

A NATURALIZATION PROJECT FOR YOUR SCHOOL

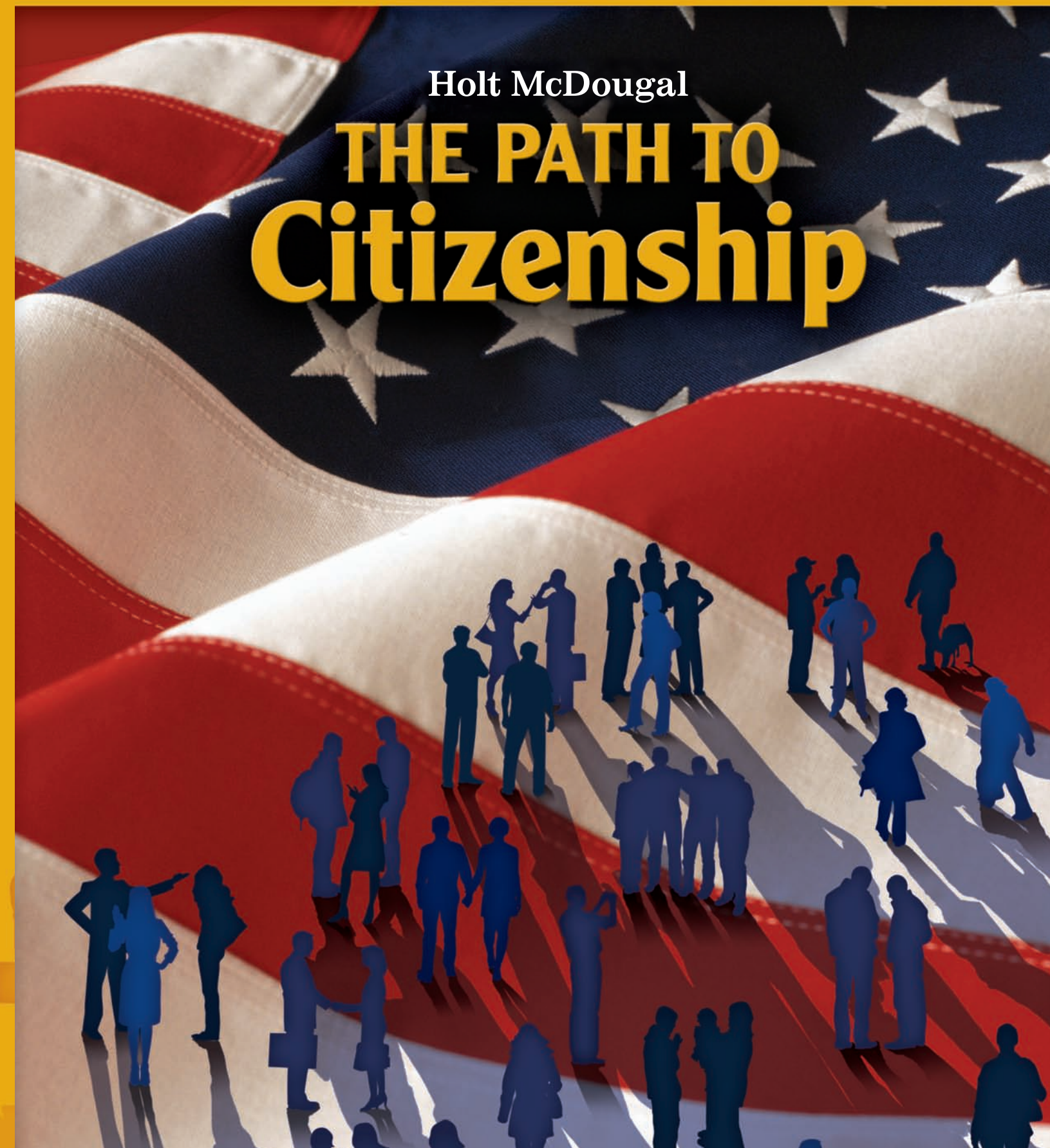
The Path to Citizenship is a civics-based curriculum for middle and high school students, offering fun and diverse ways to learn:

- the rights and responsibilities of citizenship
- the naturalization process in the United States
- the importance of contributing to your community

The multidisciplinary syllabus provides lessons and activities covering issues like social justice and the advantage of living in a democratic country.

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Holt McDougal

THE PATH TO Citizenship

A NATURALIZATION PROJECT
FOR YOUR SCHOOL

The Path to Citizenship features

- Background on immigration to the United States
- Activities about immigration
- A citizenship handbook
- Citizenship activities
- A naturalization ceremony project



About the Author



▲ Alysa Ullman with her grandmother

Alysa Ullman

Like countless millions of American families, Ms. Ullman's grandparents were naturalized citizens. Her grandmother, Gerda Weissmann Klein, taught her from a very early age to value American citizenship and appreciate its benefits. Ms. Ullman conducted extensive research and met with high-ranking government officials to discuss issues of citizenship and naturalization. In June 2007, she was invited to attend a naturalization ceremony at the White House. Witnessing this ceremony motivated her to create this curriculum, which educates today's students on citizenship and the importance of displaying patriotism.

Ms. Ullman has always had a passion for writing. In early 2007, she started her own consulting company, Au Consulting, LLC. She has been hired by a variety of companies to manage an assortment of writing and marketing programs. Prior to the creation of Au Consulting, LLC, Ms. Ullman was selected to be on a media team of 17 individuals from around the world who worked in the Athletes' Village at the 2000 Summer Olympics in Sydney, Australia. The committee was responsible for writing biographies on all 11,000 athletes at the 2000 Olympics. Additionally, she worked as a Corporate Marketing Manager for Washington Sports & Entertainment, an umbrella organization that included the Washington Wizards, Capitals, and Mystics.

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Overview

Overview	2
Program Goals	3
Letters of Welcome	
from Sandra Day O'Connor	4
from Gerda Weissmann Klein	5
from Jesús García	6
from Marney Murphy	7

Settling in the United States

The Move to America Begins	8
Terms to Know	9
Animated History: Ellis Island	10
Immigration Activities	
Leaving Home	12
Saying Goodbye	12
Designing an Immigration Web Page	13



▲ Ellis Island today

Citizenship Handbook

Introduction	14
The Role of the Citizen	14
The Naturalization Process	17
Rights and Responsibilities	20
Building Citizenship Skills	22
Practicing Citizenship Skills	24
Taking Action in Your Community	25



▲ An immigration candidate eagerly awaits the start of the naturalization ceremony.

Naturalization Ceremony Project

Bringing the Naturalization Ceremony to Your School

Overview	28
Project Checklist	29
Getting Financial Support	30
Working with the Media	31
Preparing for the Ceremony	32
Mapping New Citizens' Homelands	34
Model Ceremony Time Line	36
Reflecting on the Ceremony	38
Maintaining Contacts	40
After the Ceremony	41
Acknowledgments	43



▲ Teens celebrate at a rally for new citizens.

With intense debates over immigration and the civil rights of citizens at the forefront of the national dialogue, the issue of citizenship is a vital topic today. This booklet was created to educate you on the immigration and naturalization process. It combines background information on immigration and basic information about the rights and responsibilities of citizenship in the United States. In addition, it provides you with a blueprint for hosting a naturalization ceremony at your school, so that you can witness this important event for yourself. Our hope is that after completing this program you will have a better understanding and appreciation of the great privilege—and the obligations that come with it—of being a United States citizen.

★ **Program Goals**

To help you appreciate the meaning of United States citizenship, this program hopes to

- 1 **EDUCATE** you on the process of becoming a United States citizen.
- 2 **ENGAGE** you in activities that help you understand what it means to be a citizen.
- 3 **INSPIRE** you and increase your pride in being a United States citizen.
- 4 **CHALLENGE** you to give back to your community and be a good citizen.

Milestones in United States Citizenship

July 4, 1776
Declaration of Independence is adopted. Fifty-six men, including eight who are foreign born, eventually sign it.

December 15, 1791
 The **Bill of Rights** to the Constitution is ratified. Individual freedoms are protected.

September 17, 1787
 The **Constitution** of the United States of America is signed.

October 28, 1886
 France gives the **Statue of Liberty** to the United States as a gift of friendship. She becomes America's symbol for freedom.

1892–1932
Ellis Island, in New York harbor, serves as the main immigration station. About 40% of Americans can trace their ancestry through it.

1905–1914
 Over **10 million immigrants** enter the United States, the largest ever for a ten-year period.

1910–1940
Angel Island, in San Francisco Bay, serves as the main immigration station on the west coast of the United States.

1965
 The **Immigration Act of 1965** ends the quota system. The number of immigrants from Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean greatly increases.

