



14. CIVIC LITERACY

©Literacies for the Digital Age to Teach in the K-12 Classroom

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CIVIC LITERACY DEFINED

<http://www.urbanagenda.wayne.edu/whatiscl.htm>

- **"Civic Literacy** is the knowledge of how to actively participate and initiate change in your community and the greater society. It is the foundation by which a democratic society functions: Citizen Power as a check and as a means to create avenues for peaceful change."
- SEE NEW YORK STATE SENATOR GUSTAVO RIVERA TALK ABOUT CIVIC LITERACY ON YOU TUBE, DEC. 5, 2011. HE TEACHES A CIVIC LITERACY CLASS AT THE KINGSBRIDGE LIBRARY IN THE BRONX.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YoSNkOrgGA4>



What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U.S. Results From the International IEA Civic Education Study

“This report presents an analysis of U.S. data from an assessment of the civic knowledge and skills of 14-year old students across 28 countries and their attitudes toward civic issues. The Civic Education Study assessment was conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). In the United States, the assessment was administered to a nationally representative sample of ninth-graders in October 1999. The report includes the civic achievement of U.S. students compared to other countries; the school and classroom context of civic knowledge; the demographic, socioeconomic, and out-of-school context of civic knowledge; the students’ concepts of democracy, citizenship, and government; their attitudes toward civic issues; and their current and expected political activities.”

- <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2001096>



2010 CIVIC LITERACY RESEARCH RESULTS: WHAT DO AMERICANS KNOW?

<http://www.citizenslacker.com/civic-literacy-research>

- 64% of Americans can't name the three branches of government
- most of us don't know which party controls Congress at any given time
- half can't describe the difference between liberals and conservatives
- most can't name their own members or Congress or their US Senators
- nearly half don't know that states have 2 Senators
- 41% cannot identify Nancy Pelosi as House Speaker -- even in a multiple-choice question
- 54% cannot name a single Supreme Court Justice
- only a bare majority can name even one basic purpose of the Constitution
- more citizens can name "American Idol" judges than can name the 1st Amendment rights
- 66% know at least one American Idol judge, but only 15% can name John Roberts as Chief Justice



2010 CIVIC LITERACY RESEARCH RESULTS: WHAT DO AMERICANS KNOW?

<http://www.citizenslacker.com/civic-literacy-research>

- 39% of us cannot name any of the freedoms in the First Amendment
- only one in 1000 can name all five rights in the 1st Amendment
- 35% feel the First Amendment goes too far. An additional 21% are unsure
- almost half think the president has the authority to suspend the U.S. Constitution
- 60% believe he can appoint judges to the federal courts without the approval of the Senate
- 50% feel newspapers should not be allowed to publish stories without government approval
- only 34% know that it's Congress that declares war
- only 35% know that Congress can override a presidential veto
- for those under age 40, the number rises to 54%



<http://www.civicmissionofschools.org/action-center/write-your-representative>
[Sandra Day O'Connor Civic Learning Act](#)

“The Sandra Day O'Connor Civic Learning Act of 2011 is a vital first step to improving civic education in our nation's schools and would establish a grant program for civic learning at the US Department of Education, stressing innovations and serving under-served school populations. The legislation still has the status of a bill. Its underlying goal, if it is passed as an Act, is “To authorize the Secretary of Education to award grants to promote civic learning and engagement, and for other purposes.” In addition, the bill provides for more extensive NAEP testing. “It is the sense of Congress that the Commissioner for Education Statistics, in administering the National Assessment of Educational Progress, should increase the sample size of students tested to improve disaggregation and analysis of data regarding progress in history and civics.”

<http://www.govtrack.us/congress/bills/112/hr3464/text>



Examples of civic education resources and sites for educators' classroom use.

