lookin'!

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) ...lookin' for a brand new way!

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Speak in rhythm.*) You don't say?!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) Right after the revolution...

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) Revolution!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) ...the forefathers had a vision.

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) Oh, yeah!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) They were tired of the system, lookin' for direction...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) ...that's what we got today!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) It's your...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) ...constitutional right...

WIFE: (*Sings.*) ...to stand up, be heard and counted.

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) Uh-huh!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) It's your...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) ...constitutional right...

WIFE: (*Sings.*) ...can't...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) ...nobody take it away!

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Speak in rhythm.*) Uh-uh!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) It's your...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) ...constitutional right...

WIFE: (*Sings.*) ...to get up, be heard and counted.

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) What it is!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) It was...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) ...inspirational foresight
To guarantee it in the Bill of Rights!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) Take a look at whatcha got.

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) Whatcha got!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) You got all your basic freedoms.

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) Freedoms!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) It's all down in black 'n' white.

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) That's right!

WIFE: (*Sings.*) Written...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: (*Sing.*) ...down for you and me!

BACKUP SINGERS: (*Speak in rhythm.*) But you see...

WIFE: (*Sings.*) You got so many kinds of freedoms.

BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* Freedoms!

WIFE: *(Sings.)* Let me tell you 'bout two or three.

BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* Let me see!

WIFE: *(Sings.)* You got...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* ...freedom of religion, freedom of expression...

POLICE OFFICER: *(Sings.)* ...freedom to defend yourself!

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS/POLICE OFFICER: *(A shout.)* Amen! *(ALL FREEZE on beat, then UNFREEZE on beat.)*

WIFE: *(Sings.)* It's your...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* ...constitutional right...

WIFE: *(Sings.)* ...to stand up, be heard and counted.

BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* Uh-huh!

WIFE: *(Sings.)* It's your...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* ...constitutional right...

WIFE: *(Sings.)* Can't...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* ...nobody take it away!

BACKUP SINGERS: *(Speak in rhythm.)* Uh-uh!

WIFE: *(Sings.)* It's your...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* ...constitutional right...

WIFE: *(Sings.)* ...to get up, be heard and counted.

BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* What it is!

WIFE: *(Sings.)* It was...

WIFE/BACKUP SINGERS: *(Sing.)* ...inspirational foresight
To guarantee it in the Bill of Rights! *(MUSIC continues under dialogue. LIGHTS DOWN on BACKUP SINGERS. They EXIT.)*

POLICE OFFICER: *(Speaks.)* Well said, ma'am. That's the way justice is done. *(Hands ticket to HUSBAND.)*

HUSBAND: Okay! Okay! I get the point!

WIFE: Officer, now that my husband understands all of this, could you give us the directions to Mill Street?

POLICE OFFICER: Mill Street? There isn't a Mill Street around here. Are you thinking about Mile Street?

HUSBAND: That's it! Mile Street!

WIFE: *(To HUSBAND.)* I told you we were lost. *(To OFFICER.)* Officer,

is there a way to give this man a ticket for not listening?!

HUSBAND: Never mind. I'm guilty as charged.

POLICE OFFICER: (*Smiles. To HUSBAND.*) In this case, sir, I suggest you exercise your right to remain silent.

HUSBAND: (*MUSIC OUT.*) Case closed. (*BLACKOUT.*)

End of Scene Three

Scene Four

“Insure domestic tranquility”

LIGHTS UP: The COMMITTEE MEMBERS are standing near BETSY.

ABBY: They really got him on that one, huh, ladies? (*WOMEN smile and agree.*)

SAM: (*Ignores ABBY'S comment.*) Moving on... Betsy?

BETSY: I think it should be someone else's turn to read. (*Holds up the paper.*) Anybody?

GEORGE: I can read it for you, Betsy. (*Takes sheet from BETSY. Reads.*) “We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice... (*With emphasis.*) insure domestic tranquility...”

TOM: (*Smiles.*) Keeping the home fires burning.

ABBY: How we go about things in our day-to-day lives.

MARTHA: Things we are free to do and enjoy.

BETSY: Okay. What would be a good way to show domestic tranquility? (*Thinks.*)

SAM: I could show up in a t-shirt and watch TV.

ABBY: Yes, but I doubt the audience would enjoy seeing that.

GEORGE: Let's think for a minute. (*To OTHERS.*) What do you enjoy? What is tranquility to all of you?

TOM: It's reading a good book.

SAM: (*Sarcastic.*) Surprise, surprise.

MARTHA: It's my time to relax. Like... like curling up by the fire on a snowy day.

ABBY: Watching my children play at the playground.

BETSY: Gardening. Planting my flowers in the front yard. What about you, George?

GEORGE: For me? Working in my tool shed and making furniture.
You, Sam?

SAM: Sitting in my t-shirt and watching—

ALL: (*Ad-lib. Except SAM.*) Yeah, yeah. Haven't we heard this before?
I don't want to imagine you in a t-shirt.

GEORGE: Seriously, Sam.

SAM: (*Thinks.*) At night, sitting outside—looking at the stars.

BETSY: I agree, Sam. That is tranquility.

GEORGE: How can we demonstrate tranquility in our play?

MARTHA: (*ALL pause and think.*) I know! (*Moves RIGHT as she "envisions" it.*) A picnic! We could show a family picnic! What can be better than that? (*LIGHTS FADE OUT on COMMITTEE and COME UP on FATHER and MOTHER, sitting on a blanket. MOTHER is opening up a picnic basket while FATHER is lying on his back, his hands behind his head.*)

MOTHER: Hon?

FATHER: Hmm?

MOTHER: (*Sets four plates out.*) You asleep?

FATHER: Yes.

MOTHER: Having a nice dream?

FATHER: (*Looks up.*) Yes, indeed. I was dreaming that you packed me a nice roast beef sandwich with lots of mayonnaise... and French fries. (*Smiles.*)

MOTHER: I brought chicken. It's better for you.

FATHER: (*Sits up.*) That's what dreams are for. (*Very sincere.*) You know, Beth, this is a great way to spend a Saturday afternoon. With you and the kids. It doesn't get better than this. (*Looks around.*) Where are the boys?

MOTHER: (*Pulls wrapped sandwiches out. Points RIGHT.*) Over there playing catch.

FATHER: I better call them. What're their names again?

MOTHER: (*Playful.*) Will you stop?

FATHER: (*Calls OFF RIGHT.*) Barry! Mark! Come on! Time to eat!

MOTHER: You know, you could use a little exercise yourself. Driving a patrol car all day doesn't do much for that tummy of yours...

FATHER: What? I may not be a marathon runner, but hey, I'm in the pink.

MOTHER: Pink?

FATHER: You know, the color of very rare roast beef. Hint. Hint.

MOTHER: Will you let go of that? (*BARRY and MARK ENTER RIGHT. Both wear baseball gloves, and BARRY is carrying a baseball.*)

BARRY: (*To MARK.*) When you get a grounder like that, you block it with your body!

MARK: Won't that hurt?

BARRY: Hey, sometimes it hurts to have fun.

MOTHER: Barry! I don't want you injuring your brother.

FATHER: Now, dear. That's what little brothers are for.

MOTHER: You keep talking like that, buster... they'll believe you, you know?

FATHER: (*To BARRY and MARK.*) That true? You guys believe everything I say? (*BARRY and MARK look at each other and laugh.*)

BARRY: (*Humors him.*) Sure, Dad, everything you say.

FATHER: Just what I like to hear. How was baseball?

MARK: (*Points to BARRY.*) He kept throwing fastballs at me!

BARRY: You have to learn how to play the game! Right, Dad?

