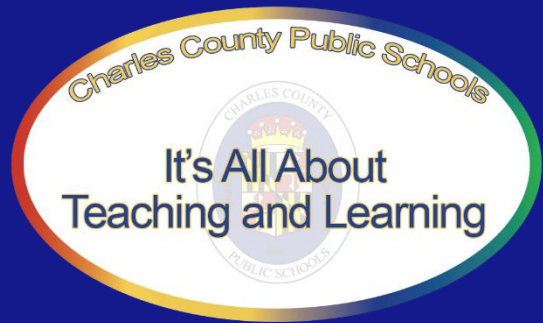


LSN Govt. (Grade 9)



CHARLES COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

LSN Govt. (Grade 9) **Social Studies** **Weeks 7 – 8** **(May 18 – May 29)**

Dear parents,

If your child is participating in distance learning solely through the completion of our instructional packets, you are required to call or email the principal to inform them of your child's participating status, since packet-assignments will not be collected until a later time. Please keep all your child's work in a safe place until you are notified of when, where, and how to submit. Thank you for your attention to this matter.



LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Estimados padres,

Si su hijo/a está participando en el aprendizaje a distancia completando solamente nuestros paquetes de instrucción, deberá llamar o enviar un correo electrónico al director para informarle sobre el estado de participación de su hijo/a, ya que las asignaciones realizadas en los paquetes no se recopilarán hasta más tarde. Por favor mantenga todo el trabajo de su hijo/a en un lugar seguro hasta que se le notifique cuándo, dónde y cómo presentarlo. Gracias por su atención a este asunto.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Student: _____ School: _____

Teacher: _____ Block/Period: _____

Packet Directions for Students

Students should complete the following sections of the APEX American Government course.

Unit 8 Overview: Public Policy

Week 7

8.4 Lesson Overview: The United States in the World

8.4.5 Study: The United States in the World

Examine U.S. foreign policy influences and assess how U.S. foreign policy affects other countries.

8.4.6 Quiz: The United States in the World

Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.

Week 8

9:1 Lesson Overview: The Obligations of a Citizen

9.1.3 Study: The Obligations of a Citizen

Examine the obligations and responsibilities of U.S. citizens and evaluate the importance of civic participation.

9.1.4 Quiz: The Obligations of a Citizen

Take a quiz to assess your understanding of the material.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

WEEK 7

8.4 - Foreign Policy – The United States in the World



In today's interconnected world, foreign policy is more important than ever.

The United States is a world leader, both politically and economically. Because the country occupies such an important place in the international community, the U.S. government develops foreign policy to work with other nations and respond to global developments. As the world has become more connected through trade, technology, and shared concerns, U.S. foreign policy has become increasingly important.

In this lesson, you will examine the tools the U.S. government uses to implement its foreign policy. You will also explore the major foreign policy goals of the United States.

Lesson Objectives

- Describe the governmental roles and structures involved in creating and implementing U.S. foreign policy.
- Describe the tools used to carry out foreign policy.
- Explain the various influences on U.S. foreign policy.
- Explain how U.S. foreign policy influences other countries.
- Evaluate the goals of U.S. foreign policy.
- Analyze the role of national interest in shaping foreign policy.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)



8.4.5 Study Guide: The United States in the World

Use this study guide to answer questions about important concepts covered in this activity.

DEFINE TERMS

Define the following terms.

Terms	Definition
free trade	
human rights	
North American Free Trade Agreement	
outsourcing	
terrorism	
trade barriers	
trade bloc	
war on terror	
weapons of mass destruction	

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

REVIEW IDEAS

1. Describe the difference between isolationism and interventionism as a foreign policy and provide one example of an American isolationist policy and one example of an American interventionist policy.

2. Explain how the attacks on September 11, 2001, shaped U.S. foreign policy in the 21st century.

3. What are the similarities and differences between the U.S. wars in Afghanistan and Iraq?

4. Explain how human rights became important to U.S. foreign policy.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

5. Summarize the U.S. approach to advancing human rights and democracy since the Carter administration.

6. Explain why free trade and economic development are foreign policy concerns of the United States.

7. Explain why critics object to the policies promoted by the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).



In one or two sentences, summarize the "big idea" or main point of this study.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Week 7

8.4 Lesson Overview: The United States in the World



An act of terrorism, such as the attack on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, is one of many foreign policy challenges the United States faces in the 21st century.

