

## OBLIGATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES OF CITIZENS

**SS.7.CG.2.2** Differentiate between obligations and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship, and evaluate their impact on society.

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### 2023 BENCHMARK UPDATES

- Updated from SS.7.C.2.2 and SS.7.C.2.3
  - Changed from “~~Evaluate the obligations citizens have to obey laws, pay taxes, defend the nation, and serve on juries.~~” and “~~Experience the responsibilities of citizens at the local, state, or federal levels.~~” to “Differentiate between obligations and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship, and evaluate their impact on society.”
- Depth of Knowledge Changes within Benchmark
  - Changed from “Evaluate” and “Experience” to “Differentiate”
- Benchmark Clarification Changes
  - Changed from “Students will recognize the concept of the common good as a ~~rational~~ for fulfilling the obligations and/or responsibilities of citizenship” to “Students will recognize the concept of the common good as a reason for fulfilling the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship.”
  - Changed from “Students will evaluate the obligations and/or responsibilities of citizens as they relate to active participation in society and government. .” to “Students will evaluate the obligations and responsibilities of citizens as they relate to active participation in society and government..”
  - Changed from “Students will identify the consequences or predict the outcome on society ~~of~~ citizens ~~who~~ do not fulfill their citizenship responsibilities.” to “Students will identify the consequences or predict the outcome on society if citizens do not fulfill their obligations and responsibilities.”
  - Deletion of “Students will evaluate the impact of civic participation on society, government, or the political process.” and added into the benchmark
  - Deletion of “Students will examine the significant contributions of citizens to a democratic society.”
- Vocabulary Changes
  - No changes

## Essential Teacher Content Background Information

[Teacher Content Notes Not Appropriate For Student Use]

### This section addresses the following topics:

1. The Obligations and Responsibilities of U.S. Citizenship
2. Obligations of Citizenship
3. Responsibilities of Citizenship

### 1. The Obligations and Responsibilities of U.S. Citizenship

Citizenship brings with it both obligations and responsibilities. The obligations of citizenship include those actions that citizens are required by law to take while the responsibilities of citizenship are those actions that citizens should take for the sake of the common good.

The notion of citizen responsibility may also be understood as enlightened self-interest. Enlightened self-interest suggests that when people act in a way that furthers others' interests and that advances the interests of groups to which they belong consequently serves their own interest. Self-interest is often considered selfish or self-centered; by contrast, enlightened self-interest focuses on group-based action, where one sees a positive connection between group involvement broadly defined and self-interest that is tied to the virtue of doing what is right. The notion of enlightened self-interest was articulated by Alexis de Tocqueville in his two volume work, *Democracy in America*.

*Democracy in America* was Alexis de Tocqueville's two volume account (Volume I, 1835, Volume II, 1840) of his one visit to the United States in 1831-1832. The original purpose of Tocqueville's visit was to study the U.S. prison system, yet Tocqueville collected extensive data on the nature of American society, giving particular attention to Americans' involvement in voluntary associations, social connectedness, and political practices tied to representative democracy. Tocqueville argued that Americans' tendency to join associations was an enlightened self-interest.

There is a connection among enlightened self-interest, obligations of citizenship and responsibilities of citizenship as persons who hold an enlightened self-interest are more likely to fulfill their obligations and responsibilities of citizenship.

### 2. Obligations of Citizenship

Obey laws	Legislatures and chief executives are elected by citizens in a democracy; these legislatures and chief executives are elected to represent citizen interests. Courts interpret whether these laws cohere to the U.S. Constitution. Citizens and non-citizens alike are obligated to obey laws whether they agree with them or not. Citizens and non-citizens who choose not to obey the laws may be prosecuted for their crimes; non-citizens who choose not to obey the laws may also be deported.
Pay taxes	Taxes support government functions. Legislatures and chief executives enact tax laws the same as they do other laws. The 16 <sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution allows Congress to impose an income tax. The U.S. Supreme Court may not find income taxes unconstitutional because income taxes are protected by the 16 <sup>th</sup> Amendment.
Defend the nation	Swear allegiance to support and defend the U.S. Constitution and the laws of the United States against all enemies.

