

# UNIT



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## *Citizenship: Political Recognition & Personal Responsibility*

### ◆ **OBJECTIVES**

- 1) Understand the nature of citizenship
- 2) Understand the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship
- 3) Understand one's role in the civic life of the nation
- 4) Participate in class discussion and problem-solving
- 5) Pursue Internet research of basic terms and concepts

### ◆ **TOOLS and MATERIALS NEEDED**

- 1) Web access for online projects and research
- 2) Surveys and handouts

### ◆ **ACTIVITIES**

- 1) Group Activity 1: Learning the History of the Word "Citizenship"
- 2) Group Activity 2: The Oath of Citizenship
- 3) Group Activity 3: Sample Civics Test from the Immigration and Naturalization Service

### **SUMMARY of the LESSON**

This lesson will explore the character and nature of citizenship in American democracy. It explores how individuals become American citizens, including concepts of immigration and naturalization. Citizenship reveals the kind of relationship that exists between the individual and his or her political community. At its most basic level, citizenship is a matter of political recognition and responsibility. *Recognition* includes all the different rights and freedoms a community extends to its members. *Responsibility* includes the role the individual plays in preserving those rights and freedoms.

# *Citizenship*

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## *Implementation Outline*

- 1. Introduction: What is citizenship? What is its nature?**
- 2. What does citizenship mean in America? How does one become an American citizen?**
- 3. Did everyone freely choose to come to America? Find out how many students know when they or their families decided to immigrate to America.**
- 4. What does political recognition mean?**
- 5. What are the responsibilities of citizenship?**
- 6. What are some of the benefits of citizenship?**
- 7. What is the difference between being a citizen and a subject? Is there a difference between being a good citizen and being a good person?**


# TEACHER'S GUIDE to CLASS DISCUSSION

## UNIT 3: Citizenship

### *Teacher's Note!*

Use these questions to spark a discussion with your students about citizenship, specifically its responsibilities and benefits. The Internet resources are offered as tools to expand and/or deeper the examination of citizenship.

### 1. What is citizenship? What is its nature?

- According to the Grolier Encyclopedia *citizenship* is a relationship between an individual and a state involving the individual's full political membership in the state and his and her permanent allegiance to it. Other persons may be subject to the authority of the state and may even owe it allegiance, but the citizen has duties, rights, responsibilities, and privileges that the noncitizen shares to a lesser degree or not at all. The status of citizen is official recognition of the individual's integration into the political system.
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- What does it mean to be a citizen? This is a complex question. Different kinds of communities define the question differently. History, geography, culture, language all play different roles in defining what it means to be a citizen. Some places define citizenship by birth and geography (where you are when you are born), others by parentage or ethnic identity, others by culture (e.g., family history, language use), and others by ideology (understood as a system of beliefs and practices).
  - Across history, three general outlines follow of different political communities and their conceptions of citizenship.
    - In a **monarchy**, the majority of **Acitizens@** (the term was not customarily used in such a community) did not have a voice in public debates. Political power was restricted to a minority of aristocrats who controlled most of the land and wealth in the land. Monarchies arranged persons in a hierarchy of authority and obedience in a scale from top to bottom: king to nobles to commoners. As monarchies developed, legal structures emerged to restrict the power of the king and ruling families and provide some recognition of political **Arights@** to the broader society. Although some constitutional monarchies remain, the authority of the monarch is now largely ceremonial. Few countries accept in principle the authority of a single individual to rule over subjects because of family history or an ordained vision of society. In a monarchy, a good **Acitizen@** is a subject; he is not an agent in the public life.
    - **Marxism**, in theory, praised the value of communal solidarity and expected its citizens to sacrifice their private claims for the greater good of the state. Under communism, a good citizen devotes his time and energy to the whole, even at the expense of his own interest or family. This disregard for individual claims led to

profound abuses and corruption. Ultimately, this model of politics and concept of human nature, as implemented, failed to satisfy the needs and aspirations of its members and is now in the process of fading from the political stage.

- **Democracy** means rule of the many. Its authority rests upon the freedom of the whole community to participate in the public life through discussion and election of political representatives. It requires people to pay attention to public matters and get involved in debates about the future of society. It requires respect for differences of opinion and the rule of law. One must be informed and involved in public life, vote, support local organizations that serve the common good, and obey the laws of the land in letter and spirit.

**Internet Resources**



**What Does It Mean To Be A Citizen In A Democracy?** This is the question that the Ohio Literacy Network tries to answer in its website. According to that source, being a citizen means three things: voting, communicating with elected officers, and volunteering. Find out more about each of them and share it with your students

<http://literacy.kent.edu/Oasis/Resc/Educ/vote2.html>



**Group Activity 1: Learning the History of the Word “Citizenship.”** The goal of this activity is to explore the history of words and their meaning(s). Words have a history that is key to understanding how concepts and cultures change. Explore with your students the history of the word *Citizenship* (see Handout 1).