- [National Standards for Civics and Government](#) *Entire Text*
These K - 12 standards specify what students should know and be able to do in the field of civics and government.
- [CIVITAS: A Framework for Civic Education](#) - *Executive Summary*
A comprehensive model framework for civic education in the nations elementary and secondary schools, designed as a resource tool for curriculum developers, school administrators, teachers, and scholars.
- [Comparative Lessons for Democracy](#)
A resource book for high school teachers with lessons that feature comparative analyses of emerging democracies in Central and Eastern Europe. *Sample lesson*
- [Project Citizen Resources](#)



A SUPERB WEBSITE

iCivics

<http://www.icivics.org/>

An initiative of retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, this site features online lessons covering

- the three branches of government and
- interactive games that cover citizenship and participation,
- the Constitution and Bill of Rights,
- separation of powers,
- budgeting, and
- the executive, judicial and legislative branches.

Online discussion forums allow teachers and students to give feedback on various topics. Teacher resources include curricula that complement the games, webquests, lessons and activities. Resources are free. Level: Middle and high school



SAMPLE ONLINE WEBSITES WITH RESOURCES TO TEACH CIVIC LITERACY

<http://worldofmedia2007-2008.blogspot.com/2009/09/free-civic-literacy-online-classroom.html>

- Civics Online
<http://civics-online.org/teachers/activities.php>
- Bill of Rights Institute
<http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org/>
- C-SPAN Classroom
<http://www.c-spanclassroom.org/>
- The National Archives
<http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/constitution-day/>
- We the People
<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/themes/>
- Evaluating Websites
<http://www.altn.org/webquests/websites/index.html>



SAMPLE OF A CIVIC LITERACY PROJECT LINKED TO WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY IN DETROIT, MICHIGAN

<http://www.urbanagenda.wayne.edu/What%20We%20Do.htm>

“The *Youth Urban Agenda Civic Literacy Project* is an effort to promote activities that educate students in terms of their civic responsibilities with the experience of building a real political agenda. The Project is implemented by the following phases:”

- 1) *Students generate an urban-conscious agenda.*
- 2) *Students learn about the political process*
- 3) *Students become involved in more participatory efforts.*
- 4) *The schools later meet in clusters*

The heart of the program is the process of agenda building as a key method for preparing youth in their role as participants in a democratic society. The program is a means of sparking student interest for learning social studies, civics and communications.

<http://www.urbanagenda.wayne.edu/index.htm>



EXCERPTS FROM THE *Youth Urban Agenda Civic Literacy Project*'s CURRICULUM

<http://www.urbanagenda.wayne.edu/WebCurr/currhome.htm>

[Program History](#)

[Theoretical Overview](#)

[Introduction to Curriculum](#)

[American Government](#)

[American History](#)

[Economics](#)

[Geography](#)

[Sociology](#)

[World History](#)

[Agenda Building](#)

[Agenda Building Process](#)

[Supplemental Lesson Plans](#)

[Lesson One](#)

[Lesson Two](#)

[Utopian School Lesson](#)

[Writing Lesson](#)

[MEAP: Correlation by Strand
and Benchmarks](#)

[Urban Agenda Convention](#)



CIVIC LITERACY SKILLS ACCORDING TO The Youth Urban Agenda/Civic Literacy Project

<http://www.urbanagenda.wayne.edu/whatiscl.htm>

	Awareness	Analysis	Prioities	Advocacy
Communication	discussion	evaluation	agenda-setting	argumentation
Mobilization	reaching out	debating	tactics	call to action
Caolition-Building	dialogue	strategy	bargaining	persuasive communications
Organizing	goal-setting	activity planning	assigning tasks	implementation
Institutionalizing	stakeholder meetings	capacity assessment	long-range plan	getting sponsors

CIVIC CONTENT KNOWLEDGE



Civic content includes both core knowledge and the ability to apply knowledge to different circumstances and settings.

- Key historical periods, episodes, cases, themes, and experiences of individuals and groups in U.S. history
- Principles, documents, and ideas essential to constitutional democracy
- Relationship between historical documents, principles, and episodes and contemporary issues
- Structures, processes, and functions of government; powers of branches and levels of government
- Political vehicles for representing public opinion and effecting political change
- Mechanisms and structure of the U.S. legal system
- Relationship between government and other sectors
- Political and civic heroes
- Social and political networks for making change
- Social movements and struggles, particularly those that address issues as yet unresolved
- Structural analyses of social problems and systemic solutions to making change



