



Civic Readiness for All Students 5-8



Civic Readiness is the ability to make a positive difference in the public life of our communities through the combination of civic knowledge, skills and actions, mindsets, and experiences.

What is Civics? The study of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

Who are Civic Ready students?

Students who use civic knowledge, skills and mindsets to make decisions and take actions for themselves, their communities, and the public good.

What is a community?

A community is a social unit (a group of living things) with commonality such as norms, religion, values, customs, or identity.

Communities work together to meet the needs of those who are part of it. There are many kinds of communities you might be part of: your school; your neighborhood; your city or town. Communities can work together to solve problems, make changes, or improve things for everyone. People in a community might have different ideas, look different, or not agree on some things.

Why is Civic education important? Civics education allows us the opportunity to become well-informed, active citizens within our community and government, while also empowering us to communicate effectively. It helps us understand the ideals of democracy and encourages us to become a vital part of the process, while understanding our Constitution. Civics education highlights connections between ourselves, other active citizens and democracy. It is through these connections that we can make a difference in our local, national and international communities. One of the big reasons we have Social Studies in schools is to make sure that you are civic ready and an actively engaged participant in the life of your communities. Civics education empowers everyone to work together to create positive change while respecting what makes us each unique.

Civic Readiness is:



CIVIC KNOWLEDGE

- Understand how the Bill of Rights protects Freedom of Speech.
- Three branches of government: Judicial, Legislative and Executive.
- Discuss how the U.S. Constitution represents both Democratic and Republican ideas.
- Voting process and why it is important to vote.



CIVIC SKILLS & ACTIONS

- Looking at current events and having classroom discussions on how they relate to past situations.
- Identify a problem in the school, community or local government, and determine how to voice your concern regarding it.
- Engage in classroom debates, respectfully disagreeing with other viewpoints and provide evidence for a counterargument.



CIVIC MINDSETS

- Actively participate with others respectfully.
- Promote democratic ideas.
- Be active citizens within our schools and communities, willing to contribute and help solve issues locally and/or nationally.



CIVIC EXPERIENCES

- Complete a capstone.
- Participate in negotiating and compromising in the resolution of differences and conflict.
- Volunteering and participating in community organizations.

Civic Knowledge

Fundamental civic knowledge in grade level appropriate forms includes:

- What kind of government do we have in the United States; the structure and functioning of government, law, and democracy at the federal, state, local, and school levels, and how to participate;
- The impact of individual and collective histories in shaping contemporary issues;
- Discussions of the Bill of Rights and the voting process;
- History, geography, economics, and current events within our country and in our global society; and
- The importance of civic rights and responsibilities, such as voting, volunteering, serving on a jury, and the importance of ensuring a free press.

Civic Skills & Actions

Critical intellectual and participatory civic skills students should develop and actions they should take in grade-level appropriate forms include the ability to:

- Discuss and/or participate in activities that focus on a classroom, community, local or national problem and analyze different solutions and how to respectfully disagree with other viewpoints and provide evidence for a counterargument;
- Recognizing what it is like to be an American - values and beliefs;
- Identify rights and responsibilities in classrooms, schools, and communities;
- Analyze and evaluate news (news literacy), media, social media and other sources of information for accuracy, bias, reliability, and credibility;
- Identify differing philosophies of social and political participation; and
- Work to influence those in positions of power to achieve extensions of freedom, social justice, and human rights.

Civic Mindsets

Key civic mindsets students should develop in grade-level appropriate ways include:

- Valuing equity, inclusivity, diversity, and fairness;
- Recognizing the need to plan for both current needs and the good of future generations;
- Empathy, compassion, and respect for the views of people with other opinions and perspectives;
- Committing to balancing the common good with individual liberties;
- Demonstrating a sense of self as an active participant in society, willing to contribute to solving local and/or national problems; and
- Discussion on what makes a good community member.

Civic Experiences

Key civic mindsets students should develop in grade-level appropriate ways include:

- Showing respect in issues involving differences and conflict; participate in negotiating and compromising in the resolution of differences and conflict;
- Exploring how anyone can create positive change in their school, community, or country;
- Participating in school and community governance, ;
- Taking responsibility for improving one's community—locally, in government at all levels, and in the broader world;
- Identify and help solve problems within ones community.
- Completing a civic readiness capstone or, civic engagement project;
- Engaging with news and digital tools, such as social media, responsibly;
- Participating in school governance;
- Voting, volunteering and participating in community organizations and governmental systems, such as community boards, youth advisory councils, etc., to promote continuous improvement.