

Citizenship in the Nation

I don't teach the requirements in order. I start out with the documents (Declaration, Constitution, Bill of Rights), then do the functions of government, the branches of government, reading "national" news, reading a speech of national importance, and then writing to a member of Congress. We end with the rights and duties of citizenship, which is easy once they have done all the other requirements. The site visits can be done at any time.

My approach is to get them to read about it, write about it, talk about it in a small group, play games with it, explain it to me one-on-one, and ultimately think about it and understand it. Breaking the merit badge in 6 or 7 sessions with no session longer than about 30 minutes seems to work.

The worksheets referred to are all on our web site. The page assignments refer to the Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge pamphlet published by the Boy Scouts.

Meeting Number	Subject	Requirements	Pamphlet Page Numbers	Materials	Direct Instruction	Activity	Assignment for next Meeting
Pre-Meeting						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute Merit Badge Pamphlets • Distribute Constitution and Declaration of Independence 	Read pp. 11-15 Read Declaration, Read Preamble
1	Declaration, Constitution and the Functions of Government	4a, 4b, 5	pp. 11-15	Constitution, Declaration of Independence, Worksheet 5, White board	Declaration of Independence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When was it written? • Why was it written? • Who wrote it? • What are the first seven words? • Who were we declaring independence from? • What truths are self-evident in para 2 of the declaration? Are they "self-evident" and were they then? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worksheet 5: Functions of Government 	Read pp. 16-23

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some of the “repeated injuries” that the King inflicted on the States? • What did the writers declare in the last paragraph of the declaration? (“That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States” • What did they pledge to each other on signing the Declaration? (“our Lives, or Fortunes, and our sacred Honor”) • What did the signers have to lose? (Everything. Traitors to the crown. Families killed. Homes destroyed. These were prominent, some wealthy men.) • Was victory assured for the Americans? (No. England was the most powerful country in the world.) • Why would they risk everything? • Would you have been willing to do the same? <p>Constitution:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When was it written? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shortest written Constitution in the world ○ Oldest written Constitution still used. • What was before the Constitution (Articles of Confederation. Didn’t 		
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					<p>work well.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the first 3 words of the Constitution? • Read Preamble to Constitution out loud • Work through 6 phrases that define function of federal government • What does each phrase mean? • Who did the people of 1787 write this Constitution for? • How do these functions affect you and your community? <p>Individual Check off: 4a, 4b, 5</p>		
2	Constitution and the Bill of Rights	4c, 4d, 4e	pp. 16-23	<p>Constitutions</p> <p>Distribute Worksheet 3</p> <p>Constitution Q and A cards</p>	<p>Constitution</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the structure of the Constitution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Articles and Amendments ○ Articles I, II, III for three branches • How was it ratified? What does ratified mean? • What is the electoral college? • What are “national” issues? How are they different from “local” or “state” issues? <p>Bill of Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the Bill of Rights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ What are some of the rights you have under the Bill of Rights? • How is the Constitution amended? <p>Set up Constitution Quizmo</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution Quizmo 	<p>Read pp. 25-31, Read pp. 39-40, Watch the news 5 days Complete Worksheet 3</p>

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					Review assignment for next meeting Individual Check Off: 4c, 4d, 4e		
3	Branches of Government and News	7, 3	pp. 25-31 pp. 39-40	Newspapers from past week Speeches Worksheet 3 Worksheet 7 Distribute Worksheet 6	Branches of Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the three branches of government? • What are their functions? • How are citizens involved in each? • What does “checks and balances” mean? • What are the checks each branch has on the others? News <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What were the national issues you identified? • What is a “national” issue? (Congress, President, Federal Courts, Federal agencies, issue given to federal government under the Constitution.) • Share clippings • Do different news media treat national news differently? • How do some of these issues affect your family? Choosing a speech for next meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where can you find a speech? • What makes it “nationally important”? Review assignment for next meeting Pick speeches Individual Check Off: 7, 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In large group do Worksheet 7: Branches of Government • Review Worksheet 3 • Pick a speech 	Read a speech Complete Worksheet 6
4	Speech	6		Worksheet 6	Speech	Presentation of Speeches	Read pp. 41

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				<p>Distribute Tips for Writing and model letter Paper Pens Pencils</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does a speech of “national historical importance” mean? • Probably an American, but maybe not. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Winston Churchill: Iron Curtain ○ Pope John Paul II: Do not be afraid • How does a speech become historically important? • Share with group what you read <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who, what, when, where • Why was it important? What impact did it have? • Was there something about it you particularly liked? • Was there a quote that was memorable to you? <p>Letter Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is your Representative and Senators? • How do you find their addresses? (Phone book, internet) • What are national issues you might write about? • Review Tips for writing • Review Model Letter <p>Assignment for next meeting Individual Check-Off: 6</p>	<p>Start Writing Letters</p>	<p>Read tips for writing Review model letter Draft Letter</p>
5	Writing Congress	8	pp. 41	<p>Pencils Pens Paper</p>	<p>Review of Letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing means re-writing • Final drafts 	<p>Write and re-write letters</p>	<p>Read pp. 43-47</p>

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				Envelopes Stamps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addressing your letter 		
6	Site Visit	2	pp. 43-47		Site Visits – Vary As needed		Read pp. 7-8 Bring any replies to letters
7	Citizenship	1			<p>Letters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Did anyone get a reply to your letter to Congress? <p>Citizenship</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What does Citizenship in the Nation mean? What are your rights as a citizen? What are your duties as a citizen? What are your obligations as a responsible and active American citizen? <p>Review as needed Individual Check-Off: 1 Check-Off all remaining items</p>	Constitution Quizmo Review and compare letters from Congress	