The United States is a wealthy, powerful country and a leader in the international community. Therefore, U.S. foreign policy affects life not just at home but around the world. The actions the United States takes worldwide are focused on advancing U.S. interests. Their stated intent is also to make the world a better, safer, freer, and more prosperous place. In this activity, you will examine the way the United States acts on the global stage. You will learn about U.S. efforts to fight terrorism, advance human rights and democracy, and benefit the global economy. You will also see how those efforts are limited and why they generate criticism.

History of U.S. Foreign Policy

U.S. foreign policy has had a major impact on the world, but the United States has not always been so quick to get involved in the affairs of other countries. At times, the U.S. government has had a policy of isolationism and concentrated on domestic activities within the country's borders. But over time, the government's policy has mostly turned to one of interventionism, and the United States has become deeply involved in conflicts between other countries.

U.S. foreign policy has changed many times throughout history, and by the 1940s, the country had been involved in numerous conflicts. The U.S. government started with a policy of isolationism but has shifted back and forth between isolationism and interventionism over the years.

U.S. Foreign Policy Concerns

The United States is an undisputed superpower. Its military has no rivals, and its economy is larger than that of any other single nation. The country's importance in the global system brings both opportunities and problems.

In recent years, the United States has had three primary foreign policy concerns: terrorism, human rights, and global economics.

Terrorism: International terrorism spreads fear and economic disruption wherever it goes. As both a target of terrorist attacks and an ally of threatened nations, the United States has launched a war on terror to fight this threat to global peace and stability.

Human rights: The United States holds the highest ideals of democracy and individual rights. To many people, it is not enough to work toward these ideals at home. They believe the United States has a responsibility to see that human rights and democracy are advanced around the world.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Global economics: The United States has the world's largest, most interdependent economy, so foreign policy makers have to pay attention to patterns of global trade. Hoping to benefit the United States as well as other nations, they push for free trade policies and the development of free market economies around the world.

Terrorism

The threat of terrorism has been a foreign policy problem for the United States for decades. However, it was not always a top priority for the U.S. government.

Terrorism gained worldwide attention when gunmen killed nine athletes at the 1972 Summer Olympics.

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, terrorists exploded bombs, hijacked planes, and threatened people around the world. They sought attention for various causes, from Palestinian liberation to corporate greed.

During these years most terrorist attacks took place outside the United States. While U.S. policy makers acknowledged that terrorism was a problem, most considered it a much smaller threat than the Soviet Union, which was competing with the United States in the Cold War.

September 11, 2001

U.S. foreign policy made an abrupt change after the September 11 attacks in 2001. When terrorists hijacked and crashed four planes on American soil, terrorism became a top priority for the U.S. government.

President George W. Bush declared a war on terror and focused on destroying terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda.

At the same time, Congress passed the USA PATRIOT Act to give the executive branch new powers to fight terrorism. It also created the Department of Homeland Security to centralize government efforts to safeguard the nation against future attacks.

The War on Terror Speech

Below are two passages from the speech by President Bush. Read the passages and answer think about the question regarding each passage.

Passage 1 reads:

On September the 11th, enemies of freedom committed an act of war against our country. Americans have known wars — but for the past 136 years, they have been wars on foreign soil, except for one Sunday in 1941. Americans have known the casualties of war — but not at the center of a great city on a peaceful morning. Americans have known surprise attacks — but never before on thousands of civilians. All of this was brought upon us in a single day — and night fell on a different world, a world where freedom itself is under attack.

Question 1: Why does President Bush compare the September 11 attacks to previous wars?

Passage 2 reads:

Americans are asking, why do they hate us? They hate what we see right here in this chamber — a democratically elected government. Their leaders are self-appointed. They hate our freedoms — our freedom of religion, our freedom of speech, our freedom to vote and assemble and disagree with each other. They want to overthrow existing governments in many Muslim countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan. They want to drive Israel out of the Middle East. They want to drive Christians and Jews out of vast regions of Asia and Africa.

Question 2: Why does President Bush make the points emphasized in this excerpt?

