

Being a Good Citizen

By Phyllis Naegeli

What is a citizen? If you were born in the United States, you are a citizen. That means you are a member of our country. Sometimes people who are not born here want to become citizens. They do this by asking the government to make them a citizen. This is called naturalization.



When you are a citizen you have rights. Rights are special privileges the government gives you. In our country, you have free speech. You are also given the right to choose a religion. In America, the press is free to tell you what is happening in the world. The Bill of Rights lists the freedoms given to citizens. These rights are very important. Many people in the world do not have freedoms like we do.

Because the government gives us rights, we have the duty to be good citizens. But, what does it mean to be a good citizen? How can you be a part of giving back for the freedom you have?

Being a good citizen means you show your love to your country. You can do this by being courteous to the symbols in America. Singing our National Anthem and respecting our flag are ways to show how much the United States means to you.

Being a good citizen also means obeying the laws in your community and school. Laws are made to help you and keep you safe. Obeying the law also shows your respect for others. You can also treat people with kindness. Being friendly to those who are different from you is also a part of being a good citizen. Perhaps there is someone new at school. One way to be a good citizen is to be welcoming to that person.

Good citizens take part in their community. They give to the poor. They help clean parks. They keep up to date on current events. Then they help whenever they can. It is also important to conserve our natural resources. Using energy wisely, treating animals fairly, and picking up trash all help to give back to our country.

Someday you will be given the right to vote. This is an honor. By using this right, you can take part in the government. Even now, you can find out about politics. Your parents and teachers are good sources of information. You can ask them how they feel about the government. You can also ask them questions about candidates in an election. Gathering information will help you make decisions when you can vote.

When you begin to work, you will have to pay taxes. Taxes help to run our country. Roads, schools, police forces, firefighters, and government workers are all paid from taxes.

Being a member of our country is a wonderful privilege. When you work to be a good citizen, everyone benefits.

Name _____



Date _____

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Questions

- _____ 1. The Bill of Rights lists the freedoms we have in America.
- A. true
 - B. false
- _____ 2. Which of the following is a way to become a citizen in the United States?
- A. by moving here from another country
 - B. by birth
 - C. by voting for it
 - D. by buying citizenship
- _____ 3. Part of being a good citizen means that you should _____.
- A. obey the laws of your community and school
 - B. become a politician
 - C. ignore people who are different from you
 - D. skip doing your homework
- _____ 4. What is naturalization?
- A. the process of becoming a politician
 - B. the process of learning about the government
 - C. the process of becoming a citizen of the United States
 - D. none of the above
- _____ 5. What do taxes help pay for?
- A. roads
 - B. firefighters
 - C. schools
 - D. all of the above
 - E. none of the above
- _____ 6. You cannot participate in politics until you can vote.
- A. true
 - B. false
- _____ 7. Conserving natural resources is a way to be a good citizen.
- A. true
 - B. false

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- _____ 8. Which of the following is not a way of showing good citizenship?
- A. refuse to pay taxes
 - B. obey laws
 - C. help clean a park
 - D. treat people kindly