Essential Question:
How has the Covid 19 pandemic information and facts changed over time?

Instructions:
1. As we move through this historic pandemic around COVID-19, journal how our government reacts to a nation in crisis. Document where you get your sources of information, noting why those sources are credible. A journal entry can be as simple as a paragraph documenting info and dates. **Be sure to put in what you are feeling and going through during the week.**

2. Maintain a journal of events by making at least 3 different entries each week. Below is the focus that each week’s journal should touch on. It can be online using Google Docs or on paper.

3. Choose one of the following ways to present your information: a Paper, a Journal (Paper), a PowerPoint or a Video Journal.

Week #5
Focus on the Rights of the People vs Government restrictions. This week, we want you thinking about the Bill of Rights and how the gov’t is creating rules for people to follow that may go against the Bill of Rights (BoR).

**Background** - When the BoR was written in 1791, the Founding Fathers wanted to make sure to limit the Federal Gov’t from becoming too big and taking rights away from the American people that they fought the Revolutionary War for. Within the BoR, there are definitive lines drawn that state the “federal government can’t.” For example, the Federal gov’t can’t take away your right to free speech, your freedom to assemble or your right to exercise your faith. There are also certain powers that are given to the States and forbidden to the Federal gov’t.

**Questions to ponder** - With this pandemic, many States have been enforcing limits that are prohibited for the Federal gov’t to enforce when it comes to the first and second amendments. What we want you writing about is how you feel about these restrictions as you are going through the pandemic. For example - one day write your thoughts about limiting religious services during this time. In another entry you could write about how some states are limiting gun purchases during this time or maybe your right to assemble with others when and where you want to. Some may think it’s good the gov’t is enforcing these limits and others may not like it at all - **tell us what you think and why!**

Below are a few sources that may help you in your process. You may or may not use them in your own journaling: they are here to help you.


A Teenager Posted About Her COVID-19 Infection on Instagram. A Deputy Threatened To Arrest Her If She Didn't Delete It.

Now the family is suing. SCOTT SHACKFORD | 4.17.2020 12:50 PM , Reason.com

A family in Oxford, Wisconsin, is suing the local sheriff's department after a patrol sergeant threatened to arrest a teenage girl for disorderly conduct for posting on Instagram about being infected with COVID-19.

Amyiah Cohoon, 16, is a student at Westfield Area High School in Westfield, Wisconsin. According to this lawsuit, she and schoolmates went to Disney World and Universal Studios in Florida for a spring break trip in early March, right as the coronavirus was beginning to spread and businesses began to shut down. She and her classmates canceled the trip early and returned home.

Once home, Cohoon began developing symptoms associated with COVID-19. She sought medical assistance, but at the time they were unable to test her to see if she was infected. She was diagnosed with an upper respiratory infection with "symptoms consistent with COVID-19," according to the lawsuit.

Cohoon went home and posted on Instagram letting people know that she had COVID-19 and was in self-quarantine. Her condition worsened and she was brought to the hospital for treatment. She posted again about the experience on Instagram. Finally, they were able to test her, but the test came back negative. According to the lawsuit, doctors told her it was likely she missed the window for testing positive, but she probably did have COVID-19, despite the test results. (False negative results have been an ongoing issue in accurately diagnosing infections.)

After she returned home from this visit, she posted again on Instagram and included a picture of herself at the hospital wearing an oxygen mask.

The very next day, Patrol Sergeant Cameron Klump from Marquette County Sheriff's Department showed up on the family's doorstep. He was there under orders from Sheriff Joseph Konrath to demand that Amyiah and her father, Richard Cohoon, remove Amyiah's Instagram posts. If they refused, Klump said the family faced charges for disorderly conduct and Klump told them he would "start taking people to jail," according to the suit.

Konrath's justification was that there had been no confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the county. He found out about the Instagram post from Amyiah's high school. The Cohoon family had contacted the school to let them know about Amyiah's infection, but nobody ever contacted them back to get more information. It appears that instead the school contacted the police. Under the threat of arrest, Cohoon complied and deleted the allegedly illegal Instagram post.

That evening the family would discover that a school administrator sent out an alert to families accusing Cohoon of making it up and assuring families that any information of infection was just a rumor. "Let me assure you there is NO truth to this," the message read. "This was a foolish means to get attention and the source of the rumor has been addressed. This rumor had caught the attention of our Public Health Department and she was involved in putting a stop to this nonsense."

