



Civics Flip-Book Companion Guide NIE Week 2011

For the Teacher

Civics teaches the value of civic engagement and the importance of civic responsibility. It is the subject that shows students how to become active, contributing citizens in society. In most schools, civics is not taught as a separate subject. But the lessons of civics can be learned in social studies, history, language arts, environmental science and even the math of business and careers.

Civics also can be learned and better understood by reading newspapers every day in their print, electronic or Web formats. Being an informed citizen, after all, is the underpinning of civics education and the foundation for students' becoming strong and active citizens as adults.

This flip-book lesson has been created to extend the lessons of "Power Pack: Lessons in Civics, Math and Fine Arts for NIE Week 2011."

It offers interactive inquiry activities students can do in the classroom and also demonstrates how students can use primary sources now available through the Internet, museums and other historic and archival centers. Each page of the lesson explores an aspect of civics, civic engagement or citizenship.

Each page also includes hyperlinks that will take students and teachers to Internet resources through computers, interactive whiteboards or similar technology for further learning. Click on the individual hyperlinks to open a new window, then position the content next to the portion of the lesson it supports.

Additional activities, writing prompts and Internet resources for further student engagement are provided for the teacher in the activities below. They are listed in categories that correspond to the different pages of the lesson.

For added convenience, national civics standards addressed by each activity are listed. Standards cited are from the McREL Online Compendium (www.mcrel.org/standards).

A Note on Hyperlinks

The hyperlinks in this flip-book lesson have been provided to take advantage of the primary sources available on the Internet, especially through historic, museum and

government websites. At the same time, we acknowledge that every class is different and that the lessons have been written for use by all ages. What may be appropriate and workable for one set of students may not be effective for another group. We urge all teachers to **VIEW ALL HYPERLINKS IN ADVANCE to ensure they fall within the comfort zone you have with your students this year.** Some portions may be more appropriate than others for your class.

If you have problems connecting with any hyperlink from your interactive whiteboard, the links are written out below. Just copy and paste the Web addresses listed into your browser and proceed.

1. A Government of Laws

Internet Links for This Lesson

John Adams

www.whitehouse.gov/about/presidents/johnadams

John Adams Portraits

www.google.com/images?client=safari&rls=en&q=john+adams+portraits&oe=UTF-8&um=1&ie=UTF-8&source=univ&ei=gxYjTejQGYWclgfp17TjDA&sa=X&oi=image_result_group&ct=title&resnum=1&ved=0CCsQsAQwAA&biw=1025&bih=662

Activities

News Writing Prompt

In the United States, government is “a government of laws, not of men.” But not all laws are national laws. Some are state laws, some are county laws and some are local laws that apply only to a city or a town. Divide students into teams or pairs and use the print, electronic or Web edition of the newspaper to find examples of a national law, a state law and a local law. Or have them find an example of an activity controlled by a national, state or local law. Ask them to write or discuss why each law was needed and why it was a national, state or local law instead of something else.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 1: Understand ideas about civic life, politics and government.

Standard 3: Understand the sources, purposes and functions of law, and the importance of the rule of law for the protection of individual rights and the common good.

Grades K-4

Standard 1, Level II, Item 1: Know various people and groups make, apply and enforce rules and laws for others and manage disputes about rules and laws.

Grades 5-8

Standard 1, Level III, Item 3: Know institutions that have the authority to direct or control the behavior of members of a society (e.g., a school board, state legislature, courts, Congress).

Grades 9-12

Standard 1, Level IV, Item 8: Understand how the purposes served by a government affect relationships between the individual and government and between government and society as a whole.

Connect With a Lawmaker

Laws are made by the legislative branch of government. At the national level, that would be the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. Members of Congress have offices in Washington, D.C., and also in their states or districts. They also stay connected with citizens through their websites. As a class, in teams or in pairs, have students visit the websites for the U.S. House or U.S. Senate at www.house.gov or www.senate.gov. Have them use the links provided on these sites to find the individual website of a senator from their state or their U.S. representative. Ask them to scan the site to learn issues the lawmaker is working on, then have them draft a letter to the lawmaker expressing an opinion about the work being done.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 29: Understand the importance of political leadership, public service and a knowledgeable citizenry in American constitutional democracy.