2008
New naturalization exam introduced.

Letter of Welcome from Sandra Day O'Connor

Sandra Day O'Connor was the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court. President Ronald Reagan appointed her in 1981 and she served until 2006. Since her retirement, she has been active in helping young people learn more about the judicial system. Currently she teaches a course at the Sandra Day O'Connor School of Law at Arizona State University.



Dear Students,

Knowledge about the ideals embodied in our Constitution and the manner by which our lives are affected are not automatically passed from one generation to the next. These concepts are acquired knowledge. They must be learned anew. The information and activities in this guide will deepen your understanding about what it means to be an American, and will enrich your everyday life. It is essential that we, as Americans, understand the foundations of our great nation so that we can work together to meet the challenges of today's world.

I have gained valuable lessons from my own public service. It is my belief that a democratic form of government based upon separation of powers among the three branches is still the best model to be followed. Yet, democracy carries with it certain citizenship responsibilities. The key to the continued success of the United States as a democracy rests with each of you in learning about how our government works and learning how to assert your rights, and how to fulfill your responsibilities. Good citizenship requires that you learn to make wise decisions based upon credible information.

Each of us has been given the privilege of freedom of speech, beliefs, and religious practices. By exercising these rights and privileges responsibly we can preserve our great nation. I hope that the information you receive about naturalization and citizenship in this guide will assist you as you embark on a life-long mission of good citizenship.

Sandra Day O'Connor
Retired Associate Justice,
United States Supreme Court

Letter of Welcome from Gerda Weissmann Klein

In 1939, fifteen-year-old Gerda Weissmann Klein's life changed forever when German troops invaded her home in Bielsko, Poland. She would become a survivor of the Holocaust. Klein immigrated to the United States in 1946 and became a U.S. citizen in 1948. Her U.S. citizenship remains one of her most treasured possessions.

Dear Students,

Wherever I am, I make an effort to observe my surroundings. Whether among a crowd or seeing a single person walking or sitting on a bench, I marvel at the incredible gifts that we enjoy in this country and which—had they not once been denied to me—I, myself, might take totally for granted. Americans accept as our birthright the freedom to go where we choose and to say what we think. Yet, in numerous places across the globe, these natural activities are, as yet, unattainable dreams.

I comprehended these precious gifts when I arrived in the United States, but first felt secure that I possessed them when I received my citizenship. The passport I carry when traveling abroad is the tangible manifestation of that cherished status. Almost anywhere in the world, I can go to my embassy if I am in need of help or protection. I speak of the United States as my adopted country. But in equal measure, it has adopted me. After having been homeless and orphaned for so long, I now belong.

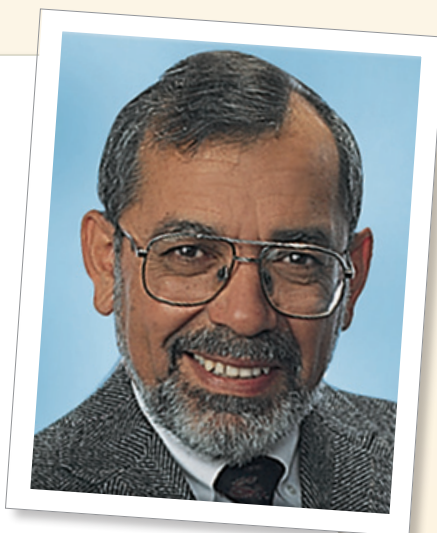
With gratitude, pride, and awe, I pledge to my country my loyalty and desire to be worthy of the honor of American citizenship. It is my greatest hope that the content in this booklet will help you students, the future of our country, understand and appreciate the value of American citizenship.

Gerda Weissmann Klein
Holocaust Survivor



Letter of Welcome from Jesús García

Dr. Jesús García is a first generation Latino whose appreciation for U.S. citizenship developed in his childhood home. He is former President of the National Council for the Social Studies and Professor of Social Studies Education at University of Nevada, Las Vegas.



Dear Students,

What a wonderful way to build a sense of citizenship for students—a naturalization project! As a former social studies teacher, I have read the histories of immigrants who have overcome insurmountable challenges to reach this country. I have traveled about the country and listened to new immigrants relay their life experiences. This book codifies the many themes that are part of the immigrant experience.

I am a first generation Latino; my parents immigrated to this country from Mexico in the early 1930s to escape poverty and to find economic opportunities in “el norte.” Like many immigrants who vowed their stay in the United States was temporary, my parents remained in this country to find each other and to raise a family.

My parents are intelligent individuals and well-informed on issues affecting their lives, but it is only recently that they became U.S. citizens. Growing up, I overheard my parents talk about economic, political, and social issues of the day, but because they were not citizens, their participation in society was limited. This book will help you learn about the rights and responsibilities of citizens, the importance of immigrants becoming citizens, and the strengths of a culturally diverse citizenry.

Dr. Jesús García

Former President,
National Council for the Social Studies

Letter of Welcome from Marney Murphy

Marney Murphy is a school media specialist for the Three Rivers Middle School in Cleves, Ohio. Her dedication to raising awareness about citizenship and increasing patriotism with her students served as the inspiration for this curriculum.



Dear Students,

In the early 1980s I took a group of National Junior Honor Society students to the International Folk Festival in Cincinnati, Ohio. Here my students had an opportunity to witness a naturalization ceremony. The students were so impressed with this experience that they asked me if we could hold a ceremony on our school’s campus so the rest of the students could observe this incredible event. After two years of writing letters to the federal courthouse, U.S. Federal Court Judge Carl B. Rubin agreed to hold a naturalization ceremony at Three Rivers Middle School.

I created a curriculum to teach my students about the importance of immigrants. I wanted them to be educated about how our country is comprised of immigrants, all who came here to build a better life for their families. I engaged my students in several activities to encourage them to learn about their own heritage, as well as teach them about the countries where people would be emigrating from at the ceremony.

Many facets can be incorporated into studying the naturalization process: citizenship, slavery, family ancestry, government, quotas throughout history, voting statistics, etiquette, and so on. The teaching goals of these concepts are simple: instilling pride, patriotism, and a lifetime commitment to good citizenship. To date, Three Rivers Middle School has hosted five naturalization ceremonies where 4,000 students (all with a tear in their eye) have witnessed 420 immigrants take the Oath of Allegiance and become citizens of the United States of America. I take great pride in knowing that my students are now informed citizens who have an appreciation of this rich, diverse country and take pride in the fact that they are citizens of the United States of America.

Marney Murphy

Media Specialist, Three Rivers Middle School



The Move to America Begins

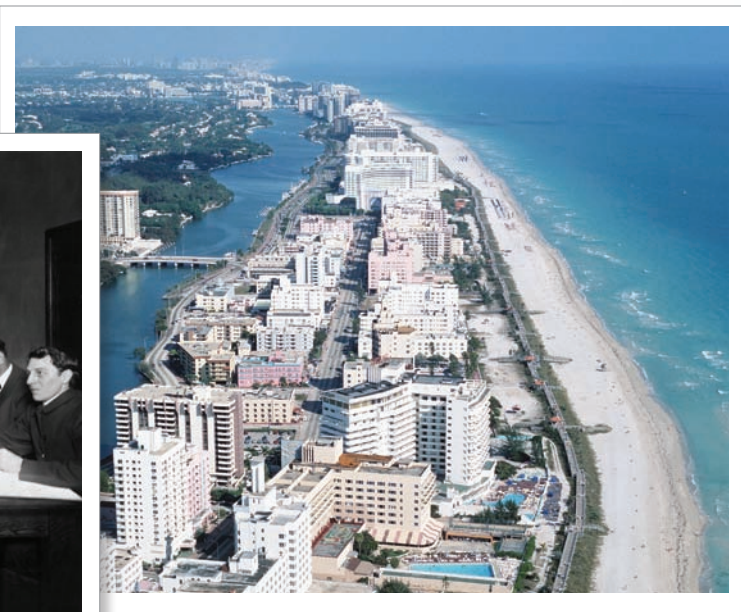
People from many different countries have immigrated to America throughout its history. A variety of factors led these people to **emigrate**, or leave their home country, and **immigrate**, or settle, in America. Some **immigrants** came in search of better career and educational opportunities. Others came seeking relief from governments that controlled their religious and political freedom.

Remember that people in some parts of the world do not have the freedoms that we enjoy. For millions of people, America has represented a land of opportunity, a place where they could build a better life. In their home countries, many immigrants had lived lives ruled by rigid class structures. In America, they sought equality and freedom. They believed that they could achieve prosperity through their own hard work and abilities. This promise of a better life is sometimes called the "American dream." This vision drew people to the United States.