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

War in Afghanistan and Iraq

The war on terror led the United States into two foreign wars. The first, in Afghanistan, began in 2001, shortly after September 11. The invasion was a direct response to the terrorist attacks. President Bush was also concerned about terrorists gaining possession of weapons of mass destruction. Some U.S. officials believed that Iraq possessed such weapons and that it would provide them to Al-Qaeda or another terrorist group. This fear led to a U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2004. While the United States had similar goals in both conflicts, unique factors also influenced each.

U.S. Goals in Afghanistan

Remove the Taliban from power: The main goal of the war in Afghanistan was to overthrow the Taliban-controlled government. The Taliban is a radical Islamic group that repressed the Afghan people. It had also given aid to Al-Qaeda, which helped that group organize the terrorist attacks on September 11.

Rebuild Afghanistan: Overthrowing the Taliban was only the beginning of the war in Afghanistan. The United States had destroyed the government, so it needed to rebuild the nation. President Bush vowed to promote democracy in Afghanistan — and to destroy any remaining elements of the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. Doing so proved extremely difficult. The war in Afghanistan, which began in 2001 and officially ended in 2014, was the longest war in U.S. history. Afghanistan remains unstable to this day.

Destroy Al-Qaeda: Al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the September 11 attacks. President Bush declared the group a top U.S. enemy and vowed to destroy its capability to launch future attacks. While not directly connected to the Afghan government, Al-Qaeda did have important bases in Afghanistan that the U.S. military sought to destroy.

U.S. Goals in Iraq

Prevent WMDs from falling into the hands of terrorists: At one time, Iraq had possessed chemical weapons, and Bush administration officials were worried that the country had obtained them again. Officials also feared that Iraq was developing nuclear weapons. One of the main justifications for invading Iraq was to prevent WMDs from being used against U.S. targets.

Overthrow Saddam Hussein: Saddam Hussein was an unpredictable dictator who had given the United States problems in the past. U.S. troops first entered Iraq in 1991 when Saddam invaded Kuwait. The Persian Gulf War left Hussein in power, but as an enemy of the United States. President Bush considered him a danger to the Middle East and the American people.

U.S. goals in Afghanistan and Iraq

Democratize the conquered nations: After ordering the invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, President Bush announced that the United States was committed to starting democracies in these two conquered nations. This plan fit with his idea that the war on terror was a fight between freedom and fear. He believed it was not enough to defeat current threats to U.S. security, and that establishing democracy would safeguard the future.

Stabilize the Middle East: The Bush administration saw the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as part of the war on terror. The administration also hoped U.S. actions there would achieve a long-held goal of U.S. foreign policy: stabilizing the tumultuous Middle East. Because the United States obtains a large portion of its energy from the region, instability there is both a security problem and an economic threat.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Continuing Efforts in the Middle East

The United States withdrew from Iraq in 2011 under the oversight of President Barack Obama. Although Saddam Hussein had been removed from power, no evidence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq was found. President Obama delayed ending combat operations in Afghanistan until the close of 2014. The Taliban was removed from power and Al-Qaeda was severely weakened. In both Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States helped establish democratic governments, although both proved unstable. Even after the wars had officially ended, U.S. troops remained in both countries to provide security. New threats also emerged during the Obama administration. The gravest one was the Islamic State, a radical Islamic organization that controls territory in Iraq and Syria. Because of this and other continued threats, the United States remains deeply involved in the Middle East.

Advancing Human Rights

The end of World War II brought a new era in global governance. World leaders sought collective solutions to global problems after witnessing Nazi atrocities and the horrors of two world wars within two generations. They founded the United Nations in 1945 to make the world safer and more humane. One of the UN's first actions was passing the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This document lists fundamental human rights that the UN's member nations commit themselves to protecting. The UN's focus on human rights has made the issue central to U.S. foreign policy as well. For the United States, supporting democratic reforms often goes hand in hand with supporting human rights. The country plays a major role in overseeing foreign elections and supporting democratic reforms.

Human Rights and Democratic Policies

Although the United States signed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, political considerations over the years have sometimes interfered with the country's commitment to the issue of human rights. When President Jimmy Carter took office, he promised to recommit the nation to human rights. Since then, U.S. presidents have pursued different approaches to advancing human rights and democratic reforms around the world.

Human Rights and Democratic Policies: 1977 – 2017

This timeline lists six significant dates related to human rights and democratic policies between 1977 and 2017.

