

CITIZENSHIP CLASS MANUAL

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I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

U.S. Code citation: 4USC4

The Pledge of Allegiance was first published in 1892 in *The Youth's Companion* magazine in Boston, Massachusetts to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America. It was first used in public schools to celebrate Columbus Day on October 12, 1892. The Pledge received official recognition by Congress as an Act approved on June 22, 1942. The phrase "under God" was added to the Pledge by a Congressional act approved on June 14, 1954.

A controversy arose concerning the authorship of the Pledge of 1892. Claims were made on behalf of both James B. Upham, one of the editors of *The Youth's Companion*, and Francis Bellamy, an assistant editor. In 1939, a committee of the U.S. Flag Association ruled in favor of Bellamy, and a detailed report issued by the *U.S. Library of Congress* in 1957 supported the committee's ruling.

The United States Code (4USC4) states that when delivering the Pledge of Allegiance, all must be standing at attention, facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. It also states that men not in uniform should remove any nonreligious headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute.

First Session

A. Introduction

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Video: “Faces of America”
3. Steps to Citizenship: Overview
4. www.uscis.gov: resources and languages
5. Review of citizenship notebook, Welcome to the United States, etc.

B. First Step to Citizenship: Determining Eligibility

1. “The Naturalization Examination” – video
2. Step-by-step Guide to Citizenship
3. Naturalization Eligibility Worksheet

Break

C. U.S. History/Civics Lesson:

1. Questions 1-12: Principles of American Democracy
2. “Declaration of Independence – Reese Witherspoon” - video

D. Homework

Using the blank N-400 form in your packet, try filling it out completely. Bring it to class next time for review.

What is a citizen?

A citizen of the United States is a native-born, foreign-born, or naturalized person who owes allegiance to the United States and who is entitled to its protection. In addition to the naturalization process, the United States recognizes the U.S. citizenship of individuals according to two fundamental principles: jus soli, or right of birthplace, and jus sanguinis, or right of blood.

The 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution guarantees citizenship at birth to almost all individuals born in the United States or in U.S. jurisdictions, according to the principle of jus soli. Certain individuals born in the United States, such as children of foreign heads of state or children of foreign diplomats, do not obtain U.S. citizenship under jus soli.

Certain individuals born outside of the United States are born citizens because of their parents, according to the principle of jus sanguinis (which holds that the country of citizenship of a child is the same as that of his / her parents). The U.S. Congress is responsible for enacting laws that determine how citizenship is conveyed by a U.S. citizen parent or parents according to the principle of jus sanguinis. These laws are contained in the Immigration and Nationality Act.

<http://www.uscis.gov/graphics/services/natz/citizen.htm>

SOME BENEFITS OF US CITIZENSHIP

- **The right to vote in national, state and local elections.** A citizen may run for election, vote and serve on juries.
- **Traveling with a US passport.** You may obtain help from the US government when traveling, if needed, and travel freely to and from the United States.
- **Bringing family members to the US.** Citizens get priority when petitioning to bring family members to this country.
- **Better employment and educational opportunities.** Some government jobs and scholarships require citizenship.
- **Protection from deportation.** Your right as a citizen to live in the United States cannot be taken away.
- **Government benefits.** Some government benefits are only available to citizens.

Duties and Responsibilities of Citizens

The right to vote is a duty as well as a privilege. It is important for all citizens to vote in every election to make sure that the democratic, representative system of government is maintained. Persons who do not vote lose their voice in the government.

Before voting in an election, each citizen should be well informed about the issues and candidates. Resources such as [GPO Access](#) can help citizens keep current on issues facing the Congress and how members of Congress vote on these issues. The political parties distribute brochures, pamphlets and newsletters about their candidates, the party platform, and the party view on important issues. Citizens can read this information to learn about the differences among the parties. Some candidates are independent and do not belong to a political party. These candidates distribute their own information. Radio, television, newspapers, and magazines provide information, also. Each citizen needs to make his/her own decision about who would be the best representatives by considering all sides of the issues.

State and local elections involve voting on issues or laws that are of concern to the citizens, such as businesses, schools, neighborhoods, transportation, safety or health. In many states, the voters have a direct part in the lawmaking process. For example, a law that has been passed in the state legislature may be sent back to the voters to accept or reject. The voters decide directly if a new law should be put into effect. This is known as the power of [referendum](#). Another form of direct lawmaking by the voters in some states is the [initiative](#). In this process, a group of voters signs a petition asking for a specific law. If enough people have signed the petition, the qualified voters must be given a chance to vote for or against the proposed law. The law will go into effect if more than half (a majority) of the votes are in favor of the law. These two processes, referendum and initiative, show the authority of the people in the U.S. system of government and the importance of being a well-informed citizen. To keep the laws responsive to the needs of state and community, it is important to vote and be represented.

From
<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/912/citizenship/responsibilities.html>

Step-by-step Guide to Citizenship

1. Meet the requirements

In order to apply for citizenship, the applicant has to meet certain requirements, these are:

AGE: Must be at least 18 years old.

SELECTIVE SERVICES: Men 18 through 25 must be registered for Selective Service. Can register at any U.S. Post Office and online at www.sss.gov .

- *If applicant didn't file, and was not required to file for Selective Service, applicant needs to bring an ineligibility letter from Selective Service.*

RESIDENCY: Legal resident for 5 years, or 3 years if married to someone who has been a U.S. citizen for at least 3 years.

- Special case:
*The Violence Against Women Act allows abused spouses and children of U.S. citizens and permanent residents to "self-petition" to become a **permanent resident**.*

PHYSICAL PRESENCE: Applicant must have lived continuously in the U.S. for at least 5 years and has been physically present for at least 30 months.

- *Applicant could lose Legal Permanent Residence if absent from the U.S. for more than one (1) year.*
- *Under rare special circumstances, Legal Permanent Residence may not be lost, but applicant will have to wait 4 years and 1 day before applying for Naturalization.*

GOOD MORAL CHARACTER: During the statutory period (5 years, or 3 depending on situation) applicant must have established good moral character, which means being well-behaved and law-abiding.

- *It is strongly recommended that applicant is honest in his/her responses and that he/she DOES NOT withhold information. This could be considered FRAUD, which would result in a denial and deportation.*

Applicant will be **permanently barred** if he or she has

- ever been convicted of murder
- ever been convicted of an aggravated felony

ATTACHMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION: applicant must show understanding and adherence to its principles.

LANGUAGE: Applicants must be able to read, write, speak and understand words in ordinary English. Most applicants who do not pass are denied because of inadequate English.

Exceptions:

- *50 years old living in the U.S. for at least 20 years*
- *55 years old living in the U.S. for at least 15 years*
- *medically determined physical or mental impediment to learning English*

U.S. HISTORY & GOVERNMENT: Applicants must demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of U.S. history and of U.S. government form and principles.

