# Civics and Citizenship

by Jeff Stockdale

Throughout the United States’ history, civic education has been viewed as a safeguard to democratic values. In a 1787 letter to James Madison, Thomas Jefferson stated, “Above all things I hope the education of the common people will be the test of the country. The test consists of 10 questions taken from a list of 100 possible questions. These questions are presented orally to applicants during their personal interview. To pass the test, they must answer six of the 10 questions correctly. According to UScis, the overall national pass rate as of September 2016 is 91.9 percent. These tests were not always administered in such a standardized manner. There is little record of civics exams prior to 1960, when the federal Bureau of Naturalization began to manage the process. Before this time, naturalization procedures were under the jurisdiction of local courts and the exams were conducted orally by judges and varied widely. Establishing a standardized method of testing was thought to promote efficiency, increase a minimum competency of democratic values and encourage immigrant participation. How- ever, as seen with other methods of education where the curriculum is focused on “teaching to the test,” concerns have arisen about promoting test preparation over actual education. While there is no doubt that the standardization of the civics test has increased accessibility for would-be citizens, it remains unclear if they are better prepared for civic engagement. The test’s 100 possible questions are listed in the following chapter by chapter, in the order of these questions. Do you answer correctly? Do you think these questions about civics and the Constitution further an understanding of the purposes, values and principles of American democracy and prepare immigrants for citizenship?

## PRINCIPLES OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

**SEC. A**

1. What is the supreme law of the land?
2. What does the Constitution do?
3. The idea of self-government is in the first three words of the Constitution. What are these words?
4. What is an amendment?
5. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?
6. What is one right or freedom from the First Amendment?
7. How many amendments does the Constitution have?
8. What did the Declaration of Independence do?
9. What are two rights in the Declaration of Independence?
10. What is freedom of religion?
11. What is the economic system in the United States?
12. What is the rule of law?

**SEC. B**

13. Name one branch or part of the government.
14. What stops one branch of government from becoming too powerful?
15. Who is in charge of the executive branch?
16. Who makes federal laws?
17. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?
18. How many U.S. Senators are there?
19. Who elects the U.S. Senator for how many years?
20. Who is one of your state’s U.S. Senators now?
21. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?
22. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?
23. Name your U.S. Representative.
24. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?
25. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?
26. We elect a President for how many years?
27. In what month do we vote for President?
28. What is the name of the President of the United States now?
29. What is the name of the Vice President of the United States now?
30. If the President can no longer serve, who becomes President?
31. If both the President and the Vice President can no longer serve, who becomes President?
32. Who is the Commander in Chief of the military?
33. Who signs bills to become law?
34. Who vetoes bills?
35. What does the President’s Cabinet do?
36. What are two Cabinet-level positions?
37. What does the judicial branch do?
38. What is the highest court in the United States?
39. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?
40. Who is the Chief Justice of the United States now?
41. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the federal government. What is one power of the federal government?
42. Under our Constitution, some powers belong to the states. What is one power of the states?
43. What is the capital of your state?
44. What are the two major political parties in the United States?
45. What is the political party of the President now?
46. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

## SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT

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21. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?
22. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?

## SECTION B KEY

13. Any of the following: Congress, legislative, executive, the courts, judicial.
14. Checks and balances or separation of powers.
15. The President.
16. Checks and balances or separation of powers.
17. The Senate.
18. Executive.
19. Representatives in Congress.
20. Executive.
21. 435.
22. Two.
23. Answers will vary. Citizens of a. A territory may have a delegate to Congress, a nonvoting Representative or a Resident Commissioner. If they have a delegate, they get two representatives in Congress, a delegate or a nonvoting Resident Commissioner. If they have a nonvoting Representative or a Resident Commissioner, they get one representative in Congress.
24. All people of the state.
25. The President.
26. The President.
27. November.
28. Donald J. Trump or Trump;
29. Acceptable answers include: Michael R. Pence, Mike Pence or Pence; 30. The Vice President;
31. Acceptable answers include: 32. Speaker of the House; 33. The President;
34. Acceptable answers include: 35. The Secretary of.
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40. Acceptable answers include: 41. Acceptable answers include: 42. Acceptable answers include: 43. Acceptable answers include: 44. Acceptable answers include: 45. Acceptable answers include:
Section C

1. When must all men register for the Selective Service?

2. What is one reason colonists came to America?

3. Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?

4. What groups of people were taken to America and sold as slaves?

5. Why did the colonists fight the British?

6. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

7. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?

8. Which two states, North Carolina and South Carolina, were admitted to the Union in 1788?

9. What major event happened on September 11, 2001, in the United States?

10. What is the official name of the United States?

11. What is the capital of the United States?

Section A

1. How old do citizens have to be to vote for President?

2. When is the last day you can send in federal income tax forms?

3. What do we show loyalty to when we say the Pledge of Allegiance?

4. What is one right only for United States citizens?

5. What is one responsibility that is only for United States citizens?

6. Name one American Indian tribe in the United States.

7. What did Susan B. Anthony do?

8. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?

9. What was one important thing that Abraham Lincoln did?

10. What territory did the United States buy from France in 1803?

11. What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves?

12. Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

13. On what date did the Declaration of Independence become law?

14. Which two states, New Hampshire and Virginia, were admitted to the Union in 1788?

15. What is the capital of the United States?

Section B

1. Who was the first President?

2. Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?

3. When did the United States fight in World War II?

4. Before he was President, Eisenhower was a general. What war was Eisenhower in?

5. Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?

6. Who was President during the Great Depression and World War II?

7. In what year was the United States attacked?

8. What did Martin Luther King, Jr. do?

9. What did John F. Kennedy do?

10. What did the United States fight in World War II?

11. What did Louis L. B. Mayer and Samuel Goldwyn give to America?

12. How many states are there in the United States?

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