

## **Planting the Seeds of Responsibility and Growing Citizens**

*Alima McKnight*

*Richmond Elementary*

**Governor of California and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren said,  
“Citizenship is the right to have rights.”**

### **Abstract**

Encouraging students to become active citizens is the goal of this unit. Voting is the main right and responsibility within citizenship that is examined. A look at recent and historical voting among minority groups is explained. Lessons are presented to address what citizenship is, what it looks like in practice, and how citizens can effect change by utilizing their right to vote. These lessons culminate in a micro-society project where students build and run their own imaginary town. Historical examples of civilizations and cities are presented to students, as well as some of the challenges and accomplishments of past and present cities in an effort to encourage students to be civic minded in their growth and development as citizens born and citizens formed.

*Keywords: citizen, citizenship, African Americans, government, voting, society, rights, change*

### **Content Objectives**

#### **Voting**

Whites vote more than Blacks, according to the 2016 Census data. To be more precise, the percentage of white voters has been significantly higher than the percentage of black voters since the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment barred states from denying Black men the right to vote based on "race, color, or previous condition of servitude" in 1870. This is not because African Americans do not *want* to vote. Instead it has to do with the barriers faced by Black citizens trying to exercise their right to vote since then.

Ninety-five years after our elected government officials added the 15th Amendment to our Constitution, they had to pass *another* law to prohibit racially motivated legal and systematic barriers to voting implemented by municipal and state

governments, particularly in the South. This new law was the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This law forbade obstacles like poll-taxes and literacy tests, which were set up to keep Blacks from voting, particularly in the South. The Voting Rights Act came about not simply because southern states were violating federal laws, but because television and newspapers depicted the South's treatment of Voting Rights marchers in cities like Selma, Alabama and this attention brought the South's treatment of Blacks into the national spotlight for *all* of America to see. The shameful events were enough to pass President Lyndon Johnson's proposed legislation into law. Indeed, *citizens* of the United States were *attacked* by police because they walked, held signs, and chanted to exercise their right to vote. This was over 50 years ago.

### **Teaching**

Philadelphia schools close on election day because the schools turn into polling stations. The day before election day, I always encouraged my students to go with their parents to vote. The idea was to have parents literally pull back the curtain (on the voting machines) and show kids how easy it now was to walk up and exercise the right to cast your vote. Almost two decades ago, when I asked students if they went with their parents to vote on their day off, the vast majority said they did not. In fact the follow up question of whether their parents went to vote at all got, and continues to get, a resounding no as well. I saw first hand that Blacks still were not voting. This made me upset when I thought about the history involved. Soon though, I realized that my rose-colored vision of exercising your civic duty and right to vote was naive. The influence a person feels on the civics of a country can pale in comparison to the detriments imposed by the written and unwritten laws that govern human interaction. Why would Black people feel like they had any stake or claim to the government systems that oscillate between their protection and persecution?

Former Governor of California and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Earl Warren said, "Citizenship is the right to have rights." Historically, however, that hasn't been the case for everyone. Even after the fight and victory for equal rights was legalized, systemic racism that followed the end of race-based laws has affected housing, jobs, education, healthcare, justice, and the overall quality of life for black (and brown) citizens. The impact of this legacy lives on. Black people in American have real life experiences that make them query: What impact can I have when I am treated as a second class citizen?

As a teacher, I have formulated the opinion that if I want students to grow into citizens that feel that their voices matter, then I need to have them buy into the fact that it does at an early age. I tell my students at the end of lessons about voting that maybe one day I can vote for them as mayor or president. Getting them to believe me is the challenge.

## Is it Only Historical?

First, it must be noted that the blanket statement, “Blacks don’t vote,” isn’t true. That doesn’t negate my first few paragraphs which are rooted in statistical comparisons. The fact is that Blacks do vote. They vote at higher rates than other minorities. They vote in increasing percentages year to year. They vote more now than in the past. And they vote in elections when they feel that their vote will matter, like in elections where there is a black candidate (Ray and Whitlock, 2019). However, the Black vote still has barriers to being counted and people feel that. Gerrymandering and identification procuring locations have led to a disenchantment among black voters. Additionally, polling stations are closed disproportionately in minority communities. Black men, who are disproportionately incarcerated, are legally kept from the right to vote in most states, 48, while serving time or on probation (2019). In many ways, those who desire changes in the government and laws that negatively and disproportionately affect them are the ones kept from voting and effecting that change.

It is not just black voters. Overall there has been a decades’ long decline in Americans voting, especially among young people (in whatever year you choose to look) who distrust the government, feel less aligned with party affiliations and causes, and do not feel as if their vote counts.(Putnam, 2018) In fact, it was in the 2008 presidential election, when Obama was running for president, that the voter drives for citizens aged 18-42 really ramped up. The message that year was that hope for a better future meant casting your vote and that after you voted, change was on the way. The electoral college, where one person doesn't equal one vote, complicates the belief in the power of the individual voter. In addition, senate, congressional, and judicial positions have a greater impact on laws and legal consequences that affect the everyday citizen more than does the presidency, yet those elections for those positions generate far less voter engagement and turnout.

The last demographic feature of the families whose children I taught teach? needing consideration is economic. Poor people vote less than middle class or rich people. Education levels could factor into this feature as well since income affects college attendance and degree attainment and college educated persons vote at higher rates. Although the number of low-income students attending college has increased over the last decade (Smith, 2019), there still remains a gap and that gap affects voting rates.

Looking at my students and their families, factoring in the legacy of systemic racism that created real barriers to and disenchantment with voting, it was no longer a question of why the families weren’t taking their children, my students, to vote, but how to change that. As a teacher of elementary-age children, my goal is to effectively educate my students. However, there is a bonus to educating their parents as well. Being black, young, and poor in America doesn’t mean you don’t know *about* voting, it may just mean that voting means nothing *to* you.

