

Citizenship

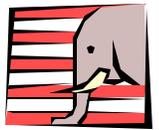
Remember:
You can make a
difference.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

~Margaret Mead~



May 2007 Character Connection Theme: Citizenship



Definitions

A **citizen** is someone who owes loyalty and is entitled by birth or naturalization to the protection of a given state. Citizenship is the status of a citizen with its attendant duties, rights and privileges.¹



- *Do your share to make the United States better.
- *Stay informed about local and national current events, vote.
- *Learn about and obey laws and rules.
- *Respect authority.
- *Protect the environment.²



Quotes

"All it takes for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing". –Edmund Burke

"What is right is right, even if no one is doing it. What is wrong is wrong, even if everyone is doing it." – Anonymous

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." —Margaret Mead³

"When my country demands the sacrifice, personal ease must always be a secondary consideration." –George Washington⁴

"There are no 'passengers' on spaceship earth. Everybody's 'crew.' "
–M. McLuhan⁵

"Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary." –Reinhold Neibuhr, 20th century German theologian⁶

"The first requisite of a good citizen in this Republic of ours is that he shall be able and willing to pull his weight." —Theodore Roosevelt, New York, 11 Nov. 1902⁷

Activities

**Encourage students to attend a Memorial Day flag ceremony. Support our country's military by sending letters or care packages.

**The Declaration of Independence ranks as one the most important documents in human history. It is an inspiration to freedom-loving people everywhere. The Constitution provides for the basic rights of an American citizen. As a class, memorize part of the Declaration of Independence, the 4 verses of the Star Spangled Banner, or the Preamble of the Constitution.

**Hold nominations and vote for a class president using ballots. Take away some of the ballots and recount the remaining ballots. Does the same person win? Does everybody's vote count?

**Have students learn who their representatives are at the local, school, state and national level. Find out about current issues on which these representatives are working. Have students write a letter to a representative expressing their stand on an issue.

¹ From The American Heritage Dictionary

² adapted from Six pillars of character, Definitions for Young People, Good Ideas to Help Young People Develop Good Character, page 5

³ From quotes compiled for Provo's PACE

⁴ Bennett, William J., Our Country's Founders, page 8

⁵ From quotes compiled for Provo's PACE

⁶ <http://www.josphoninstitute.org/quotes>

⁷ The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1980, page 408

****Chief Seattle said, “The Earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth.”⁸** Work as a class on a recycling or community-beautifying proposal. Take pictures as the project progresses. Some artists turn recycled material into art pieces. Have students make a recycled art project.

****Give Uncle Sam a Helping Hand.** Have students trace their hands on red, white and blue paper. Have students write on the colored hands: “I will be a good citizen by. . .” Arrange hands in the shape of a flag (rows of red and white hands),⁹ United States, or Liberty Bell.

****Play kickball or some other game.** Assign a few members of one team to do nothing when the ball comes to them. What happens? Talk about how each member of our country is important to our country’s success. Learn about citizen responsibilities in other countries.

Stories

Nathan Hale

Nathan Hale was born in Connecticut, one of 12 children. He excelled at sports and could kick a ball quite high. At 14, he attended Yale College. After graduation he taught school. Soon he became involved in the patriotic cause. In July 1775 he received a lieutenant’s commission. Later, he became a captain in the Continental Army. Because of his resourceful leadership, he also became a member of a select fighting group called the Rangers. The Rangers were known for valor and leadership in battle. General George Washington asked for a Ranger volunteer to go through British lines to find information on the British position. Nathan volunteered. Disguised as a schoolmaster, he crossed into British territory and obtained the needed information. He hid the information in his shoe and was returning home when the British captured him. (Some say that it was his British cousin that betrayed him.)

On September 21, 1776, he was hung without trial as a spy. He is attributed with these last words: “I only regret that I have but one life to lose for my country.”¹⁰

Dolley Madison

Dolley Madison was the wife of the 4th President of the United State. During the War of 1812, the British were near Washington D.C. When the enemy forces were yet in the distance, Dolley calmly directed that many state papers be taken with those fleeing the city. Much of her private property was sacrificed in her efforts to save those papers that were valuable to the country. She insisted on staying at the White House until she could ensure the safety of a large portrait of General George Washington. First the doorkeeper and gardener tried to unscrew the frame from the wall. The minutes ticked by, and still the portrait was attached to the wall. The enemy was approaching. Finally, Dolley ordered the frame broken and the canvas portrait removed for safekeeping. Soon afterward, the British entered the city and set fire to the Capitol and the White House.¹¹

The Cat and the Mouse

A fable from Aesop



There was once a group of mice that lived together in a house. In the beginning their lives were joyful, full of crumbs and freedom. Then the owner of the house bought a cat. Now the lives of the mice were full of terror. A Mouse Council was called and different ideas were discussed.

Suddenly one young mouse squeaked, “I have a wonderful idea. Let us tie a bell to the mouse. Every time he moves we will hear the bell and be able to move to safety.”

The idea of the cat wearing a warning bell was applauded. However, one very old mouse said, “This is a wonderful idea. Who among you will be willing to put the bell on the mouse?”

All of the mice, including the young mouse, trembled in fear.

