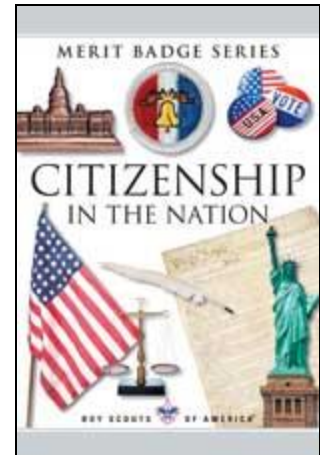


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As Scouts fulfill the requirements for this merit badge, they will learn how to become active citizens are aware of and grateful for their liberties and rights, to participate in their governments and protect their freedom, helping to defend their country and standing up for individual rights on behalf of all its citizens.

Requirements

1. Explain what citizenship in the nation means and what it takes to be a good citizen of this country. Discuss the rights, duties, and obligations of a responsible and active American citizen.
2. Do TWO of the following:
 - a. Visit a place that is listed as a National Historic Landmark or that is on the National Register of Historic Places. Tell your counselor what you learned about the landmark or site and what you found interesting about it.
 - b. Tour your state capitol building or the U.S. Capitol. Tell your counselor what you learned about the capitol, its function, and the history.
 - c. Tour a federal facility. Explain to your counselor what you saw there and what you learned about its function in the local community and how it serves this nation.
 - d. Choose a national monument that interests you. Using books, brochures, the Internet (with your parent's permission), and other resources, find out more about the monument. Tell your counselor what you learned, and explain why the monument is important to this country's citizens.
3. Watch the national evening news five days in a row OR read the front page of a major daily newspaper five days in a row. Discuss the national issues you learned about with your counselor. Choose one of the issues and explain how it affects you and your family.
4. Discuss each of the following documents with your counselor. Tell your counselor how you feel life in the United States might be different without each one.
 - a. Declaration of Independence
 - b. Preamble to the Constitution
 - c. The Constitution
 - d. Bill of Rights
 - e. Amendments to the Constitution
5. List the six functions of government as noted in the preamble to the Constitution. Discuss with your counselor how these functions affect your family and local community.
6. With your counselor's approval, choose a speech of national historical importance. Find out about the author, and tell your counselor about the person who gave the speech. Explain the importance of the speech at the time it was given, and tell how it applies to American citizens today. Choose a sentence or two from the speech that has significant meaning to you, and tell your counselor why.
7. Name the three branches of our federal government and explain to your counselor their functions. Explain how citizens are involved in each branch. For each branch of government, explain the importance of the system of checks and balances.
8. Name your two senators and the member of Congress from your congressional district. Write a letter about a national issue and send it to one of these elected officials, sharing your view with



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him or her. Show your letter and any response you receive to your counselor.

Resources

Scouting Literature

American Business, American Cultures, American Heritage, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the World, and Law merit badge pamphlets

Books

- Bjornlund, Lydia. *The U.S. Constitution: Blueprint for Democracy*. Lucent Books Inc., 1999.
- Faber, Doris and Harold Faber. *We the People: The Story of the United States Constitution Since 1787*. Charles Scribner's Sons, 1987.
- Feinberg, Barbara Silberdick. *The Articles of Confederation: The First Constitution of the United States*. Twenty-First Century Books, 2002.
- Freedman, Russell. *Give Me Liberty! The Story of the Declaration of Independence*. Holiday House, 2000.
- Jaffe, Steven H. *Who Were the Founding Fathers? Two Hundred Years of Reinventing American History*. Henry Holt and Co., 1996.
- Kassinger, Ruth. *U.S. Census: A Mirror of America*. Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers, 2000.
- Krull, Kathleen. *A Kid's Guide to America's Bill of Rights: Curfews, Censorship, and the 100-Pound Giant*. William Morrow & Co., 1999.
- Mackintosh, Barry. *The National Park Service*. Chelsea House Publishers, 1988.
- Torricelli, Robert, and Andrew Carroll, eds. *In Our Own Words: Extraordinary Speeches of the American Century*. Kodansha International, 1999.
- Weber, Michael. *The Young Republic*. Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers, 2000.
- Wilson, Richard Guy, ed. *A Guide to Popular U.S. Landmarks as Listed in the National Registry of Historic Places*. Franklin Watts Inc., 2003.
- Zeinert, Karen. *Free Speech: From Newspapers to Music Lyrics*. Enslow Publishers, 1995.

Organizations and Web Sites

American Civil Liberties Union

125 Broad St., 18th Floor

New York, NY 10004

Telephone: 212-549-2549

Web site: <http://www.aclu.org>

Democratic National Committee

430 South Capitol St. SE

Washington, DC 20003

Telephone: 202-863-8000

Web site: <http://www.democrats.org>

FirstGov

Web site: <http://www.firstgov.gov>

GovSpot

Web site: <http://www.govspot.com>

League of Women Voters

1730 M St. NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20036-4508
Telephone: 202-429-1965
Web site: <http://www.lwv.org>

National Constitution Center

525 Arch St.
Independence Mall
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Toll-free telephone: 866-917-1787
Web site: <http://www.constitutioncenter.org>

National Park Service

1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240
Telephone: 202-208-6843
Web site: <http://www.nps.gov>

Republican National Committee

310 First St. SE
Washington, DC 20003
Telephone: 202-863-8500
Web site: <http://www.rnc.org>

Thomas

Web site: <http://thomas.loc.gov>

The U. S. Constitution Online

Web site: <http://www.usconstitution.net>

U.S. Census Bureau

4700 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233-0001
Telephone: 301-763-1305
Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

U.S. House of Representatives

Telephone: 202-224-3121
Web site: <http://www.house.gov>

U.S. Government Printing Office

Mail Stop: SDE
732 N. Capitol St. NW
Washington, DC 20401
Toll-free telephone: 888-293-6498
Web site: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov>

U.S. Senate

Telephone: 202-225-6827
Web site: <http://www.senate.gov>

U.S. Supreme Court

Telephone: 202-479-3211

Web site: <http://www.supremecourtus.gov>

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW

Washington, DC 20500

Telephone: 202-456-1414

Web site: <http://www.whitehouse.gov>