Exceptions:

- *Over 50 years old, living in the U.S. for 20 yrs.
May take civics test in native language or with interpreter*
- *Over 55 years old, living in the U.S. for 15 yrs. May take civics test in native language or with interpreter*
- *65 years old living in the U.S. for at least 20 years*
- *May take a simplified civics test in native language or with interpreter*

(Interpreter should be a disinterested person. However, CIS may allow friends, colleagues, or relatives to act as interpreters. Attorneys are prohibited from being interpreters. Interpreters will be asked to swear (or affirm) that they are able to accurately interpret what is said by both the applicant and the examiner.)

OATH OF ALLEGIANCE: Applicants swear to support the Constitution, Obey the laws of the U.S., renounce any foreign allegiance/title and bear arms for the U.S. Armed Forces or perform services for the government.

Special considerations:

- *Modified oath for those opposed to armed forces by religion or belief (see page 50)*

2. Apply for Naturalization:

FORMS: Applications can be obtained over the phone or online.

Phone:

- call 1-800-870-3676
- choose 1 for English or 2 for Spanish
- give personal information, such as full name, complete address and phone number and form numbers you are requesting.

Internet: use a computer with access to the internet and Adobe Reader software, and download form N-400 and Instructions from the U.S. Citizenship Office webpage at:

<http://uscis.gov/graphics/formsfee/forms/n-400.htm>

- Scroll down to DOWNLOADS.
- Click on N-400 Form (in PDF format, 632 KB).
- Print all 10 pages.
- Click on N-400 Instructions (PDF, 159 KB).
- Print all 7 pages.

PICTURES: Applicants should send in two (2) standard passport-style photographs with the application.

FINGERPRINTS: After USCIS has received the application, they will notify applicants of the location where they should get fingerprinted. (*Fingerprinting is good for 15 months*)

FILING FEES: The fee for this application is **\$595.00**. A **\$80.00** biometric services fee for fingerprinting is also required. Applicants should submit both fees with Form N-400.

Payment should be made with a check or money order drawn on a U.S. bank in U.S. dollars payable to "US Department of Homeland Security"

Fees are **NOT REFUNDABLE**, even if application is withdrawn or denied.

- ♦ *Applicants who are denied because they failed the English or Civics/history test portion will have a second opportunity to take it without making new payment. Appointment is rescheduled at least 60 days from the first exam date. The interview portion cannot be retaken if failed.*
- ♦ *There is no limit to the number of times one may apply, but full payment is due every time.*

If applicant is unable to pay the fee, he/she can apply in writing for a *fee waiver*.

DOCUMENTS: All applicants must send 3 things with their N-400 application:

- Photocopy (front and back) of Permanent Resident Card (**aka.** Green Card)
- Two (2) identical standard passport-style color photographs, with applicants name and "A" written lightly in pencil on the back of each picture.
- A check or money order for the application and fingerprinting fee (**\$675.00**) Write "A" on the back of the check or money order.

USCIS SERVICE CENTER: All Oregon and Washington state applicants must send Form N-400 and supporting documents to:

USCIS
Attention N-400 Unit, P.O. Box 21251
Phoenix, Arizona 85036

IMPORTANT: Applicant **SHOULD NOT FORGET TO MAKE COPIES** of all documents before sending them. During the interview, applicant will be asked questions about his/her application.

[For more on eligibility, use the "Naturalization Eligibility Worksheet in your binder."](#)

100 Questions – New History and Civics Test

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

A: Principles of American Democracy

1. What is the supreme law of the land?
 - the Constitution
2. What does the Constitution do?
 - sets up the government
 - defines the government
 - protects basic rights of Americans
3. The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?
 - We the People
4. What is an amendment?
 - a change (to the Constitution)
 - an addition (to the Constitution)
5. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?
 - the Bill of Rights
6. What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?*- speech
- religion
- assembly
- press
- petition the government
7. How many amendments does the Constitution have?
 - twenty-seven (27)
8. What did the Declaration of Independence do?
 - announced our independence (from Great Britain)
 - declared our independence (from Great Britain)
 - said that the United States is free (from Great Britain)
9. What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?
 - life
 - liberty
 - pursuit of happiness
10. What is freedom of religion?
 - You can practice any religion, or not practice a religion.

11. What is the economic system in the United States?*

- capitalist economy
- market economy

12. What is the “rule of law”?

- Everyone must follow the law.
- Leaders must obey the law.
- Government must obey the law.
- No one is above the law.

B: System of Government

13. Name one branch or part of the government.*

- Congress
- legislative
- President
- executive
- the courts
- judicial

14. What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?

- checks and balances
- separation of powers

15. Who is in charge of the executive branch?

- the President

16. Who makes federal laws?

- Congress
- Senate and House (of Representatives)
- (U.S. or national) legislature

17. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?*

- the Senate and House (of Representatives)

18. How many U.S. Senators are there?

- one hundred (100)

19. We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?

- six (6)

20. Who is one of your state’s U.S. Senators?*

Oregon’s US Senators are Ron Wyden and Gordon Smith.

21. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?

- four hundred thirty-five (435)

22. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?

- two (2)

23. Name your U.S. Representative.

Earl Blumenauer

24. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?

- all people of the state

25. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?

- (because of) the state's population
- (because) they have more people
- (because) some states have more people

26. We elect a President for how many years?

- four (4)

27. In what month do we vote for President?*

- November

28. What is the name of the President of the United States now?*

- Barack Obama
- Obama

29. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States now?

- Joseph Biden
- Joe Biden
- Biden

30. If the President can no longer serve, who becomes President?

- the Vice President

31. If both the President and the Vice President can no longer serve, who becomes President?

- the Speaker of the House

32. Who is the Commander in Chief of the military?

- the President

33. Who signs bills to become laws?

- the President

34. Who vetoes bills?

- the President

35. What does the President's Cabinet do?

- advises the President

36. What are two Cabinet-level positions?

- Secretary of Agriculture
- Secretary of Commerce
- Secretary of Defense
- Secretary of Education
- Secretary of Energy
- Secretary of Health and Human Services
- Secretary of Homeland Security
- Secretary of Housing and Urban Development
- Secretary of Interior
- Secretary of State
- Secretary of Transportation
- Secretary of Treasury
- Secretary of Veterans' Affairs
- Secretary of Labor
- Attorney General

37. What does the judicial branch do?

- reviews laws
- explains laws
- resolves disputes (disagreements)
- decides if a law goes against the Constitution

38. What is the highest court in the United States?

- the Supreme Court

39. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?

- nine (9)

40. Who is the Chief Justice of the United States?

- John Roberts (John G. Roberts, Jr.)

41. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the federal government. What is one power of the federal government?

- to print money
- to declare war
- to create an army
- to make treaties

42. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the states. What is one power of the states?

- provide schooling and education
- provide protection (police)
- provide safety (fire departments)
- give a driver's license
- approve zoning and land use

43. Who is the Governor of your state?

Ted Kulongoski

44. What is the capital of your state?*

Salem

45. What are the two major political parties in the United States?*

- Democratic and Republican

46. What is the political party of the President now?

- Democrat

47. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

- (Nancy) Pelosi

C: Rights and Responsibilities

48. There are four amendments to the Constitution about who can vote. Describe one of them.

- Citizens eighteen (18) and older (can vote).
- You don't have to pay (a poll tax) to vote.
- Any citizen can vote. (Women and men can vote.)
- A male citizen of any race (can vote).