## Teaching Civics and the Importance of Voting to Elementary Students

The social studies curriculum in the elementary grades in Philadelphia is over 20 years old. I know because this is my twentieth year and the books and lessons were here when I started and have yet to be updated. Some may argue that since social studies deals in history and the basics of government, there is not much demand for revision since history cannot be rewritten nor has our system of government changed in any significant way recently. However, I choose to counter with the notion that history indeed can be rewritten, and is constantly in need of being rewritten, filling in for past omissions and purposeful misdirections. Salmon (1912) noted that history needs rewriting “to correct the personal equation [because] all history...written during the supremacy of a strong line of Kings, or of a powerful political party, or emanating from an influential Church organization, are prone to be affected by the personal elements involved.” Indeed, if we ever desire for children to invest in their government as defined by our history, it needs to be presented as fluid, to at least to some degree. Which then leads me, as a teacher of 3rd grade students, to the awesome responsibility of whetting the appetites of 8 year olds to want to be a part of the process that governs their lives and the lives of those they love and despise, for is it not a sign of our democracy that we all share the umbrella of citizenship with the rights afforded them therein, whether or not we could ever share a meal at the same table?

Waxing poetic aside, the terrible tragedy does not end with a lack of materials and old standards with which to teach social studies, but is further compounded by the fact that teachers do not teach it, nor are they held accountable for teaching it; literacy and math dominate the focus across the country with the introduction of the Common Core Standards. Research reveals one more troubling tidbit that has emerged from the literature: students don't like to learn social studies. (Schug, 1984) Whenever I hear an elementary teacher say kids don't like a subject, I interpret that to mean the teacher doesn't like it or is not proficient at teaching it. This is a shame because while citizens are born, responsible citizens are nurtured, guided, and encouraged-- and social studies instruction is one of the principal means to this goal in early childhood. Therefore I asked the question: How can the importance of social studies be presented in a way that inspires both teachers and students?

The majority of my teaching career has been spent working with younger students in 2nd through 4th grade. What I find, when faced with teaching a subject that is not valued for all it should be, is that lessons need to be short yet impactful. I accomplish this in a few ways: using music and song to teach content, having kids create art to deepen the connection students have to the material, and helping students internalize by role playing. Kids learn and retain more when music is a part of their education- whether it's learning an instrument (McCann, 2014) or learning through song (Lucas , 2012). This isn't anything surprising or new. The alphabet song and Barney's *Clean Up, Clean Up* have been and will be around for the long haul. Visual art taps into a part of the brain that

connects and creates memories, from interpreting the colors, emotions, and images presented (Gharib, 2020). By using both of these mediums, there is a greater and longer lasting impact of the material, even if the lessons are brief.

The goal of this unit is to present the material in a new and exciting way that builds interest, has staying power in the minds of students, is low impact in terms of teacher planning, and grows future citizens with a desire to exercise their rights and responsibilities. The need is urgent because of the lack of engaging lessons available to teachers on this topic; the lack of young people voting; the feelings of “not counting” by too many minorities and populations on the fringe or at high risk; and the time allotted by teachers, and accepted by administrators, to implement social studies lessons. This unit presents lessons that guide teachers and students on a journey towards seeing the big picture of citizenship and how we can affect the systems that govern us. This unit is about planting the seeds of responsibility in children that will hopefully grow them into adults willing to demonstrate citizenship in its most advantageous forms.

### **Social Studies Teaching**

In 3rd grade, students are supposed to learn about what a community is, and the ways in which we exist within our communities. This social studies instruction calls for an examination of our desire to belong and get along as well as looking at our system of governance and our role therein. Delivering these lessons out of context is what I believe leaves students with a lackluster sense of the awe of our power as citizens which ultimately comes from the power of voting.

The idea of citizenship started to evolve in ancient times as early humans settled closer and closer together to form networking relationships that shared resources and responsibilities, for protection, and to make life easier overall. These settlements may have started as religious pilgrimages to sacred locations, food and water hubs, or temporary stations during travel and migration, but eventually, they became communities with benefits (Mumford, 1991). Out of these settled communities arose civilizations that history continues to marvel over. With these newly formed villages, towns and cities came the need for leadership and definitive inclusion. Rules and laws needed to be made, followed, and enforced in order for everyone to get along and inclusion in the community needed to be stipulated so that people knew their place and position. Although many of the earliest settled communities were often ruled by one person and less than democratic, it's still clear to see: systems of government and citizenship have been a part of history from the beginnings of human existence/ expansion/ leaving the caves.

Who a citizen is has changed over the millennia. Historically, citizens have been wealthy men of the ethnic group in power. This meant that the majority of people living in a settled community played little if no role in dictating the ways they were allowed to conduct their lives. This may have been women and anyone of a different ethnic or birth

origin. Still, some cultures and civilizations extended, if it were, citizenship to other groups of their demographic (ie. slaves), but at a cost. Slaves in Ancient Rome could be citizens and hold public office, but it meant giving up their language and culture for an assimilated life- much like the Native Americans in the USA.

Even with the changes in who is and is not a citizen, one thing remains the same: citizens have rights and responsibilities. In Ancient Greece, a citizen could own property and have a voice in political affairs. In Ancient Rome, a citizen was afforded voting and protections outside of the borders of their residential community. In both societies, as in today's, their biggest responsibilities were following the laws and paying taxes. Modern day US citizenship offers so many benefits compared to other countries that having or getting it becomes a life changing situation. Laws that protect us, give us a voice, and allow us to live much as we choose to live are the cornerstones of our rights as citizens. One might argue that our Bill of Rights is the envy of the citizens of other countries.

Many of these rights and responsibilities sound familiar and just to us as modern day citizens. However, it cannot be overlooked that time, revolution, and great effort has been made for citizenship to have its current definition apply to *all* of us in the United States. And even then an argument can be made that not everyone feels the full protection and exercise of those rights.

Today, American citizens have the Constitution to look to to see all their rights. The possibilities for change and improvement are what make our Constitution inviting for those without such a governing document, however long those changes take to become law. The compelling thing is that change *can* happen here. The compelling thing is that change *should* be happening. Voting is one of the most important and influential ways the everyday citizen effects those changes.