Grades K-4

Standard 29, Level II, Item 1: Know what political leaders do and why leadership is necessary in a democracy.

Grades 5-8

Standard 29, Level III, Item 7: Understand why becoming knowledgeable about public affairs and the values and principles of American constitutional democracy and communicating that knowledge to others is an important form of participation; understand the argument that constitutional democracy requires the participation of an attentive, knowledgeable and competent citizenry.

Grades 9-12

Standard 2, Level IV, Item 2: Understand how civil society allows for individuals or groups to influence government in ways other than voting and elections.

Standard 29, Level IV, Item 3: Understand how awareness of the nature of American constitutional change gives citizens the ability to reaffirm or change fundamental constitutional values.

2. Explore Our Constitution

Internet Links for This Lesson

National Constitution Center

http://constitutioncenter.org/ncc_edu_Studying_the_Constitution.aspx

Profiles of Founders

www.constitutioncenter.org/ncc_edu_Founding_Fathers.aspx

Activities

News Writing Prompt

The U.S. Constitution divides the power of the national government among three branches: 1) the executive branch, headed by the president; 2) the legislative branch, made up of the U.S. House and U.S. Senate; and 3) the judicial branch, made up of the nation's courts and headed by the U.S. Supreme Court. State constitutions also divide power and authority this way. As a class, or in teams or pairs, have students use the print, electronic or Web edition of the newspaper to find examples of each branch of government in the news. Direct them to write or discuss what each branch is doing, why it is important and whom it will affect most, now and in the future.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 2: Understand the essential characteristics of limited and unlimited governments.

Standard 5: Understand the major characteristics of systems of shared powers and of parliamentary systems.

Grades K-4

Standard 2, Level II, Item 2: Know how laws can limit the power of people in government (e.g., laws that prohibit a teacher from releasing personal information about students to people other than the students' parents or guardians; laws that prohibit governments from discriminating against people because of their religious or political beliefs).

Grades 5-8

Standard 5, Level III, Item 1: Understand the primary responsibilities of each branch of government in a system of shared powers (e.g., legislative, executive, judicial) and ways in which each branch shares the powers and functions of the other branches.

Grades 9-12

Standard 1, Level IV, Item 1: Understand how politics enables a group of people with varying opinions and/or interests to reach collective decisions, influence decisions and accomplish goals that they could not reach as individuals (e.g., managing the distribution of resources, allocating benefits and burdens, managing conflicts).

The Constitution and Politics

The U.S. Constitution was written more than 220 years ago, but it is very much a part of politics today. In the 2010 elections for the U.S. House and U.S. Senate, candidates spent a great deal of time talking about constitutional rights and the authority the Constitution gives the president and the U.S. House and U.S. Senate. As a class, talk about reasons politicians would want to point to the Constitution to make points or express ideas. Then have students work in teams or as a class to find a political leader in the news who is talking about constitutional issues. Discuss what this leader is saying about the Constitution and why s/he thinks it is important to government and politics today. Have older students draw an editorial cartoon expressing an opinion about this leader's constitutional views.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 8: Understand the central ideas of American constitutional government and how this form of government has shaped the character of American society.

Grades K-4

Standard 8, Level II, Item 3: Know how fundamental values and principles of American democracy are expressed in documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights, as well as in American songs, stories, and speeches.

Grades 5-8

Standard 8, Level III, Item 1: Know the essential ideas of American constitutional government that are expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and other writings (e.g., the Constitution is a higher law that authorizes a government of limited powers; the Preamble to the Constitution states the purposes of government such as to form a more perfect union, establish justice, provide for the common defense and promote the general welfare).

Standard 8, Level III, Item 2: Know how certain provisions of the United States Constitution give government the necessary power to fulfill its purposes.