SAMPLE OF CORE CIVIC EDUCATION KNOWLEDGE

CORE KNOWLEDGE: THE U.S. CONSTITUTION

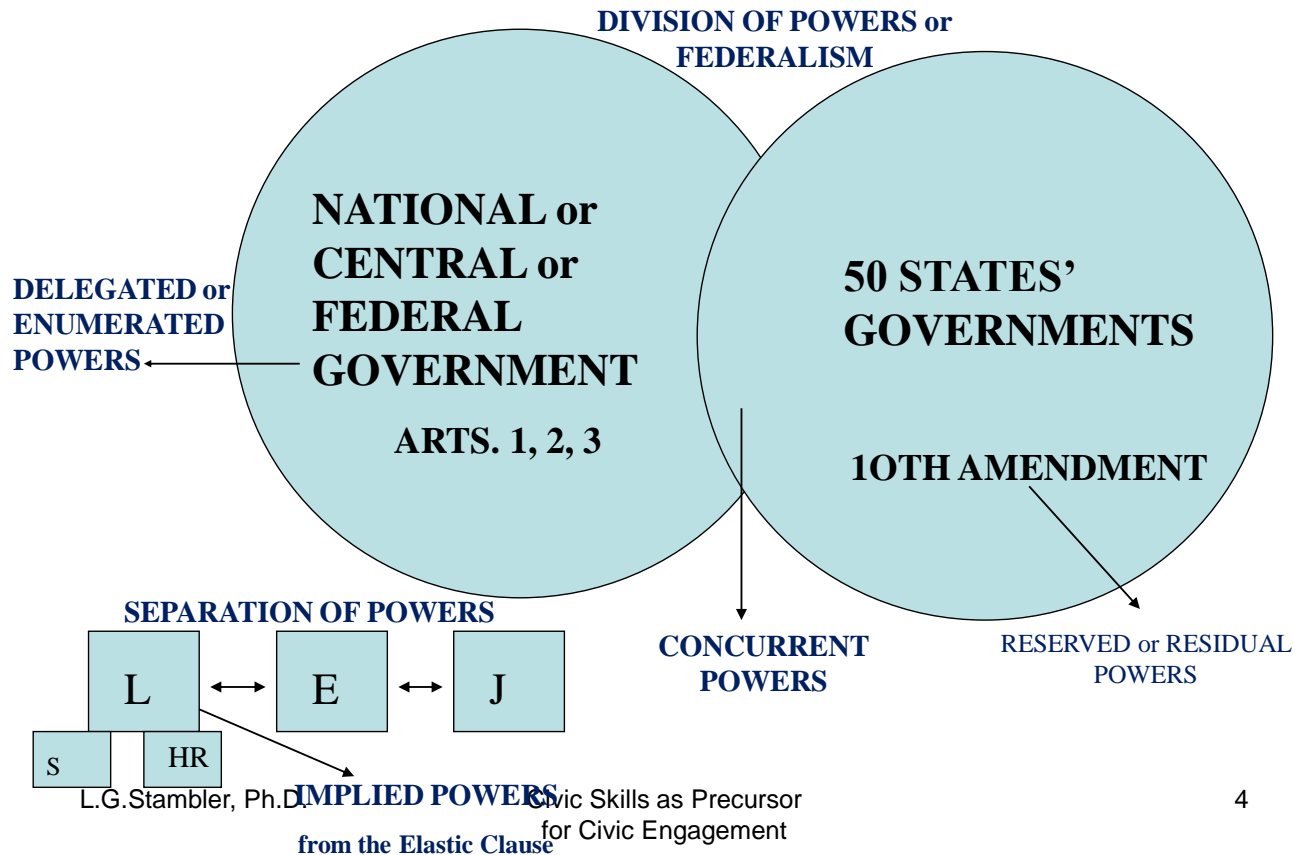


Diagram
by L.G.
Stambler,
Ph.D.



SAMPLE OF CORE CIVIC EDUCATION KNOWLEDGE

APPLICATION OF CORE KNOWLEDGE OF THE U.S.
CONSTITUTION TO ISSUES IN AMERICAN EDUCATION
GAINING EQUAL ACCESS TO PUBLIC EDUCATION
[ppt for ED 206, ED 500]



The issue: Does the Constitution allow states to segregate schools or other public facilities on the basis of race or sex?