Milestone 1: 1977 – 1981: (Carter administration) When he took office, President Jimmy Carter made human rights central to his foreign policy. Prior to his term, U.S. leaders had ignored human rights abuses in allied countries. Carter's administration changed that policy by acknowledging the abuses of U.S. allies and pressuring them to change. He also ended military and political support for President Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua, who was a longtime ally of the United States but also an abusive dictator.

Milestone 2: 1981 – 1989: (Reagan administration) Ronald Reagan scaled back the Carter administration's focus on human rights but increased U.S. efforts to promote democratic reforms around the world. Reagan's administration eased pressure on allied countries to improve human rights practices and ignored conditions in South Africa, which operated a brutally segregationist government. Reagan also supported nondemocratic countries if they were allied with the United States. At the same time, his administration urged the Soviet Union to allow open elections in countries in Eastern Europe and successfully pushed for democratic reforms in El Salvador.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Milestone 3: 1989 – 1993: (Bush administration) George H. W. Bush oversaw the end of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union. He was in a unique position to push for democratic reforms in areas that were formerly under Soviet control. Bush cautiously supported democratic reforms, including the reunification of a democratic Germany in 1990. He also led an international military coalition to oppose the actions of Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, who was guilty of human rights abuses against people in Kuwait and in his own country.

Milestone 4: 1993 – 2001: (Clinton administration) Bill Clinton's administration was more forceful in supporting human rights issues, but officials did pick their battles. Clinton's administration used diplomacy to convince the dictator of Haiti to step down and allow elections. Clinton also used military force to halt ethnic conflicts and human rights violations in Bosnia, Croatia, and other regions in the former Yugoslavia. When ethnic killings took place in Somalia, however, Clinton did not use military force to intervene, citing a lack of public support.

Milestone 5: 2001 – 2009: (Bush administration) George W. Bush spoke strongly against human rights violations, especially in nations that opposed the United States, like North Korea and Iraq. However, he ignored violations in allied countries like Pakistan and China. One of the major goals of the Iraq War was to establish a democracy there, and Bush pushed for elections and a new government. His efforts were partially successful, but the democratic Iraqi government proved unstable and required continued U.S. military support to function.

Milestone 6: 2009 – 2017: (Obama administration) The Obama administration continued to focus on human rights and democratic reforms, pushing for improvements especially in African nations. But like his predecessor, Obama was hesitant to pressure allied nations like China and Saudi Arabia.

Global Economics

The U.S. economy is extremely important to the global economy, and vice versa. Because the U.S. economy and the global economy are so interdependent, foreign policy makers have to pay close attention to economic issues and events.

- **U.S. and global GDP:** The U.S. economy makes up nearly a quarter of the entire global economy. By contrast, China, the world's second-largest economy, makes up just over 10 percent. Therefore, the health of the U.S. economy is extremely important to the global economy.
- **The U.S. trade deficit:** In the middle of the 20th century, the United States had an almost equal trade balance, exporting slightly more goods and services than it imported. Beginning in the 1980s, the United States began to spend much more on imports than it earned from exports. By 2015, the United States was primarily an importer, with a trade deficit of over \$500 billion.
- **Energy independence:** The United States has long used foreign energy sources, but until the second half of the 20th century, the amount of imported energy was relatively low. In response to this shift, U.S. economic policy has focused on making the country more energy independent. This way, events outside the country have less of an effect. Domestic petroleum production now tops imports for the first time since the 1990s.

Free Trade

The main economic doctrine driving U.S. foreign policy is free trade. U.S. diplomats seek to reduce trade barriers among nations to promote more international trade. The United States works to create free trade policies in a number of ways:

- It belongs to the World Trade Organization (WTO), an international forum that helps nations voluntarily lower trade barriers.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

- It is a member of numerous trade blocs, the most important of which was established by the North American Free Trade Agreement. This treaty lowered trade barriers between the United States, Canada, and Mexico. The United States has similar agreements with nations in Central and South America and around the Pacific Rim.

Economic Development

U.S. foreign policy also promotes development among the world's poorer nations, an approach that helps both struggling countries and the United States. Because the U.S. and world economies are so deeply connected, the United States benefits when the global economy grows — and the rising wealth of poorer nations helps that global growth. Wealthier nations also tend to be more stable, which contributes to peace. The Department of State has a foreign aid budget that targets poverty abroad. The United States also works through two international institutions, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The World Bank provides nations with low-interest loans to fund economic development and antipoverty programs. The IMF also provides loans, which come with policy conditions meant to help governments stabilize their economies and encourage foreign investment.