FATHER: Did I ever show you how I throw my fastball?

BARRY: You have a fastball?

MARK: You can throw?

MOTHER: (*Nudges FATHER.*) See? Told you that you should exercise more.

FATHER: Well, I guess I'll have to show you all. (*Rises and crosses to MARK.*) Let's have the glove. (*MARK hands glove to FATHER.*) Okay, Barry. Here's how it works. (*Crosses to CENTER and huddles with BARRY.*)

MARK: (*While FATHER huddles with BARRY. To MOTHER.*) What're we having to eat? (*Takes sandwich and unwraps it.*)

MOTHER: Chicken.

MARK: (*Looks at sandwich.*) Wait. This is roast beef.

MOTHER: (*Leans to MARK and winks.*) Shhhh.

FATHER: (*Crosses LEFT as BARRY crosses RIGHT.*) Okay, everyone ready?

BARRY: (*Takes a catcher's stance. Holds glove tight.*) Ready.

FATHER: (*Holds glove tight.*) Now, here's my world famous fastball. Watch closely. And... (*"Pitches" ball to BARRY. BARRY holds up ball, which he's had the whole time. FATHER turns to OTHERS.*) Huh? What do you think of that?

MARK: (*Laughs.*) Wow!

FATHER: Am I good, or what?

MOTHER: Just come and sit down and have my incredible chicken sandwich. (*FATHER and BARRY sit back down.*)

BARRY: Good one, Dad.

FATHER: I remember when my father used to do that one with me. (*BOYS sit. FATHER settles back and looks at the sky. MUSIC CUE 5: "Relaxin' in the Noonday Sun." Speaks.*) You know, it just doesn't get any better than this—a man relaxing with his family under a blue sky and not a care in the world.

(*Sings.*) Relaxin' in the noonday sun,
Relaxin' a-when the day is done.

A day at the zoo, a picnic in the park,
A concert in the town square after dark.

Now you can work, work, work most all your life,
You never see the kids, you never see the wife.
Sometimes you gotta stop awhile and breathe a little air,
There's a garden in the backyard needin' care.

FATHER/MOTHER: (*Sing.*) Relaxin' in the noonday sun,
Relaxin' a-when the day is done.

FATHER: (*Sings.*) A trip to the mountains, a journey to the shore,
There's a Disney World vacation knockin' at my door. (*MUSIC continues under dialogue. To MOTHER and BOYS. Speaks.*) Okay, I've told you what I like to do to relax. Now it's your turn. Your mother will go first.

MOTHER: (*Laughs.*) Me?!

BARRY/MARK: (*Ad-lib.*) Yeah, Mom. Come on, Mom.

MOM: (*Speaks.*) Oh, all right. You all know how I like to shop.

FATHER: (*In disbelief. Speaks.*) Shop?

MOTHER: (*Speaks.*) It relaxes me. But I don't like being in those fancy places... you see (*Sings.*),
I like shopping at the discount stores.
There's a bargain to be found behind every door.
I like Walmart and K-Mart and J.C. Penny's,
And later that night there's breakfast at Denny's.

Relaxin' in the noonday sun,
Relaxin' a-when the day is done.
Now, I'll find the best deal with a guarantee,
There's a blue light special waitin' just for me!

BARRY/MARK: (*Speak. Ad-lib.*) Ah, Mom. Yeah, right.

FATHER: (*Speaks.*) You're kidding, of course.

MOTHER: (*Speaks.*) No, I'm not. All right, boys. Your turn.

BARRY: (*Sings.*) I like spending time at summer camp.

MARK: (*Sings.*) I like rollerblading down a ramp.

BARRY/MARK: (*Sing.*) Sleepin' in the treehouse under the stars...

MARK: (*Sings.*) Eatin' popcorn and pizza!

BARRY: (*Sings.*) And candy bars!

FATHER/MOTHER/BARRY/MARK: (*Sing.*) Relaxin' in the noonday
sun,
Relaxin' a-when the day is done.

MOTHER: (*To FATHER. Sings.*)

Do yourself a favor 'fore you have a heart attack,

FATHER: Take a long vacation and a-just kick back!

FATHER/MOTHER/BARRY/MARK/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Relaxin' in the
noonday sun,
Relaxin' a-when the day is done.

FATHER: (*Sings.*) It's called domestic tranquility, now whad'ya say?

FATHER/MOTHER/BARRY/MARK/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)

We got it all right here in the U.S.A.!

Relaxin' in the noonday sun,

Relaxin' a-when the day is done.

FATHER: (*Sings.*) It's called domestic tranquility, now whad'ya say?

FATHER/MOTHER/BARRY/MARK/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)

We got it all right here in the U.S.A.! (*MUSIC OUT. BOYS sit. FATHER
takes sandwich from basket.*)

POLICE OFFICER: (*ENTERS LEFT.*) Excuse me, Beth. Hey, Frank.

Good thing you told me about your plans for the day. Lieutenant
wants us to clock in early.

FATHER: I thought we had a couple more hours?

POLICE OFFICER: He needs us for crowd control at the big game
today. Things might get kinda rowdy, so he needs us for our calming
influence.

FATHER: (*To MOTHER.*) Well, duty calls. Gotta keep the peace at
the game!

MOTHER: You two be careful.

FATHER: Aren't we always? (*Grabs a few sandwiches for the road.*)

POLICE OFFICER: Say, got an extra sandwich?

MOTHER: Of course. (*Tosses sandwich to POLICE OFFICER, who immediately starts to unwrap it.*)

FATHER: (*To MOTHER.*) Keep the home fires burning. (*Leans over and kisses MOTHER.*)

MARK/BARRY: Aaaaaaaaaaw!

FATHER: (*To MARK and BARRY.*) Just wait a couple of years, you two. (*To POLICE OFFICER.*) Let's go.

POLICE OFFICER: (*Begins to EXIT with FATHER.*) Wow! Roast beef!

FATHER: What!? Roast beef!? She does love me after all! (*OTHERS laugh. BLACKOUT.*)

End of Scene Four

Scene Five

"Provide for the common defense"

LIGHTS UP: The COMMITTEE MEMBERS are in their seats again.

ABBY: I thought the last scene was cute. Let's keep going. We're really onto something here!

GEORGE: (*To ABBY.*) Here, why don't you give it a shot? (*Hands her paper.*)

ABBY: Okay. (*Reads.*) "We the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility... (*With emphasis.*) provide for the common defense..."

TOM: There is such a wealth of history to draw from.

GEORGE: So many times we've had to fight for our freedom.

MARTHA: At home and abroad.

SAM: I told you guys this would get too difficult.

TOM: It doesn't have to be difficult, Sam. Do you know what I think exemplifies all of this? (*OTHERS look at him expectantly.*) The Gettysburg Address.

SAM: (*Aside to himself.*) Boring...

MARTHA: What do you mean? What could we do with the speech?

