

Tennessee Secretary of State *Civics Lesson Plans*

Citizenship

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Grade Level: 3rd – 5th grade

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Introduction:

The goal of this lesson is to teach students the importance of being a responsible citizen and what actions they can take to become one. The students will also be introduced to roles of elected leaders and their responsibilities over the course of the next two lesson plans.

Guiding Questions:

- What does the word “citizenship” mean?
- What is the importance of being a responsible citizen?
- What are some of the roles and responsibilities of an engaged citizen?
- Who are elected leaders and what are their responsibilities?
- What jobs and positions do elected leaders hold?

Learning Objectives: In the course of the lesson, students will...

- Examine what it means to be a citizen.
- View a Brain Pop video “Citizenship,” to learn the roles and responsibilities of a citizen.
- View a copy of the U.S. Bill of Rights and examine how it lays out the basic rights for the people of the United States.
- Write an informative piece on the importance of being a responsible citizen and outline duties or responsibilities of an engaged citizen.
- Define and analyze the roles of elected leaders.

Curriculum Standards:

RL.4.1/RI.4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

W.4.1 Write opinion pieces on topics or texts, supporting a point of view with reasons and information.

L.4.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

L.3.6 Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships.

Note: This lesson plan can also be adapted to fit literacy standards in grades 3-5.

Materials Needed:

- Brain Pop Video: “Citizenship”
- Projector/Smart Board
- Copies of the U.S. Bill of Rights
 - *Tennessee Blue Book*, pgs. 486-488
 - [Ben’s Guide to the U.S. Government](#) (ages 9-13)
- Poster paper
- Markers, colored pencils, crayons, etc.

Background:

- [Ben’s Guide to the U.S. Government website](#)
- Book: *Johnny Appleseed*, by James Howard Kunstler
- Video: Adventures from the Book of Virtues, “Citizenship”

Lesson Activities:

1. Begin a group discussion brainstorming what students know about the word “citizen.”
2. Create a “T” chart with roles and responsibilities of a citizen. These can be looked at again at the end of the unit to see if things can be added to the list.
3. Have the students watch a Brain Pop video “Citizenship” to give the students an introduction to what a citizen is and the rights of citizens outlined in the “Bill of Rights.”
4. Give the students copies of the Bill of Rights and discuss its significance.
5. After discussing the Bill of Rights and its importance, show the students “Responsibilities of Citizens” from Ben’s Guide. This will also introduce direct roles of elected officials and how and why these individuals are important and are good examples of responsible citizens.
6. After the group discussion, have students form groups to brainstorm ideas on how to become better citizens and improve the entire community. The students will then collaborate to create posters with illustrations based on their discussion.
7. Have the students share with their peers at end of class and hand in the posters.
8. You can hang the posters in the school hallways to create a picture gallery of citizenship. These examples will also be seen by the entire school on a daily basis encouraging other grades and students to become better citizens.
9. This will conclude the first day’s lesson to transition into the next lesson focusing on elected officials.

Extension Options:

- Advanced students could write full reports on citizenship and its importance to share with the class.
- Small reading groups could be established where the students are reading books such as *Johnny Appleseed* by James Howard Kunstler. The students can read in their reading groups and create graphic organizers brainstorming ways that they can be better citizens in their communities, schools, and homes.
- Writing centers can be developed, having students write opinion pieces on the importance of being good citizens and the benefits of responsible citizens to a community.

Modifications for Other Grades:

- All of the activities above fall in line for grades 3-5 curriculum standards in writing and reading.