Critiques of Economic Foreign Policy

U.S. economic foreign policy has frequently been the target of criticism.

- **Loss of Jobs** – A lot of American workers worry that free trade policies reduce the number of jobs available to them. Specifically, they are concerned about outsourcing, a common practice in which businesses hire workers in foreign countries rather than pay more expensive workers in the United States. This results in a loss of available jobs in the United States.
- **Harm to the Environment** – Many people who are concerned about the environment are also critical of U.S. economic foreign policies. They worry that increased global trade harms the environment. Developing nations often have fewer environmental protection policies, so manufacturing in those countries produces more pollution.
- **Increasing Wealth Gap** – The WTO and IMF are often criticized for encouraging poorer nations to focus their development efforts on serving as exporters to wealthier nations. Critics argue that free trade policies benefit the world's richest nations at the expense of its poorest, widening an already large global wealth gap.

Summary: A Global Power

The United States has the world's largest national economy and its most powerful military. It is a global superpower and a world leader. Because of this unique position, U.S. foreign policy decisions have a major impact both at home and abroad. The United States pushes for democracy and human rights around the world and attempts to shape the global economy. It also faces many challenges on the global stage, including the threat of terrorist attacks against the American people and U.S. allies.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Quiz: The United States in the World

Question 1 of 10

Which option *best* completes the diagram?



- A. The aftermath of the Cold War is the major U.S. foreign policy priority.
- B. The United States is not deeply involved in foreign policy.
- C. Terrorism is a primary concern of ordinary U.S. citizens.
- D. Terrorism does not occur outside Middle Eastern countries.

Question 2 of 10

Removing the Taliban from power was a major goal of _____.

- A. neither the war in Afghanistan nor the war in Iraq
- B. the war in Iraq
- C. the war in Afghanistan
- D. both the war in Afghanistan and the war in Iraq

Question 3 of 10

Which statement would *most* likely be made by a supporter of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan?

- A. Treaties and other agreements can solve most international problems.
- B. The United States must not allow the Soviet Union too much power.
- C. It is the job of the United States to protect the world from terrorism.
- D. The best way to influence international policy is through economic means.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Question 4 of 10

When did human rights become a major international concern?

- A. After the attacks of September 11
- B. After the fall of Saddam Hussein
- C. After the end of World War II
- D. After the election of Jimmy Carter

Question 5 of 10

- ***First president to make human rights central to foreign policy***
- ***Pressured U.S. military allies to improve human rights practices***
- ***Withdrew support for President Anastasio Somoza of Nicaragua over human rights issues***

This list describes the human rights record of which U.S. president?

- A. Barack Obama
- B. Jimmy Carter
- C. Ronald Reagan
- D. George W. Bush

Question 6 of 10

About how big a share of the global economy is the U.S. economy?

- A. 22 percent
- B. 13 percent
- C. 55 percent
- D. 38 percent

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Question 7 of 10

- ***Editorial: Countries That Harm Their Own Citizens Cannot Be True U.S. Allies***
- ***President Carter Announces Increased Focus on Human Rights Records of Military Partners***
- ***President Carter Ends Support for Nicaragua, Citing Human Rights Abuses***

What development in foreign policy do these headlines reflect?

- A. A need to balance the desire to protect human rights with the interests of the U.S. economy
- B. An acknowledgment that strong words on human rights don't always applied equally to all nations
- C. A belief that human rights are as important as military policy
- D. A decision to intervene in some human rights situations but not others

Question 8 of 10

Overall, what is U.S. economic foreign policy designed to promote?

- A. U.S. cultural dominance
- B. Free trade
- C. Protection of U.S. companies
- D. Fair wages for workers

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Question 9 of 10

What critique of U.S. economic policy is this protestor's sign making?



- A. Free trade can harm the environment because other countries may not have environmental regulations in place.
- B. Cheaper goods are more likely to be thrown away rather than recycled, leading to excessive waste.
- C. Politicians are more interested in increasing wealth than they are in protecting the environment.
- D. Economic activity is environmentally damaging because it takes too much energy to ship goods around the globe.

Question 10 of 10

American Workers' Concerns about Outsourcing



Which option *best* completes the diagram?

