

**CITIZENSHIP**  
A Government Lesson

**Meets These 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies Content Standards:**

**History**

Chronology

Construct time lines with evenly spaced intervals for years, decades, and centuries to show the order of significant events in Ohio history.

Growth

Explain how Ohio progressed from territory to statehood, including the terms of the Northwest Ordinance

**Government**

Role of Government

Explain major responsibilities of each of the three branches of government in Ohio.

- a. The legislative branch, headed by the General Assembly, makes state laws.
- b. The executive branch, headed by the governor, carries out and enforces laws made by the General Assembly.
- c. The judicial branch, headed by the Ohio Supreme Court, interprets and applies the law.

Explain why elections are used to select leaders and decide issues.

Explain the purpose of a democratic constitution:

- a. To provide a framework for a government;
- b. To limit the power of government;
- c. To define authority of elected officials.

Explain that the Ohio Constitution tells how the state government should be organized and guarantees the rights of individuals.

**Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities**

Participation

Describe the ways in which citizens can promote the common good and influence their government including:

- a. Voting;
- b. Communicating with officials;
- c. Participating in civic and service organizations;
- d. Performing voluntary service.

Rights and Responsibilities

Explain why personal responsibilities (e.g., taking advantage of the opportunity to be educated) and civic responsibilities (e.g., obeying the law and respecting the rights of others) are important.

Explain the importance of leadership and public service.

Explain why characteristics such as respect for the rights of others, fairness, reliability, honesty, wisdom, and courage are desirable quality in the people citizens select as their leaders.

**Social Studies Skills and Methods**

Obtaining Information

Obtain information about state issues from a variety of print and electronic sources, and determine the relevance of information to a research topic:

- a. Atlases;
- b. Encyclopedias;

- c. Dictionaries;
- d. Newspapers;
- e. Multimedia/Electronic sources.

Use a glossary and index to locate information.

Use primary and secondary sources to answer questions about Ohio History.

#### Thinking and Organizing

Identify main ideas and supporting details from factual information

Distinguish between fact and opinion.

Formulate a question to focus research.

#### Problem Solving

Use a problem-solving/decision-making process which includes:

- a. Identifying a problem;
- b. Gathering information;
- c. Listing and considering options;
- d. Considering advantages and disadvantages of options;
- e. Choosing and implementing a solution.
- f. Developing criteria for judging its effectiveness.

### GLOSSARY

**act** – A bill that has passed through both houses and is awaiting the decision of the governor to make it a law or not.

**amendment** – A change to a constitution.

**bicameral** – A term that defines a legislature as having two houses.

**bill** – A proposal for a law that must be approved by the House and Senate before it can become an act then a law.

**campaign** – A series of activities that move toward a result. To run for office.

**capital** – The name of the center of government for a state. In Ohio, capital cities were Chillicothe, Zanesville, then Columbus.

**capitol** – The building in which state government work is done. The statehouse.

**citizen.**— A person who by birth or choice is a member of a state or nation.

**Coat of Arms** – A symbol of a state; another name for a state seal.

**constitution** – A document of fundamental principles that govern the way a state of nation is to be run.

**cornerstone** – A ceremonial stone placed in the exterior wall of a building. It is inscribed with a date and sometimes contains objects in its hollow center.

**district** – A portion of a country, state, or city that is set aside for electing its own officials, maintaining laws, providing schools, etc.

**election** – Choosing by vote.

**General Assembly** – The legislature or legislative branch of state government that makes the laws.

**government** – A rule of authority over a city, district, state, nation.

**governor** – The executive head of a state of the United States.

**Great Seal of Ohio** – An authentic emblem that officially represents a government; a Coat of Arms. If embossed or stamped onto a paper, it makes the document official.

**House of Representatives** – The lower branch of the law-making body of a state or the national government.

**Imperium in Imperio** – A state motto that once appeared on the state seal 1866-1868; it means “An Empire within an Empire.”

**Justice** – A judge on the Ohio Supreme Court

**law** – A bill that has passed through the legislature and has become a rule [law] through action or inaction of the governor.

**legislature** – A group of persons who have the duty and power to make laws; the General Assembly.

**majority party** – The political party that has the most members.

**minority party** – The political party that has the fewest members.

**oral history** – The telling of a historical time by a person who experienced the events.

**political party** – An organized group of citizens who agree on certain issues. President; today the most common political parties are the democrat, independent, and republican parties.

**Senate** – The upper branch of the law-making body of a state or nation.

**statehouse** – The building that is the center of government for the state; the capitol.

**Supreme Court** – The judicial branch of government. It interprets the laws.

**time capsule** – A hollow case or area in which objects of a date in time are placed for the future. A cornerstone is sometimes a time capsule.

**vote** – A formal means of choosing when combined with other votes, selects an outcome.

## CITIZENSHIP

Objectives:

Part 1

- Students will define citizenship
- Students will examine the importance of being a **citizen**.

Part 2

- Students will write examples in American history when citizenship rights have not existed or have been denied.

Preparation:

- The student will be asked to define what a citizen is and what it means to be a citizen of a state or country. **Citizenship** is a difficult concept to put into words and a discussion of what a citizen is and does may help the students begin to organize their ideas.
- The students will need to be familiar with **amendments** 15 and 19 of the **United States Constitution**. Also, students will need to understand why these amendments were passed and the conditions for people before these amendments were passed.

Materials:

- A copy of the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> amendments to the United States Constitution.

For further enrichment:

- Invite a lawyer or other legal expert into the class to talk about how the law views individual rights and the consequences of the legal system ignoring an individual's rights.

## CITIZENSHIP

Citizen is a word that describes everyone. The dictionary defines a citizen as a “member in a community.” However, what does it mean to be a citizen?

1. Write an essay about citizenship which answers the following questions:
  - A. What does it mean to be a citizen of a state or country?
  - B. How does one become a citizen of a state or country?
  - C. What is the difference between a citizen and a non-citizen?
  - D. What are the responsibilities of being a citizen?

According to the 15<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> amendments to the United States Constitution, voting rights are a part of citizenship. These amendments give rights and privileges to groups who were formerly denied rights.

2. Choose one of the following questions and answer it based on the 15<sup>th</sup> and/or 19<sup>th</sup> amendments:
  - A. Were the people who were given rights in the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 19<sup>th</sup> amendments not citizens before these amendments?
  - B. Was there resistance by people who had previously been citizens to these new groups of citizens? Why or why not?
  - C. Are there any groups in the United States today who are being denied their citizenship?
  - D. Why is it important to be a citizen? Or, is it important to be a citizen of a country?