These days most people immigrate to this country by airplane. However, this has not always been the case. Between the 1870s and 1920s, almost all European immigrants arrived by steamship. About 12 million immigrants passed through Ellis Island in New York harbor, the gateway to America. Ellis Island no longer serves as an immigration station. Today, it houses a museum that tells the story of the immigrant experience. But you can learn about Ellis Island and find out about the immigration process by reading the feature on pages 10 and 11.



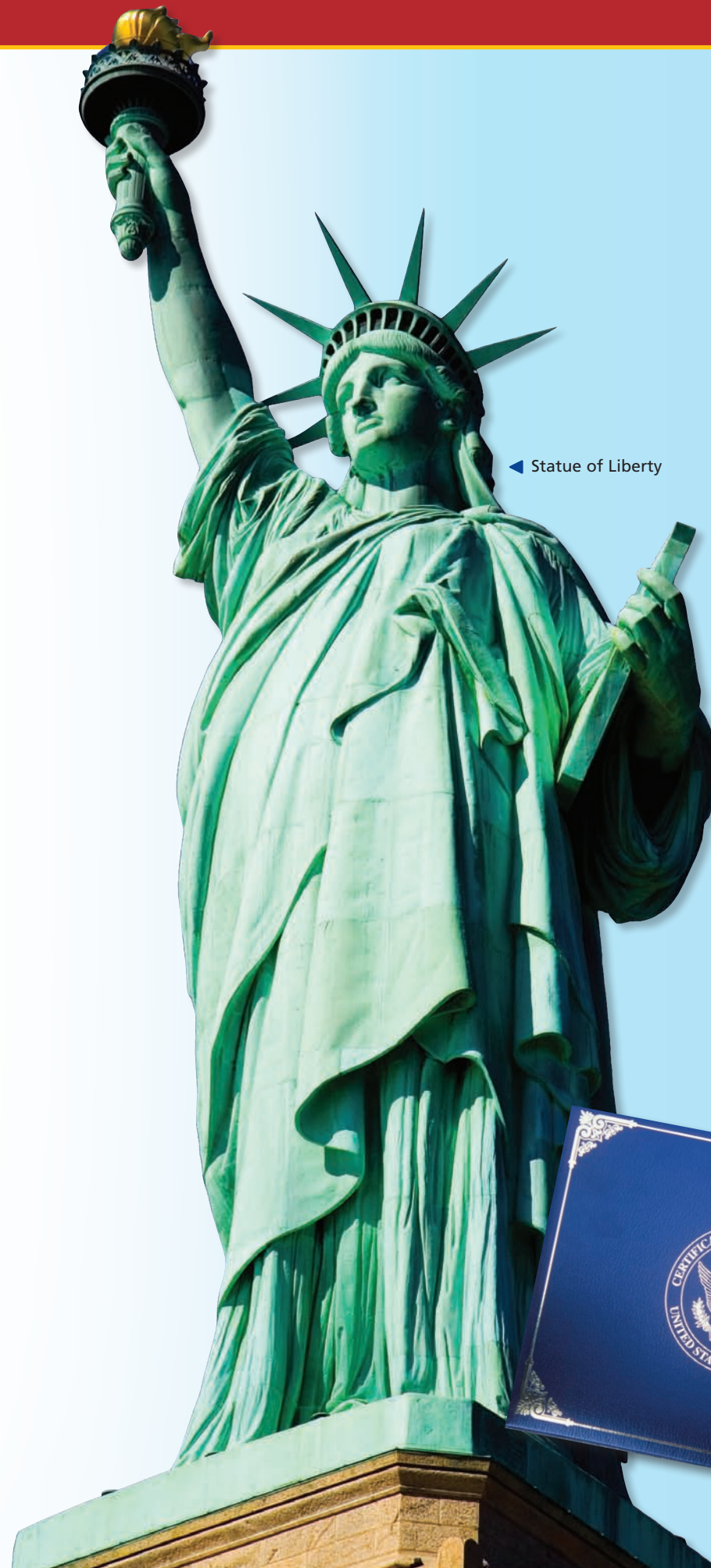
◀ New citizens show off their U.S. citizenship certificates.



Miami Beach, Florida



▲ Immigrants at Ellis Island in late 1800s
◀ Photo service for immigrants filing papers



◀ Statue of Liberty

Terms to Know

Here are some citizenship-related terms you will need to know as you read this booklet.

- citizen** a legal member of a nation guaranteed certain rights, protections, and responsibilities
- civil rights** citizens' basic rights and freedoms
- emigrate** to leave one's home country
- immigrate** to settle in a new country
- immigrant** person who settles in a new country
- naturalization** the process by which a person who is not a citizen of the United States becomes a citizen

Background Vocabulary

These general terms are useful as background for your reading.

- democracy** government by the people, exercised either directly or through elected representatives
- government** the organization that controls and carries out public policy in a country or other political unit
- U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)** the agency of the U.S. government that administers immigration and naturalization policies



◀ U.S. Naturalization Seal

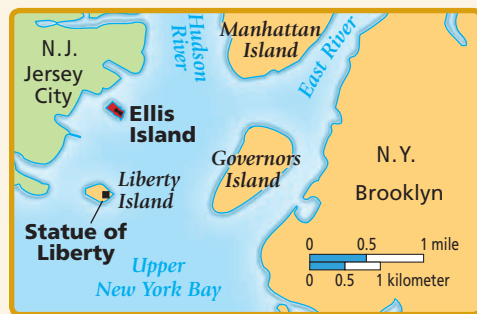
Animated HISTORY

ELLIS ISLAND

[Click here](http://www.classzone.com/cz/redirect/ellisland.html) to explore Ellis Island
www.classzone.com/cz/redirect/ellisland.html

Gateway to America

Between 1892 and 1954, about 12 million immigrants passed through the Ellis Island Immigration Station. Some immigrants stayed on Ellis Island for days or even weeks if they failed their health exams. Others waited for family members or money to arrive before they could travel to the mainland.



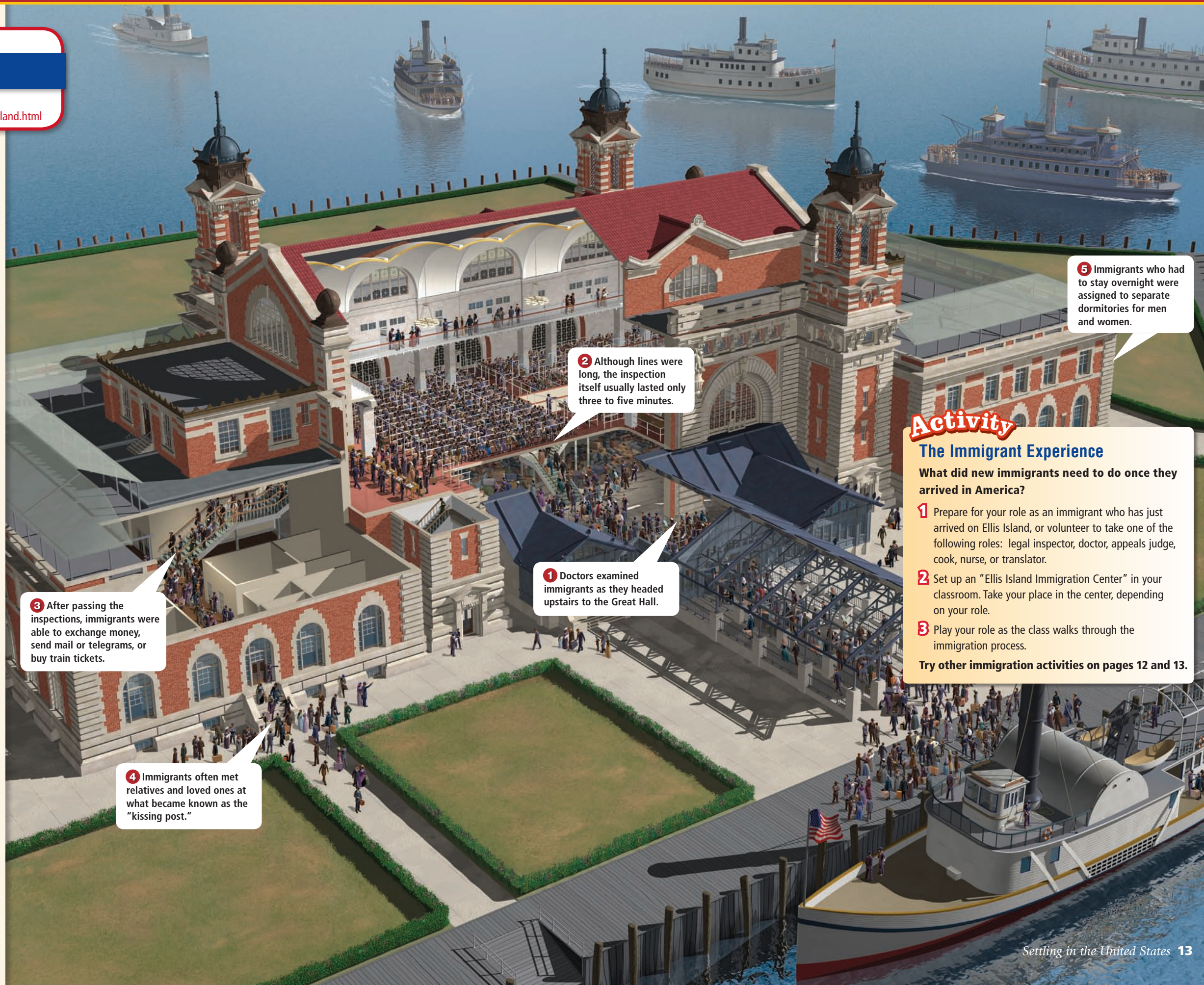
[Click here](#) Ferries took immigrants from piers on the mainland to Ellis Island.