- A. Governments enter into a trade agreement to lower taxes on imports.
- B. Trade blocs place restrictions on international economic activity.
- C. Foreign investors take control of U.S. companies.
- D. Free trade allows companies to relocate anywhere on the globe.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Week 8

Civic and Political Participation – The Role of Citizens



Today, well over 300 million U.S. citizens from many diverse backgrounds live across the nation.

The United States is made up of millions of people with the right to live, work, and vote in the country. These people are all citizens of the United States, and together, they play the biggest role in shaping the nation's government. Being a U.S. citizen has many benefits, but it also comes with obligations and responsibilities. In this lesson, you will examine what it means to be a U.S. citizen and how someone can become a citizen. You will also examine the rights, duties, and responsibilities of all U.S. citizens.

Lesson Objectives

- Evaluate the constitutional definition of citizenship and how it has changed over time.
- Explain the processes by which different categories of people become U.S. citizens.
- Describe the responsibilities of U.S. citizens.
- Evaluate the importance of civic participation.
- Analyze the civic responsibilities associated with exercising one's individual rights.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)



9.1.3

Study Guide: The Obligations of a Citizen

Use this study guide to answer questions about important concepts covered in this activity.

DEFINE TERMS

Define the following terms.

Terms	Definition
civic obligation	
civic participation	
civic responsibility	

REVIEW IDEAS

Answer the following questions as you complete the study.

1. List the four basic civic obligations required of U.S. citizens.

-
-
-
-

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

2. Tax dollars pay for a wide range of public services. For each category in the table below, list some examples of specific functions or positions that are funded through taxes.

Education and services	
Protection and security	
Help for those in need	
Funding for the government	

3. Explain some of the benefits of serving on a jury.
Serving on a jury gives citizens the opportunity to:

4. List the four basic criteria for being informed citizens.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

5. Explain some ways an ideal citizen can offer public service to his or her community.



In one or two sentences, summarize the "big idea" or main point of this study.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

The Obligations of a Citizen



Civic obligations — like serving on juries, voting, and obeying traffic laws — are what keep our society moving forward.

What would life be like if citizens were not required to give anything back to society? For starters, no one would pay taxes, so public institutions like schools wouldn't be funded, and there would be no public services to repair roads or traffic lights. The citizens themselves would no longer be obliged to follow laws or serve on a jury, which would make it impossible for anyone to get a fair trial. And who would choose government leaders if no one voted?

It's hard to imagine a scenario like this, isn't it? That's because our entire society depends heavily on civic participation.

In this activity, you'll learn what is required of every U.S. citizen and how these duties keep our society working for us. You'll also learn what it means to be an "ideal citizen" and what it takes to fully contribute to the community in which you live.

Civic Obligations

In his famous Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln said the United States was "a government of the people, by the people, for the people."¹ In other words, the citizens of the United States have the freedom to choose their own leaders and determine their own destinies. These are some of the great benefits of living in a democracy. But for any democracy to function, its citizens must fulfill certain requirements. A requirement of this nature is called a civic obligation.

So what are the civic obligations expected from each citizen of the United States? They're pretty basic:

- Every citizen must pay taxes.
- Every citizen must obey the laws.
- Every citizen must agree to serve on a jury if selected.
- Every (male) citizen must register for the military's selective service.

Why Pay Taxes?

Paying taxes is so deeply rooted in our culture that many people don't even question why we do it. But it's one of our most important civic obligations, and the money generated from taxes provides some of society's most basic functions. This list represents the benefits of paying taxes.

Education and services: Taxes pay for a wide variety of services you use every day. These services are important for the development and enrichment of any community. Here are just a handful of public services funded by tax dollars:

- Traffic lights
- Highways, roads, and street repair
- Public parks
- Libraries
- Public schools

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Protection and security: Without taxes, there would be no one to call in an emergency and no one to deliver justice to those who have broken the law. Tax dollars pay for the following positions:

- Police officers
- Firefighters
- Judges
- Public attorneys

Help for those in need: Taxes also provide basic services to people who might struggle financially. These include:

- Medicaid
- Financial aid for college or other education
- Low-income housing
- Homeless shelters

Funding for the government: The salaries of all government workers, from the mayor of a small town to the president of the United States, are paid by tax dollars. Taxes are literally what keeps the government functioning.

