

Understanding Civics

Question Cards



Core Knowledge®

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These materials are contributed by the Educating for American Democracy participants. The development of the materials was funded under a cooperative agreement with the National Endowment for the Humanities and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the content of this initiative does not necessarily represent the policy of the U.S. Department of Education or the National Endowment for the Humanities, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

ISBN: 979-8-88970-993-0

CHAPTER 1: What Is Government?



The U.S. Capitol is where the nation's laws are made.



Big Question: Why do societies have governments?

CHAPTER 1: What Is Government?



U.S. soldiers unload supplies in Port au Prince, Haiti, after an earthquake.

 **Question:** How does the U.S. government work with and against other governments?

CHAPTER 2: Creating the American Government



Thomas Jefferson (standing) was the main author of the Declaration of Independence. He wrote that governments “derive [get] their just powers from the consent of the governed.” This is the idea of the social contract.



Big Question: How does the American government embody a social contract?

CHAPTER 2: Creating the American Government



The Bill of Rights was added to the U.S. Constitution as its first ten amendments.



Question: How does the United States' particular form of government support freedom and equality?

CHAPTER 2: Creating the American Government



If “we the people” do not like the decisions of our elected leaders, we can vote new leaders into office.



Question: How do people governed by a constitution make decisions?

CHAPTER 2: Creating the American Government



George Washington surveys his troops at Valley Forge during the American Revolution. Not all colonists supported the American fight for independence.

 **Question:** Why did some colonists support independence from Great Britain while other colonists opposed it?

CHAPTER 2: Creating the American Government



Agrippa Hull served in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.



Question: How did different groups of people (e.g., enslaved people, Indigenous peoples, British, French, Spanish, etc.) react to the fight for independence?

CHAPTER 2: Creating the American Government



The enslavement of people is part of U.S. History.



Question: How do we engage with hard histories, such as slavery?

CHAPTER 2: Creating the American Government



The signers of the Declaration of Independence wanted more equality, but not all people were treated equally in the United States after independence.