TOM: Someone could come out and talk about that moment in history, after the Battle of Gettysburg, when Lincoln got up to speak. And

we will always remember what he said that day. (*MUSIC CUE 5a: "American Hymn Montage—Underscore."* Crosses to *CENTER* and dons a black top hat, if available. As *Abraham Lincoln*. Recites.) "Four score and seven years ago, our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal. Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation or any nation so conceived and so dedicated can long endure." (*Turns and looks LEFT. LIGHTS FADE and COME UP LEFT on MOTHER as MUSIC transitions. She is wearing a shawl, sitting in a chair and holding some flowers.*)

MOTHER: How it all came about, I don't know. But our country was at war a'fore we knew it. Mr. Lincoln, he said a country divided against itself cannot stand. My William put great stock in what Mr. Lincoln said that day. And William, he done up and enlisted. August, 1862, it was. He looked so smart in his uniform. He was so proud, and we was so proud of him. He wrote us when he could, but that weren't often. He never let on how bad it was for him. And I wrote him back ev'ry chance I could. (*Points OFF.*) That's his gravestone yonder. Oh, he ain't in it, but we put up a stone just the same. (*LIGHTS FADE and COME UP on TOM as MUSIC transitions. [NOTE FOR CHORUS: Please refer to piano score, vocal score or rehearsal CD for underscoring lyrics.]*)

TOM: (*Continues as Abraham Lincoln.*) "We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this." (*Looks to PROFESSOR. LIGHTS FADE and COME UP on PROFESSOR, who is holding a letter. MUSIC transitions.*)

PROFESSOR: (*Holds parchment letter.*) February 16, 1778. General George Washington wrote (*Reads.*), "It is with great reluctance I trouble you on a subject that occasions me more distress than I have felt since the commencement of the war... For some days past there has been little less than a famine in the camp. Naked and starving as they are, we cannot enough admire the incomparable patience and fidelity of the soldiers. I am, on my part, putting every engine to work, that I can possibly think of, to prevent the fatal consequences..." (*LIGHTS FADE and COME UP on TOM as MUSIC transitions.*)

TOM: (*Still Abraham Lincoln.*) "But, in a large sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract." (*Looks to HOUSEWIFE. LIGHTS FADE and COME UP on HOUSEWIFE as MUSIC transitions. She is wearing a 1940s style dress and wiping*

her hands with a dishcloth.)

HOUSEWIFE: You have to understand, we all had to make sacrifices during World War Two. That was what it was all about, what it was all for. And when we stopped to think what our boys were going through over there... well, it was little enough for us to do without. Oh, there were scrap iron drives, rubber drives, paper drives—everything went for the war effort. And we were rationed over here—we had these ration books. We were only allowed so many eggs, so much meat, that kind of thing. (*MUSIC STOPS.*) It was so scary. I mean, you'd sometimes go to bed at night and wonder that maybe when you woke up, you wouldn't be free anymore. (*LIGHTS FADE and COME UP on TOM as MUSIC COMES BACK UP.*)

TOM: (*As Abraham Lincoln.*) "The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us." (*Looks to CONGRESSMAN. LIGHTS FADE and COME UP on CONGRESSMAN as MUSIC transitions.*)

CONGRESSMAN: "We are not fighting a war now as we did after Pearl Harbor. Nor will it be one like Desert Storm. This is a new kind of war, but one we will fight nonetheless. It will be fought on many fronts, some visible and some invisible. But we will not let our freedoms be taken from us. We will not succumb to tyrants and evil doers, whoever and wherever they are. And, let it be known to all—we will protect this country and what it stands for." (*LIGHTS COME UP FULL on ALL.*)

TOM: (*As Abraham Lincoln.*) "That from those honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion."

MOTHER: "That we here highly resolve that those dead shall not have died in vain."

PROFESSOR: "That this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom."

HOUSEWIFE: "And that the government of the people—"

CONGRESSMAN: "By the people and for the people—"

ALL FIVE: "Shall not perish from the earth." (*Segue to MUSIC CUE 6: "Together We Must Stand."*)

ABBY: (*Sings.*) Together we must stand in times of mounting fear,
Never losing sight of our vision, our quest, the truths we hold so dear.

A people filled with hope, a country young and proud,
Working hand in hand, together we must stand.
We are one! We are the United States of America.
We are one! We are a nation indivisible.

BETSY/MARTHA/ABBY: *(Sing.)*

We're one! We are the United States of America.

ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS: *(Sing.)*

We are the land of the free!

TOM/GEORGE/SAM: *(Sing.)*

Together we must fight an ever-growing foe.

We must all believe in this cause in our future,

The life we've come to know.

ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS: *(Sing.)*

We fight to set men free, we fight for liberty,

Working hand in hand, together we must stand!

ONSTAGE ACTORS/COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS ONE:

(Sing.)

We are one! We are the United States of America.

We are one! We are a nation indivisible.

We're one! We are the United States of America.

We are the land of the free!

ONSTAGE ACTORS/COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS ONE/TWO:

(Sing.)

We are one! We are the United States of America.

We are one! We are a nation indivisible.

We're one! We are the United States of America.

We are the land of the free! *(The following TWO STANZAS are sung as a DUET. Separate ACTORS and CHORUS into two groups.)*

ACTORS ONE/CHORUS ONE: *(Sings.)*

We are one! We are the United States of America.

We are one! We are the United States of America.

We are one! We are the United States of America.

ACTORS TWO/CHORUS TWO: *(Sings.)* My country 'tis of thee,

Sweet land of liberty,

Of thee I sing.

ALL: *(Sing.)* We are the land of the free! *(MUSIC OUT. BLACKOUT. CURTAIN.)*

End of ACT ONE

ACT TWO

MUSIC CUE 7: "Entr'Acte." *(A SPOTLIGHT reveals one SOLOIST*

DOWN CENTER.)

SOLOIST: (*Sings.*) God bless America, land that I love.

Stand beside her and guide her

Through the night with a light from above. (*The CHORUS MEMBERS ENTER, singing, down the aisles of the auditorium, as in the opening.*

They move to risers/chairs. COMMITTEE MEMBERS ENTER RIGHT and LEFT and move DOWN CENTER on either side of SOLOIST.)

SOLOIST/COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)

From the mountains to the prairies to the ocean,

White with foam.

God bless America, my home sweet home.

God bless America, my home sweet home. (*OPTIONAL: SOLOIST can ask the AUDIENCE to join in singing, "God Bless America."*)

SOLOIST/COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS/AUDIENCE: (*Sing.*)

God bless America, land that I love.

Stand beside her and guide her

Through the night with a light from above.

From the mountains to the prairies to the oceans,

White with foam,

God bless America, my home sweet home.

God bless America, my home sweet home. (*MUSIC OUT. CHORUS should be in place at this time. As CURTAIN OPENS, COMMITTEE MEMBERS return to their seats ONSTAGE.*)

Scene One

"Promote the general welfare"

BETSY: That last scene was really powerful. (*ALL nod in agreement.*)

MARTHA: What can we possibly do to follow it?

ABBY: Let's see what's next in the Preamble, Tom.

SAM: Yeah, teach... what's it say?

TOM: (*Reads.*) "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... (*With emphasis.*) promote the general welfare..." That could mean a number of things.

ABBY: Getting along with your family and friends.

GEORGE: Constructive relations between one state and another.

MARTHA: Keeping the country healthy.

ABBY: Business, jobs, careers.

BETSY: Happiness.

GEORGE: That's "pursuit of happiness." Whether you're happy or not is up to you.

TOM: Yes, it is. It comes down to the individual. We live in a land of opportunities, but how we deal with those opportunities is up to each and every one of us.

BETSY: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country."

TOM: Yes. America is more than just a collection of old documents written years ago. It's how we use our basic constitutional rights to take care of ourselves and each other—promote the general welfare.

SAM: How do you mean?

MARTHA: Like we all have seen on TV or even in our own lives. When disaster strikes, we rush to help our neighbors, whether they live next door or in another state.

BETSY: The Red Cross.

ABBY: The Salvation Army.