Citizenship today comes in two forms at birth depending on where you live: based on where you were born (called *jus soli*, like in the USA or Brazil) or from which country your birth parents claim citizenship (called *jus sanguinis*, like in most of Europe ). Application later in life is also a path to citizenship. African Americans have all the rights and responsibilities of any other citizen of the USA. My job as a teacher is to reinforce the idea that their voices, choices, lives and votes matter. My job is to show how the right to vote is a responsibility.

### **Once Upon a Time in a Small Town in My Classroom...**

The culminating activity in this unit is a school-year's long project called Liberty Falls. A town within a classroom, or mini-society, project allows students to interact with one another in real world types of ways. The goal is to have the students invest in *their* town to the extent that they develop a sense of community and ultimately citizenship. Students will create a character, or community member, to represent themselves in a newly settled,

fictional town. The community member will have to offer goods or services to the other community members. The town will have its own money/ economy. The community members will vote on a mayor and runners ups will be on the town council. The mayor and council will vote on a charter or set of laws for the town as suggested by the community members. The students will have multiple opportunities to interact as their created community member through the length of the project. These interactions will mirror real life and present challenges so that students can practice community building, conflict resolution, decision making, money management, voting, and other real life scenarios. Although there are many things to be learned in this mini-society, the most important aspect of this activity, in regards to this unit, is that communities work when its citizens participate and abide by the social contracts they've established.

Upon investigating the research based benefits of this type of town-in-a-classroom program, the Micro-Society© program was found to be the model of this approach: "MicroSociety© is an educational approach in which a portion of the school day becomes a student-run miniature society, enhancing academics with real life application and problem solving. The society sets a foundation for leadership, entrepreneurship, and creativity and provides a context to motivate students to improve their academics in order to succeed." A meta-analysis of this program that is used school-wide reveals that the program "produces outstanding gains in children's... economic literacy and reasoning, entrepreneurial awareness and concept acquisition, as well as enhanced mathematics achievement and attitude toward school and learning". (Kourilsky & Carlson, 1996)

Often in everyday practice, fairness is usually reserved for childhood and adults can take advantage and "get away" with things. The balance of who actually gets to take advantage or get away with things is part of the money and race privilege that is being discussed in today's America. This Liberty Falls project seeks to teach responsibility and develop students' sense of right and wrong while balancing the value of the participation of all members of the society in order to demonstrate that if everyone plays by the same rules, a community can be a place for *all* members to thrive and grow, with social contracts maintained. The choice to add activities to demonstrate the need for fairness and equity may be added to the lessons in a way that matches student maturity.

### **Teaching Strategies**

In order to grow kids into responsible and active adult citizens, there are more lessons for students to learn than can be taught in a curriculum unit in one Spring. Therefore, the lessons presented must start as soon into a school year as possible and serve as a proverbial "mustard seed," so that kids' appetites are whetted and they become eager to exercise their rights and responsibilities as United States citizens. This unit aims at two targets, real life today and the future tomorrow. It gives a nod to history for having gotten us to where we are; connects what kids have experienced to a broader world; shows them ways that they fit into society at large; and encourages them to feel the strength they

possess as they live lives of intention. This must happen over time and with multiple opportunities to practice and form beneficial patterns. It is with this in mind that the strategies for this unit deal with building a foundation of information and activities on which to build a fun and kid-friendly bridge to grown-up ideas and ways of life.

The broad concept here is citizenship. It is in the curriculum content area of social studies. Within citizenship, this unit presents lessons on the following topics: community, government, and the role of citizens. For each topic, students will be tasked with learning new information; applying it to themselves or something familiar; and applying their newfound knowledge to creating an imaginary community within the classroom.

<b>Strategies for The 5 W's of Communities:</b>	
Communities: What is a community? Why do we live in communities? Community members.	
<b>Recognize/ Define</b>	Recognize and define the meaning of community: what, why, when, where, who.
<b>Identify</b>	Identify the basic needs of all people and how their needs are met in a community. Identify some needs via goods and services.
<b>Sort</b>	Sort roles in a community and community helpers.
<b>Study/ Utilize</b>	Study and utilize maps and timelines as they pertain to communities.
<b>Discuss</b>	Discuss the purpose of laws and rules.
<b>Create</b>	Create a collage of a community.

<b>Strategies for Citizenship:</b>	
Who is a citizen? What are the advantages of being a citizen (rights)? What do I have to do as a citizen (responsibilities)? How does culture impact citizenship?	
<b>Distinguish</b>	Distinguish between the terms culture and custom.
<b>Recognize/ Define</b>	Recognize and define the meaning of citizen.
<b>Define/ Distinguish</b>	Define and distinguish between rights and responsibilities.
<b>Create</b>	Create a quilt-style portrait of themselves as adult citizens.
<b>Recite/ Perform</b>	Recite or perform a poem about being a citizen.

<b>Strategies for Government and Me</b>	
Government: Laws, rights/ services, types of government, citizenship	
<b>Brainstorm</b>	Brainstorm where laws come from.
<b>Brainstorm</b>	Brainstorm how we change laws (courts vs hearts/ minds vs legislation).
<b>Consider/ Evaluate</b>	Consider the road to citizenship throughout history in different forms of government in order to evaluate a preference.
<b>Approximate</b>	Approximate the actions of good citizenship through classroom jobs and rewards (this is done in September but referred to here.)
<b>Understand</b>	Understand the benefits of the three branches of government.
<b>Plan</b>	Plan a class election.
<b>Present</b>	Present a campaign for a make-believe community.

<b>Strategies for Growing Citizens</b>	
Road to citizenship: historical perspectives, losses and gains, ancient civilizations to today	
<b>Describe/ Examine</b>	Describe and examine Philadelphia as a “City of Neighborhoods” examining the cultural/ ethnic make-up of these areas.
<b>Cite</b>	Cite specific contributions from different immigrant groups past and present.
<b>Explain</b>	Explain the contributions of African Americans in the Philadelphia Community Where do they find the information? Readings?
<b>Develop</b>	Develop a character trait for a model good citizen. (Have kids put themselves into the model and show/ tell how they can exhibit that trait.)
<b>Explore/ Discover</b>	Explore ancient cultures and societies to discover how people lived and became citizens.
<b>Present</b>	Present the profile of a citizen that has had a lasting impact on our culture/ society. (Minority and immigrant citizens will be encouraged.)