Grades 9-12

Standard 8, Level IV, Item 2: Know how the creation of American constitutional government was influenced by the central ideas of the natural rights philosophy (e.g., all persons have the right to life, liberty, property and the pursuit of happiness; the major purpose of government is to protect those rights).

Standard 8, Level IV, Item 4: Understand the concept of popular sovereignty as a central idea of American constitutional government (e.g., the people as the ultimate source of the power to create, alter, or abolish governments).

3. The Rights We Enjoy

Internet Links for This Lesson

Bill of Rights Institute

<http://www.billofrightsintitute.org/page.aspx?pid=463>

Rights in the News

<http://www.billofrightsintitute.org/page.aspx?pid=461>

Freedoms in Art

www.nrm.org/collections-2/the-collection/collections-slideshow/

FDR Speech

www.archives.gov/exhibits/powers_of_persuasion/four_freedoms/four_freedoms.html

Activities

News Writing Prompt

Some of the most important rights granted to citizens by the Constitution involve fair trials in court. The Sixth Amendment grants the right to a speedy and public trial, allows people to confront witnesses against them and to present witnesses in their defense. As a class, talk about why these rights are important in efforts to give all people fair trials. Then have students work alone or in teams to find news coverage of a criminal trial in the print, electronic or Web edition of the newspaper. Ask them to read details of the case in the story or find additional details online. Then have them list three types of witnesses they would call for the defense of the person accused of breaking the law. Have them write or explain orally why each type would be helpful to the defense.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 3: Understand the sources, purposes and functions of law, and the importance of the rule of law for the protection of individual rights and the common good.

Grades K-4

Standard 3, Level I, Item 1: Know that promoting justice is one of the fundamental purposes of law in American society.

Standard 3, Level II, Item 1: Know common ways in which rules and laws can be used (e.g., to describe how people should behave; to provide order, predictability and security; to protect rights; to provide benefits; to assign burdens or responsibilities; to limit the power of people in authority).

Grades 5-8

Standard 3, Level III, Item 2: Understand how and why the rule of law can be used to restrict the actions of private citizens and government officials.

Standard 18, Level III, Item 1: Understand the importance of the rule of law in establishing limits on both those who govern and the governed, protecting individual rights, and promoting the common good.

Grades 9-12

Standard 3, Level IV, Item 2: Know alternative ideas about the purposes and functions of law (e.g., regulating relationships among people and between people and their government; providing order, predictability, security and established procedures for the management of conflict; regulating social and economic relationships in civil society).

The Fifth Amendment

The Fifth Amendment to the Constitution contains one of the most famous American rights: the right not to be forced to testify against yourself in a court proceeding. Defendants who exercise this right often are said to be “taking the Fifth.” As a class, talk about why this is an important right for Americans to have. Then challenge students to use images, words or stories from the print, electronic or Web newspaper to design an art collage showing the importance of this right. Ask them to give their collage a dramatic or eye-catching title that would get people to think about this constitutional right.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 18: Understand the role and importance of law in the American constitutional system and issues regarding the judicial protection of individual rights.

Grades K-4

Standard 18, Level II, Item 1: Know that the judicial branch, headed by the Supreme Court, makes decisions concerning the law that aim to protect individual rights (e.g., the right to a fair trial, to vote, to practice one's religious beliefs) and promote the common good (e.g., upholding laws that protect the rights of all people to equal opportunity).

Grades 5-8

Standard 18, Level III, Item 7: Understand the importance to individuals and to society of major due process protections such as habeas corpus, presumption of innocence, fair notice, impartial tribunal, speedy and public trials, right to counsel, trial by jury, right against self incrimination, protection against double jeopardy, right of appeal.

Grades 9-12

Standard 18, Level IV, Item 1: Understand how the rule of law makes possible a system of ordered liberty that protects the basic rights of citizens.