[Click here](#) In the station cafeteria, immigrants could have their first taste of ice cream and other American dishes.



[Click here](#) After waiting for hours to be inspected, immigrants still had to wait in long lines to leave Ellis Island.



5 Immigrants who had to stay overnight were assigned to separate dormitories for men and women.

2 Although lines were long, the inspection itself usually lasted only three to five minutes.

1 Doctors examined immigrants as they headed upstairs to the Great Hall.

3 After passing the inspections, immigrants were able to exchange money, send mail or telegrams, or buy train tickets.

4 Immigrants often met relatives and loved ones at what became known as the "kissing post."

Activity

The Immigrant Experience

What did new immigrants need to do once they arrived in America?

- 1 Prepare for your role as an immigrant who has just arrived on Ellis Island, or volunteer to take one of the following roles: legal inspector, doctor, appeals judge, cook, nurse, or translator.
- 2 Set up an "Ellis Island Immigration Center" in your classroom. Take your place in the center, depending on your role.
- 3 Play your role as the class walks through the immigration process.

Try other immigration activities on pages 12 and 13.

Activity

Leaving Home

Immigrants have many important decisions to make before they move to a new country. One decision is what to bring with them. Obviously, they cannot bring all of their belongings. So they must decide what to take and what to leave behind.

Imagine that you are immigrating to a new country. You are allowed only two suitcases. One will be filled with your clothing. The other can be filled with whatever you like. Follow these steps to help you decide what to pack in the second suitcase.

- 1 Think about your possessions that have special meaning. You might consider photographs, family keepsakes, and books.
- 2 List five items in the chart at right. Next to each item, explain why it is important. If you can't come up with a very good reason for including a particular item, erase it and write something else.
- 3 Once you have completed your list, compare it with those of your classmates. Which items were similar? Which items were different?

★ Suitcase Contents	
Item	Reason
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Saying Goodbye

Not only do immigrants leave possessions behind, but they may also leave behind friends, family, and familiar surroundings. Think about what you might miss by leaving your home to move to a new land. Follow these steps to help you think about what you are giving up to immigrate.

- 1 Think about your daily life and what you take for granted, for example certain television programs or clubs or groups you belong to.
- 2 List five ideas about what you are leaving behind in the chart at right. Next to each item, explain why it is important to you.
- 3 Once you have completed your list, compare it with those of your classmates. Which items were similar? Which items were different?

★ Trade Offs	
Idea	Importance
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Activity

Designing an Immigration Web Page

In this activity, you will design a Web page that shows immigrants the advantages of settling in the United States. Work with a small group and follow these steps.

- 1 Brainstorm and list the advantages that you enjoy in America. You might list educational opportunities, free and low-cost recreational facilities (parks, pools, playgrounds, museums), and the freedom to express yourself.
- 2 Agree on a title and design for your Web page. Decide on the text, visual materials, and links you will include on your page.
- 3 Sketch your design on the model Web page below.
- 4 Share your Web page with your classmates.



★ Web Page Plan

★ Web Page Plan

Introduction

In 1948, President Harry S. Truman said, "There is no more precious possession today than United States citizenship." There are many reasons why American citizenship is so valuable. One is that people from countries all over the world have chosen to immigrate to the United States. Their foods, customs, and cultures enrich our life and continually change what it means to be an American.

The U.S. Census Bureau reports that one person immigrates to the United States every 26 seconds. The pie chart on page 15 shows the percentage of immigrants to America from various regions of the world. As you can see, we are truly a country of immigrants.

In the following pages, you will find out more about your role as a U.S. citizen. You will learn about the rights and responsibilities that come with being a citizen and discover how you can build your own citizenship skills.

The Role of the Citizen

Citizens of the United States enjoy many basic rights and freedoms. Freedom of speech and religion are examples. These rights are guaranteed by the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and other amendments to the Constitution. Along with these rights, however, come responsibilities. Obeying rules and laws, voting, and serving on juries are some examples.

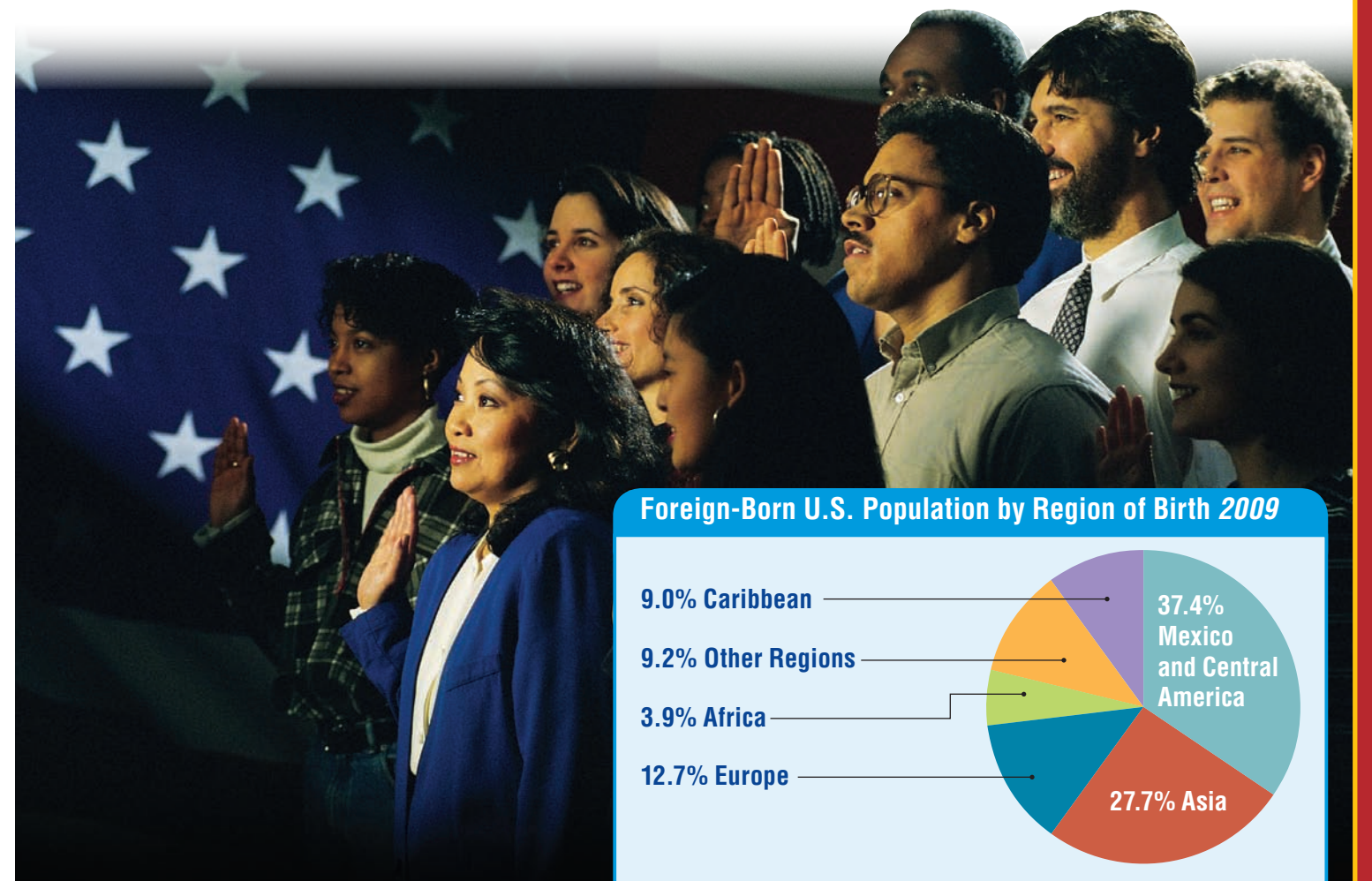
Reason and respect are also important aspects of citizenship. Reason—considering perspectives, applying logical and analytical thought, and exercising good judgment—is an important part of developing positive character qualities. Respect—for one's self, for other people, and for the community—plays a key role in how you participate in society. The Three R's of Democratic Citizenship are listed below. As you read through this handbook, note how the Three R's impact all aspects of citizenship.