The family then connected with the Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty, and the Institute sent a letter to Konrath warning him that he had violated Cohoon's First Amendment rights and demanded both an apology and the promise that there would be no further threats of criminal charges against the family for Amyiah's post.

Konrath refused, and now the Wisconsin Institute of Law and Liberty is suing Konrath and Klump in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Wisconsin for violating Cohoon's First and 14th Amendment rights. Her Instagram posts are protected speech, the Institute argues, and there was nothing about her posts that violated the county's disorderly conduct law, and even if they did, the Wisconsin Supreme Court has held that disorderly conduct statutes in the state cannot be applied to speech protected by the First Amendment.
The Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty is asking the court to rule that Cohoon's posts were protected speech and order that the sheriff's department may not threaten or cite Cohoon or her family for these posts, plus paying "nominal damages."

The sheriff's department is not backing down or even acknowledging an overreaction. According to the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, their position remains that the one negative test means that she did not have COVID-19, which simply isn't how it works. The Sentinel reports:

Sam Hall, an attorney for the sheriff, said the teenager "caused distress and panic" among other parents by claiming she had contracted the coronavirus despite getting a negative test result.

"This case is nothing more than a 2020 version of screaming fire in a crowded theater," he said, referring to speech that is not protected by the First Amendment.

That the sheriff's lawyer is misusing the much-maligned "fire in a crowded theater" argument from Schenck v. United States is a huge tell that these guys don't have a leg to stand on. It's a bad argument, a bad precedent (it was about censoring anti-war activism), and the Supreme Court has subsequently weakened that decision and broadened our free speech protections.

And even if that ruling remained relevant, Amyiah Cohoon was not engaging in the equivalent of "shouting fire in a crowded theater." Because of the significant number of false negative test results, it's appropriate for health staff to treat her as though she likely has COVID-19 based on her symptoms. It's also appropriate for the Cohoon family to attempt to warn families of the students who went with her to Florida that they might have been exposed, too.

It's the school officials and the police who behaved irresponsibly, not Amyiah or her family.

Officials Debate Whether Gun Stores Are 'Essential' During Coronavirus Outbreak

March 27, 20206:52 PM ET    BOBBY ALLYN, NPR.org

More than 200 million people in about half of the states are under orders to stay indoors to slow the transmission of the coronavirus.

Under those decrees, businesses have closed unless deemed "essential," which has sparked a nationwide debate among state and local leaders: Should gun stores be considered essential?

"A lot of people may find themselves in situations where they may need to be their own first responders," said Michael Cargill, who runs Central Texas Gun Works in Austin.

Gun owners, he said, "want to protect their family in case things go the other way."

John Feinblatt, president of Everytown for Gun Safety, which advocates for gun control measures, said labeling gun retailers as "essential" in the midst of a global pandemic is not in the public's best interest.

"Guns will not make Americans safer in the face of COVID-19," Feinblatt said. "Gun stores do not deserve special treatment. In fact, a surge in gun sales will put many communities at greater risk if guns aren't stored securely and if background checks aren't completed."

Increasing concerns for gun control advocates are reports of people using firearms out of fear created by the coronavirus crisis. In Alpharetta, Ga., for instance, a man was arrested for allegedly pulling out a gun on two women wearing medical masks at a post office because he worried they had the coronavirus.

Gun and ammo sales have rocketed since the outbreak surfaced. And some of the panic driving the purchases is also present because of what gun rights advocates see as preserving their constitutional right to bear arms. They argue short-term emergency restrictions on gun sales could erode their enshrined rights.

"Just because we're in a pandemic, American rights do not go away," Mark Oliva, a spokesman for the National Shooting Sports Foundation, told NPR. "There are disparate interpretations on how people want to view these orders, but the Second Amendment is unequivocal."

Indeed, whether or not gun shops are essential amid a global health crisis appears to be creating a patchwork of differing rules and guidelines state by state and stoking anew the tussle between gun advocates and gun control groups.

A patchwork of orders over whether gun shops are 'essential'
In Pennsylvania, Gov. Tom Wolf allowed gun shops to open with new social distancing rules at the urging of some justices on the state's high court.