4. The Power of the Vote

Internet Links for This Lesson

Rock the Vote

www.rockthevote.org/

Project Vote Smart

www.votesmart.org/

Declare Yourself

www.declareyourself.com/

Smackdown Your Vote!

www.wwe.com/inside/overtheropes/wweinyourcorner/smackdownyourvote/

AIGA Voting Posters

www.aiga.org/content.cfm/selected-posters-2008

Student Voting Performance

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=Ux1wYP0HNdc&vq=medium#t=55

Activities

News Writing Prompt

One of the most important rights in the United States is the right of citizens to vote and choose leaders for the nation, states and local communities. Potential candidates for the next presidential election are already meeting leaders in different states to decide whether to run. Have students use the print, electronic or Web edition of the newspaper to find news about possible presidential candidates, or have them search the Internet to find an example of such news. Ask them to talk or write about one possible candidate, what experience s/he has and what challenges s/he faces in winning the nomination.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 29: Understand the importance of political leadership, public service and a knowledgeable citizenry in American constitutional democracy.

Grades K-4

Standard 29, Level II, Item 5: Know qualities leaders should have such as commitment to the values and principles of constitutional democracy, respect for the rights of others, ability to work with others, reliability or dependability, courage, honesty, ability to be fair, intelligence, willingness to work hard, and special knowledge or skills.

Grades 5-8

Standard 29, Level III, Item 1: Understand the functions of political leadership and why leadership is a vital necessity in a constitutional democracy.

Grades 9-12

Standard 29, Level IV, Item 2: Understand why becoming knowledgeable about public affairs and the values and principles of American constitutional democracy, and communicating that knowledge to others are important forms of participation, and understand the argument that constitutional democracy requires the participation of an attentive, knowledgeable, and competent citizenry.

How Long Is Too Long?

Presidential elections begin long before voters actually go to the polls. As a class, talk about the advantages and disadvantages of candidates campaigning for months and months. Then have students write a letter to the editor of the newspaper expressing an opinion on whether this is good or bad.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 20: Understand the roles of political parties, campaigns, elections and associations and groups in American politics.

Standard 28: Understand how participation in civic and political life can help citizens attain individual and public goals.

Grades K-4

Standard 28, Level II, Item 2: Know ways people can influence the decisions and actions of their government such as voting; taking an active role in interest groups, political parties, and other organizations that attempt to influence public policy and elections; attending meetings of governing agencies (e.g., city council, school board); working in campaigns, circulating and signing petitions; taking part in peaceful demonstrations; and contributing money to political parties, candidates or causes.

Grades 5-8

Standard 20, Level III, Item 2: Know the various kinds of elections (e.g., primary and general, local and state, congressional, presidential, recall).

Grades 9-12

Standard 20, Level IV, Item 6: Understand the significance of campaigns and elections in the American political system, and know current criticisms of campaigns and proposals for their reform.

5. The Character of the Nation

Internet Links for This Lesson

JFK Inauguration Speech

http://www.youtube.com/watch_popup?v=VB6hLg3PRbY&vq=smalllated

Ben's Guide to Citizenship

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/6-8/citizenship/responsibilities.html>

Ben Franklin Timeline

www.benfranklin300.org/timeline

Activities

News Writing Prompt

A person's character, a congressman once said, is how you behave when no one is looking. A nation's character, on the other hand, can be shown in how it behaves when everyone is looking. As a class, discuss events or decisions that have been important in showing the nation's character in the past or today. Talk about how these events connect to values expressed in the Bill of Rights or the U.S. Constitution. Then have students work on their own, in teams or as a class, to find a story in the print, electronic or Web edition of the newspaper that reveals something about the nation's character. Ask them to write out three lessons that could be learned from the people or events in the story that could help the nation or the community in the future.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 9: Understand the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, beliefs, and principles of American constitutional democracy.

Grades K-4

Standard 9, Level II, Item 1: Understand how Americans are united by the values, principles and beliefs they share rather than by ethnicity, race, religion, class, language, gender or national origin.

Grades 5-8

Standard 9, Level III, Item 1: Identify fundamental values and principles that are expressed in basic documents (e.g., Declaration of Independence, United States Constitution), significant political speeches and writings (e.g., The Federalist, King's "I Have a Dream" speech), and individual and group actions that embody fundamental values and principles (e.g., suffrage and civil rights movements).