The Three R's of Democratic Citizenship		
<p>★ Reason</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thoughtfulness • Multiple perspectives • A basis or motive for action • Logical, rational, and analytic thought • Good judgment, sound sense 	<p>★ Respect</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For one's self • For people (individuals and groups) • For other perspectives • For knowledge and its uses • For democratic values 	<p>★ Responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For actions • For community • For nation • For humankind • For the environment

Active Citizenship

Active citizenship is not limited to adults. Younger citizens can help their communities become better places. The following pages will help you to learn about your rights and responsibilities. Knowing them will help you to become an active and involved citizen of your community.

The chart below lists five important ways *you* can be a model citizen. The examples in the pages that follow provide details about the five aspects of citizenship listed here.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, March 2009

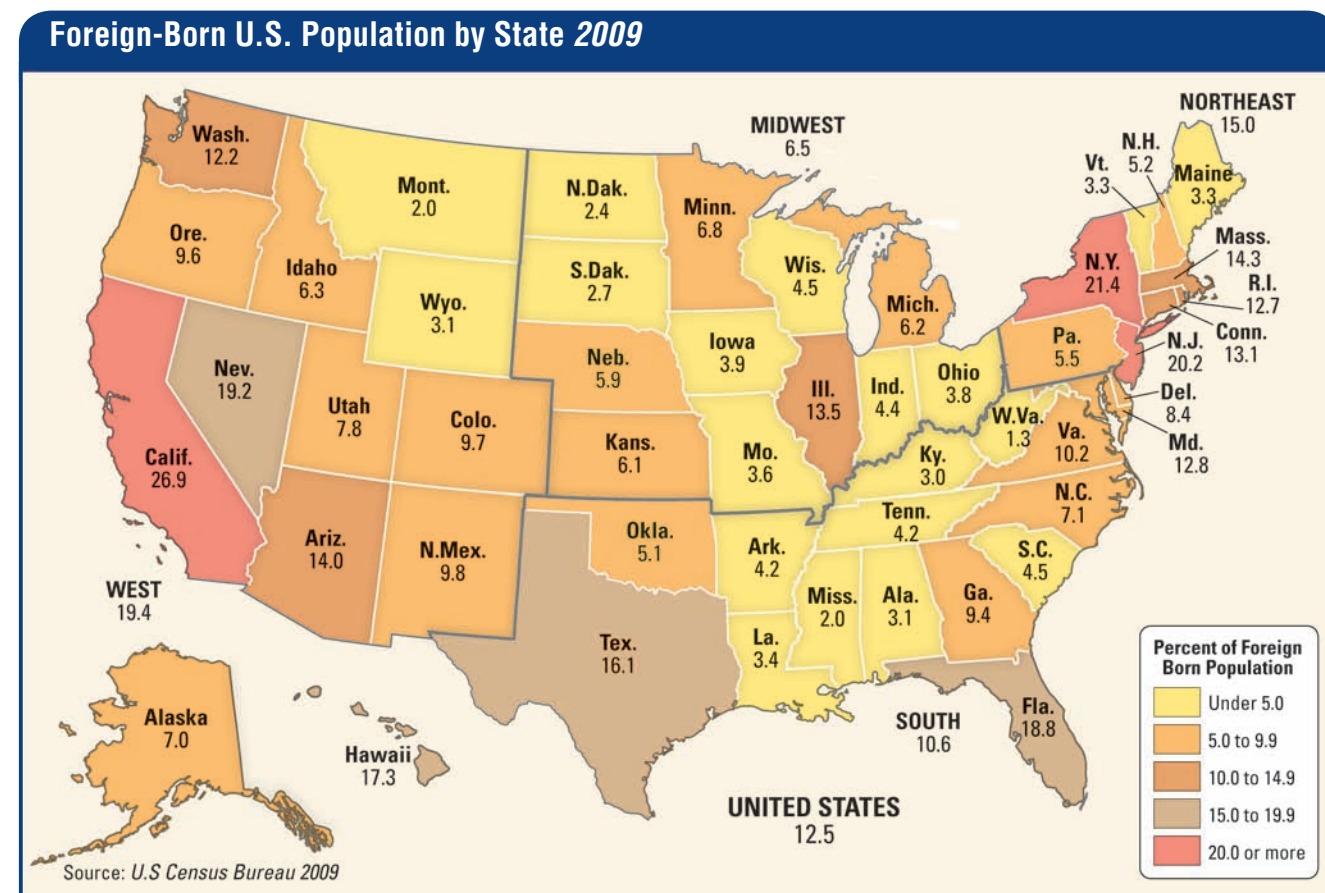
What Is a Citizen?

A **citizen** is a legal member of a nation who pledges loyalty to that nation. A citizen has certain guaranteed rights, protections, and responsibilities. All citizens have the right to equal protection under the law. A citizen is a member of a community and wants to make it a good place to live.

There are a number of ways to become a citizen. The most familiar are citizenship by birth and citizenship by naturalization.

A child born in the United States is a citizen by birth. Children born to U.S. citizens traveling or living outside the country are citizens. Even children born in the United States to parents who are not citizens of the United States are considered U.S. citizens. These children have dual citizenship. This means they are citizens of two countries—both the United States and the country of their parents' citizenship. At the age of 18, the child may choose one of the countries for permanent citizenship.

A person who is not a citizen of the United States may become one through a process called **naturalization**. The map below shows the foreign-born U.S. population by state. The percentages include both naturalized citizens and those who have not yet become citizens. In the next section, you will learn what is involved in the naturalization process.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009 American Community Survey

The Naturalization Process

As you have read, a person who is not a citizen of the United States may become one through the naturalization process. The following are the steps in this process.

- 1 File an application.
- 2 Get fingerprints taken.
- 3 Be interviewed and take an English examination and a civics test.
- 4 Take an oath of allegiance.

Before this process can begin, certain criteria must be met. In the following pages, you will learn about these criteria and find out what it might be like to take the naturalization examination and the oath of allegiance.

Criteria for Naturalization

To become a naturalized citizen, a person must meet these requirements.

- Be at least 18 years of age. Children under the age of 18 automatically become naturalized citizens when their parents do.
- Have good moral character.
- Live in the United States for at least five years as a permanent resident prior to application.
- Read, write, and speak English.
- Show knowledge of American history and government.

It is important to note that there are some special exceptions to these requirements. For an updated list of criteria, you can go to www.uscis.gov.

Once a person has completed the citizenship application, he or she mails it—along with the \$680 in fees—to an office of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). On average, the naturalization process takes about six months. However, the USCIS is constantly improving its procedures to reduce this time period.



These new citizens were sworn in at Ellis Island Immigration Museum. Naturalization ceremonies take place at many locations in the United States.

Examination for Naturalization

The newest version of the immigration exam was introduced in October 2008. It focuses less on historic facts and more on the meaning of democracy. Emilio Gonzales, Director of the USCIS, states that the goal of the new exam is to make it “more meaningful” for naturalized citizens. He believes that the newer version will help applicants gain a better “understanding and respect for U.S. values.”

To pass the exam, applicants must answer 60 percent of the questions correctly. Below are a few sample questions from both the old and new versions of the exam. Compare the questions and notice how they have been reworded. Then try answering the questions. See whether you could pass the naturalization examination. The answers are on page 42.

Sample Questions from the Naturalization Exam

Old Exam 1. What is the Constitution?
New Exam 1. What does the Constitution do?

Old Exam 2. What are the duties of the Supreme Court?
New Exam 2. What does the judicial branch do?

Old Exam 3. What were the original 13 states?
New Exam 3. There were 13 original states. Name three.

Old Exam 4. Who was president during the Civil War?
New Exam 4. What was one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did?

Old Exam 5. How many branches are there in the United States government?
New Exam 5. Name one branch or part of the government.

Oath of Allegiance

Below is the Oath of Allegiance that all naturalized citizens must take when they are sworn in as American citizens. Once applicants take this oath, they are guaranteed the rights of a U.S. citizen. But, as you will see, these rights come with important responsibilities.

“I hereby declare, on oath,

That I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure [give up] all allegiance

And fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate [monarch], state, or sovereignty [country]

Of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen;

That I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic;

That I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same;

That I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law;*

That I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law;*

That I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law;

And that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion;

So help me God.”

* In some cases the oath may be taken without these clauses.

The new citizen pledges loyalty to the United States.

