

Responsibilities of Citizenship

Cross-Curricular Focus: Social Sciences



You are a citizen of the country you were born in. Usually, citizens live in their country as loyal members of society. Many countries also have options so people who are not natural-born citizens can become citizens of that country. When they complete the requirements, they are called naturalized citizens.

As a citizen of your country, you have some rights, duties and responsibilities. U.S. law guarantees the rights of all citizens. It doesn't matter what U.S. state the citizen lives in, the rights are the same for all citizens. This is because the U.S. Constitution is the supreme law of the land. The rights of citizens of the United States are protected in the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights is the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution. A citizen has the right to speak freely and the right to religious freedom. A citizen who is accused of a crime has a right to a fair trial and a trial with a jury.

In exchange for their rights, citizens have duties and responsibilities. They have a duty to serve on a jury when asked. They should obey all laws. In wartime, they must serve in the armed forces when required to. They must pay taxes to support the services and programs of the government. Good citizens vote in elections to express their opinion on how the government should be run.

In addition to a national citizenship, people are citizens of a state and a city. They have similar rights and responsibilities in each level of citizenship.

Name _____

Answer the following questions based on the reading passage. Don't forget to go back to the passage whenever necessary to find or confirm your answers.

1) In your own words, explain what it means to be a citizen.

2) What are the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution called?

3) What is a naturalized citizen? _____

4) Describe some of the duties and responsibilities of a citizen. _____

5) What are two rights guaranteed to citizens in the U.S. Constitution?