49. What is one responsibility that is only for United States citizens?*

- serve on a jury
- vote

50. What are two rights only for United States citizens?

- apply for a federal job
- vote
- run for office
- carry a U.S. passport

51. What are two rights of everyone living in the United States?

- freedom of expression
- freedom of speech
- freedom of assembly
- freedom to petition the government
- freedom of worship
- the right to bear arms

52. What do we show loyalty to when we say the Pledge of Allegiance?

- the United States
- the flag

53. What is one promise you make when you become a United States citizen?

- give up loyalty to other countries
- defend the Constitution and laws of the United States
- obey the laws of the United States
- serve in the U.S. military (if needed)
- serve (do important work for) the nation (if needed)
- be loyal to the United States

54. How old do citizens have to be to vote for President?*

- eighteen (18) and older

55. What are two ways that Americans can participate in their democracy?

- vote
- join a political party
- help with a campaign
- join a civic group
- join a community group
- give an elected official your opinion on an issue
- call Senators and Representatives
- publicly support or oppose an issue or policy
- run for office
- write to a newspaper

56. When is the last day you can send in federal income tax forms?*

- April 15

57. When must all men register for the Selective Service?

- at age eighteen (18)
- between eighteen (18) and twenty-six (26)

AMERICAN HISTORY

A: Colonial Period and Independence

58. What is one reason colonists came to America?

- freedom
- political liberty
- religious freedom
- economic opportunity
- practice their religion
- escape persecution

59. Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?

- Native Americans
- American Indians

60. What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves?

- Africans
- people from Africa

61. Why did the colonists fight the British?

- because of high taxes (taxation without representation)
- because the British army stayed in their houses (boarding, quartering)
- because they didn't have self-government

62. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

- (Thomas) Jefferson

63. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?

- July 4, 1776

64. There were 13 original states. Name three.

- New Hampshire
- Massachusetts
- Rhode Island
- Connecticut
- New York
- New Jersey
- Pennsylvania
- Delaware
- Maryland
- Virginia
- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Georgia

65. What happened at the Constitutional Convention?

- The Constitution was written.
- The Founding Fathers wrote the Constitution.

66. When was the Constitution written?

- 1787

67. The Federalist Papers supported the passage of the U.S. Constitution. Name one of the writers.

- (James) Madison
- (Alexander) Hamilton
- (John) Jay
- Publius

68. What is one thing Benjamin Franklin is famous for?

- U.S. diplomat
- oldest member of the Constitutional Convention
- first Postmaster General of the United States
- writer of "Poor Richard's Almanac"
- started the first free libraries

69. Who is the "Father of Our Country"?

- (George) Washington

70. Who was the first President?*

- (George) Washington

B: 1800s

71. What territory did the United States buy from France in 1803?

- the Louisiana Territory
- Louisiana

72. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1800s.

- War of 1812
- Mexican-American War
- Civil War
- Spanish-American War

73. Name the U.S. war between the North and the South.

- the Civil War
- the War between the States

74. Name one problem that led to the Civil War.

- slavery
- economic reasons
- states' rights

75. What was one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did?*

- freed the slaves (Emancipation Proclamation)
- saved (or preserved) the Union
- led the United States during the Civil War

76. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?

- freed the slaves
- freed slaves in the Confederacy
- freed slaves in the Confederate states
- freed slaves in most Southern states

77. What did Susan B. Anthony do?

- fought for women's rights
- fought for civil rights

C: Recent American History and Other Important Historical Information

78. Name one war fought by the United States in the 1900s.*

- World War I
- World War II
- Korean War
- Vietnam War
- (Persian) Gulf War

79. Who was President during World War I?

- (Woodrow) Wilson

80. Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?

- (Franklin) Roosevelt

81. Who did the United States fight in World War II?

- Japan, Germany, and Italy

82. Before he was President, Eisenhower was a general. What war was he in?

- World War II

83. During the Cold War, what was the main concern of the United States?

- Communism

84. What movement tried to end racial discrimination?

- civil rights (movement)

85. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?*

- fought for civil rights
- worked for equality for all Americans

86. What major event happened on September 11, 2001 in the United States?

- Terrorists attacked the United States.

87. Name one American Indian tribe in the United States.

[Adjudicators will be supplied with a complete list.]

- | | |
|-------------|------------|
| ▪ Cherokee | ▪ Cheyenne |
| ▪ Navajo | ▪ Arawak |
| ▪ Sioux | ▪ Shawnee |
| ▪ Chippewa | ▪ Mohegan |
| ▪ Choctaw | ▪ Huron |
| ▪ Pueblo | ▪ Oneida |
| ▪ Apache | ▪ Lakota |
| ▪ Iroquois | ▪ Crow |
| ▪ Creek | ▪ Teton |
| ▪ Blackfeet | ▪ Hopi |
| ▪ Seminole | ▪ Inuit |

INTEGRATED CIVICS

A: Geography

88. Name one of the two longest rivers in the United States.

- Missouri (River)
- Mississippi (River)

89. What ocean is on the West Coast of the United States?

- Pacific (Ocean)

90. What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?

- Atlantic (Ocean)

91. Name one U.S. territory.

- Puerto Rico
- U.S. Virgin Islands
- American Samoa
- Northern Mariana Islands
- Guam

92. Name one state that borders Canada.

- Maine
- New Hampshire
- Vermont
- New York
- Pennsylvania
- Ohio
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- North Dakota
- Montana
- Idaho
- Washington
- Alaska

93. Name one state that borders Mexico.

- California
- Arizona
- New Mexico
- Texas

94. What is the capital of the United States?*

- Washington, D.C.

95. Where is the Statue of Liberty?*

- New York (Harbor)
- Liberty Island

[Also acceptable are New Jersey, near New York City, and on the Hudson (River).]

B: Symbols

96. Why does the flag have 13 stripes?

- because there were 13 original colonies
- because the stripes represent the original colonies

97. Why does the flag have 50 stars?*

- because there is one star for each state
- because each star represents a state
- because there are 50 states

98. What is the name of the national anthem?

- The Star-Spangled Banner

C: Holidays

99. When do we celebrate Independence Day?*

- July 4

100. Name two national U.S. holidays.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr., Day
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving
- Christmas

* If you are 65 years old or older and have been a legal permanent resident of the United States for 20 or more years, you may study just the questions that have been marked with an asterisk.

Second Session

A. Introduction and The National Anthem: The Star-Spangled Banner

B. Second Step to Citizenship:

Applying for Citizenship (Filling out the N-400 Form)
Guest Speaker

Break

C. U.S. History/Civics Lesson: Three Branches of Government

Three branches of government: Executive, Judicial and Legislative
Activity: 3 branches matrix

D. Homework

Study questions 13-47.
Read about the 3 branches of government, and state and local government on the following pages.