The new citizen agrees to take certain jobs if drafted. The job may be in the military or, if the person is opposed to bearing arms, it may be other work.

The new citizen states that he/she makes the oath knowing what this action means and is honest about his/her intention.

Rights and Responsibilities

What Are Your Rights?

Citizens of the United States are guaranteed rights by the U.S. Constitution, state constitutions, and state and federal laws. All citizens have three kinds of rights:

- 1 **Basic Freedoms** Citizens' basic rights and freedoms are sometimes called **civil rights**. Some of these rights are personal, and others are political.
- 2 **Personal Protections** The second category of rights is intended to protect citizens from unfair government actions.
- 3 **Equal Treatment Under the Law** The third category is the right to equal treatment under the law. The government cannot treat one individual or group differently from another.

★ **Respect** Rights of a U.S. Citizen

<p>1 Basic Freedoms</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Freedom of religion Freedom of speech Freedom of the press Freedom of peaceful assembly Freedom to petition the government for change 	<p>2 Personal Protections</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The right to bear arms Freedom from being forced to house soldiers Protection from unreasonable search and seizure The right to a speedy public trial by an impartial jury Protection from excessive bail or fines Protection from cruel and unusual punishment 	<p>3 Equal Treatment Under the Law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No slavery The right to vote for all citizens over 18 years old Protection of voting rights and prevention of voter discrimination Protection of the rights of disabled citizens
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The U.S. Constitution grants these five basic freedoms.

Other parts of the Bill of Rights grant these rights.

Rights of citizenship have expanded over the years.

Limits to Rights The rights guaranteed to citizens have sensible limits. For example, the right to free speech does not allow a person to falsely shout, "Fire!" at a crowded concert. The government may place limits on certain rights to protect national security or to provide equal opportunities for all citizens. And rights come with responsibilities.

What Are Your Responsibilities?

For American democracy to work, citizens must carry out important responsibilities. There are two kinds of responsibilities, personal and civic. Personal responsibilities include taking care of yourself, helping your family, knowing right from wrong, and behaving in a respectful way.

Civic responsibilities are those that involve your government and community. They include obeying rules and laws, serving on juries, paying taxes, and defending your country when called upon. One of the most important responsibilities is voting. When you turn 18, you will have that right.

As a young person, you can be a good citizen in a number of ways. You might work with other people in your community to make it a fair and just place to live. Working for a political party or writing to your elected officials about issues that concern you are some other examples.

The diagram below shows how responsibilities change with a citizen's age. Notice that all citizens share the responsibility to obey the laws of their communities.

★ **Responsibility** Responsibilities of a U.S. Citizen

UNDER 18

- Receive an education, either at school or at home
- Take responsibility for one's behavior
- Help one's family

ALL AGES

- Obey rules and laws
- Be tolerant of others
- Pay taxes
- Volunteer for a cause
- Stay informed about issues

OVER 18

- Vote
- Serve on a jury
- May serve in the military to defend the country

Many citizens are required to serve on a jury to help ensure balance and fairness in our country's legal system.

Building Citizenship Skills

Good citizenship skills include staying informed, solving problems or making decisions, and taking action. Every citizen can find ways to build citizenship skills. By showing respect for the law and for the rights of others in your daily life, you promote democracy. You can also work to change conditions in your community to make sure all citizens experience freedom and justice.

How Do You Stay Informed?

People today can sometimes feel that they have access to too much information. It may seem overwhelming. Even so, you should stay informed on issues that affect your life. Staying informed gives you the information you need to make wise decisions and helps you find ways to solve problems. Blogging and social networking sites are popular ways to stay informed.

★ Responsibility Staying Informed

1 Watch, Listen, and Read

The first step in practicing good citizenship is to know how to find information that you need.

Sources of information include broadcast and print media and the Internet. Public officials and civic organizations are also good sources for additional information.

2 Evaluate

As you become informed, you will need to make judgments about the accuracy of your news sources. You must also be aware of those sources' points of view and biases. (Bias is a one-sided presentation of an issue.)

You should determine if you need more information, and if so, where to find it. After gathering information, you may be ready to form an opinion or a plan of action to solve a problem.

3 Communicate

To bring about change in their communities, active citizens may need to contact public officials. In today's world, making contact is easy.

You can reach most public officials by telephone, voice mail, fax, or letter. Many public officials also have Internet pages or e-mail that encourages input from the public.



How Do You Make Good Decisions?

Civic life involves making important decisions. As a voter, whom should you vote for? As a juror, should you find the defendant guilty or not guilty? As an informed citizen, should you support or oppose a proposed government action? Unlike decisions about which video to rent, civic decisions cannot be made by a process as easy as tossing a coin. Instead, you should use a problem-solving approach like the one shown in the chart below. Decision making won't always proceed directly from step to step. Sometimes it's necessary to backtrack a little. For example, you may get to the "Analyze the Information" step and realize that you don't have enough information to analyze. Then you can go back a step and gather more information.

★ Reason Making Good Decisions

Problem solving and decision making involve many steps. This chart shows you how to take those steps. Notice that you may have to repeat some steps depending on the information you gather.

1 Identify the Problem

Decide what the main issues are and what your goal is.

2 Gather Information

Get to know the basics of the problem. Find out as much as possible about the issues.

3 Analyze the Information

Look at the information and determine what it reveals about solving the problem.

4 Consider Options

Think of as many ways as possible to solve the problem. Don't be afraid to include ideas that others might think of as unacceptable.

5 Choose a Solution

Choose the solution you believe will best solve the problem and help you reach your goal.

6 Implement the Solution

Take action or plan to take action on a chosen solution.

7 Evaluate the Solution

Review the results of putting your solution into action. Did the solution work? Do you need to adjust the solution in some way?



Conducting a survey is one way to gather information.

Practicing Citizenship Skills

You have learned that good citizenship involves three skills: staying informed, making good decisions, and taking action. Below are some activities to help you improve your citizenship skills. By practicing these skills you can work to make a difference in your own life and in the lives of those in your community.



Activity

Stay Informed

▷ **Create a pamphlet or recruiting commercial**

Ask your school counselors or write to your state department of education to get information on state-run colleges, universities, or technical schools. Use this information to create a brochure or recruiting commercial showing these schools and the different programs and degrees they offer.

Keep in mind

What's there for me?

It may help you to think about what areas students are interested in and may want to pursue after graduation.

Where is it?

You may want to have a map showing where the schools are located in your state.

How can I afford it?

Students might want to know if financial aid is available to attend the schools you have featured.

Make Good Decisions

▷ **Create a game board or skit**

Study the steps on page 23. With a small group, develop a skit that explains the steps in problem solving. Present your skit to younger students in your school. As an alternative, create a game board that would help younger students understand the steps in making a decision.

Keep in mind

What do children this age understand?

Be sure to create a skit or game at an age-appropriate level.

What kinds of decisions do younger students make?

Think about the kinds of decisions that the viewers of your skit or players of the game might make.

How can I make it interesting?

Use visual aids to help students understand the steps in decision making.

Take Action

▷ **Create a bulletin board for your class**

Do some research on the Internet or consult the yellow pages under "Social Services" to find the names of organizations that have volunteer opportunities for young people. Call or write for more information. Then create a bulletin board for your class showing groups that need volunteer help.

Keep in mind

What kinds of jobs are they?

You may want to list the types of skills or jobs that volunteer groups are looking for.

How old do I have to be?

Some groups may be looking for younger volunteers; others may need older volunteers.

How do I get there?

How easy is it to get to the volunteer group's location?

Taking Action in Your Community

The weather was sunny but cold on January 20, 1961—the day that John F. Kennedy became the 35th president of the United States. In his first speech as president, he urged all Americans to serve their country. Since then, Kennedy's words have inspired millions of Americans to become more active citizens.



President John F. Kennedy urged all Americans to become active citizens and work to improve their communities.

“Ask not what your country can do for you —ask what you can do for your country!”

—John F. Kennedy

Making a Difference

Across the country many young people have come up with ways to make a difference in their communities. Here's how Lexi Klein, a 13-year-old girl from Washington, D.C., chose to make her community a better place to live.

In 2003, instead of having a party for a special event in her life, Lexi Klein chose to do something to give back to her community. She teamed up with an organization named KaBOOM! (www.kaboom.org), and they helped her plan and execute the building of a playground in a disadvantaged neighborhood in Washington, D.C.

The day after Lexi's Bat Mitzvah ceremony, more than 200 people, including Lexi's family and friends and community volunteers, gathered at an empty lot in a Washington, D.C. neighborhood. The group worked hard to convert the lot into a playground for young children. Some people assembled playground equipment, others planted flowers, while another group entertained neighborhood children. At the end of the day, there was a ribbon-cutting ceremony to dedicate the completed playground.



