

Name _____

Unlocking the Constitution: How Amendments Are Made

Short Answer Key

1. Amendments can be proposed by Congress with a two-thirds majority vote in both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Alternatively, a constitutional convention can be called by Congress at the request of two-thirds of state legislatures, although this method has never been used.
2. State legislatures have the authority to ratify amendments by a three-fourths majority vote. They play a crucial role in determining whether proposed amendments become part of the Constitution.
3. Requiring a three-fourths majority for ratification ensures broad consensus and prevents hasty changes to the Constitution. It reflects the importance of widespread support among states before amending the supreme law of the land.
4. An example is the First Amendment, which protects freedoms of speech, religion, press, assembly, and petition. It is significant because it safeguards fundamental rights and liberties, allowing for free expression and the exercise of religion without government interference.
5. The framers recognized the need for flexibility and adaptability in the Constitution to address changing circumstances and societal values. The amendment process allows the Constitution to remain relevant while ensuring that changes are made deliberately and with broad support.