<b>Strategies for Mini Society</b>	
Liberty Falls and Microsociety	
<b>Create</b>	Create an imaginary town/ city called Liberty Falls in the classroom.
<b>Contribute</b>	Contribute to a Bill of Rights for the citizens of Liberty Falls.
<b>Imagine/ Embody</b>	Imagine the life of a citizen of Liberty Falls and embody it.
<b>Compose</b>	Compose a narrative of their citizens' lives. (Overlapping stories will be encouraged.)
<b>Participate</b>	Participate in a microsociety, Liberty Falls, as the citizen they created.

## Classroom Activities

The lessons presented here are designed to be 30-45 minutes each based on the SDP guidelines for Social Studies instruction. Please note that for the objectives of these lessons, SWBAT means “Students will be able to” and IOT means “in order to”.

Lesson 1: The 5 W’s of Communities	
Review	Review what the 5 W’s are: who, what, when, where, when, why.
Anticipatory Set	Teacher brainstorms with the class who are the people that we live near, what are the things everyone does “around here”, when do we do special things together, where “we” are, and then asks them to think of why we do all these things. The teacher explains that all of this is about the fact that we live in community with one another and connects the definition of community to these brainstormed ideas. Students are again asked to think of why we do all these things together and ideas are added to the board or a Padlet if students have access to technology devices.
Objective	SWBAT recognize and define the meaning of community IOT identify the basic needs of all people and how their needs are met in a community.
Input and Modeling	Students will read about the 3 main reasons people live in community: to live, to work, to belong. The teacher will create a trifold class poster with multiple examples under each reason. (Teacher Resource 1) Teacher will guide students as they connect and sort the ideas of why they said we live in communities for these 3 reasons. The teacher will guide students to connect the meeting of needs. Students will connect the idea of community to their neighborhood. Teacher made trifold will remain on display.
Checking Understanding	Students will view a montage of these 3 reasons taken from different cultures and time periods (Teacher Resource 2) and use hand signals (the letters L, W, and B in American Sign Language) to vote on which reason it is.
Guided Practice	Students will create a trifold mini poster of the 3 reasons with illustrations of an example for reason. (Students Resource 1)
Independent Practice	Students will begin a large poster or infographic about communities. This will be the first section.

Lesson 2: The 5 W's of Communities	
Review	Teacher will ask what are the 3 reasons to be in a community. Students will give examples of doing those things.
Anticipatory Set	Teacher will display images of people that live in a community and ask their job. Teacher will ask and students will discuss in a Turn and Talk: why do you think we need these people in our communities?
Objectives and Standards	SWBAT sort roles in a community and community helpers IOT identify the basic needs of all people and how their needs are met in a community via goods and services.
	Standard - 5.3.3.C Identify services performed by the local governments. Standard - 5.3.3.D Identify positions of authority at school and community.
Input and Modeling	Students will brainstorm things they need and make a list within their seated groups. Students will view videos about Community Helpers (these videos can be found on YouTube). Teacher will list on the board the community helpers and the services they provide. Teacher made list will remain on display.
Checking Understanding	Students will sort community helpers with the service they provide. (Teacher Resource 3) This can be done via discussion or SmartBoard game.
Guided Practice	Students choose pictures of community helpers to label and describe the services they provide.
Independent Practice	Students get magazines and cut out 5 pictures of community helpers to add to their poster or infographic about communities.

Lesson 3: The 5 W's of Communities	
Review	Teacher will have students name roles in a community and community helpers.
Anticipatory Set	Students will talk about and list where these helpers work and where services and goods can be found.
Objective	SWBAT study and utilize maps and timelines as they pertain to communities IOT identify how their needs are met in a community via goods and services.
Input and Modeling	Teacher will present an old map of Philadelphia with Center City as the main reference point. Commercial hubs and marketplaces for meeting a community's needs will be displayed and examined. The main street for commercial business in the neighborhood will be identified. Images of commercial hubs and markets in other cultures and time periods will be displayed. Students will discuss the goods they see and how community members would use such goods. Images of service works in the other cultures and time periods will be displayed. Students will describe their roles in a community. (Student Resource 3). Teacher will display a blank map to the students with the school as the main reference point. The teacher will use student input to map places in the community where community helpers work and goods can be purchased. Teacher made map will remain on display.
Checking Understanding	Students will list 5 places in their community in which they could get a need met either with a good or a service.
Guided Practice	Students are shown labeled street maps and given access to a business directory to find and map places in their neighborhood in which they could get a need met either with a good or a service. This map will be given for homework so that families can contribute 3 more locations on the map.
Independent Practice	Students get magazines and cut out 4 pictures of community places to add to their poster or infographic.

Lesson 3: The 5 W's of Communities	
Review	Students will summarize all that they learned about communities, referring to teacher made posters.
Anticipatory Set	Students are presented with several scenarios where people might disagree (school and real-life based anecdotes would be appropriate) and asked to do a turn and talk about how to solve the dilemma. Students will then be asked how is it that everyone in a community is able to get along and live together without always fighting? Students will journal about their answer.
Objectives and Standards	SWABT discuss the purpose of laws and rules IOT identify how a community is maintained.
	Standard - 5.1.3.A Explain the purposes of rules, laws, and consequences. Standard - 5.2.3.B Identify the sources of conflict and disagreement and different ways conflict can be resolved. Standard - 5.3.3.B Identify how laws are made in the local community.
Input and Modeling	Students read about early laws, specifically the Code of Hammurabi*, and learn that since the beginning of civilizations, laws and consequences to breaking those laws have been around. Students use Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down to vote in whether some of the Codes of Hammurabi seem fair. Teacher lists those laws that students think are just.
Checking Understanding	Students make groups lists of what they think are some laws and rules. Students are asked to put a star next to any laws that might be laws that only apply to people in the USA, their state, or their city/ town.
Guided Practice	Teacher responds by adding actual laws to a class chart as found on the various student lists. A star is put next to any laws that only apply to people in the USA, their state, or their city/ town.
Independent Practice	Students add 3-5 laws to their poster or infographic.