Participating in Your Community

Think about all of the wonderful things that your community offers you. Libraries, parks, schools, and museums are just a few. Now think about how you can give back to your community. There are countless ways that you can help make your community a better place to live. You can volunteer to pick up trash at a local park, serve meals to the homeless, visit sick patients in hospitals, or participate in a walk to raise money for an important cause. As an active citizen you can make a difference. Below are some ways in which you can participate in your community.

★ Responsibility Taking Action

1 Find a Cause


How can you become involved in your community? First, select a community problem or issue that interests you. Some ideas from other young people include starting a support group for children with cancer, publishing a neighborhood newspaper with children's stories and art, and putting on performances to entertain people in shelters and hospitals.

2 Develop Solutions

Once you have found a cause on which you want to work, develop a plan for solving the problem. Use the decision-making or problem-solving skills you have learned to find ways to approach the problem. You may want to involve other people in your activities.

3 Follow Through

Solving problems takes time. You'll need to be patient in developing a plan. You can show leadership in working with your group by following through on meetings you set up and plans you make. When you finally solve the problem, you will feel proud of your accomplishments.



Members of Clean & Green, a Los Angeles Conservation Corps program, help to renovate a city building.

Naturalization Ceremony Project

Imagine what it would be like to watch people become new citizens! In this section you will find step-by-step directions for you and your classmates to plan a naturalization ceremony that takes place at your school. It's a great opportunity to participate in a really important event in the life of an immigrant, as he or she becomes a new citizen.

Follow the suggestions in the next section and look for the tips from Marney Murphy. Her students have helped to hold this ceremony five times and have watched about 420 immigrants become new citizens.



Naturalization Ceremony Project

Bringing the Naturalization Ceremony to Your School

Overview

Now that you have learned about people coming to the United States, you might be curious to know more about the actual ceremony that makes a person a new citizen. This section will outline steps and guidelines to follow for hosting a naturalization ceremony at your school. Bringing the ceremony to your school is an excellent way to involve students and faculty in the planning and preparation of this special event. Some duties need to be performed by an administrator or faculty member, but there are plenty of roles to involve individual students, and student clubs and organizations. The entire group should discuss plans and preparation for this event. Remember your goal is to make the event special to the new citizens and their friends and family, and to students, teachers, faculty, and community members witnessing this inspiring event.

Keep in mind that the process will vary a bit depending on local and state regulations. The following pages give you a blueprint for how to successfully develop and execute a naturalization ceremony. You will find suggestions for contacting government officials, working with the media, and getting financial support.

Project Checklist

At right is a checklist of things that need to be done in order to create a meaningful ceremony at your school. Typically naturalization ceremonies are preset for the year in January. Most judges will be flexible and try to accommodate your request for a date the best they can. It is important to remember that you must plan at least six months to a year in advance. So build in some extra time to avoid dealing with too many details in the final weeks and days before the ceremony.

▼ Student committees divide the work of making the naturalization ceremony a great success.



PROJECT CHECKLIST

- Contact a federal court judge in your city or town to request an opportunity to host a naturalization ceremony at your school.
- After receiving permission, call the Clerk of Courts to coordinate the date when the ceremony will be held.
- A few months prior to the ceremony, courtroom officials will visit your school to discuss security measures and review the floor plan for where the ceremony will be held.
- Check audio-visual equipment, then place an order for items the school does not have.
- Review the checklist for Getting Financial Support on page 30.
- Review the checklist for Working with the Media on page 31.
- Make a list of people who will be invited to attend and send invitations.
- Create a seating plan to designate specific seating areas for the ceremony.
- Plan a program for the ceremony.
- Put together media information.
- Contact a selected person to ask if he or she would be the keynote speaker.
- Secure volunteers for the day of the event to help with parking, seating, and other tasks.
- Plan a reception to be held after the ceremony to honor the new citizens.
- Encourage anyone who has not registered to vote to do so before leaving the ceremony or reception.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Include some reasons for wanting to have the ceremony at your school.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Because the facility will be like a courtroom, there are certain requirements such as a place for the court reporter and a robing room for the judge.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Your list might include naturalized citizens and their family and friends, community leaders, and some students and faculty.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Try to find a group willing to host this activity.

Getting Financial Support

This program can be planned and executed with minimal costs. It is important to determine the items that need to be secured for this event so that you have an idea of the costs that will be incurred. Costs for this event will vary depending on the price of items, rental fees, and the number of invitees. The average cost to produce an event is about \$1,200. We will use \$1,200 as a guideline and see how the various items are broken down.

Sample Budget

• Refreshments for the reception (cookies, punch, water, etc.)	\$350
• Rentals if needed (sound system, U.S. and state flags, etc.)	\$350
• Miniature flags for newly-inducted citizens	\$200
• Keynote Speaker (Often the speaker will not charge a fee, but it's nice to give a small gift as a token of appreciation.)	\$100
• Gift to judge as token of appreciation	\$100
• Miscellaneous (decorations, signage)	\$100
<hr/>	
Total	\$1,200

To support this program contact friends and neighbors to see if they will donate an item or service to be used on the day of the event. Reach out to your school's PTA and local service clubs like Kiwanis, Lions, or Rotary to ask how they can help. You will be surprised how many people are willing to donate items; all you have to do is ask!

Sometimes local companies will donate items for free if you explain the project and inform them that it is education-related. Try asking a bakery to donate baked goods for the reception, or asking a grocery store to donate bottled water, beverages, or flowers and balloons for decoration.

Be creative; try to figure out if you can give media exposure to various companies if they donate items for free. For example, include donors' names in the press releases, and/or invite the sponsors to the event to witness the ceremony. Paint banners thanking corporate sponsors for their donations.

Working with the Media

The media often searches for stories involving positive events in the community. A school hosting a naturalization ceremony to welcome citizens into the community illustrates students and faculty coming together to give back to the community and to make it a better place to live.

With proper planning and advance notice, you can reach out to local and possibly regional and state media outlets to inform them of the event and encourage them to cover it. Keep in mind that news is constantly changing, so if a big story breaks, coverage on your event may be altered.

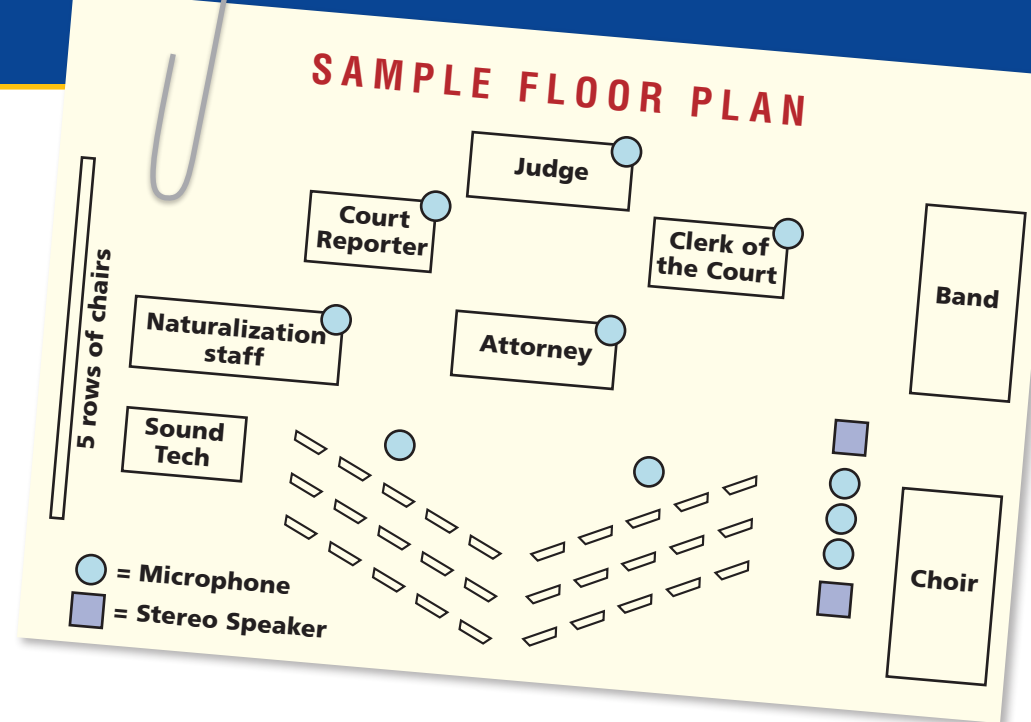
Developing a Successful Media Plan

- 1 Identify a teacher, faculty member, club supervisor, or school administrator who will serve as the key contact for the media.
- 2 Set up a group of students to build a contact list of media outlets—school website, student newspaper or PTA group newsletters, local newspapers, local TV news stations, radio stations, online publications (newspapers and radio).
- 3 Create materials to inform the media of the event and send them out well in advance of the event day.
- 4 Create a plan for the actual day. The plan should include how to distribute press passes for the event and identify who might give interviews to the media.
- 5 Keep records of all media who cover the event. Once the event is over, be sure to ask for multiple copies of the coverage received (such as newspaper articles or news videos) so your school can maintain a file on the media coverage from the event.