MARTHA: All sorts of people... helping other people. (*LIGHTS FADE on COMMITTEE and COME UP on REPORTER, who is holding a microphone. Next to him are a MAN and a WOMAN.*)

REPORTER: (*To AUDIENCE.*) I'm here at Dexter Middle School where an emergency shelter has been set up for flood victims. Earlier today, I saw the area where the worst flooding is taking place. All around me I could see people waving desperately from the roofs of their houses, waiting to be rescued by boats. Their houses were under several feet of water. I'm standing here now with John and Kathy Sutton, who apparently lost a great deal. (*To MAN.*) Mr. Sutton, you told me that you were barely able to make it out.

MAN: (*Obviously shaken.*) That's right. When the water started coming in, we grabbed what we could and moved to the second floor. But the water kept coming in...

WOMAN: We finally had to climb out a window to the roof.

REPORTER: And that's when you were rescued?

WOMAN: That's right.

MAN: Yes, some neighbors came by in their fishing boat.

WOMAN: They were people we hardly knew, yet they were going out of their way to help us.

REPORTER: As I understand, you're new to the area.

MAN: Yes, we just moved here last month. I can't believe we've lost everything.

WOMAN: (*Chokes back tears.*) Everything. But I don't know what we'd have done without all the wonderful people who have helped us.

MAN: The Red Cross is here. They gave us dry clothes and food.

REPORTER: And I believe, thanks to them, you'll also have a place to sleep tonight.

WOMAN: Yes, things could have been much worse.

MAN: When the water goes down, we'll go back and clean up.

WOMAN: We just thank God we're alive.

MAN: We're so grateful for those volunteers. Some have lost more than we have and still went out of their way to help us.

REPORTER: It sounds like you're planning on staying in town?

WOMAN: Yes, we're staying right here. With people like these.

MAN: One thing about it, something like this really brings people together. (*MUSIC CUE 8: "People Helping People."*)

MAN/WOMAN/REPORTER: (*Hum.*) Mm-mm. Mm-mm. Mm-mm-mm!
Mm-mm. Mm-mm. Mm-mm-mm!

MAN: (*Sings.*) When the mighty Mississippi up 'n' floods its muddy banks,
You can offer up a prayer an' give a blessed thanks.
'Cause when them settlers 'long the shore were just about to drown,
Them rescue folks done came 'n' moved 'em up to higher ground.

MAN/WOMAN/REPORTER: (*Sing.*)
People helping people all across the land.
Open up your heart and brother, sister, lend a hand.
We got people helping people, when they're down an' out.
Givin' of yourself is truly what it's all about.

MAN/WOMAN/REPORTER/CHORUS: (*Hum.*)
Mm-mm. Mm-mm. Mm-mm-mm!
Mm-mm. Mm-mm. Mm-mm-mm!

WOMAN: (*Sings.*)
When tornados come a-thund'rin' up an' down the Bible Belt,
An' there's good folks homeless everywhere those twisters can be felt.
With that tossin', turnin', it's a wonder anyone survives,

But them rescue people always come an' bring 'em out alive!

MAN/WOMAN/REPORTER/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)

People helping people all across the land.

Open up your heart and brother, sister, lend a hand.

We got people helping people, when they're down an' out.

Givin' of yourself is truly what it's all about.

MAN/WOMAN/REPORTER/CHORUS: (*Hum.*)

Mm-mm. Mm-mm. Mm-mm-mm.

Mm-mm. Mm-mm. Mm-mm-mm.

REPORTER: (*Sings.*)

When disaster struck in NYC, the people all would mourn.

On that fateful Tuesday mornin' this country was reborn.

Folks, they came from every corner jus' to help in any way.

Pray for all the brave heroic souls who sacrificed that day.

MAN/WOMAN/REPORTER/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)

People helping people all across the land.

Open up your heart and brother, sister, lend a hand.

We got people helping people, when they're down an' out.

Givin' of yourself is truly what it's all about.

People helping people all across the land.

Open up your heart and brother, sister, lend a hand.

We got people helping people, when they're down an' out.

Givin' of yourself is truly what it's all about.

People helping people all across the land.

Open up your heart and brother, sister, lend a hand.

We got people helping people, when they're down an' out.

Givin' of yourself is truly what it's all about.

Mm-mm. Mm-mm. Mm-mm-mm.

Mm-mm. Mm-mm. Mm-mm-mm. (*MUSIC OUT. BLACKOUT.*)

End of Scene One

Scene Two

"And secure the blessings of liberty"

LIGHTS UP: On COMMITTEE.

ABBY: It's so touching to see how much neighbors care about each other.

MARTHA: I agree. America is a nice neighborhood.

TOM: Martha, why don't you read for us? (*Hands her the paper.*)

MARTHA: Okay. (*Reads.*) "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... *(With emphasis.)* and secure the blessings of liberty..."

BETSY: Americans have fought long and hard to secure the blessings of liberty for themselves.

ABBY: We have so much to be thankful for and not take for granted.

TOM: That's for sure. These liberties we enjoy today were fought for and protected by those who came before us. *(SAM laughs.)* What's so funny, Sam?

SAM: Oh, I was just thinking about a story my grandfather used to tell me about these two buddies he fought in the war with. *(Looks OFF as the LIGHTS FADE OUT on the COMMITTEE and COME UP on two elderly MEN, sitting at a table LEFT, playing checkers.)*

MAN ONE: Kids have it too easy these days.

MAN TWO: That's a fact. Spoiled, all of 'em.

MAN ONE: Why, when I was a kid, I had to walk to school. Come sun-up, I had to walk eight miles just to get there.

MAN TWO: Did you say you got to wait until the sun was up? It was pitch dark when I left for school. And I had a longer walk than that. I bet I wore out four pairs of shoes each year.

MAN ONE: Did you say you had shoes? Shoot, what I wouldn't have given to have shoes. I had to wear the shoeboxes, older brother got the shoes.

MAN TWO: You had an older brother? Man, I was an only child and had to do all the chores myself. Had to milk eighty cows before I went off to school by myself.

MAN ONE: You had cows? What I wouldn't have given for fresh cow's milk! We had goat's milk. And used their hides for coats.

MAN TWO: You had a coat? All I had was a feed sack with holes poked in it for my arms. And sometimes it got below freezing!

MAN ONE: Sounds like a heat wave to me. It was below zero most mornings, and I had to chip my way through the snow with my penknife.

MAN TWO: You had a pen knife? I had to bite my way through the snow with my own teeth!

MAN ONE: You had your own teeth? We couldn't afford our own teeth. We had to borrow from our neighbors.

MAN TWO: You had neighbors? Shoot, I never saw another human outside my family until I was in school. Spent too much time on chores. It was all we could do just to find time to breathe everyday.

MAN ONE: You got to breathe everyday?! We only got to breathe every other day! And another thing... (*LIGHTS FADE OUT on MEN and COME UP on COMMITTEE.*)

SAM: But seriously, even though they joked around a lot, Grandpa said these men were the best in the unit. Where would we be now without people like them who have fought for our freedoms?

ABBY: (*As an aside to MARTHA.*) Look who's coming around. (*MARTHA nods in agreement.*)

GEORGE: We're so lucky to live in America.