Serving on a Jury

One civic obligation of a U.S. citizen is to respect and obey the law. But what happens when someone doesn't? The answer depends on the type of law that's broken, but for serious crimes, the accused lawbreaker is sent to court, where he or she is tried and declared innocent or guilty. This decision isn't made by the government, however; it's made by other U.S. citizens. Criminal court cases in the United States are presented to a jury of peers who listen closely to the evidence and make a decision based on what they hear in court.

Frequently Asked Questions about Jury Duty

Who can be a juror? A citizen of the United States can be summoned for jury service at any time, as long as he or she:

- Is at least 18 years old
- Has never been convicted of a felony
- Is not currently on active duty in the military
- Is not already serving on another jury
- Is able to read and write in English

What if you are summoned? Jurors are randomly selected and notified by mail. Jury service is not optional, but jurors are given a small payment for their service. When summoned, a citizen is expected to:

- Show up to court on the scheduled date
- Answer questions asked by the judge and attorneys involved with the case
- Wait to be assigned to a trial

If a juror is not assigned to a trial by the end of the day, he or she may be excused or asked to return on another day.

Why should you serve? Though it can be inconvenient to make time for jury service, the benefits outweigh the challenges. Serving on a jury gives a citizen the opportunity to:

- Participate directly in the democratic justice system
- Help ensure his or her peers receive fair, balanced trials
- Witness firsthand how the court system works

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Selective Service

There is one civic obligation that applies specifically to men between the ages of 18 and 25: registering for the Selective Service. This agency, run by the federal government, maintains records of all registered men who might be eligible for military duty. In certain circumstances, such as an attack from another country or a foreign war, a military draft could be reinstated. A draft would require those registered to enlist in military duty.

The draft has not been active in the United States since the mid-1970s, when the Vietnam War ended. However, men who want to apply for citizenship or financial aid must register with the Selective Service. Failing to register has consequences including a large fine or even jail time.

An Ideal Citizen: Civic Responsibilities

An ideal citizen fulfills more than just his or her basic civic obligations. Playing an active role in the community, volunteering one's services to help those in need, and staying informed of current events are also important to the well-being of American society. These are examples of civic responsibilities. There is no law that says you *must* do these things, but that doesn't make them any less crucial.

Voting is perhaps the most important civic responsibility. Choosing the politicians to represent your community ensures your ideals and interests will be recognized. Elected officials:

- Decide where tax dollars will be spent
- Push for important social policies
- Make decisions to address the concerns of the people they represent

Voting in federal and local elections is the most effective way for a citizen to directly influence his or her community.

Informed Citizens: Understanding the Issues

As important as voting is, it's not enough to simply walk into a voting booth and cast your ballot. Another civic responsibility citizens have is staying informed about important issues so that their votes are meaningful and beneficial. But what does it mean to be an informed citizen in a world so full of information?

An Informed Citizen

- **Follows national politics:** Every day, the federal government makes decisions that affect the entire nation. An ideal citizen stays informed about national politics and understands how the decisions being made affect his or her community.
- **Stays informed of local news:** Attending town hall meetings, communicating with local politicians, reading local news reports, and participating in community events are all important ways to be an informed citizen.
- **Recognizes biased sources:** It's not enough to simply read or watch the news. An informed citizen carefully evaluates news sources, effectively identifies any slants or biases, and then uses the information to form his or her own opinion.
- **Understands and respects other opinions:** U.S. towns and cities are made up of diverse communities. It's important as an informed citizen to read news sources that reflect a variety of viewpoints. That doesn't mean you have to agree with what you're reading, but understanding and respecting other opinions are key to living in a democracy.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Giving Back: Volunteering in the Community

No one lives in a bubble, isolated from the other residents of a town or nation. In a society, people depend on one another. This is why it's important for an ideal citizen to find ways to give back to the community. It can be as simple as reporting illegal activity or helping someone in need. Citizens also have many opportunities to volunteer their time and effort to serve the public.