Grades 9-12

Standard 9, Level IV, Item 3: Understand the significance of fundamental values and principles for the individual and society.

Character in the Community

In every community, people demonstrate good character in their actions or ideas. As a class, discuss different ways students have seen people act with good character. What did they do? How did it affect others? Then ask students to find an example in the print, electronic or Web edition of the newspaper of someone showing good character in what they are doing or saying. Have them write a summary of what the person is doing and why it is good for the community. For added creativity, ask them to draw a picture, illustration or cartoon showing how the person's character was a benefit to others or to him/herself.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 9: Understand the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, beliefs and principles of American constitutional democracy.

Standard 27: Understand how certain character traits enhance citizens' ability to fulfill personal and civic responsibilities.

Grades K-4

Standard 9, Level II, Item 7: Know how the values and principles of American democracy can be fostered through helping to promote the common good (e.g., volunteer work).

Standard 27, Level II, Item 3: Know private character traits that contribute to the health of American democracy such as individual responsibility, self-discipline/self-governance, honesty, persistence and compassion.

Grades 5-8

Standard 10, Level III, Item 1: Know factors that have influenced American voluntarism (e.g., colonial conditions, frontier traditions, religious beliefs).

Grades 9-12

Standard 9, Level IV, Item 2: Understand the interdependence among certain values and principles (e.g., individual liberty and diversity).

6. You Can Make a Difference

Internet Links for This Lesson

AmeriCorps

www.AmeriCorps.gov

Volunteers Tell Their Stories

www.serve.gov/myamericanstory.asp

Volunteering in America

www.volunteeringinamerica.gov

United We Serve

www.serve.gov

Tips for Volunteers

www.nationalservice.gov/about/volunteering/tips.asp

Activities

News Writing Prompt

Volunteers and active citizens play an important role in making communities strong and successful. They also play an important role in calling attention to issues or fixing problems. As a class, talk about things volunteers can do to make a community better. Then send students into the print, electronic or Web edition of the newspaper to find a problem that could be fixed or a situation that could be made better by volunteers. Have students write a complete sentence or paragraph explaining how volunteers could make things better. Then challenge them to draw a newspaper comic strip, or series of comic strips, showing volunteers taking action and improving things.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 10: Understand the roles of voluntarism and organized groups in American social and political life.

Grades K-4

Standard 10, Level II, Item 1: Understand the importance of voluntarism as a characteristic of American society (e.g., people should volunteer to help others in their family, schools, communities, state, nation and the world; volunteering is a source of individual satisfaction and fulfillment).

Grades 5-8

Standard 10, Level III, Item 2: Know services that are provided by charitable, religious and civic groups in the community (e.g., health, child and elderly care; disaster relief; counseling; tutoring; basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter).

Grades 9-12

Standard 10, Level IV, Item 2: Know how voluntary associations and other organized groups have been involved in functions usually associated with government (e.g., social welfare, education).

Help the Kids

Many volunteer organizations look for people who would like to help kids grow, learn and succeed. As a class, talk about the ways volunteers can help kids — for example, coaching sports, teaching art or helping with homework. Ask students what would be the first or most important thing they would ask volunteers to do to help children in their neighborhood. Then challenge them to design a public service ad for the print, electronic or Web edition of the newspaper to encourage volunteers to get involved.

McREL civics standards addressed by this activity:

All

Standard 10: Understand the roles of voluntarism and organized groups in American social and political life.

Grades K-4

Standard 9, Level II, Item 7: Know how the values and principles of American democracy can be fostered through helping to promote the common good (e.g., volunteer work).

Grades 5-8

Standard 10, Level III, Item 3: Know volunteer opportunities that exist in one's own school and community.

Grades 9-12

Standard 10, Level IV, Item 2: Know how voluntary associations and other organized groups have been involved in functions usually associated with government (e.g., social welfare, education).

Civics Flip-Book Credits:

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