BETSY: That's why immigrants have always considered America the "land of milk and honey." (*LIGHTS FADE OUT on COMMITTEE and COME UP on an IMMIGRANT, RIGHT. She is wearing a shawl and holding a cloth coat. [NOTE: The accent used can be of the actor's choosing.] MUSIC CUE 8a: "The Immigrant—Underscore."*)

IMMIGRANT: It was hard choice to make to come here, to America. I think the hardest thing I ever do was leave Mother. But she tell me I should come here. So I say good-bye, and we cry. Then I and lots of other are in big ship, way down under deck. All of us are scared, for many reasons, but all going on this long trip over the ocean. Then, I never forget, we see this big lady statue, standing so high and holding torch. We rush over to the ship's rail to see her. We had reached Ellis Island. We all know about this Ellis Island, so many years, long as I remember. So good it felt to be on solid ground again! Before long, we are in this big room. Lots of people—old men, young women, women with babies, some sleeping, some crying. I try to remember all I was told—do not look scared, do not rub my eyes. I hear if they see red eyes they think it's something bad and send you back. And I have my money, you have to have some money to get into America unless you have letter from relative. So I have my money, my shoes, my coat—that's all I bring. Then men are moved one way and women another. And some are taken into other rooms. I see families looking around like someone was taken away from them. I stand in line and they ask how to spell my name, but I do not know in English. So they spell it for me. Then they ask some other questions and I try to answer them as best I know how. Then... then the man, he look at me and he say, "You are free to go." Free to go! I am here, at last! And I am... free to go... into America! (*Segue to MUSIC CUE 9: "Oh, Freedom!" LIGHTS FADE on IMMIGRANT and RISE on a female SOLOIST. [NOTE: A projection of the Statue of Liberty would be a nice effect here.]*)

SOLOIST: (*Sings.*)

"Give me your tired, your poor,

Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free..."

In the land of milk and honey,
You will find the bluest sky.
In the land of milk and honey,
You can live, you can learn, you can fly!

Oh, freedom, oh, freedom!
Hold your mighty torch up high
For the whole world to see.
Grant us life and liberty!

ALL ACTORS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Oh, freedom, oh, freedom!
Hold your mighty torch up high
For the whole world to see.
Grant us life and liberty!

SOLOIST: (*Sings.*)
In the land of milk and honey,
You can choose what you will be.
In the land of milk and honey,
You can sing, you can dance, you are free!

ALL ACTORS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Oh, freedom, oh, freedom!
Like no other in the world.
Standing tall, standing proud,
Raise your voice, and sing it out loud. (*ALL ACTORS, except COMMITTEE MEMBERS, begin to EXIT during following chorus.*)
Oh, freedom, oh, freedom!
Like no other in the world.
Standing tall, standing proud,
Raise your voice and sing it out loud.
Sing it loud!
Oh, freedom! (*MUSIC OUT. BLACKOUT.*)

End of Scene Two

Scene Three

"To ourselves and our posterity"

LIGHTS UP: On COMMITTEE.

BETSY: Wow! Makes you feel lucky to be an American, doesn't it?

ALL: (*Ad-lib agreement.*) Sure does. That really sums it up. I have goosebumps! Etc.

SAM: All right, Martha, batter up! I'm ready to take a crack at this next line!

ABBY: Gotta love Sam's new attitude!

GEORGE: Yes, Sam. We all appreciate your enthusiasm!

MARTHA: (*Hands paper back to GEORGE.*) George, why don't you read again? You're so good at it!

GEORGE: (*Reads.*) "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... (*With emphasis.*) to ourselves and our posterity..."

BETSY: That's pretty obvious. That means for us and for those who come after us.

TOM: (*Nods.*) The future of our country. That's a pretty big order.

MARTHA: Maybe we could have a fortuneteller. You know, with a crystal ball and the whole bit.

SAM: That would be like saying our future depends on somebody who works in a tent. (*The OTHERS laugh.*)

BETSY: We need something positive, something that shows that even though things change, other things never will.

ABBY: (*Moves LEFT.*) We need to show that America will still exist for our great-grandchildren and even their great-grandchildren.

SAM: Right.

ABBY: (*"Envisions" it.*) Like a time capsule... (*LIGHTS FADE OUT on COMMITTEE and COME UP on group of SIX TEACHERS sitting in the lunchroom, DOWN CENTER.*)

ALL TEACHERS: (*Ad-lib.*) This was such a neat assignment. My kids had a great time thinking of things that define their generation. There were so many good ideas! What did your kids come up with?

TEACHER TWO: (*Holds up a CD.*) Well, my kids decided on a (*Insert the name of a current, popular music or singer.*) CD. We talked about how music has changed over the years. They couldn't believe the old Beatles "45" I brought in. You'd think they'd never seen a record player before! Actually, some of them hadn't! (*They laugh.*)

TEACHER THREE: (*Shows a world map.*) My kids want to put in this map. I mean, think how things might change in a hundred years. It wasn't that long ago that Russia was the Soviet Union... a lot of countries had different names in the past. Just a century ago, there weren't even 50 states. (*Shows a small calculator.*) They also wanted to put in a calculator. I guess I'm showing my age when I admit that I had to learn how to use a slide rule in math!

TEACHER FOUR: (*Holds up picture.*) Look at this picture of the international space station my students chose. To them, landing on the moon is just a historical fact. They were born into a world where

men had already visited the moon.

TEACHER TWO: I remember the first time we stepped on the moon. “One small step for man... one giant leap for mankind.” I wonder when we’ll be on Mars?

TEACHER FOUR: I have a student who’s so spacey, I think he’s already been to Mars... and hasn’t come back! *(ALL laugh except TEACHER FIVE, who smiles, but seems reserved.)*

TEACHER FIVE: *(After laughter subsides.)* My kids want to put in this postcard and newspaper article.

TEACHER ONE: *(Looks at postcard.)* Wow... the World Trade Center. That’s a day we’ll never forget. Is that what the article is about, too?

TEACHER FIVE: Yes, this is the “New York Times” from September 12, 2001—the day after. *(MUSIC CUE 9a: “911—Underscore.” Reads.)* “For several panic-stricken hours yesterday morning, people in Lower Manhattan witnessed the inexpressible, the incomprehensible, the unthinkable.”

TEACHER SIX: *(Recalls.)* One plane, then another crashing into the twin towers... who would have ever thought?

TEACHER FIVE: *(Continues reading.)* “Police officers warned people in the vicinity to move north, that the buildings could fall, but most people found that unthinkable. They stayed put or gravitated closer. Abruptly, there was an ear-splitting noise. The south tower shook, seemed to list in one direction and then began to come down, imploding upon itself.”

TEACHER THREE: Remember Terri, who used to teach here? She lost a brother in that tower.

TEACHER FIVE: *(Still reading.)* “A plume of smoke reminiscent of an atomic bomb rose upward and then descended to street level and sped uptown. People began running, chased by the smoke. The air rained white ash and plaster dust, coating people until they looked ghostlike.”

TEACHER FOUR: *(Recalls.)* Not long after, the other tower came down, too.

TEACHER FIVE: Right. Listen to this. *(Reads more.)* “Many of the onlookers stayed put, frozen in horror. Slowly, the next thought crept into their consciousness: the other tower would come down, too. People started walking briskly north until the premonition became real—another horrifying eruption, as one floor after another seemed to detonate.”

TEACHER TWO: That was the most awful day. I still feel sick thinking of the thousands who lost their lives.

TEACHER FIVE: (*Finishes reading.*) “Again, people ran. Many of them stopped at Canal Street and watched the smoke dissolve. People cried at what they saw: a crystalline sky with nothing in it.” (*MUSIC OUT.*)

TEACHER ONE: That was a day that changed the world forever, like the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

TEACHER SIX: (*Pause.*) My kids took a different approach to the time capsule.

TEACHER ONE: How?

TEACHER SIX: They figured there will always be a lot of changes in the world. That’s what’s so special about time capsules—they record those changes. But my kids decided to put in something that in essence hasn’t changed in over two hundred years and hopefully never will.

TEACHER TWO: What’s that?

TEACHER SIX: A copy of the U.S. Constitution.

TEACHER SIX: Our country is relatively young, but we’ve gone through a lot. We’ve had our share of challenges to our rights and freedoms. My kids want to show that the Constitution will always be the backbone of our country’s government, even a hundred years in the future.