\*BONUS FIELD TRIP: A replica of the Code of Hammurabi can be seen on display at the The University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. There are many more artifacts of ancient civilizations to be studied as well.

Lesson 4: Citizenship

Review	Students present their posters to each other in small/ table groups.
Anticipatory Set	Students are asked to Turn and Talk about how they know they are members of these communities they saw in the posters. Students share their responses.
Objective	SWBAT define and distinguish between rights and responsibilities IOT recognize and define the meaning of citizen.
Input and Modeling	Teacher presents the word “citizen” as a new vocabulary word and focus for the next several lessons. A citizen is defined. The distinction is made between a person literally living and working in a community versus a legal citizen of that community as distinguished by rights and responsibilities. Historical and other country references are presented. (Teacher Resource 4) Students watch a video about the Bill of Rights. Students make and read a one page book about the Bill of Rights.
Checking Understanding	Students sort rights (things we get) from responsibilities (things we do) on a teacher made poster to be displayed. (Teacher Resource 5)
Guided Practice	Students are tasked with making a rights and responsibilities T-chart for the classroom.
Independent Practice	Students choose 3 rights and 3 responsibilities to add to their community posters.

Lesson 5: Citizenship	
Review	Students will review the concepts of citizen, rights, and responsibilities by reading the class posters.
Anticipatory Set	Students will be asked whether they think people/ citizens within a community have things in common and what those things might be.
Objective	SWBAT examine how citizens live IOT distinguish between the terms culture and custom.
Input and Modeling	Citizen profiles are presented, possibly using the book <i>Children Just Like Me</i> . (Teacher Resource 6) Students will identify the different aspects of culture and customs presented: food, music, beliefs, traditions, etc. Students will distinguish between culture and customs and connect those concepts to the right to practice them as citizens of a culture.
Checking Understanding	Students will create a Venn diagram for culture and customs in their notebooks.
Guided Practice	Students will identify culture and customs for themselves and create a mini poster of who they are using drawings and labels. (Student Resource 2)
Independent Practice	Students will create a quilt-style portrait of themselves as adult citizens using drawings, magazines, and photos. Attached to the quilt will be an acrostic poem for the word “citizen” that identifies rights, responsibilities, culture and customs.

Lesson 6: Government and Me (this lesson is two periods)	
Review	Students will review the need for laws and recall as they can referring to class poster.
Anticipatory Set	Students will consider the question: where do we get our laws?
Objective	SWBAT examine how rules, laws, and consequences are developed and carried out IOT identify the roles of the three branches of government.
	Standard - 5.1.3.A Explain the purposes of rules, laws, and consequences. Standard - 5.3.3.A Identify the roles of the three branches of government. Standard - 5.3.3.B Identify how laws are made in the local community. Standard - 5.3.3.D Identify positions of authority at school and community.
Input and Modeling	Students will learn <a href="#">a rap song about the three branches of government</a> and watch videos. Students follow a step by step guide to drawing the HQ buildings of the three branches (the where) in a flip book.
Checking Understanding	Students sort scenarios into the three branches on the board.
Guided Practice	Students add the who and what scenarios to their flip books.
Independent Practice	Students make a Who, What, Where of the Three Branches mini-poster for Homework. Bonus is naming the leaders of their city and state. Homework: iCivics.org online game.

Lesson 7: Government and Me	
Review	Review why rules and laws exist within a group of people and how they are formed and actually become laws.
Anticipatory Set	Students Turn and Talk: what is a rule (in school or at home) or law (municipal, state, or federal) you would change? How and why would you change it?
Objective	SWBAT connect elected officials to the formation of laws IOT identify the importance of voting.
Input and Modeling	Teacher discusses the benefits of being a citizen of the city in which they live: trash pick up, clean streets, places to go and have fun, police*, firefighters, fireworks and parades, parks and rec centers, schools, housing and neighborhoods*, etc. Teacher explains the historical absence of those things as the reasons we have them today. Teacher shows how citizens have managed to enact laws and ordinances. Teacher explains how people can change the laws, whether by voting or taking issues to court. Students watch videos.
Checking Understanding	Students do Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down for things they can change and things they cannot. (Hint: with almost any law or societal rule, citizens can work to effect change)
Guided Practice	Students list the rules of school and annotate whether they support the rule or write how they would change it. Students rotate around the room sharing for 2 minutes with another student and switching. After several minutes of rotating, students are able to revise their lists. Students are polled on a few of the “new” rules and asked if they support the rule**.
Independent Practice	Students will begin planning a campaign for class president. Each student must build a platform on which to run, even if they do not run. The winner will be the mayor of Liberty Falls. Runners up may be the town/ city council.

\*If students are mature enough to handle the content, the historical division of justice and housing can be explored as a way to demonstrate changes in laws vs actual changes in social impact.

\*\*If students are mature enough to handle the content, eye color or sock color can be their ticket to voting in the poll to demonstrate the history of (voter) discrimination. (See Jane Elliot)

<p style="text-align: center;">Lesson 8: Growing Citizens (Two class periods: one for research, one for presentations)</p>	
Review	Students consider all that they have learned by taking a vision tour or gallery walk of the different posters from the unit so far. Students may share any new understandings they have.
Anticipatory Set	Teachers shows PPT of famous immigrants to the USA and asks if students recognize them and what they are famous for, such as Albert Einstein, Dikembe Mutombo, Natalie Portman, Arnold Schwarzenegger, etc. Teacher explains that these are immigrants and defines the terms.
Objective	SWBAT describe and examine Philadelphia as a “City of Neighborhoods” examining the cultural/ ethnic make-up of these areas IOT cite specific contributions from African Americans and different immigrant groups past and present.
Input and Modeling	Teacher will show <a href="#">Animated Map Shows History Of Immigration To The US</a> . Teacher will feature <a href="#">Immigration 1870-1930</a> and <a href="#">1930-Present</a> , <a href="#">City of Neighborhoods</a> maps and information on the board or in PPT form. Students watch <a href="#">Octavius V. Catto, A Legacy for the 21st Century</a> (Student Resource 3)
Checking Understanding	Students visit <a href="#">Guide to African American Cultural and Historic Sites in Philadelphia</a> , <a href="#">The African American Experience in Philadelphia</a> , <a href="#">The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia: African Americans</a> , and <a href="#">Notable African-Americans in Pennsylvania: Black History Month</a> using the 5 W’s to take notes and report out contributions of African Americans to Philadelphia history.
Guided Practice	Students read about the contributions of African American Philadelphians, such as Richard Allen, Billie Holiday, Lee Daniels, Marian Anderson, Questlove, etc. and plot on a map where the person was born in the city.
Independent Practice	For homework, students will locate one business in their neighborhood that is owned by immigrants.