The Los Angeles County sheriff has twice ordered gun shops to close. His initial decision was followed by an outcry and an opinion from the county's top lawyers that gun retailers could keep their doors open during the pandemic. Asked who was right, Gov. Gavin Newsom said it was up to local sheriffs.

Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton said Friday that purchasing and possession of firearms during the pandemic is indeed essential.

Washington state is shuttering gun shops by not listing firearm retailers on its list of essential operations.

In New Orleans, the mayor issued an emergency proclamation that allows for the suspension of "alcoholic beverages, firearms and explosives" if deemed necessary.

Meanwhile, in other parts of the country, the question awaits the outcome of legal battles.

Lawyers with the New Jersey Second Amendment Society filed a federal lawsuit this week against the state's governor for not classifying gun retailers as essential.

Mark Olivia with the National Shooting Sports Foundation said his group has been in talks with the Trump administration to make sure firearm manufacturers do not experience a disruption during the pandemic.

He said Department of Homeland Security officials have told him gun-makers will be added to a list of "critical infrastructure" sectors that will keep businesses open during the crisis.

"The majority of law enforcement departments rely on their local retailers to supply them with the firearms and ammunition that they need," Olivia said. "So it comes down to the public safety missions police departments have right now. Those missions are not ending. In fact, it's more critical than ever during the pandemic."

FBI data has shown a surge in background checks for gun purchases since the beginning of the year, a trend experts say is, in part, attributed to 2020 being a presidential election year prompting concerns about the possibility of new gun restrictions ahead.

**Chuches across the US are holding in-person services despite public health orders. One pastor was even arrested and charged with unlawful assembly.**

*Kelly McLaughlin Mar 30, 2020, 4:23 PM, Insider.com*

Megachurches in Ohio, Florida, and Louisiana, are still holding in-person services despite calls for social distancing to help prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Politicians and health officials have repeatedly warned about the coronavirus spreading across the US in recent weeks, and many faith-based communities are resorting to live-stream and drive-in services to accommodate parishioners while they can't come to church.

But some churches are continuing in-person services for their congregations despite orders from city and state officials, as well as guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Police in Florida announced on Monday that one pastor, Ronald Howard-Browne had been arrested after continuing services. Hillsborough County Sheriff Chad Chronister said he "intentionally and repeatedly disregarded state and local public health orders."

Howard-Browne, pastor of The River at Tampa Bay Church, held two large services over the weekend and had been encouraging his congregation to meet in person, according to My FOX 8. He's facing charges of unlawful assembly and violation of public health emergency rules.

Some pastors argue that places of worship should be considered essential services

Howard-Browne suggested that religion was an essential service while defending his decision to hold services in a Facebook Live post seen by My FOX 8.
"I'm not again negating that people are dying from the coronavirus," he said. "We're not saying that, just saying that the thing is blown totally way out of proportion and if you shut the church down, the church is not a non-essential service."

In Louisiana, Pastor Tony Spell, of Baton Rouge, is still holding services at his Apostolic Life Tabernacle Church for hundreds of people every Sunday and Tuesday, even though the state's governor, John Bel Edwards, limited public gatherings to 50 people or fewer.

Spell's service on Sunday had more than 550 people in attendance, according to Bloomberg.

Despite Spell, too, calling church an essential service, Governor Edwards had previously told CNN affiliate WVLA that faith leaders should stop holding mass gatherings.

In Lebanon, Ohio, Solid Rock Church, a congregation with 3,500 members, according to Bloomberg, also held services Sunday.

The church had cited the first amendment right to religious assembly in its decision to hold the services, while the local health department urged parishioners not to meet.

**One poll says 17% of Americans were still attending worship services in person as of last week**

According to a nationally representative poll published on Friday by Buzzfeed News, 17% of respondents said they were still attending worship services in person, while 22% of respondents said they had been "encouraged" to do so.

While most states have ordered places of worship to close in their stay-at-home orders, New York, Pennsylvania, Michigan, California, Louisiana, and Ohio issued exemptions for such establishments while also urging people to practice social distancing.

Rachel Laser, the president and CEO of the nonprofit advocacy group Americans United for the Separation of Church and State, told ABC News that a number of COVID-19 cases spread through religious congregations.

"We recognize that many people find solace in attending religious services, especially during uncertain times such as these, and thus share in the deep sorrow that the already challenging coronavirus situation also means temporarily halting in-person religious services," Laser said.