TEACHER THREE: Good for them! (*MUSIC CUE 10: “The Future of America.”*)

TEACHER ONE: (*Speaks.*) With kids like these, I have a lot of hope for the future of America.

(*Sings.*) Well, the future of America is safely in the hands of every little bitty boy and girl.

TEACHER TWO: (*Sings.*)

We hope the children of today will wake up tomorrow livin’ in a much safer world.

TEACHER THREE: (*Sings.*)

You gotta teach ’em ’bout the country an’ how it all began. It’s gonna make ’em feel good inside.

TEACHER FOUR: (*Sings.*)

And if you bring ’em up right, hold ’em real tight, they’re bound to grow up with American pride.

ALL TEACHERS: (*Sing.*)

I’m just a patriotic, flag-wavin’, country-lovin’, trail-blazin’, yankee

doodle good ol' boy.
I'm as red, white and blue as my daddy and my granddaddy.
Lordy, I'm the real McCoy.
And when my young-uns see the flag this Fourth of July,
I'm gonna pick 'em up 'n' hold 'em high.
An' tell 'em, "Kids, we were born in the U.S.A....
...An' we're American as apple pie!"

(DANCE/INSTRUMENTAL INTERLUDE.)

TEACHER FIVE: (*Sings.*) Well, the future of America is safely in the hands of every little bitty boy and girl.

TEACHER SIX: (*Sings.*)

You gotta teach 'em well today so they wake up tomorrow in a whole lot safer world.

ALL TEACHERS: (*Sing.*)

And when the future generations are lookin' back in time, hope they got a kind word or two.

And though the future of the world sits with every boy an' girl, right now it's up to me and you.

I'm just a patriotic, flag-wavin', country-lovin', trail-blazin, yankee doodle good ol' boy!

I'm as red, white and blue as my daddy and my granddaddy.

Lordy, I'm the real McCoy.

TEACHERS ONE/THREE/FIVE: (*Sing.*)

Now, you can grumble, you can gripe,

You can moan 'n' groan,

But there ain't no better place to live.

TEACHERS TWO/FOUR/SIX: (*Sing.*)

Just remember, we're free in the U.S.A.

ALL TEACHERS: (*Sing.*)

...because a patriot was willin' to give.

I'm just a patriotic, flag-wavin', country-lovin', trail-blazin, yankee doodle good ol' boy!

I'm as red, white and blue as my daddy and my granddaddy.

Lordy, I'm the real McCoy.

And when my young-uns see the flag this Fourth of July,

I'm gonna pick 'em up 'n' hold 'em high.

An' tell 'em, "Kids, we were born in the U.S.A. an' we're American as apple pie!"

Yes, sir, we were born in the good ol' U.S.A., an' we're American as apple pie! (*MUSIC OUT. BLACKOUT.*)

End of Scene Three

Scene Four

“Do ordain and establish this Constitution”

LIGHTS UP: On COMMITTEE.

TOM: Yes, I also have a lot of hope invested in my students—they are the future of America.

MARTHA: That was a good scene. What is the next phrase, George?

GEORGE: (*Reads.*) “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... (*With emphasis.*) do ordain and establish this Constitution...”

TOM: How about something about the Bill of Rights here?

GEORGE: I like it, Tom!

MARTHA: Why the Bill of Rights?

TOM: It’s the core of our Constitution. You see, when the states were deciding whether to adopt the Constitution, they were concerned it would open the way to tyranny by the central government. So, they demanded a Bill of Rights that would give protection to individual citizens.

ABBY: That’s the spirit!

BETSY: It’s the spirit of America. Freedom and democracy.

GEORGE: That’s what we’re all about. Those first ten Amendments to the Constitution made the government—our union—that much “more perfect,” like we discussed before.

BETSY: Can anyone here—besides Tom, that is—name the first ten amendments?

SAM: Thou shalt not steal.

ABBY: That’s the Ten Commandments, silly!

MARTHA: (*Counts on fingers.*) Let’s see. There’s freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of the press and freedom to assemble.

TOM: Correct. Those are all pieces of the First Amendment.

MARTHA: Wow! That First Amendment alone carries a lot of weight!

TOM: That it does. Take the First Amendment and add nine more, and you have a strong foundation for the Constitution.

SAM: (*Thinks to himself.*) How can we demonstrate the Bill of Rights in a scene? (*To OTHERS.*) I have to admit that I’m getting pretty

excited about the show.

ALL: (*Ad-lib.*) Sam, excited about the show? Now we're getting somewhere! Could this be true?

SAM: The Bill of Rights obviously comes up in our daily lives. But how can we show it?

GEORGE: That shouldn't be too difficult. How about this... (*LIGHTS FADE OUT on COMMITTEE and COME UP on two NEIGHBORS, LARRY and NED. They are both raking. LARRY looks over an imaginary fence at NED'S yard.*)

LARRY: Hey, Ned! Not to be a pain, but your crabgrass is getting into my lawn again.

NED: Sorry to say this, ol' buddy, but that's not my crabgrass. That's your crabgrass. (*Points to other side of fence.*)

LARRY: (*Gets irritated.*) Don't give me that. I never had crabgrass until you moved in! Look at the rest of my lawn. It should be on the cover of "Better Homes and Gardens."

NED: Yeah? How about "Better Homes and Crabgrass"?!

LARRY: Ned, if crabgrass was against the law, they'd throw you in jail. They wouldn't even need a judge to decide.

NED: Wrongo, Larry. Please note in our Bill of Rights— (*Reaches into pocket and pulls out a sheet of paper.*) and I happen to have a copy of it right here (*LARRY rolls his eyes.*)—that the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution says the accused has a right to a speedy trial.

LARRY: Yeah. You'd still be found guilty.

NED: I'd appeal to the jury.

LARRY: You wouldn't deserve a jury!

NED: (*Waves paper in the air.*) Sorry, think about the Seventh Amendment. In any cases of common law, the right to a jury shall be preserved. And then I'd show them what your yard looks like. You'd be fined a million dollars!

LARRY: (*Snatches paper from NED and scans it.*) Nope. Check out the Eighth Amendment. Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted. If anything, your crabgrass is cruel and unusual punishment. I should bring in an army to get rid of your lawn.

NED: Yeah? You and what army?

LARRY: (*Points to paper.*) The Second Amendment. You know, the right of people to keep and bear arms. A well-regulated militia, necessary to the security of a free state. And then I'd move a couple of 'em into

your house to make sure you keep your crabgrass on your side.

NED: (*Snatches the paper back.*) No, siree! Fourth Amendment! The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures shall not be violated. No warrants shall be issued but upon probable cause.

LARRY: But...

NED: And we can't forget the Third Amendment! No soldier shall, in time of peace, be quartered in any house without consent of the owner! And you don't have my consent!

WIFE: (*ENTERS and crosses to LARRY.*) What on earth are you two arguing about now?

NED: I think we just figured out Larry's crabgrass is unconstitutional.

LARRY: My crabgrass?! It's your crabgrass!

WIFE: Okay, who started all of this?

LARRY/NED: (*Look at each other, then at WIFE.*) We plead the Fifth. (*BLACKOUT.*)

End of Scene Four

Scene Five

"For the United States of America"

LIGHTS UP: On the COMMITTEE.

MARTHA: Well, that was a fun little history lesson! Great idea, Tom, to include the Bill of Rights.

TOM: Thanks, Martha.

SAM: (*Indicates his notes.*) I think we actually got some great stuff here. Only one more line to go, and we can wrap this thing up.

BETSY: George?

