

What Does it Mean to be American?

Grade Level K-2, 3-5

Subjects: Civics, History

This lesson was designed to supplement reading *What Does it Mean to be American?* by Rana DiOrio & Elad Yoran.

One way to help answer this question is exploring citizenship and what it means to be a citizen. The definition of **citizenship** is the status of being a citizen, along with the rights, duties and privileges of being a citizen. Citizen can refer to one's local community, country of residence or birth, and to the larger global community.

Questions to consider:

- What does it mean to you to be American?
- What does citizenship mean -- including rights and responsibilities of citizens?
 - When have you exhibited citizenship?
- What does it mean to be a good citizen?
- What special rules do we follow as citizens of the United States?

Activities:

- Illustrate the preamble to the Constitution

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

 - Write the preamble out on a large piece of cardboard (deconstructed delivery box), poster board, or paper with space between each line for artwork.
 - Have children illustrate what they think that line means
- Create a family/class 'constitution'/motto.
 - As a family or class work together to develop a list of common goals or rules, or a saying or motto that everyone can follow.
- Create a good citizen flower
 - Cut out a circle for the center of the flower, write a good citizen in the center
 - Cut out 5 petals
 - Have child write or draw something that makes a good citizen on each petal
 - Assemble to make a flower

Additional Resources:

[Best Ideas for Teaching Citizenship to Early Learners Dec. 3, 2018](#)

[America to Me | Patriotic Song for Kids | Song for America | Jack Hartmann](#)

[Citizenship: Being a Good Citizen](#)

[What Can A Citizen Do?: A picture book about the power of good citizenship by Dave Eggers](#)

[Constitution of the United States of America](#)

[Founding Documents and Resources](#)

[Good Citizenship & Social Skills for Kids | Being a Good Citizen | Kids Academy](#)