The Anthem and the Flag



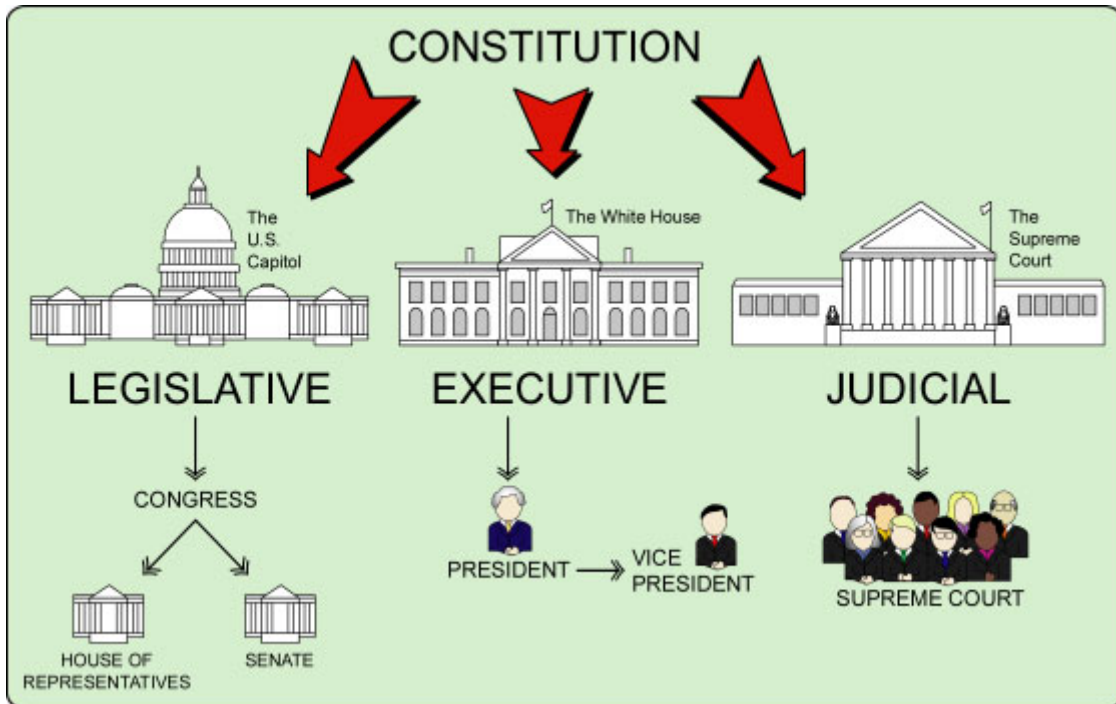
The United States Flag is red, white, and blue. The flag has 13 red and white stripes representing the 13 original colonies. There are 50 white stars on the flag representing the 50 states of the United States.

The national anthem of the United States is called The Star Spangled Banner. Francis Scott Key wrote the Star Spangled Banner. He was a lawyer from Baltimore, Maryland.

In 1812, the United States was at war again with England. Francis Scott Key saw Fort McHenry being attacked during the night by the English. During the fighting, several times he could see the flag from the fort because of the light coming from exploding bombs. Since the flag was still waving he knew that the Americans had not lost. He was even happier to see that the flag was still waving in the morning when the sun came up. He wrote these words:

*Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming:
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming;
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
Oh, say does the star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?*

Branches of Government



The Founding Fathers, the framers of the Constitution, wanted to form a government that did not allow one person to have too much authority or control. While under the rule of the British king they learned that this could be a bad system. Yet government under the Articles of Confederation taught them that there was a need for a strong centralized government.

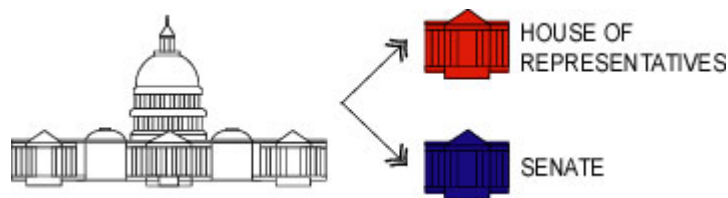
With this in mind the framers wrote the Constitution to provide for a Separation of Powers, or three separate branches of government. Each has its own responsibilities and at the same time they work together to make the country run smoothly and to assure that the rights of citizens are not ignored or disallowed. This is done through checks and balances. A branch may use its powers to check the powers of the other two in order to maintain a balance of power among the three branches of government.

The three branches of the U.S. Government are the legislative, executive, and judicial.

Legislative Branch

The legislative branch of government is made up of the Congress and government agencies, such as the Government Printing Office and Library of Congress, which provide assistance to and support services for the Congress. Article I of the Constitution established this branch and gave Congress the power to make laws. Congress has two parts, the House of Representatives and the Senate.

The U.S. Congress



The U.S. Congress is made up of two parts, the House of Representatives and the Senate. Congress meets at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. Its primary duty is to write, debate, and pass bills, which are then passed on to the President for approval.

Other Powers of Congress

- Makes laws controlling trade between states and between the United States and other countries.
- Makes laws about taxes and borrowing money.
- Approves the making of money.
- Can declare war on other countries.

Each Congress lasts for two years. When the two years are over, new Members of Congress are elected. We are currently in the 110th Congress. Congress meets once every year and usually last from January 3rd to July 31st, but in special cases, it can last longer.

The way that states are represented in the House and the Senate is different. Why is this? Well, when the Founding Fathers were drafting the Constitution, there were debates over how states would be represented. States with larger populations wanted more representation than states with smaller populations. Meanwhile, states with smaller populations favored equal representation. So, a compromise was made -- Representation in the Senate would be equal, while representation in the House would be based on population.

Executive Branch

The executive branch of Government makes sure that the laws of the United States are obeyed. The President of the United States is the head of the executive branch of government. This branch is very large so the President gets help from the Vice President, department heads (Cabinet members), and heads of independent agencies.

- **President:** Leader of the country and commands the military.
- **Vice President:** President of the Senate and becomes President if the President can no longer do the job.
- **Departments:** Department heads advise the President on issues and help carry out policies.
- **Independent Agencies:** Help carry out policy or provide special services.

The President of the United States

The President is the head of the executive branch and plays a large role in making America's laws. His job is to approve the laws that Congress creates. When the Senate and the House approve a bill, they send it to the President. If he agrees with the law, he signs it and the law goes into effect.

If the President does not like a bill, he can refuse to sign it. When he does this, it is called a veto. If the President vetoes a bill, it will most likely never become a law. Congress can override a veto, but to do so two-thirds of the Members of Congress must vote against the President.

Despite all of his power, the President cannot write bills. He can propose a bill, but a member of Congress must submit it for him.

In addition to playing a key role in the lawmaking process, the President has several duties. He serves as the American Head of State, meaning that he meets with the leaders of other countries and can make treaties with them. However, the Senate must approve any treaty before it becomes official.

The President is also the Chief of the Government. That means that he is technically the boss of every government worker. Also, the President is the official head of the U.S. military. He can authorize the use of troops overseas without declaring war. To officially declare war, though, he must get the approval of the Congress.

The President and the Vice-President are the only officials chosen by the entire country. Not just anyone can be President, though. In order to be elected, one must be at least 35 years old. Also, each candidate must be a natural-born U.S. citizen and have lived in the U.S. for at least 14 years. When elected, the President serves a term of four years. The most one President can serve is two terms, for a total of eight years.

