

## Citizenship Education

# Sources of Materials for Developing Enlightened Citizens

I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but with the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take power from them, but to inform their discretion through education.

—Thomas Jefferson (1820)

Throughout our nation numerous resources are available to help young people become informed and committed citizens. The projects highlighted below reflect diverse views about citizenship education; therefore, educators should evaluate them in light of ideology, curriculum fit, teacher interests and abilities, and so forth.

Projects that represent the philosophy of the administration in office usually receive federal dollars, and organizations that rely on federal funding often shift their emphases in response to a changing federal focus. The current administration supports projects that emphasize patriotism and nationalism, respect for authority, principles from the Bill of Rights, and appreciation for our cultural heritage.

In addition to consulting the following sources, educators should contact

social studies specialists at their state education agencies. Several states publish a variety of materials related to citizenship education. These and the following materials are available at little or no cost.

### **American Bar Association Special Committee on Youth Education for Citizenship**

750 N. Lake Shore Dr.  
Chicago, IL 60611

The ABA offers programs about the law and the legal process for elementary and secondary students through publications, conferences and seminars, and consulting and clearing-house services. Classroom activity handbooks, newsletters, and guides are available to those who request to have their names added to the ABA mailing list. State bar associations often provide materials and speakers for classes and meetings.

### **Center for Civic Education**

5115 Douglas Fir Rd., Suite 1  
Calabasas, CA 91302

Through the Law in a Free Society Project, the Center helps K-12 students understand the principles and values

of democracy, develop participation skills, and take part in making decisions and managing conflict. The Center has developed curriculum materials based on eight fundamental concepts: authority, privacy, justice, responsibility, participation, property, diversity, and freedom. Both classroom and teacher training materials are available. The Center is a sponsor of the National Bicentennial Competition on the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

### **Citizenship Development for a Global Age**

Mershon Center  
Ohio State University  
199 W. 10th Ave.  
Columbus, OH 43201

The Mershon Center's program has four objectives: to assist educators in teaching about national security and global issues, to help secondary schools strengthen world studies programs, to facilitate the development of extracurricular programs related to national security and global issues, and to explore the meaning of citizenship in an interdependent world. Classroom materials develop citizen-

ship competencies by using research findings and concepts from the social sciences and humanities to enrich existing courses and to promote active student learning. These materials can be used as integrated programs or as supplementary activities. Materials on curriculum planning policy are also available. Some resources related to teaching about national security in a nuclear age are now available, and others are forthcoming.

**Constitutional Rights Foundation**  
601 S. Kingsley Dr.  
Los Angeles, CA 90005

For over two decades the CRF has provided classroom materials and teachers' workshops on constitutional issues. CRF projects include statewide mock trial competition and Lawyer-in-the-Classroom programs. CRF materials include the *Bill of Rights in Action*, simulation games for secondary students; *Educating for Citizenship*, for K-4 students, organized around concepts of responsibility, choices, and governance; and various resources for upper elementary and secondary students.

**Educators for Social Responsibility**  
23 Garden St.  
Cambridge, MA 02138

ESR, in collaboration with local school districts, seeks to help young people at all grade levels examine the challenges of living in the nuclear age, develop a commitment to social responsibility, and cultivate a willingness to act on their convictions. By considering public policy issues such as national security and U.S.-U.S.S.R. relations, students learn to make informed and responsible decisions as active citizens in our democratic society. Professional development programs, instructional materials, and other resources are available.

**Foundation for Teaching Economics**  
550 Kearny St., Suite 1000  
San Francisco, CA 94108-2586

The Foundation's recently announced program for eighth- and

ninth-graders, *Our Democracy: How America Works*, integrates the study of our political, economic, and social systems into a single course. The curriculum's objectives are: (1) to teach how and why citizens must participate in our political, economic, and social systems in order to determine how individual and collective needs and wants will be met; and (2) to teach the knowledge, skills, and values students need to become effective citizens in a participatory democracy. Those interested in the development, implementation, and evaluation of the new civics program are invited to contact the Foundation.

**The Jefferson Foundation**  
1529 18th St., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20036

The Foundation provides discussion guides on preparing for a Jefferson Town Meeting. A Town Meeting on the Constitution, for instance, enables students and adults to reflect on the values expressed in the document and to consider their appropriateness for today. These town-type meetings involve pro and con debates about issues related to the structure and performance of our federal government, such as proposed constitutional amendments, which sharpen participants' citizenship, communication, and analytic skills. Participants examine the practices of the past, evaluate the performance of our government today, and consider the Constitution's effectiveness as we move into our third century as a nation.

**National Institute for Citizen Education in the Law**  
25 E St., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20001

NICEL promotes increased opportunities for citizens of all ages to learn about our legal system. Programs are designed to help people understand their legal rights and responsibilities, develop skills for analyzing law-related problems, and avoid and resolve disputes. The institute grew out of the earlier "Street Law" programs, which

provided practical law education for students; its present focus is on law-related education in our schools, courts, and corrections systems. A variety of resources are available, including two self-paced workbooks on family and consumer law for adult learners and secondary students seeking to improve study and reading skills.

**A Presidential Classroom for Young Americans, Inc.**  
441 N. Lee St.  
Alexandria, VA 22314

The Presidential Classroom program offers secondary students a one-week experience in Washington, D.C., to view firsthand our federal government in operation. Students learn about the realities of decision making and consensus building. By interacting with young people from 50 states in the Washington setting, participants gain perspectives on political and social values as diverse as they themselves are.

**National Council for the Social Studies**  
3501 Newark St., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20016

The National Council for the Social Studies frequently publishes articles and bulletins about citizenship education. Those interested in using computer programs to teach citizenship education concepts and skills may wish to see: Charles S. White, "Citizenship Education Software: A Selective, Annotated Bibliography of Microcomputer Programs for the Social Studies" in *Social Education* 47 (May 1983): 338-343.

Since citizenship in our democracy includes rights and responsibilities, citizens need knowledge of government and politics, an understanding of the values of government, and the skills for participation in the local, state, national, and international community. Education for "enlightened citizens" is essential to our republic. □

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