**2. What does citizenship mean in America? How does one become an American citizen?**



***The meaning of the word American***

Thanks to the Italian cartographer and sailor *Amerigo Vespucci*, who accompanied Christopher Columbus in his discovery of the New World, our continent is called America. Although any individual living in any of the 42 countries of the American continent may call him/herself American, the word is customarily used to designate the people from the United States of America. We acknowledge the broader meaning of the word American, but we use it in this curriculum when referring to the people from the United States of America.

- One can become an U.S. citizen in three ways: (1) by being born in the United States of America, (2) by being born to American parents, (3) or by formal application.
- Some of us were born here (or on American property overseas such as military bases or American hospitals), whereby, we are recognized as U.S. citizens. Some of us were born overseas to U.S. citizens, but we are still U.S. citizens (and perhaps we may have more than one citizenship!).
- Most people who were born in the U.S. or have U.S. parents may take their citizenship for granted. They do not have to think about it on a regular basis. They did not apply for it. They do not see citizenship as a matter of daily focus or concern. Although Americans pay attention to politics, very few are directly involved in the system. Approximately fifty percent of eligible voters take advantage of that right.
- Immigrants can become citizens through a process called *naturalization*. This process takes many years and requires the applicant to demonstrate residency in the United States, competency in English, understanding of American history and constitutional philosophy, and be a person of good, moral character. The United States of America is not perfect, yet immigrants can appreciate the differences between our way of life and their home.
- Once someone has legally moved here and applied for citizenship, his ethnic or cultural background does not limit his chances for citizenship. Americans do not define citizenship by origin, race or religion but by the willingness to understand and support the principles of the constitution. In general, American citizenship is a matter of political, social, and economic identity and not one's family or ethnic history. However, high acceptance rates for political asylum applicants from countries such as Cuba and Haiti would suggest that geopolitics and geography are not unimportant, after all, to become a U.S. citizen.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Internet Resources</b></p> 	<p><b>Becoming a U.S. citizen!</b> According to the Ben's Guide to U.S. Government, any person from a foreign country who wants to become a U.S. citizen needs to follow three specific steps. Learn more about this process and share it with your students.</p> <p><a href="http://bensguide.gpo.gov/9-12/citizenship/citizenship.html">http://bensguide.gpo.gov/9-12/citizenship/citizenship.html</a></p> <p>Check also the <b>Learning Booth</b> provided by the Utah Education Network to find out more about the process of naturalization</p> <p><a href="http://www.voteutah.org/learning/citizenship/become.html">http://www.voteutah.org/learning/citizenship/become.html</a></p>
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**Group Activity 2: *The Oath of Citizenship.*** Read with your students the oath. Follow the Handout 2 guide to initiate a group discussion regarding the Oath.



**Group Activity 3: *Sample Civics Test.*** Take with your students a sample of the civics tests that emigrants have to take in order to obtain the U.S. citizenship. You will find 24 questions with they respective answer (see Handout 3).

**3. Did everyone freely choose to come to America? Find out how many students know when they or their families decided to immigrate to America.**

- Once someone has legally moved here and applied for citizenship, his ethnic or cultural background does not limit his chances for citizenship. Americans do not define citizenship by origin, race or religion, but by the willingness to understand and support the principles of the constitution. Ultimately, American citizenship is a matter of political identity and not one's family or ethnic history. Americans understand themselves as committed to constitutional principles, beliefs and practices they share with fellow Americans. For American citizenship, ideas matter more than where someone was born or who their parents are.
- The majority of Americans descend from immigrants who decided or were forced to leave their countries behind. Native Africans, for instance, became involuntary migrants as a result of the slave trade that took place when the New World was discovered. A similar situation happened to Native Americans who were conquered by the Europeans and to Mexicans who lived in the land taken by the United States. Throughout our history many immigrants have come to the U.S. because of political or religious oppression took place in their homeland. Many come in pursuit of economic and educational opportunity.

**Internet Resources**



If you want to learn more about immigrant history, log on the PBS web site **The New Americans**

<http://www.pbs.org/kcet/newamericans/>

We also recommend the Library of the Congress' exhibition **The African American Odyssey: A Quest for Full Citizenship**, which contains valuable information and historical documents.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/aahtml/exhibit/aointro.html>

#### **4. What does political recognition mean?**

- *Political Recognition:* What does citizenship mean? At a basic level, a citizen is someone who has rights and responsibilities. The state *recognizes* that a citizen enjoys certain freedoms to pursue different concepts of the good life, and express themselves and their political opinions without fear of persecution. In this democracy we are free to express ourselves and pursue our interests as long as they do not infringe upon the health and interests of others.
- The state also recognizes certain basic protections of individuals from religious, political, and or legal prosecution. American citizens are presumed innocent until proven guilty. Furthermore, the state seeks to promote the common good by providing basic services such as transportation networks, education and hospitalization for those living within its borders.