Don’t expect others to do what you are afraid to do yourself.

There are many in our community that routinely “put the bell on the cat” when they serve in the military, capture drug dealers, prosecute criminals, put out fires, and treat deadly diseases. As citizens and beneficiaries of their bravery, what can we do to help these workers in their dangerous jobs?



⁸ Nish, Steven, Good Ideas to Help Young People Develop Good Character, page 220

⁹ Nish, Steven, Good Ideas to Help Young People Develop Good Character, page 124

¹⁰ “Hale, Nathan,” World Book Encyclopedia, 1988 p. 18,19

¹¹ “Madison, Dolley Payne,” World Book Encyclopedia, 1988 p. 3; Bennett, The Book of Virtues for Young People, pages 181-184

Writing or Discussion Topics

** The signers of the Declaration of Independence risked their lives, fortune, and sacred honor to help form a new country. First, John Hancock boldly signed proclaiming, "There! His Majesty can now read my name without glasses. And he can double the reward on my head."¹² Benjamin Rush, another signer, referred to the Declaration as a "death warrant," and recalled the "pensive and awful silence" that filled the room. Indeed Benjamin Franklin commented, "We must all hang together, or we most assuredly will hang separately." Research the lives of those that signed this important document. (Read about the fates of the delegates from New Jersey: Francis Hopkinson, John Witherspoon, Abraham Clark, John Hart, and Richard Stockton in William J. Bennett's book, Our Country's Founders, page 10,11,12) *Ask students what they are willing to risk for the good of their country. Have students ask a grandparent or an older relative about their involvement with one of the world wars or other important parts of United States history. Have students imagine that they, too, participated in a historic, patriotic event and write about their experiences. In a time of war, how do we best support our country?*

**John F. Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States was born on May 29, 1917.¹³ He said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." *Talk about the responsibilities of citizenship in the United States. What does volunteer work have to do with being a good citizen? What does a good citizen do about gang violence, vandalism, graffiti, etc.?*

**E.B. White, 20th century American essayist said, "When a man hangs from a tree it doesn't spell justice unless he helped write the law that hanged him."¹⁴ *How do we help write our laws? Talk about juries and jury duty. Have students discuss with their parents why getting involved in politics, becoming informed about legislative actions and participating in elections is important? How can we become more involved in governing ourselves?*

**In the 1950's, Laura Ingalls Wilder wrote, "The 'Little House' books are stories of long ago. Today our way of living and our schools are much different; so many things have made living and learning easier. But the real things haven't changed. It is still best to be honest and truthful; to make the most of what we have; to be happy with the simple pleasures and to be cheerful and have courage when things go wrong. Great improvements in living have been made because every American has always been free to pursue his happiness, and so long as Americans are free they will continue to make our country ever more wonderful."¹⁵ *What does freedom and the freedom to think have to do with inventions and standard of living?*

**Mahatma Gandhi is attributed with this list: " 'On things that will destroy us: Politics without principle, Pleasure without conscience, Wealth without work, Knowledge without character, Business without morality, Science without humanity, Worship without sacrifice, Rights without responsibilities."¹⁶ *What does this list have to do with being a good citizen?*

Role Plays

**Susan sees a gum wrapper on the playground. It is very small and it is not hers. *How could Susan be a good citizen?*

**Joseph notices campaign signs around the neighborhood. Joseph is not old enough to vote. *How can Joseph be a good citizen?*

**Carlos and Bob are hiking on the Mount Timpanogus Trail. They are about halfway to the top and starting to get tired. The boys can see that the trail switches back just above. They also see a faint path leading to the switchback. The path has a short log separating it from the main trail. Obviously others have used this short cut. Bob leaves the marked trail and goes on the shortcut. *What should Carlos do? What are the consequences?*

Book List

(List contributed by Lindon Community members)

Seven Brave Women by Betsy Hearne

The Courage of Sarah Noble by Alice Dalgliesh

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¹² Bennett, William J., Our Country's Founders, page 9

¹³ Childcraft, volume 9, page 171

¹⁴ <http://www.josphoninstitute.org/quotes>

¹⁵ <http://webpages.marshall.edu/~irby1/laura/frames.html>

¹⁶ quotation list submitted by Arlaine Austin, from quotes compiled by Jolene Bunnell

Citizenship

On the back of this paper, brainstorm different ways to be a good citizen in each of these groups. Make a check mark in the appropriate square as you exhibit good citizenship in that particular area. After completing five in a row, try for a “blackout” as you recognize and exemplify the traits of a wonderful citizen!

<p>Family</p> 	<p>Community</p> 	<p>Club</p> 	<p>Class</p> 	<p>Country</p> 
<p>World</p> 	<p>School</p> 	<p>Friends</p> 	<p>Church</p> 	<p>Neighborhood</p> 
<p>Sports group</p> 	<p>Service Organization</p> 	<p>Earth</p> 	<p>Extended Family</p> 	<p>City</p> 
<p>Humanity</p> 	<p>Work</p> 	<p>Organization</p> 	<p>Social Group</p> 	<p>Family</p> 
<p>Traveler</p> 	<p>Home</p> 	<p>Music Group</p> 	<p>World of living things</p> 	<p>Political Group</p> 