

Name _____

Freedom of Speech, Religion, and the Press: The First Amendment's Safeguards

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. The First Amendment is significant because it protects fundamental freedoms such as freedom of speech, religion, and the press, which are essential for a vibrant democracy. It ensures that citizens can express themselves, practice their faith, and access accurate information without government interference.
2. In a scenario where freedom of speech is not protected, society may become repressive, and individuals may fear expressing their opinions. This could stifle creativity, hinder progress, and lead to a lack of open debate and discussion.
3. A real-life example of a test of freedom of religion is the Supreme Court case of *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*. It involved a baker who refused to create a wedding cake for a same-sex couple based on his religious beliefs, raising questions about the balance between religious freedom and anti-discrimination laws.
4. Limitations on freedom of speech are important in a democracy to prevent harm, protect public safety, and maintain civil discourse. For example, hate speech can incite violence and harm marginalized communities, making it necessary to set boundaries on speech to ensure a safe and respectful society.