#### **5. What are the responsibilities of citizenship?**

- Citizens participate in civic life. They do this by paying attention to public matters and political campaigns and voting accordingly. Democracy requires that citizens are informed and involved in the elective and legislative process. If they disagree with proposed policies, they need to speak out and get organized. Citizens get involved in their local communities by supporting organizations with time and money. They may serve on local school councils or parent/teacher associations, coach an after-school program, volunteer at a local soup kitchen. They read the paper and voice their opinions in the media and to politicians and bureaucrats. Citizens get to know their neighbors. They learn to respect the opinions and practices of others, even when they differ from each other. Democracy requires that different individuals can agree to disagree. Although minors cannot vote that does not exclude them from the responsibilities of citizenship in other civic activities.
- The health of our nation depends upon the willingness of its members to assume the burdens of citizenship. A democracy requires that all adult citizens vote responsibly, pay taxes, obey the laws in letter and spirit, and participate in various forums of public life, whether as volunteer, board member in community based organizations and charities.

#### **6. What are some of the benefits of citizenship and democracy?**

- Citizenship allows people to vote. They can participate in our representative democracy by choosing politicians that reflect their views on public policy. Or they can decide to run for office. Citizens are entitled to an American passport that allows one to travel overseas where they enjoy the protection of the American government if persecuted by a foreign government. Citizens cannot be deported to another country. If they have family or friends who wish to move to America and apply for citizenship, they can sponsor these individuals during the legal process.

- Furthermore, citizens are eligible for many welfare benefits (such as food stamps or medical aid). In many cases, legal alien residents might also be eligible for some benefits such as K to 12 education.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Internet Resources</b></p> 	<p>For more information, visit the <b>Immigration and Naturalization Service</b> web page  <a href="http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/index.htm">http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/index.htm</a></p>
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**Knowing the Facts!**

In Handout 4, we have included some of the benefits listed by U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS).

**7. What is the difference between being a citizen and a subject? Is there a difference between being a good citizen and being a good person?**

- Citizens enjoy the freedom to participate in public life. They can make their voices heard in the political process. They may not win every argument or election, but they can remain engaged in public debates and deliberations. Subjects do not enjoy these privileges or responsibilities. Kings and tyrants do not want citizens to participate in public life. They want people to listen and obey. A subject is passive and allows the ruler(s) to dictate policies and priorities.
- We like to believe that our country is a place of justice and laws that allow people to live together and participate in civic life. But we also realize that many barriers exist that prevent people from participating completely in community life. Historically, women, the poor, minorities and recent immigrants have been excluded from enjoying full public participation. Good citizens obey the laws of their community, but what do we do if those laws support injustice? If we live in a place that legalizes slavery, can we be good citizens and good persons? The civil rights movement in this country that extended voting privileges to women and African Americans challenged existing laws that prevented all adults from voicing their opinions through the election process.
- Consider our more recent concerns about the environment. Most people consider the recognition of private property to be a central ingredient in social life and prosperity. But does ownership of land give one the right to pollute? Environmentalists have challenged existing laws that ignore the consequences of pollution to the larger society.

## ***WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?***

- ❖ **The meaning of citizenship must be understood historically and culturally.**
- ❖ **Citizenship provides rights and entails responsibilities.**
- ❖ **American citizenship requires a commitment to the principles and practices of constitutional democracy**
- ❖ **Becoming a citizen does not just happen. Citizenship results from the actions, habits and beliefs of individuals committed to public life.**
- ❖ **Citizenship means being the kind of person who finds out about public issues, makes his or her opinion heard, and listens to others respectfully. It means getting involved. It means being part of the solution to the challenges of public life.**

## ***KEY TERMS or CONCEPTS***

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\*Unless otherwise noted, all definitions are taken from Webster Dictionary at <http://www.m-w.com>

- ❖ ***Immigration/immigrant:*** a person who comes to a country to take up permanent residence; to enter a country and usually become established; to come into a country of which one is not a native for the purpose of permanent residence.
- ❖ ***Naturalization:*** to confer the rights of a national on; especially to admit to citizenship; to become established as a native.
- ❖ ***Political recognition:*** the action of recognizing; the state of being recognized; formal acknowledgment of the political existence of a government or nation.
- ❖ ***Rights:*** qualities (as adherence to duty or obedience to lawful authority) that together constitute the ideal of moral propriety or merit moral approval; something to which one has a just claim such as the power or privilege to which one is justly entitled. Something that one may properly claim as due.



## ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS INDEX

The Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science were developed using the 1985 Illinois State Goals for Social Science, the National Standards for World History, the National Standards for United States History, the National Geography Standards, and National Standards for Civics and Government, other various state and national work, and local standards contributed by team members.

### *Online Resource:*

Information regarding the Illinois State Board of Education Learning Standards can be found online at: <http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/default0.html>

### **Illinois Learning Standards Alignment**

State Goal	1	Read with understanding and fluency
Learning Standards	A, B, C, D	
Major Emphasis	1.A.3a-b, 1.A.4a-b, 1.A.5a-b 14.C.3, 14.C.4, 14.C.5	
State Goal	16	Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the United States and other nations.
Learning Standards	A, B	



## NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SOCIAL STUDIES (NCSS)

The Curriculum Standards for Social Studies were developed by a Task Force of the National Council for the Social Studies and approved by the NCSS Board of Directors in April 1994. Its *Expectations of Excellence: Curriculum Standards for Social Studies* focuses on ten thematic strands in social studies considered essential for educators and students. More information can be found at their website: <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards/>

This unit addresses the following thematic standards:

- ❑ Culture
- ❑ Individual Development and Identity
- ❑ Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- ❑ Power, Authority, and Governance
- ❑ Civic Ideals and Practices

# ***DICTIONARY and INFORMATION LINKS***

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There are many helpful resources online for you and your students. Those below will just get you started.

## **LibrarySpot.com**

This is one of the best places to begin any kind of information search. It provides direct links to encyclopedias, dictionaries, curriculum ideas and library resources.

<http://www.libraryspot.com/>

## **Dictionary.com**

Free online English dictionary, thesaurus and reference guide, crossword puzzles and other word games, online translator and Word of the Day.

<http://www.Dictionary.com>

## **Webster Dictionary** at [www.m-w.com](http://www.m-w.com)

Online version of the Merriam-Webster Collegiate Dictionary. Simply enter keywords for a comprehensive definition, with thesaurus option.

<http://www.m-w.com>

## **AllWords.com** - Dictionary, Guide, Community and More

allwords.com provides English definitions plus a multi-lingual search. Search in German, Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish and English. It provides a helpful pronunciation guide and gives students a chance to see how words often share cultural roots with geographic, and cultural neighbors.

<http://www.allwords.com/>

## **AskJeeves.com**

One of the best search engines on the web. Web users simply put questions to AJeeves@the butler, who then searches the web for relevant information and web sites.

<http://www.askjeeves.com/>

# ***INTERNET RESOURCES on CITIZENSHIP***

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Visit the following web sites for more information on how to connect your students to public life. Some of these sites provide information while others outline opportunities for getting students connected to their communities. Unless otherwise noticed, all quoted material is taken directly from the listed web sites.

## **⊕ *Immigration and Naturalization Service***

This link will allow students to review the naturalization process and understand some of the benefits of citizenship. The site provides an example of the citizenship exam required for naturalization.

At <http://www.ins.usdoj.gov/graphics/index.htm>

## **⊕ *USCITIZENSHIP.ORG***

Want some helpful study guides for the citizenship test? This site will provide the online opportunity to study for the U.S. Citizenship test. Written and oral quizzes will provide the practice needed to pass the U.S. Citizenship test. There are links to other citizenship related web pages.

At <http://www.uscitizenship.org/>

## **⊕ *D. L. Hennessey Links on Immigration***

This page provides valuable links on this topic. The site links to federal agencies and educational sites that orient any native or immigrant seeking information about immigration. Hennessey's book, *Twenty-Five Lessons in Citizenship*, is also available at this site.

At <http://www.mindspring.com/~citizenship/links.html>

## **⊕ *Education for Democratic Citizenship: A Framework***

This link outlines a helpful discussion about the nature and meaning of citizenship.

At [http://www.civiced.org/framework\\_index.html](http://www.civiced.org/framework_index.html)

## **⊕ *Center for Civic Education***

The Center for Civic Education specializes in civic and citizenship education, law-related education, and international exchange programs in education in developing democracies. Programs focus upon the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, and the site has free resources for educators.

At <http://www.civiced.org/>

# ***CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT***

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This curriculum was developed with the support of a grant to the Center for Urban Research and Learning (CURL), Loyola University Chicago, from the Technology Innovation Challenge Grant Program sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The project team consisted of:

- ✦ Brian C. Shea, Ph.D. candidate, Department of Philosophy, coordinator and principal author;
- ✦ Alan Gitelson, Ph.D., Department of Political Science, faculty consultant;
- ✦ Nelson Portillo, Ph.D. candidate, Department of Psychology, evaluation, editing, and web design;
- ✦ Yolanda Suarez-Balcazar, Ph.D., Department of Psychology, evaluation supervision;
- ✦ Linda Von Dreele, Associate Director of CURL, oversight and editing.

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