Lesson 9: Growing Citizens	
Review	Teacher reminds students what a citizen is and how they have rights and responsibilities. Students recount some of each.
Anticipatory Set	Students Turn and Talk: What makes a citizen good?
Objective	SWBAT describe character traits for a model good citizen IOT present the profile of a citizen that has had a lasting impact on our culture/ society.
Input and Modeling	Teacher engages students in a discussion about the traits that good citizens demonstrate using a list on the board of all types of traits. Teacher makes a poster about Barack Obama and incorporates character traits around the image (picture or drawing).
Checking Understanding	Students add to the poster, explaining what they chose that trait.
Guided Practice	Students read through brief destinations of citizens that have made a difference and choose one to learn more about. Students are given one page biographies of the person they chose to teach the class about. Students make posters of the person with five character traits that describe them as good citizens. Under each trait, evidence from the person's life is presented.
Independent Practice	Students present their posters to the class, explaining their choices for the character traits.

Lesson 10: Mini-Society	
Review	Students review why people live in community and list some community roles and jobs.
Anticipatory Set	Students Turn & Talk: What are the most important laws to you?
Objective	SWBAT imagine the life of a citizen of Liberty Falls and embody it IOT contribute to a Bill of Rights for the citizens of Liberty Falls.
Input and Modeling	Teacher presents the town of Liberty Falls*. Students are randomly selected to choose their profession/ house- except for whoever ran for class president, who will be the mayor. Runners up will be Town Council, but may or may not hold another job. Teacher explains what a town charter is and asks for input into a Bill of Rights for the town by brainstorming laws and rules, rights, and responsibilities. The list is much longer than the 10 laws that will be voted on.
Checking Understanding	Students asked to choose the top 10 laws/ rules that they want for the town.
Guided Practice	Students journal who they will be in the town, what their job entails, and who might be their clients/ customers. Bonus journaling: what they think the introduction to their town charter to say, using the Constitution as a model. (Teacher gathers the top 15-20 laws and posts them while students are writing.)
Independent Practice	Students are presented with the 10 laws for their town and complete the Liberty Falls Town Charter and Bill of Rights.

\* Students can create buildings out of paper (Internet search: Paper buildings cutouts), cardboard boxes, or milk cartons. OR Teacher can purchase and allow students to choose a ceramic house on a completed 3D map of the town.

Lesson 11: Mini-Society

Review	Students review why people live in community and focus on how community members interact.
Anticipatory Set	Students Turn & Talk: It's Friday evening, what is your character doing?
Objective	SWBAT compose a narrative of their imaginary citizens' life IOT participate in a mini-society, Liberty Falls, as the citizen they created.
Input and Modeling	Teacher shares a narrative story about their made up citizen.
Checking Understanding	Students plan their narrative (Student Resources 5) and share who they are and what they do in the town. This share out will aid in students being able to write crossover stories.
Guided Practice	Students use a template to write a narrative of their imaginary citizens' life.
Independent Practice	Students have several opportunities to "be" their character via writing and roleplaying in many different scenarios over the course of several weeks.

Lesson 12: Mini-Society

Review	Students review what it means to be a citizen.
Anticipatory Set	Students rate their experience being a citizen of Liberty Falls using a Lykert scale.
Objective	SWBAT describe their experience being a member of a mini-society IOT recognize the benefits of good citizenship as expressed through having a voice in their town via voting.
Input and Modeling	Teacher highlights laws that were added, or amendments, that changed the way of life for citizens in the US, bringing more people to the political “table” and ensuring a more balanced chance for everyone to live equitable lives.
Checking Understanding	Students journal: What would happen if everyone stopped voting?
Guided Practice	Students use a template to write about their experience as a citizen of Liberty Falls.
Independent Practice	Students summarize their essay into a paragraph and add it to the Citizens of Liberty Falls bulletin board (ie. Padlet, PPT, or actual bulletin board).

## Teacher Resources

We Live in Communities		
To Belong	To Work	To Have Fun

Teacher Resource 1: Example of trifold to illustrate why people live in community.

**Reasons People Live in Community**

Vote: to work  to belong  to have fun 

w b f



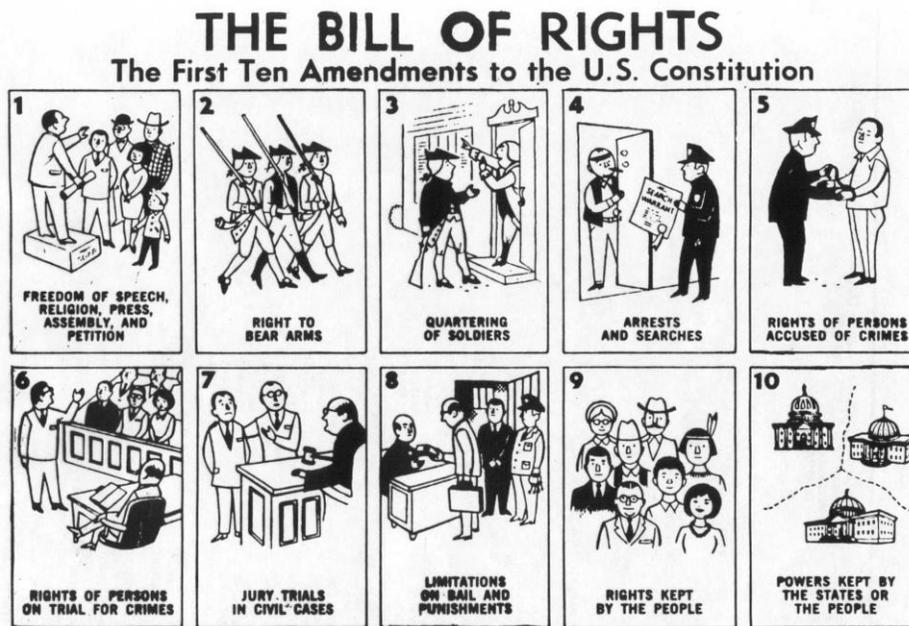
Albert Einstein left Germany because he did not agree with the politics of his time. Irish immigrants came to the US during the industrial revolution. People move to NYC for the art, music, museums, and other cultural attractions.

