

CHARACTER TRAIT OF THE MONTH: CITIZENSHIP

October

What is Citizenship: The Dictionary defines it as “the state of being vested with the Rights, Privileges, and Duties of a citizen”.

What does it mean to be a good citizen?

Being a good citizen means to think of others before oneself. Most people tend to think of being a good citizen as giving back.

Ways of Showing Good Citizenship

Show Respect to Rules, People, Property

Be Honest and Trustworthy

Be Responsible

Volunteer

Show consideration for those around you

Citizenship Focus Note: Every right has a responsibility that goes along with it. It is important to understand the relationship between rights and responsibilities.

“Ask not what your Country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your Country.” John F Kennedy



Are you A Citizen?

You are a citizen. You are a citizen in your family, in your school, and in your community. You do not have to be a Citizen of the United States, to be a good citizen in your family, school and community.

Citizenship in School

Rights/Privileges

You have access to the computers at school

You have books that you are available to read at school

You have teachers who spend their time helping you learn subjects that will give you a better future and the opportunities to choose the career/job you want.

You have the right to choose some of the courses that you take.

Responsibilities

You have to take care of the computers and follow the rules while using the computer.

You have to take care of the books and put them away when you are finished using them.

You have to show your teachers respect. You listen while they are talking, don't interrupt, don't argue, and complete the work they assign.

You have to be respectful to the students around you, follow instructions, and complete the class work.

Citizenship Characteristics in the Classroom:



Honesty

Always tell the truth, don't cheat on your school work. There are many things you have no control over in life; your integrity isn't one of them. Never sell yourself short by lying and cheating.

Kindness

Show kindness to each other. Be understanding of one another's feelings and needs and if there is something you can do to help someone, help them.

Consideration

Think about other's and not just yourself.

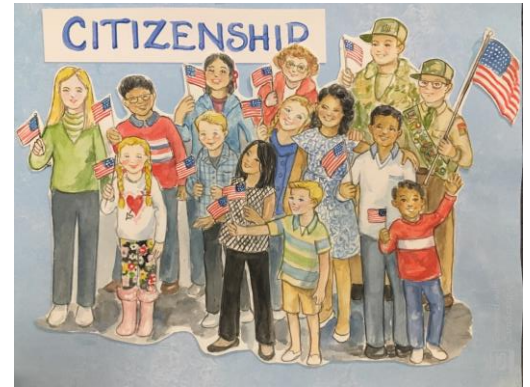
Respect

Treat other's the way you want to be treated. You will not always agree with what others think, feel or believe, but you have to respect that they have the right to those thoughts, feelings, and beliefs; the same way you have the rights to your own thoughts, feelings, and beliefs.

Responsibility

Follow the rules, take care of your school, complete your school work

Citizenship in United States



Rights/Privileges

You have access to school

You can work in any career or job you want

You are able to live anywhere you would like

You have rights that many people in other countries do not: such as freedom of speech and religion

You may already have the right to vote or will in the future have the right to vote

Responsibilities

Respect the teachers, staff and fellow students, follow the rules, take the classes that you need, study, practice in the areas that you need to get better in.

You have to work toward the future you want. Doing well in school and working hard at everything you do will help you succeed. YOU have to make good choices, as every choice YOU make can alter the life YOU have.

You have to pay your bills. If you own your home, you have to take care of the house and property. If you live in an apartment, you have to be quiet and respectful of the people around you.

You have to respect people who do not have the same beliefs you do. You have to respect that people are allowed to say things you may not like. You do not have to like it, but you have to respect it, which means we are not cruel with our words or actions to someone who says or believes differently than us.

You need to know what you are voting for. If there is a change in laws, you need to know what the change is, why the change is being made, and who will be affected by the changes. If you are voting for a person, you need to know what that person stands for, why they stand for that position, and what the consequences will be. It is your responsibility to be educated on what you are voting for. Nothing is free in life, so you need to know the true cost to every decision you make.

You have the freedom to pursue life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

YOUR responsibility is to take ownership of YOUR choices. Every choice has consequences and these consequences will lead to the success or failure of YOUR future; which is part of this freedom.



Ways to be a Good Citizen in the United States:

- 1) Learn about the history of the United States. Don't erase history, embrace it. By knowing our history, the good, the bad, and the ugly, we are able to learn from history and not repeat the same mistakes (similar to our own life).
- 2) Learn about the most important documents for the U.S.: Constitution, Bill of Rights, Declaration of Independence. Learn about why each was put into place and what each of them do for you personally, the citizens of the United States, and the residents of the United States.
- 3) Learn how the government operates. While the President of the United States gets most of the credit for the things happening (good or bad), there are 3 branches of government and all 3 of them have a very important role to how the United States operates.
- 4) Learn the National Anthem, say the Pledge of Allegiance, Fly the American Flag
- 5) Be a responsible Citizen. Don't just be a taker, make sure you are giving back. President John F. Kennedy said it best with our quote of the month, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country".
- 6) When you begin working, you will have taxes taken out of your paychecks. These taxes pay for the government programs. Learn about the programs and what your tax dollars are used to fund.
- 7) _____
- 8) _____
- 9) _____
- 10) _____

Discussion:

- 1) What do you think it would look like if there were no laws?
- 2) Is there someone you think makes a good citizen and why?
- 3) What are some actions you are going to do to try and be a better citizen?
- 4) Name one thing that you appreciate most about living in the United States.
- 5) What are some things you see could be changed in the community and what could you do to make it better?
- 6) Do you benefit from other's being good citizens? How?

Activities to be a Better Citizen

Activities you can do at Home:

Help take out the trash
Wash the dishes
Help vacuum, sweep and mop the house
Help pull weeds and/or plant flowers
Help mow the lawn

Activities to do at School:

Respect the teachers and fellow students.
Thank the teachers and staff at the school. They are there to help you succeed. Show them your appreciation.
Clean up after yourself.
If you are strong in a particular subject, help tutor someone who may be having trouble.



Activities in the Community:

The best way to help out your community is by volunteering with an organization. Here are a few options:

Volunteer at the Library
Habitat for Humanity
Food Banks
Local Church Activities
Volunteer at an Assisted Living Facility – Activities, Crafts, Visiting with Residents
Lead or Volunteer at a Clean Up Day in the Community
American Red Cross – Junior Red Cross
Meals On Wheels – Create Crafts, Cards, Handmade Gifts to go with the food delivery
Help an Elderly Neighbor with yard work
Volunteer through a church with their community activities

Activities to be a good citizen online:

- Be respectful – treat people the way you would like to be treated, whether they are in front of you or online.
- Do not bully others – be courteous and treat others kindly, even if you do not agree with what they are saying or doing. You can point out you disagree courteously. Do not attack.
- Do not post negative comments about people. This can be a form of bullying. It is very easy to post things when you do not see their facial responses. You can ask yourself “how would I feel if someone posted this about me?”

Remember, once something is posted online, it is always in the digital community. This can affect your future and others.