Selective service	Selective service is a system by which men (both citizens and resident aliens) ages 18 through 25 register with the U.S. government for military service. Selective service is not a draft; however, it is from the names included among those registered for selective service that a person drafted will be selected.
Serve on juries	<p>The sixth amendment of the U.S. Constitution provides for a trial by jury in most cases as follows:</p> <p>“In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district where the crime shall have been committed...”</p> <p>Citizens who have reached the age of majority may be called upon to serve on juries.</p>

### 3. Responsibilities of Citizenship

Voting	Citizens have a responsibility for selecting public officials who will represent their interests in government.
Attending civic meetings	Civic meetings are ways for citizens to be active participants in their government. Interest groups, political parties, candidates for public office, religious organizations, the media and public officials hold civic meetings in order to inform and learn from the public.
Petitioning government	<p>The right of individuals to come together with others and collectively express, promote, pursue and defend common interests. This includes the right to assemble in public places, and the right to join an association. Peaceable assembly is also understood as freedom of association. The U.S Supreme Court has upheld laws requiring general permits, as well as prosecutions for illegal demonstrations under certain circumstances.</p> <p>The right of individuals to express themselves must be balanced against the need to maintain public order.</p> <p>People are protected when they bring to the government’s attention their unresolved concerns, provide information to political leaders about unpopular policies and issues, and expose government misconduct. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that regulation of assembly may not be used to stifle dissent; unpopular groups may not be prevented from gathering based on the nature of the group’s message.</p>
Running for office	Running for or being appointed to serve in public office as well as serving in public office

## Lesson Summary

ESSENTIAL QUESTION		
What are the differences between obligations and responsibilities of U.S. citizens? How do obligations and responsibilities of U.S. citizens impact society?		
BENCHMARK		
<b>SS.7.CG.2.2</b> Differentiate between obligations and responsibilities of U.S. citizenship, and evaluate their impact on society.		
CIVICS EOC REPORTING CATEGORY		
N/A		
OVERVIEW		
In this lesson, students will understand the obligations and responsibilities of U.S. citizens and evaluate their impact on society.		
BENCHMARK CLARIFICATIONS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students will distinguish between an obligation or duty and a responsibility as it relates to citizenship. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, voting, attending civic meetings, petitioning government and running for office.</li> <li>Students will recognize the concept of the common good as a reason for fulfilling the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship.</li> <li>Students will evaluate the obligations and responsibilities of citizens as they relate to active participation in society and government.</li> <li>Students will use scenarios to assess specific obligations of citizens.</li> <li>Students will identify the consequences or predict the outcome on society if citizens do not fulfill their obligations and responsibilities.</li> </ul>		
BENCHMARK CONTENT LIMITS		
N/A		
CIVICS CONTENT VOCABULARY		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>citizen, common good, obligation, responsibility, selective service</li> </ul>		
INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES		
Close reading of complex text	Collaborative learning	Scenario-based readings and inquiry
MATERIALS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obligations and Responsibilities Placards</li> <li>Common Good Definition slide</li> <li>Obligations and Responsibilities activity sheet</li> <li>Jury Summons image (external link)</li> </ul>		

- Citizens Unite! video (external link)
- What Does Being A Responsible Citizen Look Like? activity sheet
- Martin Luther King Jr. reading
- Mary McLeod Bethune reading
- César Chávez reading
- Rebecca Adamson reading

### **B.E.S.T. STANDARDS**

- ELA.7.R.2.1- Explain how individual text sections and/or features convey a purpose in texts.
- ELA.7.R.3.2- Paraphrase content from grade-level texts.
- ELA.V.1.3- Apply knowledge of context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the connotative and denotative meaning of words and phrases, appropriate to grade level.
- ELA.K12.EE.1.1- Cite evidence to explain and justify reasoning.