Before 1951, the President could serve for as many terms as he wanted. However, no one had tried. After two terms as President, George Washington chose not to run again. All other

Presidents followed his example until Franklin D. Roosevelt. Roosevelt successfully ran for office four times. Early in his fourth term, he died, in 1945. Six years later, Congress passed the 22nd Amendment, which limits Presidents to two terms.

Judicial Branch

The judicial branch of government is made up of the court system. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the land. Article III of the Constitution established this Court and all other Federal courts were created by Congress. Courts decide arguments about the meaning of laws, how they are applied, and whether they break the rules of the Constitution

The Supreme Court

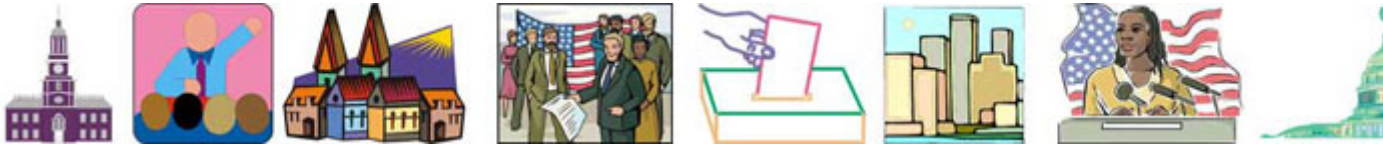
The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. The Supreme Court hears cases that have made their way through the court system, but of the more than 7,500 cases that are sent to the Supreme Court each year, only about 80 to 100 cases are actually accepted. Once the Supreme Court makes a decision, it can only be changed by another Supreme Court decision or by amending (changing) the Constitution. This is a very important power that can affect the lives of a lot of people. Also, since the main power of the Supreme Court is to decide cases that challenge the Constitution, the Court must decide if the case they receive really challenges the Constitution.



The Supreme Court is made up of nine Justices. One of these is the Chief Justice. They are appointed by the President and must be approved by the Senate. Justices have their jobs for life, unless they resign, retire, or are impeached by the House and convicted by the Senate (the removal process as described by the Constitution).

There are no requirements in order to be appointed a Justice, but all have been trained in the law. Many Justices served as members of Congress, governors, or members of the President's Cabinet. One president, William Howard Taft, was later appointed Chief Justice. The current Chief Justice is John Roberts.

State and Local Government



Like the Federal Government, state governments have three branches: executive, legislative and judicial. Each state also has a constitution on which their laws are based. The states are in charge of such things as driver's licences and public assistance to people with low-incomes.

The head of a state government is called a governor. Like the President, he or she can veto or approve bills that come from the State Legislature. The governor is also the leader of the state's National Guard. He or she also appoints judges to state courts.

The State Legislature is made up of the state senate and house of representatives. They make laws and decided about state taxes. Each state decides how many state senators and representatives to have. They meet in the state capital.

The state courts make up the state's judicial branch. Each state also has a state supreme court.

Local governments are governments of counties, cities, towns and villages. Typical services of a city include a police force, fire department, school system and garbage collection.

The head executive of a city government is usually called a mayor.

Third Session

A. Introduction and the Star-Spangled Banner

B. Third Step to Citizenship: The Interview

1. “Citizenship Examination” video
2. Guest Speaker, if possible – recently naturalized citizen
3. Practice: Interviewing Skills
4. Review of “Tips for a Successful Interview”

Break

C. U.S. History/Civic Lesson:

1. “The Promise of Freedom” video
2. Rights and responsibilities of citizenship
 - Brainstorm reasons to become a US citizen
 - Discuss responsibilities of a citizen.

D. Homework

1. Study questions 48-57 “Rights and Responsibilities”
2. Practice with flashcards.

Citizenship Interview Example

This example interview is very simple. Citizenship applicants can expect the interview to start similarly to this one. However, the actual interview will probably be much longer. Applicants should at least be able to answer any questions from the N400 application form that they filled out to apply for U.S. citizenship as well as questions about the history and government of the United States.

It is possible that during the USCIS interview, the interviewer will ask questions to test the applicant's English proficiency. Such questions might be about any subject at all. Therefore, example interviews, such as this one, might be much different than the actual interview.

One

USCIS Agent: Ma'am/Sir, please remain standing. Good morning. My name is Inspector _____. I will be reviewing your application for naturalization today.

Can you please raise your right hand at this time? Do you solemnly swear that the testimony you are about to give is the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

YOU: _____

Two

USCIS Agent: Okay, please have a seat. Could I please have your green card, your Oregon ID, and your passport if you have one?

YOU: _____

Three

USCIS Agent: What's your current marital status?

YOU: _____

Four

USCIS Agent: How tall are you?

YOU: _____

Five

USCIS Agent: What country are you a citizen of?

YOU: _____

Six

USCIS Agent: What is your complete and correct name?

YOU: _____

Seven

USCIS Agent: Have you ever used any other name?

YOU: _____

Eight

USCIS Agent: What's your address?

YOU: _____

Nine

USCIS Agent: When were you born?

YOU: _____

Ten

USCIS Agent: Where were you born?

YOU: _____

Eleven

USCIS Agent: When did you become a permanent resident of the United States?

YOU: _____

Twelve

USCIS Agent: Through what port did you enter the United States?

YOU: _____

Thirteen

USCIS Agent: Since becoming a permanent resident, have you ever left the United States?

YOU: _____

Fourteen

USCIS Agent: (If yes) Can you please tell me when?

YOU: _____

Fifteen

USCIS Agent: Where did you go?

YOU: _____

Sixteen

USCIS Agent: How long were you there?

YOU: _____

Seventeen

USCIS Agent: What did you go there for?

YOU: _____

Interview Questions for Practice

Background:

What is your current citizenship?

What is your date of birth?

How long have you been living in the United States?

Where were you born?

What other countries have you lived in?

What is your maiden name?

What other names have you used in the past?

May I see your passport?

Where did you go to school?

How did you learn English?

Were you born with or have you acquired any title of nobility?

Have you ever been confined as a patient in a mental institution?

Have you ever been a member of a Communist Party?

Are you a member of any club or organization?

Have you ever helped or been part of the Nazi Party?

Family:

What is your complete name?

Are you single/married/divorced?

Have you ever been married before?

How old is your spouse/friend/partner?

What is his/her name?

Do you live with someone?

Do you have children?

Where do your children live?
How old are your children?
Where do you live?
What is your address?
Where do your parents live?
What is your home phone number?
Do you have any family member that is a U.S.Citizen?
Do you have any family living in the United States?

Work:

Are you currently employed?
Where do you work?
How long have you worked there?
What other jobs did you have in the past?
Do you have a work number?
Do you like the work you do?
What is your occupation?
What kind of work do you do?
What kind of income do you have?
How do you support yourself?
Have you ever worked as a prostitute?

Immigration:

How long have you been a Permanent Resident of the United States?
How long have you lived in the United States?
Why do you want to become a U.S. citizen?
What was your port of entry into the United States?
Do you have your passport with you?

How did you come into the United States?