GEORGE: Sam, you should have the honor of reading the final phrase. (*Hands paper to SAM.*)

ABBY: I agree. I think Sam should get the award for "Most Improved Player."

SAM: Aw, shucks. But you know, I don't even need the sheet anymore—I have this down pat! (*Recites.*) "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... (*With emphasis.*) for the United States of America."

ALL: (*Applaud. Ad-lib.*) Bravo! Way to go, Sam! Look who learned something today!

BETSY: For the United States of America. (*To the OTHERS.*) What stands for the United States of America? What truly represents it?

ABBY: The flag. (*Points to the flag.*)

MARTHA: The bald eagle.

GEORGE: The Statue of Liberty.

SAM: Elvis. (*ALL laugh.*)

TOM: I've got it! The Declaration of Independence.

ABBY: (*Excited.*) That is uniquely American.

BETSY: It expresses the convictions of the American people when they first wanted their freedom.

MARTHA: But it was written more than a decade before the Constitution.

TOM: True, but it's our nation's first and most treasured symbol of liberty.

SAM: It demonstrates how our forefathers had a vision—a vision Americans still cherish.

BETSY: Think of how far we've come since then.

ABBY: It's also a vision that Martin Luther King, Jr. fought long and hard to make real. (*MUSIC CUE 11: "I Have A Dream."*)

GEORGE: (*Quotes Martin Luther King, Jr. Recites.*) "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal.'"

(*Sings.*) I have a dream that every man and woman
Shall not be judged by their color, race or creed.

I have a dream that the words of Abraham are still alive,
The dream is now, it's time to sow the seed.

ABBY: (*Sings.*) I have a dream that the future of tomorrow
Will brightly shine in the eyes of every chil'.
I have a dream that the children of the world will soon be free.
With heads held high, they'll walk that blessed mile.
Let freedom ring from the highest mountain.

GEORGE: (*Sings.*) Let freedom ring on every shore.

GEORGE/ABBY: (*Sing.*)

Let freedom ring from the valleys to the heavens up above.
Let freedom ring forevermore!

ABBY: (*Sings.*) I have a dream that the people of each nation
Will walk this earth in fellowship as one.

GEORGE: (*Sings.*)
I have a dream that the brotherhood of man will still survive.
The dream is now, the march has just begun.

ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)
Let freedom ring from the highest mountain.
Let freedom ring on every shore.
Let freedom ring and touch the hearts of every living soul.

GEORGE/ABBY: (*Sing.*) Let freedom ring forevermore!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)
Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

ABBY: (*Sings.*) Let freedom ring!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Let freedom
ring!

ABBY: (*Sings.*) Up on the mountain!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Up on the
mountain!

ABBY: (*Sings.*) Let freedom ring!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Let freedom
ring!

ABBY: (*Sings.*) On every shore!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) On every
shore!

ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*)
Let freedom ring from the valleys to the heavens above.

ABBY: (*Sings.*) Let freedom ring!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Freedom ring!

ABBY: (*Sings.*) Let freedom ring!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Freedom ring!

ABBY: (*Sings.*) Let freedom ring forevermore!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sings.*) Hallelu!

GEORGE: (*Sings.*) Let freedom ring!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Let freedom
ring!

GEORGE: (*Sings.*) Up on the mountain!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: (*Sing.*) Up on the

mountain!

GEORGE: *(Sings.)* Let freedom ring!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: *(Sings.)* Let freedom ring!

GEORGE: *(Sings.)* On every shore!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: *(Sing.)* On every shore!

ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: *(Sing.)*

Let freedom ring from the valleys to the heavens above.

GEORGE: *(Sings.)* Let freedom ring!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: *(Sing.)* Freedom ring!

GEORGE: *(Sings.)* Let freedom ring!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: *(Sing.)* Freedom ring!

GEORGE: *(Sings.)* Let freedom ring!

OTHER COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: *(Sing.)* Freedom ring!

GEORGE/ABBY: *(Sing.)* Let freedom ring forevermore!

ALL COMMITTEE MEMBERS/CHORUS: *([NOTE: GEORGE and ABBY sing vocal ad-libs.] Sing.)*

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Let freedom ring! *(MUSIC OUT.)*

ABBY: Now that truly captures the spirit of the civil rights movement.

MARTHA: *(In awe.)* It's like we can almost hear the echoes of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s most celebrated speech.

TOM: *(Finally lets down his guard. A shout.)* Hallelujah! *(ALL look at him with astonished expressions.)*

SAM: Yeah, Tom, let it all out!

BETSY: Well, since we all seem to have caught the spirit, I vote we end the show with something special.

TOM: A big bang!

ABBY: Let's shoot Sam out of a cannon. *(ALL laugh.)*

SAM: I think I have a better idea.

GEORGE: Let's hear it, Sam. Use your freedom of speech, and we'll finish this play off with a big finale.

SAM: Let's invite all the men and women who have served our country

in the military to stand up and be recognized.

TOM: That's a fantastic idea. (*MUSIC CUE 11a: "Military Hymns/The Star-Spangled Banner."*)

SAM: (*To the AUDIENCE. Speaks.*) Would all the members of the armed forces, past and present, please stand when we call out your branch, and remain standing? First, the Army! Please stand. (*OPTIONAL: As each branch is announced, a STUDENT ENTERS, carrying a flag representing that particular branch of the military. You may obtain the flags from your local recruiter or V.F.W. Another option is to have actual members of the armed forces, veterans or someone from your local V.F.W. ENTER with the flags.*)

ENSEMBLE: (*Sings.*) Over hill, over dale, as we hit the dusty trail,
And the Caissons go rolling along.
In and out, hear them shout, counter march and right about,
And the Caissons go rolling along.

Then it's hi, hi, hey! The Army's on its way,
Count off the cadence loud and strong, (*A shout.*) two three!
For wher-e'er we go, you will always know
That the Caissons go rolling along.

MARTHA: (*Speaks.*) The Air Force! Please stand.

ENSEMBLE: (*Sings.*) Off we go into the wild blue yonder,
Climbing high into the sun.
Here they come zooming to meet our thunder,
At 'em, boys, give 'er the gun!

Flying men, guarding our nation's borders,
We'll be there followed by more!
In echelon we carry on,
Hey! Nothing'll stop the U.S. Air Force!

TOM: (*Speaks.*) The Coast Guard! Please stand.

ENSEMBLE: (*Sings.*) We're always ready for the call,
We place our trust in thee.
Through howling gale and shot and shell,
To win our victory.

"Semper Paratus" is our guide,
Our pledge, our motto, too.
We're "always ready," do or die!
Aye! Coast Guard, we fight for you!

ABBY: (*Speaks.*) The Navy! Please stand.

ENSEMBLE: (*Sings.*) Anchor's away, my boys, anchor's away!
Farewell to college joys, we sail at break of day.

So through our last night on shore, drink to the foam,
Until we meet once more, here's wishing you a happy voyage
home.

GEORGE: (*Speaks.*) The Marines! Please stand.

ENSEMBLE: (*Sings.*) From the halls of Montezuma

To the shores of Tripoli,
We will fight our country's battles,
In the air, on land and sea.

First to fight for right and freedom,
And to keep our honor clean.

We are proud to claim the title
Of United States Marine.

BETSY: (*Speaks.*) And now we would like to give thanks to Americans
of all ages and occupations who make this country a better place
in which to live. Would you all please stand for the singing of the
National Anthem?

ENSEMBLE/AUDIENCE: (*Sings.*)

Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed, at the twilight's last gleaming?
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched, were so gallantly streaming?

And the rockets red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.

Oh, say, does that star spangled banner yet wave,
O'er the land of the free, and the home of the brave?

