Your Government and You Lesson Answer Key

Democracy in the United States

Page 1

Reading text only

The United States is a representative democracy.

This means that our government is elected by citizens.

Here, citizens vote for their government officials.

These officials represent the citizens' ideas and concerns in government.

Voting is one way to participate in our democracy.

Citizens can also contact their officials when they want to support or change a law.

Voting in an election and contacting our elected officials are two ways that Americans can participate in their democracy.

Becoming a U.S. Citizen

Page 2

Reading text only

The process required to become a citizen is called naturalization.

To become a U.S. citizen, you must meet legal requirements.

You must complete an interview with a USCIS officer.

You must also pass an English and Civics test.

Then, you take the Oath of Allegiance.

This means that you promise loyalty to the United States.

When you become a U.S. citizen, you also make these promises:

- ★ give up loyalty to other countries
- ★ defend the Constitution and laws of the United States
- ★ obey the laws of the United States
- ★ serve in the U.S. military (if needed)
- ★ do important work for the nation (if needed)

After you take the Oath of Allegiance, you are a U.S. citizen.

Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens

Page 3

Reading text only

Voting is one important right and responsibility of U.S. citizens.

Another right of all citizens is running for federal office.

Many naturalized citizens are elected to federal office.

However, to be president or vice president, you must be born in the United States.

One responsibility of all citizens is to serve on a jury.

This means that you can help decide the result of a court case.

Only citizens can serve on a jury.

Responsibilities for Everyone Here

Page 4

Reading text only

Everyone in the United States has responsibilities.

It is everyone's responsibility to obey laws in the United States.

There are local laws in your community.

There are state laws and federal laws.

Here are two important federal laws:

1. All men between 18 and 26 must register for the Selective Service.
   This means that they are ready to serve in the military if our country needs them. Men must register for the Selective Service even if they are not citizens.

2. Every year, people must send in federal income tax forms by April 15.
   The government uses this money for the U.S. military, schools, and other programs.

Dividing the Power of Government

Page 5

Reading text only

Federal and state laws control and protect different parts of people's lives.

Our Constitution explains the powers that the federal government has when it makes laws.

Federal powers are for things that must be the same for the whole country.

For example, the whole country needs one system for its money.

State powers are for things that can be different in each state.

For example, states can have different systems for giving driver's licenses.

Federal Powers

- to print money
- to declare war
- to create an army
- to make treaties

One Example of Federal Powers →

State Powers

- provide schooling and education
- provide protection (police)
- provide safety (fire departments)
- give a driver's license
- approve zoning and land use

One Example of State Powers →

Driver's License from the Commonwealth of Virginia

Your State Government

Page 6

The capital of the United States is Washington, D.C.

Each state and territory has its own capital.

Most state governments are similar to the federal government.

Most state governments have three branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial.

The Governor is in charge of the executive branch of the state.

Fill in the information about your state.

I live in **answers vary**.

The capital of my state is **answers vary**.

The Governor of my state is **answers vary**.

Word Search—Your Government and You

Page 7

Find these words in the puzzle.
The words are down (↓) or across (→).
Circle the words.

Word Bank

CAPITAL	✔CONSTITUTION	FEDERAL	GOVERNOR	JURY
LAWS	LOYALTY	POWER	RESPONSIBILITY	RIGHT
STATE	TAXES	VOTE	CITIZEN	

M	C	L	A	W	S	Q	H	Z	R	I	G	H
I	O	J	V	T	V	F	R	X	E	B	W	Q
I	N	P	O	F	K	V	A	P	S	H	J	T
C	S	J	T	E	Z	Q	G	H	P	Z	N	G
V	T	T	E	P	L	C	O	S	O	V	F	O
D	I	A	F	O	O	Q	V	J	N	U	S	F
X	T	X	W	W	Y	Z	E	U	S	Y	T	E
F	U	E	P	E	A	E	R	R	I	A	A	D
X	T	S	X	R	L	A	N	Y	B	E	T	E
R	I	G	H	T	T	P	O	S	I	X	E	R
M	O	Z	Z	J	Y	P	R	Z	L	K	F	A
N	N	O	V	S	E	C	A	P	I	T	A	L
L	C	I	T	I	Z	E	N	D	T	N	P	X
X	Y	I	W	P	F	Z	L	P	Y	X	L	V

Give One Example—Review

Page 8

Give one example for each sentence below.
There can be more than one correct answer.
Discuss your answers with your class.

Give one example of a U.S. President. **George Washington**

1. Give one example of a state capital. **answers vary**
2. Give one example of a federal power. **to print money, to declare war, to create an army, to make treaties**
3. Give one example of a state power. **provide schooling and education, provide protection (police), provide safety (fire departments), give a driver's license, approve zoning and land use**
4. Give one example of a right only for U.S. citizens. **vote in a federal election, run for federal office**
5. Give one example of a responsibility only for U.S. citizens. **serve on a jury, vote in a federal election**
6. Give one example of a way that Americans can participate in their democracy. **vote, join a political party, help with a campaign, join a civic group, join a community group, give an elected official your opinion on an issue, call Senators and Representatives, publicly support or oppose an issue or policy, run for office, write to a newspaper**
7. Give one example of a promise you make when you become a U.S. citizen.
give up loyalty to other countries, defend the Constitution and laws of the United States, obey the laws of the United States, serve in the U.S. military (if needed), serve (do important work for) the nation (if needed), be loyal to the United States

Right

Page 9

Copy the word.

right

Copy the Civics Test item and answer.

Name one right only for United States citizens.

Vote in a federal election.