Write the letters in the word C-I-T-I-Z-E-N vertically on the (interactive) white board and distribute a page with the same design to students. Have students work in pairs to complete an “acrostic” based on the word by: writing other words beginning with the same letter that describe citizens in the United States. Discuss how someone *becomes* a citizen in the general sense of the word.

Distribute the text and have students examine it briefly. Discuss the definition of the word *Preamble* and talk about what this text might be based on its title. Have students number the sentences (1) in the text and then count the words (52).
Background Information:

Share as appropriate: The Preamble to the United States Constitution is a brief introductory statement of the Constitution's fundamental purposes and guiding principles. It states in general terms, and courts have referred to it as reliable evidence of, the Founding Fathers' intentions regarding the Constitution's meaning and what they hoped the Constitution would achieve.

Note that early drafts of the Preamble listed all of the contemporary states rather than the now famous phrase: “We the people of the United States…”

Vocabulary:

Note that one of the most significant values of this seminar cycle involves learning the key vocabulary that is included in this one sentence. Ask students to identify key words from the Preamble that are unfamiliar. List those words on the board (including: Preamble, Constitution, Union, Justice, Tranquility, Welfare, Posterity, ordain, etc.). Divide the class into groups to define these words for the entire class. Discuss as a whole class and produce an annotated version of the Preamble with these words defined.

Analytical Read:

Use the (interactive) whiteboard to divide the text into eight distinct units (divide the text at each comma). Assign the eight units to eight small groups and ask them to summarize each section in modern English. Go over the whole text and create a “translation” of this 19th Century document in modern English.

Pre-Seminar Process

Define and state purpose for Paideia Seminar.
Describe the responsibilities of facilitator and participants.
Have participants set a Personal Goal.
Seminar Questions

Opening (Identify main ideas from the text.):

- What is the single, most important word in the Preamble? (round-robin response)
- What makes that word so significant? (spontaneous discussion)

Core (Analyze textual details.):

- Why do you think the authors of the Preamble chose to capitalize the words that they did?
- What do you think the authors mean by “domestic Tranquility”? Why is it important?
- What do you think they mean by “general Welfare”? Why is that important?
- Of the six purposes for the Constitution given here, which do you think is most important? Why?
- Based on this Preamble, what do you think is the purpose for the Constitution? Do you think it has changed in the 200 plus years since?

Closing (Personalize and apply the ideas.):

- If we were to revise the Constitution for the 21st Century, what purpose would you choose to add to those that are already given? Why?
Post-Seminar Process

- Have participants do a written self-assessment of their personal participation goal.
- Do a group assessment of the social and intellectual goals of seminar.
- Note reminders for next seminar.

Post-Seminar Content

Transition to Writing:

Have participants take notes to brainstorm ideas that they heard, read, and thought during seminar related to the ideas under discussion (and the Launch Activity).

Writing Task:

Of the six purposes for the U.S. Constitution given in the Preamble, which is most important? After reading and discussing the Preamble to the Constitution, write a full paragraph in which you answer the question and explain your reasons based on the text. Support your opinion with evidence from the Preamble. (Argumentation/Explain)

(LDC Task#: 2)

Brainstorm:

Working with all the materials generated so far during this seminar cycle, work with the whole class to generate a list of words that would be especially valuable in responding to the writing task. Display that list on the board and suggest that students use at least 75% of the words on the list in their writing.
**Structure the Writing:**

Allow a few minutes for all to sketch an outline for their writing. Draft the outline and use it to refine their thinking.

**First Draft:**

Challenge all to draft their argumentative paragraphs by listing key points in support of their thesis. Refer to the text in detail.

**Collaborative Revision:**

Have participants work in pairs to read their first drafts aloud to each other with emphasis on reader as creator and editor. Listener says back one point heard clearly and asks one question for clarification. Switch roles. Give time for full revisions resulting in a second draft.

**Edit:**

Once the second draft is complete, have participants work in groups of three-four and this time take turns reading each other’s second drafts slowly and silently, marking any spelling or grammar errors they find. (Have dictionaries and grammar handbooks available for reference.) Take this opportunity to clarify/reteach any specific grammar strategies you have identified your students needing. Give time for full revisions resulting in a third and final draft.

**Publish:**

Display in your classroom (or in the hallway outside) the Preamble broken down into its eight units, stressing the six purposes given for the Constitution. Display the final version of the student paragraphs by the appropriate purpose. Invite other upper elementary classes to a gallery walk to read and discuss your students’ arguments.

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This Paideia Lesson Plan was created by:

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We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, 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.

(Source - http://constitutionus.com/)