Have you traveled into the United States before that time?

Have you left the United States since you became a Permanent Resident?

Will you change your name in the near future?

Good moral character:

Do you pay taxes?

Are you married to more than one person?

Have you ever been arrested?

Have you ever committed a crime for which you have not been arrested?

Do you consider yourself a heavy drinker?

Have you ever been in trouble because of drinking alcoholic beverages?

Have you ever sold your body for money?

Have you ever helped someone to enter into the United States illegally?

Have you ever bought, sold, distributed, transported or used illegal drugs?

Have you ever received money from illegal gambling?

Have you ever claimed, pretended or said to be a U.S. Citizen?

Have you ever voted or registered to vote in the United States?

Have you ever given false testimony in order to obtain immigration benefits?

Have you ever lied while you were under oath?

Have you ever committed a terrorist act?

Have you ever persecuted or assisted somehow in the persecution of someone because of race, religion, national origin, political opinion or social status?

Citizenship:

Are you willing to bear arms for the United States against any enemy?

Will you exercise your right to vote once you become a citizen?

Do you believe in the Constitution of the United States?

Are you willing to take the full Oath of Allegiance to the United States?


Are you willing go serve on a jury?


Are you willing to give up your allegiance to any other country?


Are you willing to swear your loyalty to the United States of America?


Will you support and defend the U.S.Constitution?


Tips for a Successful Interview


- 


1 Plan to arrive to the interview 15 minutes before your scheduled time. Before your interview day, find out the exact location of your USCIS office, where you can park and how long it will take you to arrive.
- 

2 Dress formally, as you would to a job interview. Do not chew gum, wear too much perfume or smoke.
- 

3 Look at the officer in the eyes when you speak and be polite.
- 

4 Use complete sentences rather than saying just *yes* or *no*. This will show the officer your command of the English language.
- 

5 Speak loudly and with confidence.
- 

6 Use gestures when needed. For example, you can raise your right hand to explain the word "oath."
- 

7 Know every word on your application. If any of the information has changed, be sure to let the officer know.

8



If you don't understand something, ask the officer to repeat the question or to speak more slowly.

9



Respond immediately to the questions the officer asks. If you don't remember something (such as your social security number), tell the officer that you will get it for him. Try not to say "*I don't know.*"

10



Relax and try to do your best. Remember that the more you prepare, the more comfortable you will feel and the more likely you'll be to make a good impression.

Fourth Session

A. Introduction and Star-Spangled Banner

B. Steps to Citizenship:

- 1.. Practice: Dictation Skills

Break

C. U.S. History and Civics Lesson: The Colonial Period

1. Review questions 58-70
2. Study guide for “A Promise of Freedom”
3. Practice: Flash Cards

In-class dictation practice

Work with a partner, taking turns reading and writing these sentences.

Civics and History

1. A senator is elected for 6 years.
2. _____ is the Vice President of the United States.
3. All people want to be free.
4. America is the land of freedom.
5. All United States citizens have the right to vote.
6. America is the land of the free.
7. America is the home of the brave.
8. _____ is the President of the United States.
9. Citizens have the right to vote.
10. Congress is part of the American government.
11. Congress meets in Washington, D.C.
12. Congress passes laws in the United States.
13. George Washington was the first president.
14. I want to be a citizen of the United States.
15. I want to be an American citizen.
16. I want to become an American so I can vote.
17. It is important for all citizens to vote.
18. Many people come to America for freedom.
19. Many people have died for freedom.
20. Martha Washington was the first first lady.
21. Only Congress can declare war.
22. Our Government is divided into three branches.
23. People in America have the right to freedom.
24. People vote for the President in November.
25. The American flag has stars and stripes.
26. The American flag has 13 stripes.
27. The capital of the United States is in Washington, D.C.
28. The colors of the flag are red, white, and blue.
29. The Constitution is the supreme law of our land.
30. The flag of the United States has 50 stars.
31. The House and Senate are parts of Congress.
32. The people have a voice in Government.
33. The people in the class took a citizenship test.
34. The President enforces the laws.
35. The President has the power of veto.
36. The President lives in the White House.
37. The President is elected every 4 years.
38. The President lives in Washington D.C.
39. The President must be an American citizen.
40. The President must be born in the United States.

41. The President signs bills into law.
42. The stars of the American flag are white.
43. The Statue of Liberty was a gift from France.
44. The stripes of the American flag are red and white.
45. The White House is in Washington, D.C.
46. The United States of America has 50 states.
47. There are 50 states in the Union.
48. There are three branches of Government.

Everyday Life

1. He came to live with his brother.
2. He has a very big dog.
3. He knows how to ride a bike.
4. He wanted to find a job.
5. He wanted to talk to his boss.
6. He went to the post office.
7. His wife is at work right now.
8. His wife worked in the house.
9. I am too busy to talk today.
10. I bought a blue car today.
11. I came to _____ (city) today for my interview.
12. I count the cars as they pass by the office.
13. I drive a blue car to work.
14. I go to work everyday.
15. I have three children.
16. I know how to speak English.
17. I live in the States of _____.
18. I want to be a United States citizen.
19. It is a good job to start with.
20. My car does not work.
21. She can speak English very well.
22. She cooks for her friends.
23. She is my daughter, and he is my son.
24. She needs to buy some new clothes.
25. She wanted to live near her brother.
26. She was happy with her house.
27. The boy threw a ball.
28. The children bought a newspaper.
29. The children play at school.
30. The children wanted a television.
31. The man wanted to get a job.
32. The teacher was proud of her class.
33. The white house has a big tree.
34. They are a very happy family.

35. They are very happy with their car.
36. They buy many things at the store.
37. They came to live in the United States.
38. They go to the grocery store.
39. They have horses on their farm.
40. They live together in a big house.
41. They work well together.
42. Today I am going to the store.
43. Today is a sunny day.
44. Warm clothing was on sale in the store.
45. We are very smart to learn this.
46. We have a very clean house.
47. You cook very well.
48. You drink too much coffee.
49. You work very hard at your job.

Fifth Session

A. Introduction and Star-Spangled Banner

B. Steps to Citizenship:

1. Resources for citizenship: USCIS, legal services, web sites, etc.

Break

C. U.S. History/Civic Lesson: 1800s and 1900s

1. Territorial expansion and the Westward Movement
2. Expansion of Civil Rights
 - Slavery and the Civil War
 - Indian wars
 - Women's rights
3. State and Local Government

D. Homework

Review Questions 71- 87.

Read following pages on resources, civil rights and Martin Luther King.

WHEN YOU SHOULD SEE AN EXPERT IN IMMIGRATION LAW

If any of these things are true about you, you must see an expert in immigration law before you apply for naturalization. Be honest about any problems in your past. These things don't necessarily mean you can't apply for naturalization, but you should talk to an expert before you apply. If you have a problem, you may need help from an expert, so that you can best explain it to the Citizenship and Immigration Service.