BETSY: (*MUSIC OUT. To AUDIENCE.*) Thank you, you may be
seated.

TOM: America truly is the finest country to live in.

MARTHA: No doubt, I'm proud to be an American.

SAM: I really think this show will work. I like it!

ABBY: Well, if Sam likes it, we must be on to something.

TOM: Using the Constitution—the framework for our country—as the
framework of our show was a great idea, Betsy.

MARTHA: Leave it to Betsy to get us all organized!

GEORGE: I feel like our forefathers must have felt... we came together
with similar but separate ideas and worked to form something better
than any of us could have done alone.

MARTHA: I think the mayor will like it, too.

ABBY: I'm sure he will. After all, this play's a tribute to all of us. To we

the people of the United States!

ENTIRE CAST: (*MUSIC CUE 12: “We the People—Epilogue.” Sing.*)

We the people of the United States,

We the people of America!

We the people of the United States,

We the people of America!

We the people of the United States,

We the people of America!

America, America, lift your voice in song,

Walking hand in hand,

Proudly 'cross the land,

With “Old Glory” waving high!

America, America, keep your spirit free!

Spread your wings and fly,

Sounding freedom’s cry.

America! America! America!

God bless America! (*MUSIC OUT. BLACKOUT. CURTAIN.*)

END OF MUSICAL

MUSIC CUE 13: “Curtain Call.” Direct segue to **MUSIC CUE 13a:** “Together We Must Stand—Reprise.”

ENTIRE CAST: (*Sings.*)

We are one! We are the United States of America.
We are one! We are a nation indivisible.
We're one! We are the United States of America.
We are the land of the free! [NOTE: The following TWO STANZAS
are sung as a DUET.]

CHORUS ONE: (*Sings.*)

We are one! We are the United States of America.
We are one! We are a nation indivisible.
We're one! We are the United States of America.
We are the land of the free!

CHORUS TWO: (*Sings.*) My country 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing.

ENTIRE CAST: (*Sings.*) We are the land of the free!

PRODUCTION NOTES

PROPERTIES

ONSTAGE: Six chairs, American flag, miscellaneous boxes or chairs and tables that can be used as representational set pieces in the vignettes.

ACT ONE, Scene One: Pens, pencils, notebooks, backpacks (COMMITTEE MEMBERS); purse with Preamble inside (BETSY); table and chair, papers, pencil (TAXPAYER); book (TEACHER).

ACT ONE, Scene Two: Table and chair, history book (DAUGHTER); chair, newspaper (DAD).

ACT ONE, Scene Three: Chair, map (WIFE); chair, wallet, indication of license and registration (HUSBAND).

ACT ONE, Scene Four: Picnic blanket, picnic basket that includes four plates, wrapped sandwiches (MOTHER, FATHER); baseball glove, baseball (MARK); baseball glove (BARRY).

ACT ONE, Scene Five: Black top hat (TOM); chair, shawl, flowers (MOTHER); parchment letter (PROFESSOR); dishcloth (HOUSEWIFE).

ACT TWO, Scene One: Microphone (REPORTER).

ACT TWO, Scene Two: Table, two chairs, checkers set (TWO MEN); shawl, cloth coat (IMMIGRANT).

ACT TWO, Scene Three: Compact disc (TEACHER TWO); world map, small calculator (TEACHER THREE); picture of space station

(TEACHER FOUR); postcard of World Trade Center, newspaper article (TEACHER FIVE).

ACT TWO, Scene Four: Rakes, copy of Bill of Rights (NEIGHBORS).

FLEXIBLE CASTING

This musical has a highly flexible cast of 12 to 39 plus a CHORUS of any size. Besides the six COMMITTEE MEMBERS, each vignette can be performed by the same ensemble members (A minimum of six are needed.) or by a larger group of any number up to the 33 separate roles. Practically all roles, including the six COMMITTEE MEMBERS, can be played male or female. For more of a “cabaret-style” show, you could even perform this show with only six actors, having them step from their roles as COMMITTEE MEMBERS into the vignette roles.

ABOUT THE CHORUS

We the People—The Musical was written to involve a chorus of any size, which may be onstage or off on either side of the stage. While having them stand on risers would be effective, please consider the length of this musical and keep in mind the safety of your chorus members. It might be best to have chairs available, with the chorus standing whenever they perform.

In the sequence of musical numbers at the front of this play book, only certain songs indicate a CHORUS. While this is how the musical was written, feel free to add choral accompaniment to any music cue, if desired. For the BACKGROUND CHORUS parts in MUSIC CUES 2 and 5a, please refer to the piano score, vocal score or rehearsal CD for the “sha doo bee doos,” “oohs,” “aahs,” and other underscoring lyrics.

COSTUMING

There are minimal costuming requirements for the show. While the majority of the characters dress in casual, contemporary clothes, the three MINUTEMEN, two POLICE OFFICERS and IMMIGRANT will require specific yet simple, suggestive costuming for their short appearances.

Add color to your production with the costuming for the CHORUS. For instance, the CHORUS can be dressed in many different ways: 1) In red, white and blue. 2) In period costumes representing different eras of American history (colonial, pioneer, flapper, WWII soldier, etc.). 3) In costumes representing various American occupations (farmer,

We the People—The Musical had its premiere reading
at the Actor's Community Playhouse in
Littleton, Colorado on April 19, 2003.

A gracious thank you to
director Randy Roberts Souza and
the following actors and actresses
for their time and dedication to this project:

Debbie Hogue Souza

Sheila Hogue Heasley

Sarah Souza

Patricia Sasso

Gloria Foster

Jayne Nelson

Bonnie Ackermann

Jason Sare

ZJ Czupor

Mark Nelson

Jared Bess

Trestan Peck

Michael Moore

Sean McGowan

Thank you for reading this E-view.

This E-view script from Pioneer Drama Service will stay permanently in your Pioneer Library, so you can view it whenever you log in on our website. Please feel free to save it as a pdf document to your computer if you wish to share it via email with colleagues assisting you with your show selection.

To produce this show, you can order scripts for your cast and crew and arrange for performance royalties via our website or by phone, fax, or mail.

If you'd like advice on other plays or musicals to read, our customer service representatives are happy to assist you when you call 800.333.7262 during normal business hours.

Thank you for your interest in our plays and musicals.



www.pioneerdrama.com

800.333.7262

Outside of North America 303.779.4035

Fax 303.779.4315

PO Box 4267

Englewood, CO 80155-4267

We're here to help!

DIRECTORS LOVE PIONEER DRAMA SERVICE

CHOOSE HOW YOU RECEIVE YOUR SCRIPTS.

We give you more delivery options than any other publisher for receiving both your preview scripts and your full production orders. See our website for more about our many electronic delivery options for both preview and production orders.

TRUST OUR INTEGRITY.

Our family-owned and operated company is proud to offer wholesome scripts appropriate for children's and community theatres, schools, and churches.

STAY WITHIN A REASONABLE BUDGET.

Our affordable scripts offer straightforward costuming, trouble-free props and stage effects, and sets that can be as simple or as elaborate as you desire.

MAINTAIN CONTROL OF YOUR CASTING.

We help you tailor your play for your specific cast size, not the other way around.

BE ORIGINAL.

Get access to fresh, new musicals that let your actors practice true character development instead of simply mimicking Disney or the musicals that are done over and over again.

ENJOY FLEXIBLE PRODUCTION OPTIONS.

All Pioneer Drama plays and musicals can be licensed for traditional, livestreamed, recorded, or online performances. Once you've set up your royalties, you can switch your performance type with no restrictions if your plans change.