Compiled and organized By L.G. Stambler, Ph.D.

L.G.Stambler, Ph.D.

Civic Skills as Precursor
for Civic Engagement

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SAMPLE OF DIFFERENTIATED CORE CIVIC EDUCATION KNOWLEDGE

CIVIC CONTENT KNOWLEDGE

Civic content includes both core knowledge and the ability to apply knowledge to different circumstances and settings.

Teacher candidates in ED 440 secondary education professional semester learn how to teach grades 7-12 students who are ELL. FDR's Four Freedoms speech and Norman Rockwell's posters are used as the content for this task in Oct. 2012. [Williams group]

Teaching Four Freedoms Through Stage 2

- Ell student understands short phrases and short sentences;
- Can communicate limited information in everyday situations;
- Can use selected simple structures correctly, but with basic errors.

L.G.Stambler, Ph.D.



Civic Skills as Precursor
for Civic Engagement

ELL STUDENT ANSWERS:

- Who is in the painting? What is happening?
- How does the painting make you feel?
- What freedom is this painting about?
- Is it a freedom to do something? Or a freedom from something?

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Definition of Civic Skills

- **Intellectual Skills** –ex: understanding the history of issues
- **Participatory Skills** –ex: working with diverse groups
- **Research Skills** –ex: tracking legislation
- **Persuasion Skills** –ex: writing letters to representatives

http://www.calstate.edu/csl/resource_center/documents/sl_for_ce.pdf

CIVIC SKILLS: INTELLECTUAL

Intellectual civic skills encompass knowing how to identify, assess, interpret, describe, analyze, and explain matters of concern in civic life.



- Critical thinking
- Perspective-taking
- Understanding, interpreting, and critiquing various media
- Understanding, interpreting, and critiquing different points of view
- Expressing one's opinions
- Active listening
- Identifying public problems
- Drawing connections between democratic concepts and principles and one's own life experience
- <http://www.civicmissionofschools.org/resources/civiccompetencies.html>

CIVIC SKILLS: PARTICIPATORY



Civic participatory skills encompass knowing how to cope in groups and organizational settings, interface with elected officials and community representatives, communicate perspectives and arguments, and plan strategically for civic change.

- Engaging in dialogue with those who hold different perspectives
- Active listening
- Communicating through public speaking, letter writing, petitioning, canvassing, lobbying, protesting
- Managing, organizing, participating in groups
- Building consensus and forging coalitions
- Community mapping
- Utilizing electoral processes
- Utilizing non-electoral means to voice opinion (protest, petitioning, surveying, letter writing, boycotting, and so on)
- Planning and running meetings
- Utilizing strategic networks for public ends
- Organizing and demonstrating



CIVIC DISPOSITIONS

Civic dispositions encompass interpersonal and intrapersonal values, virtues, and behaviors.

- Tolerance and respect
- Appreciation of difference
- Rejection of violence
- Concern with the rights and welfare of others
- Commitment to balancing personal liberties with social responsibility to others
- Personal efficacy
- Sense of belonging to a group or polity
- Readiness to compromise personal interests to achieve shared ends
- Desire for community involvement
- Attentiveness (to civic matters, the news, etc.)



Democratic and Educational Values

http://www.calstate.edu/csl/resource_center/documents/sl_for_ce.pdf

- *Personally responsible* citizen obeys laws, pays taxes, and helps others in need. Education based virtues like integrity, respect, and hard work
- *Participatory* citizen is active in civic affairs. Educational programs on learning how public institutions work and on building skills, such as communication skills and group decision-making

-in ppt. *Service Learning for Civic Engagement* , slide 6

Westheimer and J. Kahne, *Educating the “Good” Citizen*, 2003

http://www.calstate.edu/csl/resource_center/documents/sl_for_ce.pdf



Democratic and Educational Values

http://www.calstate.edu/csl/resource_center/documents/sl_for_ce.pdf

- *Justice-oriented* citizen assesses social, political, and economic structures and considers collective strategies for change that challenge injustice and address root causes

–in ppt. *Service Learning for Civic Engagement* , slide 7

Westheimer and J. Kahne, *Educating the “Good” Citizen*, 2003

http://www.calstate.edu/csl/resource_center/documents/sl_for_ce.pdf



Definition of Civic Engagement

“Working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to make that difference”

“Promoting ” the quality of life in a community through both political and non-political processes.