Preparing for the Ceremony

Planning a big event like the naturalization ceremony involves many steps over a period of time. Use the suggested order below to help you organize for this event. Notice that the planning involves many different groups. Because this is so, it will take a lot of coordination to make sure each group has the information it needs. It would be helpful if one person is designated the “go to” person. That person can help direct the information flow and coordinate the groups. Keep in mind that this is a very special day for the new citizens, and you want everything to be as perfect as possible.



6 MONTHS AHEAD

- Contact a federal court judge in your city or town to request an opportunity to host a naturalization ceremony at your school. The judge will determine if a ceremony can be held. This approval process can take several months.
- After receiving permission, call the Clerk of Courts. This office will work with you to coordinate the date when the ceremony will be held.
- Set up the following committees to plan the event: Budget and Finance, Program, Media, Invitations and Hospitality, and Event Arrangements. Hold regular meetings to get plans in place.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Do not start to plan the ceremony until you have received approval from the judge.

3-6 MONTHS AHEAD

- Event Arrangements committee meets with the Clerk of Courts officials and U.S. Marshals to discuss security measures and review the ceremony location. They will help you create a floor plan and give you a complete list of what will be needed the day of the event.
- Program committee brainstorms a list of prominent naturalized citizens in the community and contacts one to ask if he or she would be the keynote speaker.
- Program committee contacts groups that will be a part of the ceremony such as the band, singing groups, student council, etc.
- Budget and Finance committees continue to fund raise and gather donations.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Ask the court to provide you with a transcript from a previous ceremony. Use this to help your planning of the event.

1-3 MONTHS AHEAD

- Invitations and Hospitality committee gets list of new citizens and special invitees, has invitations printed, and mails them out. They also contract for food or other reception items not donated.
- Media committee begins to assemble the announcement media packages and send them out.
- Event Arrangements committee sets up a floor plan, checks on all needed audio-visual equipment, and orders any necessary items.
- Check to see if Immigration/Courts have contacted voter registration officials.
- Line up volunteers from the school and community.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Check the seating capacity of the facility. Fire codes must be met. Typically, this means only 2 tickets per new citizen, plus those for special guests such as community leaders.

FINAL MONTH

- Purchase gifts for the judge and keynote speaker.
- Purchase flags for the new citizens.
- Order all food, drink, paper products, and decorations.
- Assemble press packets for the day of the ceremony.
- Confirm all program participants.
- Print programs.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Be sure to send a draft program to the judge to make sure all arrangements and activities are approved.

World Map: Political



Activity

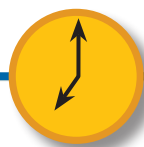
Mapping New Citizens' Homelands

As you prepare to host a naturalization ceremony, you will want to learn about the history and customs of the people present at your event. Follow the directions below to learn more about the countries from which people are emigrating.

- Your teacher will assign small groups a country or countries from the emigrant list. Find the countries on this map.
- Each group will research topics about their country, such as its history, geography, economy, culture and traditions, politics, population, educational system, or famous residents.
- The group will create a presentation to share their research results with the rest of the class.
- Discuss similarities and differences among the countries. Do they have similar political systems, educational opportunities, or economic conditions? What reasons do you think led people from these countries to immigrate to the United States?

Model Ceremony Time Line

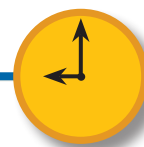
The following time line is based upon a 1:00 P.M. ceremony. Your ceremony might be different depending on the time set for the events and the needs of the court. The time line provides an idea of the order the tasks should take place.



7:00 A.M. TO 9:00 A.M.*

- Decorate space for the ceremony.
- Set up voter registration booths.
- Make sure school entrance and parking are clearly marked.
- Set up child-care area.
- Check on all media and food arrangements.
- Check on security arrangements.
- Set up hospitality area with coffee and snacks.

* These tasks occur at the same time.



9:00 A.M. TO 12 NOON

9:00 A.M.

New citizens arrive.
Children are moved to child-care area.

★ Tips from Marney ★

The courts and the immigration service will set the arrival time for the new citizens.

9:30 A.M.–11:00 A.M.

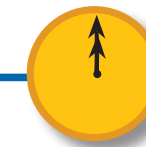
New citizens are given instructions by the court, complete all necessary paper work, and register to vote.

11:00 A.M.–11:30 A.M.

Media packets are made available. All arrangements for the ceremony are rechecked.

11:30 A.M.–12:15 P.M.

New citizens have lunch in the student cafeteria.



12 NOON TO 1:00 P.M.

12:00 P.M.–12:45 P.M.

Friends, family members, and community arrive.

12:15 P.M.

Judge and keynote speaker arrive.

12:30 P.M.

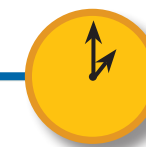
Reception set-up takes place.

12:45 P.M.

All guests are seated.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Plan to have student escorts for the keynote speaker and the judge.



1:00 P.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

1:00 P.M.

Ceremony begins.

1:50 P.M.

Ceremony concludes.

2:00 P.M.

Reception begins (refreshments served, photos taken, etc.).

3:00 P.M.

Reception concludes, and clean-up begins.

★ Tips from Marney ★

Check with the judge to see if photos will be allowed.



Reflecting on the Ceremony

Now that the event is over, take a few minutes to pause and reflect on the naturalization ceremony. This ceremony had a lot of meaning for the new citizens and their family and friends. But it probably made an impression on you too. In the left column of the chart on the next page are some questions for you to consider. Write your responses in the box. Then, as a class, discuss your answers.

Hosting the naturalization ceremony at your school required a lot of planning, preparation, and organization. As a class, you may want to review what worked well and what could be improved upon for future ceremonies. Use the right column of the chart on the next page to record your responses and share with the class. Have a volunteer take notes so that the next group that hosts a ceremony can benefit from your experiences.

▼ A student committee summarizes the lessons they learned from doing the naturalization ceremony project.



THE CEREMONY	HOSTING THE CEREMONY
What was your favorite part of the ceremony?	How did the activities and text in this booklet help prepare you for the naturalization ceremony?
Did anything about the ceremony surprise you? Why or why not?	Do you think the event was a success? Why or why not?
How did this ceremony seem to affect the new citizens and their family and friends?	What aspects of the event could be improved upon?
What lessons did you gain from this experience?	What lessons did you learn about hosting the ceremony?

Maintaining Contacts

Throughout the planning process you were in touch with various people from different organizations to coordinate details for the event. You have contacted individuals from the courthouse, the media, local companies, and others who helped out. This page will serve as a place to keep all of your contacts and their information in one central place. If you repeat the ceremony, you will have this information readily available.

C O N T A C T S			
Name	Organization	Phone Number	Email Address
Notes:			
Name	Organization	Phone Number	Email Address
Notes:			
Name	Organization	Phone Number	Email Address
Notes:			
Name	Organization	Phone Number	Email Address
Notes:			

After the Ceremony

The big event is now over. You should be proud of all of the hard work and effort that made the event such a success. Although the planning and preparation are finished, there are still a few items to be completed on the post-event checklist.

P O S T - E V E N T C H E C K L I S T

- Send thank-you notes to the judge, local courthouse officials, and the keynote speaker.
- Send thank-you notes to various media contacts.
- Send thank-you notes to companies that donated items for the event and organizations that provided support for the event.
- Create a file that includes copies of media coverage. This can include newspaper articles and DVDs or tapes of news coverage.
- Add your notes about hosting the ceremony to the file.
- Store the file in a secure area where it is easily accessible and can be used as a resource for future ceremonies.



ANSWERS FOR THE NATURALIZATION EXAM

Old Exam

1. the supreme law of the land
2. to interpret laws
3. Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, Virginia, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, Rhode Island, and Maryland
4. Abraham Lincoln
5. three

New Exam

1. It sets up the government, and it protects basic rights of Americans.
2. reviews and explains laws; resolves disputes between parties; and decides if a law goes against the Constitution
3. Name any three: Connecticut, New Hampshire, New York, Virginia, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, Rhode Island, and Maryland
4. saved (or preserved) the Union; freed the slaves; led the U.S. during the Civil War
5. Name any one: legislative, executive, judicial

Acknowledgments

Text Credits

Daniels, R. *American Immigration: A Student Companion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Koch, W. (2006, December 1). "New citizen exam is Democracy 101: Questions now stress core beliefs of U.S. system." *USA Today*, p. 3A.

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