## Suggested Student Activity Sequence & Pace

DAY	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE
DAY 1	<p><b>Planning Note:</b> Prior to the start of this lesson, you will need to print out the “Obligations and Responsibilities Placards” and tape them to the walls around the classroom to create stations. Be sure to have enough space between each station to allow for at least 2-4 students at each station at a time. This will be a two-day activity and placards should be kept in the same spot in the classroom to avoid confusion.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To begin this lesson, project the “Common Good Definition” slide.</li> <li>2. Ask a student to read the definition aloud. Ask other students to state this definition in their own words. Pose the following questions for discussion: At home or at school are there tasks you are required to do? Are there activities you should do that benefit the whole family or school group?</li> <li>3. Provide students with time to brainstorm and then share out.</li> <li>4. Pose the following question for discussion: What are the tasks that you are required to do, and should do, to benefit the city you live in or to benefit the entire country? Provide time for students to share out ideas.</li> <li>5. Ask students to try and define ‘obligation’ and ‘responsibility’ in relation to being a citizen.</li> <li>6. After defining both terms, ask students to explain the difference between the two.</li> <li>7. Lead students to the understanding that an obligation is a duty or something that is required for a citizen to do, and a responsibility is something a citizen should do.</li> <li>8. Pass out the “Obligations and Responsibilities” activity sheet. Instruct students to write down the definitions for both terms just reviewed at the top of the activity sheet in the spaces provided.</li> <li>9. Have students also add the definition for “common good” on their activity sheet which was discussed in step 1.</li> <li>10. Explain to students that today they will learn more about different obligations and responsibilities of citizenship and why they are important to fulfill.</li> <li>11. Place students into pairs or small groups and assign each to a starting station/placard around the classroom.</li> <li>12. Explain to students that their task at each station is the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ First, carefully read the placard. Based on the description, make a decision if what they are reading is an <u>obligation</u> (something that is required to do) or a <u>responsibility</u> (something citizens do to benefit the common good). Once they have decided, they need to write the title of that placard on either the responsibility or obligation side of the activity sheet. [Column 1]</li> <li>■ Next, they will summarize the placard in one complete sentence [Column 2]</li> <li>■ Finally, they will list the text evidence from the placard that led them to decide if they are reading about an obligation or responsibility. [Column 3]</li> </ul> </li> <li>13. Provide students with 3-5 minutes at each station to work on their graphic organizer. <b>Teacher Note:</b> With 9 different stations, it is important to keep the students on task to complete at least 4-5 stations on Day 1 in order to finish the activity on Day 2.</li> <li>14. To wrap up the lesson, have students return to their seats and as a class, review the definition of ‘common good’ from the beginning of the lesson. For any stations/placards visited today, have the students individually complete Column 4 on their graphic organizer to answer the question: How does this obligation/responsibility relate to the common good?</li> </ol>

DAY 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Display this “<a href="#">Jury Summons</a>” image from Broward County. <b>Teacher Note:</b> Feel free to swap for an image of a jury summons for your county.</li> <li>2. Pose the following questions for discussion: Pretend that you are now 18 years old and you have just arrived home from school or work and you receive this in the mail. What is this asking you to do? (report for jury duty) How do you know? Are you required or obligated to show up? (yes) Is there a consequence if you do not show up? How do you know? If everyone receiving a jury summons decided not to show up for jury duty, what would be the impact on the people who are on trial?</li> <li>3. Students will resume completing their “Obligations and Responsibilities” activity sheet from Day 1, visiting the remaining stations/placards.</li> <li>4. Have students return to the station they finished with yesterday and rotate from there.</li> <li>5. Give students 3-5 minutes at each remaining station to complete Columns 1-3 on their activity sheet. (See step 12 from Day 1)</li> <li>6. When students have completed all 9 stations, have them return to their desk with their partner/small group. Once again, review the definition of ‘common good’ and have students complete the question on common good in Column 4 for the stations visited today.</li> <li>7. As a whole group, complete Column 5 and answer the question: What are the consequences if people do not fulfill this obligation/responsibility? Explain to the students that our constitutional republic needs active participation in government and society to thrive and function.</li> <li>8. Instruct students to look at Column 6 on their activity sheet that asks the question: What is the impact of this act on society, government and/or the political process?</li> <li>9. Instruct students to work with their partner/group to answer this question, in column 6, for each obligation and responsibility. Walk around to assist and monitor student answers. <b>Teacher Note:</b> Utilize the answer keys provided as a guide for these last columns.</li> <li>10. Checking for Understanding (Formative Assessment): Instruct students to write a well-crafted response using the following prompt: <u>Prompt</u> Choose two obligations and two responsibilities and write an informational paragraph to explain what occurs if citizens do not fulfill these obligations/ responsibilities and the benefit to the common good when they do fulfill these obligations/responsibilities.</li> </ol>
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DAY 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Project the “<a href="#">Citizens Unite!</a>” video, from the IU Center on Representative Government.</li> <li>2. Pass out the “What Does Being A Responsible Citizen Look Like?” activity sheet and explain to students that while watching the video their task is to do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Write down the examples provided in the video of how to be a responsible citizen.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Play the video.</li> <li>4. Ask students to share some of the examples they heard of how to be a responsible citizen. <b>Teacher Note:</b> See the answer keys provided to guide the discussion.</li> <li>5. Pose the following question for discussion: Based on the list you created from the video, how does the video define what it means to be a responsible citizen?</li> <li>6. Ask students to share the individual mentioned in the video. (Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.)</li> <li>7. Explain to students that they are going to learn more about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his actions as a responsible citizen.</li> <li>8. Pass out the “Martin Luther King Jr.” reading for students to read.</li> </ol>
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**Teacher Note:** Using the “Martin Luther King Jr.” reading, determine if you will lead the students through a discussion using key points from the reading or if you will have students complete a guided reading activity.