Thomas Ehrlich, Ed. Civic Responsibility and Higher Education 2000

http://www.calstate.edu/csl/resource_center/documents/sl_for_ce.pdf



PROJECT CITIZEN PROVIDES PRACTICE IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- **Project Citizen** is unlike programs that are unit and lesson-based. It is difficult to understand the full scope and sequence of the curriculum without viewing it in its entirety. **Project Citizen** uses a process approach for teaching young people how to monitor and influence public policy in their communities.
- **CLICK ON THIS URL**
http://www.civiced.org/index.php?page=pc_sample_sb



PROJECT CITIZEN PROVIDES PRACTICE IN CIVIC ENGAGEMENT: Process Steps

- **Identify a problem to study.** You will begin by identifying a problem in your community that you think is important and determine which level of government is most directly responsible for dealing with the problem.
- **Gather information.** When your class has decided upon the problem you want to study, you will need to gather and evaluate information about the problem from a variety of sources.
- **Examine solutions.** Next, you will examine public policies that now are being used by your government. You also will examine policies being suggested by other people.
- **Develop your own public policy.** Next, you will develop a public policy that you think your government should adopt.
- **Develop an action plan.** Finally, you will develop a plan of action to show how you might influence the appropriate government or governmental agency to adopt your proposed public policy.



PROJECT CITIZEN PROCESS EXPLAINED VISUALLY

1. CLICK ON
THIS URL and
SEE
PROJECT
CITIZEN PPT>>
[http://www.civitas.hu](http://www.civitas.hu/dokumentum/1052_P_C_power_point.ppt)
[/dokumentum/1052_P](http://www.civitas.hu/dokumentum/1052_P_C_power_point.ppt)
[C_power_point.ppt](http://www.civitas.hu/dokumentum/1052_P_C_power_point.ppt)

2. *CLICK ON THIS URL*
and SEE Project citizen intro
power point - SlideShare

www.slideshare.net/gsagan/project-citizen-intro-power-point

Mar 3, 2012 - We the People:
Project Citizen A program of the
Center for Civic Education in
cooperation with the National
Conference of State Legislatures .



CIVIC LITERACY SOURCES

- <http://www.urbanagenda.wayne.edu/whatiscl.htm> “The Youth Urban Agenda/Civic Literacy Project is an international civic education program housed at [Wayne State University](http://www.waynestate.edu) in Detroit, Michigan in collaboration with the City Clerk of Detroit, Wayne County Government and numerous educational institutions.”
- <http://pubs.cde.ca.gov/tcsii/documentlibrary/civicliteracy.aspx> Civic Literacy and the Civic Mission of Schools By: Cricket F.L. Kidwell, Ed.D.
- <http://worldofmedia2007-2008.blogspot.com/2009/09/free-civic-literacy-online-classroom.html> World of Media; Instructional materials, resources, technology, and information for central Iowa K-12 educators to support teaching and learning.
- <http://www.citizenslacker.com/civic-literacy-research> CIVIC LITERACY RESEARCH; song of a Citizen © 2010



CIVIC LITERACY SOURCES

- <http://www.civicmissionofschools.org/resources/civiccompetencies.html>

Campaign for the Civic Mission of Schools, *Education for Democracy*; A Long-Term Effort to Renew and Elevate Civic Learning in Our Nation's Schools

- http://www.calstate.edu/csl/resource_center/documents/sl_for_ce.pdf

Knowledge, Skills, and Values. Civic Skills as Learning Outcomes. Relationship between Service. Learning (SL) and Civic Engagement

- <http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/51/35/5135.pdf>

Background Paper entitled *Developing Citizenship Competencies from Kindergarten through Grade 12* provides policymakers and education leaders with information on how to incorporate civic knowledge, skills and attitudes into policies that support effective citizenship education from the early elementary grades through high school (by Judith Torney-Puerta and Susan Vermeer, Education Commission of the States, August 2004).