Teacher Resource 2: Examples of why people live in community:  
to live, to work, to belong, to vote on.

*Illustration: Subin Yang*



Teacher Resource 3: Example of pictures of community helpers to label and describe the services they provide.



Teacher Resource 4: Example of pictures for Bill of Rights one page book.

*Image: Bill of Rights depicted in cartoon format from 1971*

*Young Citizen teacher's guide transparency. Courtesy: Syracuse University.*

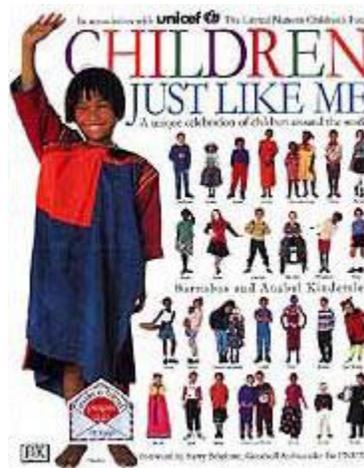
Directions for a one page book:

[http://www.shininghours.com/creating/one\\_sheet\\_8\\_pages!.htm](http://www.shininghours.com/creating/one_sheet_8_pages!.htm)

Citizens have	
Rights	Responsibilities
A prompt, fair trial by jury.	Support and defend the Constitution.
Freedom to express yourself.	Stay informed of the issues affecting your community.
To worship as you wish.	Participate in the democratic process.
To vote in elections for public officials.	Defend the country if the need should arise.
To run for elected office. Freedom to pursue "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."	Respect and obey federal, state, and local laws.
	Respect the rights, beliefs, and opinions of others.
	Serve on a jury when called upon.
	Participate in your local community.
To apply for federal employment requiring U.S. citizenship.	Pay income and other taxes honestly, and on time, to federal, state, and local authorities.

Teacher Resource 5: Examples of Rights and Responsibilities Sort

Source: <https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learners/citizenship-rights-and-responsibilities>



Teacher Resource 6: Example of a book to explore the cultural aspects of children's lives around the world.

*"A unique photographic celebration of children around the world. Through colourful pictures and children's own words, readers learn about the dreams and beliefs, hopes and fears and day-to-day events in the lives of children across the globe."*

Children Just Like Me. New York, NY: Dorling Kindersley.  
Kindersley, B., & Kindersley, A. (1996).

## Student Resources



Student Resource 1: Example of trifold to illustrate why people live in community.

## Culture

Traditions	Music	Clothes
Celebrations	Food	Beliefs

Student Resource 2: Example of worksheet for adding images/ illustrations.

Students Resource 3: [Octavius V. Catto, A Legacy for the 21st Century](#)

This video is a brief biography of the life and influence of Octavius Catto in Philadelphia, an African American. It explains his activism for equality for Blacks, including denial of participation in the military and baseball. His role in helping Blacks vote in the first elections following the Voting Act of 1870 and how that led to his murder are portrayed. This film connects to the unit because it shows ways Blacks were kept from voting even though they had the legal right and highlights Catto's contribution to Philadelphia history. This film is for mature students.

All images contained therein are public domain unless otherwise noted.

## Bibliography

Akar, B. (2014). Learning active citizenship: conflicts between students' conceptualisations of citizenship and classroom learning experiences in Lebanon. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 37(2), 288–312. doi: 10.1080/01425692.2014.916603

Akar presents student ideas about good citizenship in contrast to what they read in text books. The suggestion is made that the delivery and content of prescribed instruction undermines the purpose. This article supports the need for teachers to look beyond the prescribed text books for social studies instruction, particularly when seeking to develop students' interests in citizenship.

Aristotle, tr. by Jowett, B. (2012). *Politics*. Glendale, CA: Bibliotech Press.

Aristotle presents his philosophy on why and how man has need for politics by nature. He makes the case that humankind, due largely to our ability to talk and think, requires rule in order for there to be order. This text supports the notion that for thousands of years people have sought to come together and that when that has happened, someone(s) has taken control while the governed usually need a voice within that system (ie. voting).

Bennett, L. B., Aguayo, R. C., & Field, S. L. (2016). At Home in the World: Supporting Children in Human Rights, Global Citizenship, and Digital Citizenship. *Childhood Education*, 92(3), 189–199. doi: 10.1080/00094056.2016.1180892

Bennett and Fields present the idea that teachers need to embrace a more global minded teaching approach. The authors review the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development out of the UN General Assembly as it applies to educating the kids that will become the adults targeted to meet the agenda goals. This article supports the idea that social studies education needs a boost in its outlook and that outdated and ethnocentric education is no longer conducive to educating our youth.

Davies, I. (2019). Civic and citizenship education in volatile times. Preparing students for citizenship in the 21st century. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 68(1), 125–127. doi: 10.1080/00071005.2019.1676009

Davies' book examines the need and strategies for teaching civics as times have changed and how citizenship education needs to focus on showing students how they have power and a voice. This book supports the ideas that kids need to get started in understanding the political process so that they can engage as adults.

Gross, Ariela, and Alejandro de la Fuente. "Citizenship Once Meant Whiteness. Here's How That Changed." The Washington Post, 18 July 2019, [www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/07/18/citizenship-once-meant-whiteness-heres-how-that-changed/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/07/18/citizenship-once-meant-whiteness-heres-how-that-changed/).