Places to Volunteer in Your Community

- **Food banks:** Most communities have local food banks that collect and store donations to be given to low-income families or homeless people. Citizens can offer their time to collect, organize, and distribute food for those in need.
- **Homeless shelters:** For people who don't have a warm place to stay at night, homeless shelters can provide much-needed warmth and comfort. Citizens can volunteer to serve food or offer other support for those staying in shelters.
- **Parks and libraries:** Public tax dollars fund parks and libraries, but the money usually covers only basic expenses. These facilities always need volunteers, who might do anything from shelving books to picking up litter. Even small efforts can make a big difference.
- **The Red Cross:** The Red Cross is an organization that offers support to people in times of crisis. Whether it is helping a sick child or thousands of people suffering after a natural disaster, the organization is always seeking generous citizens who are willing to volunteer their time.

Obligations versus Responsibilities	
Civic obligation Paying taxes Obeying laws Participating in jury duty Registering with the Selective Service (men only)	Civic responsibility Volunteering to pick up litter at a park Volunteering with the Red Cross Voting Staying informed of issues

Summary: The Obligations of a Citizen

In order to enjoy the benefits of citizenship in the United States, every citizen must fulfill certain civic obligations required by law. These include:

- Obeying laws
- Paying taxes
- Serving on a jury
- Signing up for the Selective Service (men only)

However, citizens do more than just fulfill obligations. They also have a civic responsibility to be informed and responsible members of society. Ideal citizens follow the news, volunteer to help others, and take the time to cast an informed vote. If all citizens worked to be fully functioning members of their nation and community, the rewards of living in a democracy would reach their fullest potential. By fulfilling their obligations and responsibilities, citizens define the character of the nation.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Quiz: The Obligations of a Citizen

Question 1 of 10

How does civic participation primarily influence the political process in the United States?

- A. It keeps the government from becoming too powerful.
- B. It tells citizens how elected officials feel about particular issues.
- C. It allows the military to remain staffed when needed.
- D. It lets elected officials know how citizens wish them to act.

Question 2 of 10

If citizens stated these concerns, which one could be solved by spending tax money?

- A. "The roads in my state need to be repaired."
- B. "I feel like my elected representative doesn't listen to me."
- C. "I am disappointed by the corruption in federal government."
- D. "My favorite candidates never win elections."

Question 3 of 10

Which obligation is required of all citizens?

- A. Volunteering in the community
- B. Obeying the law
- C. Registering with the Selective Service
- D. Serving on a jury

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Question 4 of 10

What is true of public service?

- A. It is a civic responsibility but not a legal obligation.
- B. It is both a legal obligation and a civic responsibility.
- C. It is a legal obligation but not a civic responsibility.
- D. It is neither a legal obligation nor a civic responsibility.

Question 5 of 10

Which statement is true of the Selective Service?

- A. It is one way the government ensures it has sufficient funds.
- B. All people becoming naturalized citizens must register for it.
- C. Some citizens are required to register for it.
- D. It is an alternative to paying taxes in some situations.

Question 6 of 10

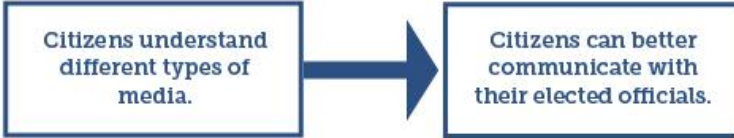



What is a direct effect of citizens voting?

- A. Taxes decrease on most citizens.
- B. Citizens have more publicly funded leisure options.
- C. Fire departments are better equipped.
- D. Political decisions better reflect citizens' desires.

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Question 7 of 10

Which cause-and-effect diagram *best* illustrates one main effect of informed citizens on the political system?

- A. 
- B. 
- C. 
- D. 

Question 8 of 10

How could a citizen *best* ensure he or she remains informed?

- A. Perform acts of public service
- B. Serve on a jury
- C. Read a variety of news sources
- D. Determine a political stance and stand by it

LSN Govt. (Grade 9)

Question 9 of 10

Qualifications for Jury Service

- Never have been convicted of a felony
- Not be currently on active duty in the military
- Not be already serving on another jury
- Be able to read and write in English
- ?

Which other qualification must a citizen meet before he or she can serve on a jury?

- A. Be at least 18 years old
- B. Have completed military service
- C. Be a citizen or in the process of naturalization
- D. Not be enrolled in college

Question 10 of 10

Why is it important to respect other political opinions?

- A. It creates a more informed electorate.
- B. It allows politicians to gain new voters.
- C. It leads to improvements in the education system.
- D. It helps citizens change their minds on political issues.