

# Citizenship

## Syllables

cit•i•zen•ship

## Pronunciation

sit-uh-zuhn-ship

## Definition

The legal duties, rights, responsibilities, and privileges of an official member of a community.

(*Marvin demonstrated good **citizenship** by voting on election day.*)

**Simply put:** the way you act as a responsible member of the community.

## Related Terms

Patriotism: The love for one's country.

## Fundamental Question:

**How does being a good citizen impact the community?**

**Students will investigate the idea that** children as well as adults can become more effective citizens and can enhance the community through their efforts.

## Objectives

Each student will:

1. Generate a list of several things citizens can do to improve their society;
2. Use their class as a microcosm through which to identify strengths of and challenges facing citizenship; and
3. Will recommend and lead a project to help address one of the challenges.

## Before you begin

- Print out one copy of *Exercises in Citizenship* for each student.

Note: Depending on the nature and needs of your class, allow one to three days for the completion of this project.

## Suggested Sidebars:

### Speaking of Citizenship (Discussion Idea)

Is it fair that some people take their responsibilities of citizenship very seriously and others do not? What occurs when that happens? What can be done to correct the situation?

### Taking It to the Next Level

Search for the keyword "Citizenship" on the Internet. Put together a Citizenship-on-the-Web directory for your class. List the name of each site, the address (URL), and a sentence or two about what you found there. Only include sites that you would recommend for kids to learn something (including different views) about citizenship.

# Citizenship

## Procedure

1. Point to or display the country's flag. Ask: "What does this represent to you?" Allow the children to respond ("my homeland," "freedom," "apple pie," "the Constitution," etc.). Record their answers on the board. Then, pointing to what you have written, say: "A few minutes ago, we talked about the word 'citizenship.' What does citizenship have to do with all of this?" Discuss.
2. Say: "In our example earlier, we said that Marvin demonstrated good citizenship by voting on election day. How old do you have to be to vote? (18) You are too young to vote in state and national elections. What are some other ways that you can show good citizenship at your age?" Discuss.
3. Distribute the *Exercises in Citizenship* sheets. Review the directions on the sheets with the children. Divide the class into teams of two (pairs) and have them complete the assignment.
4. **Follow Up:** Have the students report about (and photograph, if possible) their "strengthening our citizenship" projects. Compile the reports and copies of the questionnaires (and their results) in a sturdy binder for classroom or school-wide display.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

**Reminder:** Citizenship means the legal duties, rights, responsibilities, and privileges of an official member of a community.

## Exercises in Citizenship

With a partner, make a list of at least five important things a good citizen *of your age* should do (like: “obey the laws” and “help care for the environment”). You might find this information in books, online, or through interviews with adults, but you can probably figure much of it out by yourselves.

**A good citizen:** *Example: obeys the laws.*

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### Strengthening Our Citizenship

Using the information from your list above – and the back of this sheet or other paper – design a questionnaire to find out which of your classmates’ citizenship muscles are the strongest ... and which need more exercise? Suggest a plan.

Example: If 18 of your 22 class members say that they always obey the law, but only 6 of the 22 report participating in community service, you might suggest, organize, and lead a class community-service project, like planting flowers around the school or setting up a homework-help program for younger students.

According to your list, are you a good citizen? What are some things you could do to become an even better citizen?

Today’s Thought: *We will work to increase the public’s sense of duty to our City (sic). In all ways, we will leave this city for the next generation – not only not less, but greater and more beautiful than it was when it was given to us. – Athenian Oath*