Gross and de la Fuente discuss the progression of what a citizen is in the United States today and how that came to be. The significance of this article is to highlight the struggles and achievements of non-white and non-male citizens from early on in the nation's inception to include all peoples: "What makes someone American isn't race but dedication to the country's core principles of equality and justice for all."

Gharib, Malaka. "Feeling Artsy? Here's How Making Art Helps Your Brain." *NPR*, NPR, 11 Jan. 2020, [www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/01/11/795010044/feeling-artsy-heres-how-making-art-helps-your-brain](http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2020/01/11/795010044/feeling-artsy-heres-how-making-art-helps-your-brain).

Gharib reports on many ways that creating art enhances life experiences and fosters critical thinking. This supports the use of art when trying to create lessons that students will retain and benefit from.

Haverback, H. R. (2017). Why don't we teach social studies? Preservice teachers' social studies self-efficacy. *Social Studies Research and Practice*, 12(3), 245–257. doi: 10.1108/ssrp-07-2017-0034

Haverback addresses the lack of social studies education in the wake of Common Core standards and their focus on literacy and math. The study looked at teachers entering the profession and their knowledge and opinions of social studies pedagogy during their training to become teachers. The results of the study indicated that teachers do not feel nor are they equipped to teach social studies thoroughly.

Heisey, B. (2020). Teachers Toolkit: Science Throwdown: Rapping Up the Content. *Science Scope*, 043(05). doi: 10.2505/4/ss20\_043\_05\_16

Heisey discusses how students learn science through music. This supports the idea that innovative ways of teaching need to be used.

Joris, M., & Agirdag, O. (2019). In search of good citizenship education: A normative analysis of the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS). *European Journal of Education*, 54(2), 287–298. doi: 10.1111/ejed.12331

Joris and Agirdag contend that sources that guide civics instruction can miss the mark and fail to address that “pupils becoming autonomous and critical democratic citizens” happens when it is intentionally taught. This supports the idea that when teachers see how to address a deficiency, in this case students’ feelings about their role in politics and voting, they need to fill it by customizing lessons and units.

Kourilsky, M. L., & Carlson, S. R. (1996). Mini-Society and Yess! Learning Theory in Action. *Citizenship, Social and Economics Education*, 1(2), 105-117.  
doi:10.2304/csee.1996.1.2.105

Kourilsky and Carlson present the benefits of two products in citizenship education. The article presents some benefits of a mini-society in a school.

Larkins, C. (2013). Enacting children’s citizenship: Developing understandings of how children enact themselves as citizens through actions and Acts of citizenship. *Childhood*, 21(1), 7–21. doi: 10.1177/0907568213481815

Larkins explores how engaging kids in activities centered around citizenship help them feel involved. This supports the idea that children can benefit from practice and play in the world of citizenship and politics.

Lucas, C. (2020, February 27). Boost Memory and Learning with Music. Retrieved March 1, 2020, from <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/boost-memory-and-learning-with-music>

Lucas supports the theory that music is a way to help kids learn and retain information. This supports the use of song to help kids learn concepts and vocabulary.

McCann, S. (2014, March 24). The Power of Music. *Scholastic News*, 82(18), 4–5.

McCann’s article explains how musicality helps kids learn. This article supports the idea that music should be a more integral part every child’s education.

Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Simon & Schuster, 2020.

Putnam’s book discusses a wide range of ways that American society has become disconnected and why. This book supports the idea that voting has become a less popular due to

Reichert, F. (2016). Who is the engaged citizen? Correlates of secondary school students' concepts of good citizenship. *Educational Research and Evaluation*, 22(5-6), 305–332. doi: 10.1080/13803611.2016.1245148

Reichert found that “students need to believe in the value of civic action to become political enthusiasts and not politically alienated”. This article supports the idea that students have opinions about what a good citizen is, can be helped to be good citizens, and how textbooks alone are not the answer.

Salmon, L. (1912). Why Is History Rewritten? *The North American Review*, 195(675), 225-237. Retrieved July 2, 2020, from [www.jstor.org/stable/25119698](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25119698)

In 1912, Salmon presented an argument, “If the facts of history do not change...Why does history have to be rewritten!” This pioneering female historian speaks to the need to include left out information, correct misinformation, and “to correct the personal equation. All history is written during the supremacy of a strong line of Kings, or of a powerful political party, or emanating from an influential Church organization, are prone to be affected by the personal elements involved.”

Schug, Mark C. “Annual Meeting of the National Council for the Social Studies .” *Why Kids Don't Like Social Studies.*, November 1982.

Schug presented his findings when he asked students how they felt about social studies as it was taught to them in school. This supports the idea that students need engaging lessons in order to see the benefits of social studies instruction.

Wasson, Donald L. “Roman Citizenship.” *Ancient History Encyclopedia*, Ancient History Encyclopedia, 1 July 2020, [www.ancient.eu/article/859/roman-citizenship/](http://www.ancient.eu/article/859/roman-citizenship/).

Wasson gives information on what citizenship meant in Ancient Rome. This article provides background information for teachers when they teach about citizenship. Students can use this information to see how citizenship has changed over the years and in different cultures while being a precursor to our definition and inclusions.

## **Appendix**

This unit implements the following academic standards via reading, viewing biographical films, class discussions, learning songs, and participating in a mini-society. The mini-society allows students to create laws, vote on a town charter, imagine a fictional character with a profession to research and embody, and make decisions that promote citizenship and community building.

Standard - 5.1.3.A Explain the purposes of rules, laws, and consequences.

Standard - 5.2.3.B Identify the sources of conflict and disagreement and different ways conflict can be resolved.

Standard - 5.2.3.D Describe how citizens participate in school and community activities.

Standard - 5.3.3.A Identify the roles of the three branches of government.

Standard - 5.3.3.B Identify how laws are made in the local community.

Standard - 5.3.3.C Identify services performed by the local governments.

Standard - 5.3.3.D Identify positions of authority at school and community.

Standard - 5.3.3.E Explain the purpose for elections.

Standard - 5.3.3.F Explain how an action may be just or unjust.

Standard - 5.3.3.G Identify individual interests and explain ways to influence others.