Check this list:

- You made trips out of the US for more than 6 months.
- You moved to another country since getting your green card.
- You are in deportation or removal proceedings, or you have been deported.
- You haven't filed your federal income taxes.
- You haven't supported your children.
- You are male and did not register for the Selective Service between the ages of 18 and 26.
- You are on probation or parole for a criminal conviction.
- You have contradictory information on your application.
- You lied or committed fraud to get your green card, or you weren't eligible for your green card when you got it.
- You have been arrested or convicted of a crime, or you have committed a crime.
- You lied or committed fraud to receive public benefits.
- You helped someone enter the US illegally, even if it was a relative.
- You have ever claimed to be a US citizen, but were not.
- You have been charged with committing domestic violence, child abuse, or child neglect.
- You have voted illegally in the US.
- You have made a living by illegal gambling.
- You have been involved in prostitution.
- You have been a habitual drunkard, a drug abuser or a drug addict.

IF YOU HAVE DONE ANYTHING ON THIS LIST, YOU MUST CONSULT WITH AN IMMIGRATION EXPERT.

Resources for information on citizenship

Web sites

www.uscis.gov

U.S Citizenship and Immigration Service, Office of Citizenship

All the information you need to become a citizen: forms, flash cards, questions for practice, the Guide to Naturalization in several languages, and answers to all your questions about the process, regulations and laws.

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/9-12/index.html>

Ben's Guide to US Government for Kids

Even though this is designed for kids, it is a wonderful review of US civics and history for adults studying for citizenship.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_citizen#Citizenship test](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_citizen#Citizenship_test)

Wikipedia article on United States citizenship, including many links and good information.

<http://www.refugeeinfo.org/citizenship/preparation/index.html>

Citizenship On-line has lots of lessons and quizzes you can take to help you practice for the test.

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

The US Citizenship Podcast has wonderful reviews that you can listen to, quizzes for practice, and very up-to-date information on the new test.

Books

Kimmel, Barbara Brooks.

Citizenship made simple : an easy-to-read guide to the U.S. citizenship process

Heller, Steven D.

U.S. citizenship for dummies

Welcome to the United States: a Guide for New Immigrants

US Citizenship and Immigration Services

Local low-cost legal services for immigrants and refugees

as of October 24, 2009

The following is a list of organizations that have attorneys or accredited representatives that can assist people with immigration issues. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) offers this list as a resource for immigrants and refugees, but does *not* endorse any of these organizations.

For a complete list of accredited organizations in the U.S. please go to the Executive Office of Immigration Review, <http://www.usdoj.gov/eoir/probono/states.htm> and click on Recognition and Accreditation. To find an attorney contact the Oregon State Bar's referral service.

Portland Metro

Catholic Charities

901 S.E. Oak St
Suite 208
Portland, OR 97214
(503) 542-2855

Immigration Counseling Services

519 S. W. Park Avenue
Suite 610
Portland, OR 97205
503-221-1689 (by appt. only)

Jewish and Family Child Service

1130 S.W. Morrison, Suite 316
Portland, OR 97205
503-226-7079

Lutheran Community Services Northwest

605 S.E. 39th
Portland, OR 97214
503-233-0042

Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR)

2906 N.E. Glisan St.
Portland, OR 97232
503-284-3002

Columbia River Gorge

Hood River Legalization Project

205 Oak St.
Suite 15
Hood River, OR 97031
541-386-3433

The Civil War



The Northern and Southern part of the United States were very different by the 1860s. The Northern states did not allow white people to own African Americans as slaves

Many people in the South believed they needed slaves. In 1861, Abraham Lincoln was elected president. He was personally against slavery. In 1861, the South decided to separate from the North and formed its own government. Lincoln and others in the North wanted to keep the North and South together. The Civil War was fought between 1861 and 1895. The North won the war and the country stayed together. Shortly after the war, Lincoln was assassinated.

In 1863, Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This document freed most of the slaves. In 1865, the 13th amendment was added to the Constitution. It prohibited slavery.

A Brief History of Civil Rights

The first major step in civil rights in our nation occurred with the **Thirteenth Amendment** to the Constitution, which abolished slavery in our country in 1865. But in response, many states created "black codes" intended to limit the rights of black citizens who were newly freed. In response, the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution was passed in 1868, which prohibited limiting any citizen's constitutional rights under the law without a due process of law, and enabled the federal government to oversee the Reconstruction policies in the sometimes reluctant states after the Civil War.

In 1892, the Supreme court ruling in *Plessy v. Ferguson* created the precedent of "separate but equal" facilities for black and whites in the United States. But in 1954, this doctrine was changed when the Supreme Court ruled *Brown v. The Board of Education* of Topeka (Kansas) case which asked for integration of the schools. The court found that the "separate but equal" policy violated the Fourteenth Amendment, and over the years since schools were integrated.

Other Civil Rights cases were landmarks as well, including the refusal of Rosa Parks in 1955 to give up her seat on a bus to a white man who wanted it (this eventually helped lead to the creation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964). During the 1960s, students on campuses became involved in petitioning for increased civil rights, including sit ins in Nashville, Tennessee and Greensboro, North Carolina at lunch counters that formerly served "whites only". Another group known as the **Freedom Rides** rode interstate buses that had formerly carried only whites across state lines. And James Meredith challenged the University of Mississippi which had accepted him,

then withdrew his admission when they discovered his race (he had left the "race" section blank on his application). The U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the state could not deny admission to an academically qualified state citizen.

Birmingham, Alabama, which was still highly segregated in the 1960s, became a focus of several major civil rights demonstrations and marches. And in 1963, over 200,000 demonstrators visited the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC in one of the largest civil rights gatherings in our nation's history that helped support the **Civil Rights Act of 1964**. The civil rights movement has helped to restore rights to African-Americans and minorities, including desegregation of the school system, and ensuring the right to vote during elections. And on Sunday March 7, in Selma Alabama, a march to the state capital began that was met with violence by the police. Several other marches from Selma were organized in the month of March, which helped to pass the voting rights law which ensured equality in voting.

Martin Luther King: A Leader who Spoke Out

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is a famous civil rights leader who was born on January 15, 1929 in Atlanta, Georgia. His early years were heavily influenced by his grandfather, the Rev. A.D. Williams, pastor of Ebenezer Baptist church who founded the Atlanta chapter of the NAACP. His father was also a large influence, since his father also became a pastor and civil rights leader. Martin Luther King Jr. eventually followed in their footsteps, while forging a new path for civil rights.

He was an advocate of using non-violent strategies to accomplish social change during a period when feelings were volatile over the issue of civil rights. He also believed that the church could become an agent for social change, and he became a minister and eventually received his doctorate in theology in 1955. He first ministered at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

He also was elected the president of Montgomery Improvement Association, and his dedication to helping others became evident as he fought for civil rights. Dr. King became nationally known because of his excellent speaking skills and personal courage in the face of threats because of his stance on civil rights issues.

His work in part helped to change the segregation laws that were active in Alabama in the mid-1950s. He also became a proponent of black voting rights. In 1959, he moved to Atlanta Georgia and helped pastor Ebenezer Baptist Church (where his father and grandfather had been pastors before him). He also spoke at the famous march to the Lincoln Memorial in 1963, where he gave his well-known "**I Have a Dream**" speech. In 1964, King received the Nobel Peace Prize. And in 1968 he helped to spearhead the Poor Peoples campaign which addressed economic problems for African-Americans. On April 4, 1968, Dr. King was assassinated while helping with a garbage worker's strike in Memphis, Tennessee.