 **Question:** How do we evaluate and reflect on the actions of people in the past?

CHAPTER 2: Creating the American Government

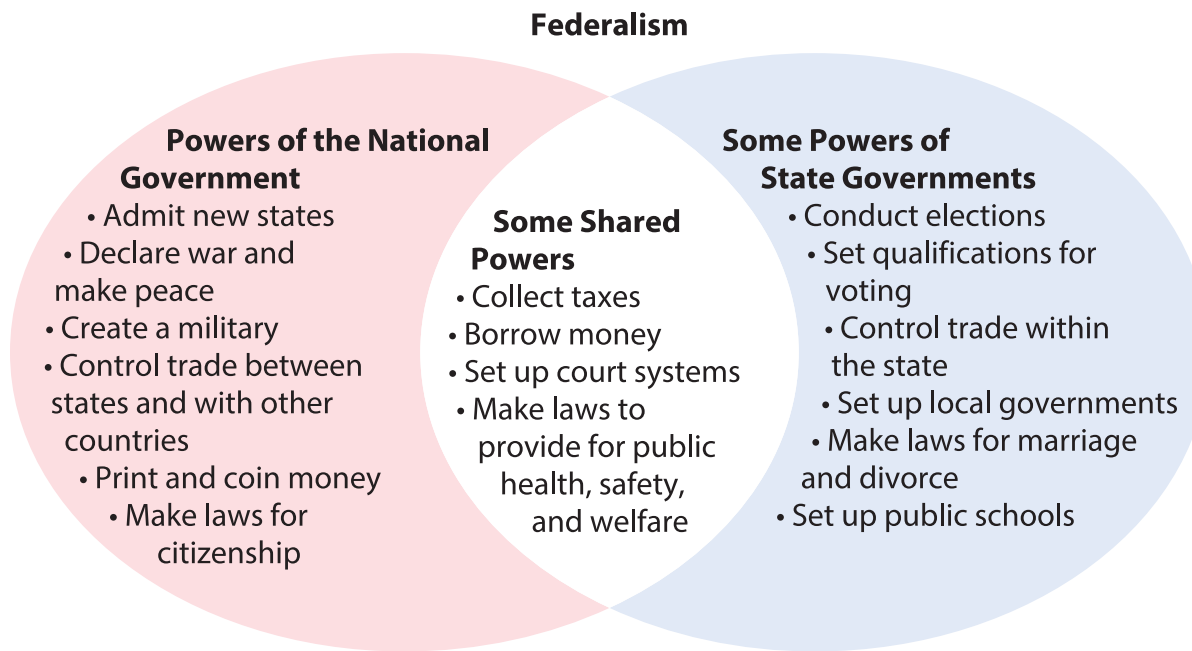


Some Founders, such as John Adams and Roger Sherman, never enslaved people. Others, such as Thomas Jefferson and George Washington, did.



Question: How can we acknowledge the accomplishments of the Founders while recognizing their flaws?

CHAPTER 3: The Federal System



Government power in the United States is distributed among national, state, and local governments.

Big Question: How does the United States distribute decision-making powers at the local, state, and national levels?

CHAPTER 3: The Federal System



At the local level, members of city councils often make decisions for the people of their community.

 **Question:** How are people involved in different kinds/levels/parts of government?

CHAPTER 3: The Federal System



Sometimes people disagree on decisions that are made for the community.

 **Question:** Why might you question decisions that are made for/in your community?

CHAPTER 3: The Federal System



Americans are citizens of the United States as well as the state in which they live.

 **Question:** How does sharing a government contribute to forming a people at the local, state, and national levels?

CHAPTER 3: The Federal System



Speaking at a government meeting is one way to let officials know your point of view.

 **Question:** Why might we want to make changes at local, state, or national levels? How can we promote change in an effective way?

CHAPTER 3: The Federal System



Solving problems in a community often requires hard work and compromise.

 **Question:** What kinds of challenges arise when people decide to take action to try to solve problems?

CHAPTER 3: The Federal System



To bring about change, we must sometimes work with people who do not support our ideas.



Question: How can we work with others (even those who disagree with us) to help make change in society?

CHAPTER 3: The Federal System



People can work together to solve problems in their community, such as pollution.



Question: Why and how do people take action in order to solve problems that affect them and others?

CHAPTER 3: The Federal System



Voting is one way that citizens can make their voices heard.

 **Question:** How can we assess leaders and challenge them when we see the need for change?

CHAPTER 4: The Shaping of America's National Identity



New Americans pledge their allegiance to the United States in a naturalization ceremony in Seattle, Washington.

 **Big Question:** What does it mean to be “a people”?

CHAPTER 4: The Shaping of America's National Identity



Many immigrants have been drawn to the United States by the promise of new opportunities and freedoms.



Question: How has the U.S. population changed over time? How have push-pull factors changed the U.S. population over time?

CHAPTER 4: The Shaping of America's National Identity



In the 1800s and early 1900s, American women protested to demand the right to vote.



Question: How have people improved U.S. society over time?

CHAPTER 4: The Shaping of America's National Identity



People of different races and ethnicities take the oath of citizenship.



Question: How has access to citizenship changed over time in the United States?

CHAPTER 4: The Shaping of America's National Identity



Immigrants from around the world have come to the United States, bringing their heritage and traditions with them.

 **Question:** How has the concept of what it means to be “a people” changed over time in the United States?

CHAPTER 4: The Shaping of America's National Identity



The United States has become a diverse, multicultural society.



Question: How have different groups (e.g., religious, racial, ethnic) shaped our society?

CHAPTER 4: The Shaping of America's National Identity



Black Americans have had to fight for equal rights throughout much of the nation's history.

 **Question:** How have some Americans resisted or reacted to the expansion of rights and citizenship claims?