9. Instruct students to summarize how Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a responsible citizen and how his actions related to the common good of the country on their activity sheet.
10. Provide time for students to write their summary statements.
11. Place students into cooperative groups of 3-4 students. Explain to students that they will look at another example of a responsible citizen through a guided reading activity.
12. Pass out one of the following reading passages to each group: “Mary McLeod Bethune”, “César Chávez”, or “Rebecca Adamson.”

**Teacher Note:** The passages vary in length and complexity; preview each passage prior to assigning them to the student groups.

13. Explain to the students that their task is to read the passage and answer the following questions on the “What Does Being A Responsible Citizen Look Like?” activity sheet: How does this person exemplify a responsible citizen? How did their actions support the common good of the country?
14. Instruct students to number the paragraphs while reading and mark the text with at least three pieces of evidence that help them answer the questions. Explain to students that they will share their answers and evidence with the class.
15. Provide time for the student groups to read, mark the text and answer the questions.
16. Have student groups share out by reading their answers aloud to the class and sharing the three pieces of evidence they used to answer both questions.

**Teacher Note:** After the first group for each passage presents, ask the groups with the same passage to read their answers and share any additional evidence they found that has not already been shared.

17. Instruct students to take notes on the back of their activity sheet on the individuals they did not read about.

18. Checking for Understanding (Formative Assessment):

Instruct students to write a well-crafted response to the following prompt:

**Prompt**

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy made this statement in his Inaugural Address:

*“...my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you – ask what you can do for your country.”*

Using what you have learned during this lesson, explain how this quote relates to the idea of being a responsible citizen and contributing to the common good.

## Civics Content Vocabulary

Word/Term	Definition
<b>citizen</b>	a legal member of a state and/or country
<b>common good</b>	beliefs or actions that are seen as a benefit to the community rather than individual interests, also known as the public good
<b>obligation</b>	a requirement or duty, something a person or government has to do
<b>responsibility</b>	something a person should do
<b>selective service</b>	a system by which men ages 18 through 25 register with the U.S. government for military service

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### [Civics 360 Resources](#)

Florida Department of Education's Civic Literacy Reading List

- *The Democratic Process* by Mark Friedman

## ANSWER KEYS

Sample Answers: Obligations and Responsibilities activity sheet

Sample Answers: What Does Being A Responsible Citizen Look Like? activity sheet

Written Response: Sample Scoring Rubric

## SOURCES

Obligations and Responsibilities of Citizens Station Activity:

<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learn-about-citizenship/should-i-consider-us-citizenship>,

[https://www.uen.org/general\\_learner/civics/citizenship.shtml](https://www.uen.org/general_learner/civics/citizenship.shtml)

Jury Summons Example: <https://www.browardbar.org/remote-jury-selection-during-a-pandemic/>

John F. Kennedy Inaugural Address:

<https://www.jfklibrary.org/learn/education/teachers/curricular-resources/elementary-school-curricular-resources/ask-not-what-your-country-can-do-for-you>

Citizens Unite video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s2TKGTA7ppU&feature=youtu.be>

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Reading: <https://thekingcenter.org/about-tkc/martin-luther-king-jr/>

Mary McLeod Bethune Reading: <http://www.learningtogive.org/papers/paper215.html>

César Chávez Reading: <http://www.learningtogive.org/papers/paper84.html>

Rebecca Adamson: <http://www.learningtogive.org/papers/paper175.html>