Sixth Session

A. Introduction and Star-Spangled Banner

B. Steps to Citizenship: The Oath and Review

- What does the oath mean?
- Exceptions: bearing arms, swearing vs. affirming

C. U.S. History and Civics Lesson: Geography, Holidays and the Flag

1. Review questions 88-100.

Break

D. More review (games, flashcards, etc.), celebration and goodbyes

E. Homework

BECOME A UNITED STATES CITIZEN! CONGRATULATIONS!

The Oath of Citizenship

I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God. In acknowledgement whereof I have hereunto affixed my signature.

In some cases, INS allows the oath to be taken without the clauses:

"... that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that I will perform non-combatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by law..."

If USCIS finds that you are unable to swear the oath using the words "on oath," you may replace these words with "and solemnly affirm." If USCIS finds that you are unable to use the words "so help me God" because of your religious training or beliefs, you are not required to say these words."

From <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/9-12/citizenship/oath.html>

Civics Glossary of Terms

A

The Allies:

The formal partnership of countries that first opposed Germany during World War I and then formed once again to oppose the Axis countries during World War II.

Ambassador:

A person who is the official representative of a country, assigned to the embassy in another country.

American Revolution:

The struggle by which the United States won independence from Great Britain. It took place from 1775 to 1783.

Abroad:

Outside of one's home country; in a foreign country.

The Axis:

The partnership, or alliance, of Germany, Italy, and Japan during World War II. The Axis opposed the Allies, which included the United States.

B

Bill:

Legislation that has formally been introduced in Congress.

Bloodshed:

Violence that causes injuries or death; carnage.

Branch:

A section or division of something; a part.

C

Civil liberty:

A freedom that limits the power of the government over people. The individual freedoms mentioned in the Bill of Rights are often known as civil liberties.

Civil rights:

Idea that all people of a nation or society should be treated equally.

Civil rights movement:

An organized effort that promoted equality, political rights, and fair treatment for all Americans, regardless of their race or skin color.

Colonies:

Areas of land controlled by a foreign country.

Compact:

A formal agreement between two (or more) groups.

Compromise:

When two groups of people with opposing views come to an agreement; a deal.

To confirm:

When the Senate approves the President's choice for an important government position.

Constellation:

A group of stars in the night sky.

Constituents:

People who are represented by an elected official.

D

Debate:

When people argue by presenting their different opinions about something.

Debt:

Money that someone, or some government, owes to someone else.

Declaration:

A statement of some idea or argument.

Declaration of war:

Official statement by one country that it is at war with another country (or countries).

Deliberate:

Careful and methodical; taking time to think.

Democratic:

Having to do with government by the people or the idea of political equality for all.

Domestic affairs:

Things that go on within a country, or political issues that affect one country and its people; having nothing to do with foreign or international affairs.

E

Equal:

The exact same; identical.

Equality:

The idea that all humans have the same rights, and that all are equal regardless of skin color or ethnic background.

To execute:

To carry out; to turn a written rule into an action.

F

Feast:

A big, special meal, which is often held to celebrate something; banquet.

Federal:

Having to do with the national, or central, government, rather than the government of a specific state.

Federalist Papers:

85 essays that were printed in New York newspapers while that state was deciding whether or not to support the U.S. Constitution. The essays were written by Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison in 1787 and 1788 and explained why New Yorkers should support the Constitution.

Fiery:

Intense and forceful; passionate.

Founding Fathers:

The men who wrote the U.S. Constitution. They created, or founded, our system of government.

G

To govern:

To set rules that people have to follow; to use political power to lead or to administer.

H

Hardiness:

Ability to survive difficulties and keep going.

Harvest:

The food that farmers get from the crops that they have been growing during the summer.

I

Ideals:

Basic principles or morals, which often discuss how a society should operate.

Inaugurated:

To have gone through the ceremony of becoming President, known as “inauguration”.

Invade:

To enter somewhere by force, using the military; to march into a place that belongs to your enemy.

J

Jury:

Group of citizens that listens to a case in court and makes a decision about the case; each U.S. citizen is called from time to time to serve on a jury.

Justice¹:

Fairness; the state of being morally good.

Justice²:

Another word for a “judge,” used especially for the judges who are members of the Supreme Court.

L

Legislative:

Having to do with making laws; often refers to the group of elected officials, such as the U.S. Congress, who get together to make laws.

Liberties:

Special freedoms or rights.

Lofty:

Very high or elevated; grand.

N

National Census:

An official count of the number of persons living in a country.

Naturalization:

The process by which a foreign-born person can become a United States citizen.

Noble:

Having very good qualities, excellent.

Nominee:

A person who is selected—or “nominated”—for an important government position.

O

Oath:

A promise or vow; a pledge.

P

Perseverance:

Never giving up and always going ahead.

Pilgrims:

English settlers who came to America long ago to live, seeking religious freedom.

Planter:

A farmer, especially one who operates a large farm called a “plantation.”

Polling station:

Where people go to vote in elections.

Posterity:

Future generations.

To protest:

To publicly oppose or complain about something; to object to something.

R

To represent:

To serve in public office, such as Congress, as the voice of the people who elected you.

Republican:

When a country’s political power comes from the citizens, not the rulers, and is put into use by representatives elected by the citizens.

Rights:

Basic things that people can freely do, freedoms and privileges.

S

Secretary of State:

The government official in charge of directing and supervising the foreign relations of the United States. He or she leads the main foreign policy agency of the United States, the Department of State. The Secretary of State is the highest-ranking head of a department in the President’s Cabinet.

Segregation:

Separation of citizens of different races, no longer legal in the United States.

Senate President Pro Tempore:

The Senator who, when the Vice President is not present, presides over the Senate. This means that he or she chooses which Senators may speak to the Senate. The President Pro Tempore is the Senator from the majority political party—the party which has the most Senators—who has served in the Senate for the longest time.

Speaker of the House:

The most powerful member of the House of Representatives, who always comes from the majority party—the party with the most Representatives. The Speaker presides over the House by deciding which Representatives can speak during debate and usually plays a very visible role in public.

Speedy:

Fast; done quickly.

Supreme:

Highest; cannot be challenged; ultimate.

T

Temperate:

Calm, composed, and reasonable; self-controlled.

Term:

Length of time that a government leader serves before he or she must be elected once again.

Term limits:

A limit on the number of terms that a leader can be elected to serve. A term is the length of time that a government leader serves before he or she must be elected once again.

Territory:

New land controlled by a government; many states were U.S. territories before officially becoming states.

Treaty:

A formal agreement between two (or more) countries; a pact.

U

Unanimous:

When everyone in a deciding group votes the same way.

V

Valor:

Bravery in facing great danger, especially in battle.

Vigilance:

The state of being alert and watching out for danger.

W

Whigs:

American political party of the 1800s. The party stood for business and banking interests and opposed Andrew Jackson and his Democratic party. Four Presidents, all serving in the 1840s and 1850s, were Whigs.