

Civics

Assignment Summaries and Learning Assessments



Grade 8

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UNIT I: Good Citizenship

Lesson 1

Values of Citizenship

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss issues.
- ☐ Explain the concept of equality.
- ☐ Give an example of a conflict of personal freedoms.
- ☐ Describe an example of justice in action.
- ☐ Give an example of disrespect or injustice.
- ☐ Collect and summarize positive news articles.

Learning Checklist

Use this learning checklist to keep track of how your skills are progressing. Include notes about what you need to work on. Please remember that these skills continue to develop over time, and you aren't expected to be able to do all of them yet. The main goal is to be aware of which skills you need to focus on.

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Express thoughts and ideas in civil discussion				
Demonstrate understanding of concepts of equality and justice				
Identify real life examples related to concepts of equality and justice				
Identify relevant, accurate news sources				
Summarize news articles				
Identify key ideas in primary and secondary sources				

Lesson 2

Community Leaders

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Perform helpful tasks in your neighborhood and write about it.
- ☐ Choose an activity to complete.
- ☐ Interview a first responder.
- ☐ Complete your collage or booklet of positive news articles.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify needs of community members				
Conduct an interview				
Summarize an interview				
Summarize news articles				
Identify key ideas in primary and secondary sources				

Lesson 3

Independence and Interdependence

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Plan a detailed personal budget.
- ☐ Plan a weekly menu and calculate costs.
- ☐ Calculate how many hours of work are needed to meet budget needs.
- ☐ Devise a plan to cut expenses.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify budget priorities				
Calculate living expenses				
Create a budget				
Calculate food costs				
Identify ways to reduce household expenses				

Lesson 4

Decision-Making

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Choose an assignment about decision-making.
- ☐ Set a goal and create an action plan.
- ☐ Find news articles that feature a decision being made.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Reflect on past experiences				
Demonstrate an understanding of the decision-making process				
Identify a personal goal				
Create an action plan to achieve a goal				
Keep track of progress toward completion of the goal				
Identify a news article that features decision-making				
Summarize a news article				

Lesson 5/6

Landmark Cases and Civic Debate

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Learn about a landmark court case.
- ☐ Define unknown legal terms.
- ☐ Complete “Landmark Case: Looking Inside.”
- ☐ Write a summary of the court’s decision and your opinion of it.
- ☐ Give an opinion on a controversial issue.
- ☐ Complete “Compare and Evaluate.”
- ☐ Locate or create an artistic commentary on a social or political issue.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Locate primary source material				
Identify key aspects of a court case				
Summarize a court decision				
Cite direct quotations in a relevant context				
Express an opinion on a court case				
Research facts and perspectives related to an issue				
Compare the merits of opposing sides of an issue				
Express or interpret a political or social stance in artistic form				

UNIT II: Building Community

Lesson 7

Immigration and Citizenship

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Choose a research assignment related to immigration.
- ☐ Draw a graph related to immigration.
- ☐ Choose an assignment about cultural influences.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify relevant, reliable sources for researching a topic				
Cite data sources in MLA format				
Use data to create a graph				
Label a graph to clarify what it is communicating				
Identify cultural influences on a family or community				

Lesson 8

Making Connections

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Perform good deeds in secret for family members.
- ☐ Choose an assignment about family life.
- ☐ Choose an activity related to interpersonal relationships.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify ways to help others				
Reflect on family dynamics and structures				
Demonstrate awareness of interpersonal skills				

Lesson 9

Disability Awareness

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Interpret song lyrics related to differences.
- ☐ Choose an assignment related to disabilities.
- ☐ Create a plan that incorporates the needs of someone who is disabled.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify relevant and reliable sources of information				
Cite sources using MLA format				
Organize information into paragraphs				
Use topic sentences to introduce information in a paragraph				
Use direct quotations to support information in the text				
Convey information using original, engaging language				
Demonstrate awareness of accessibility issues for different types of disabilities				
Develop plans to make an event accessible to people of varying abilities				

Lesson 10

Health and Wellness

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Begin an eight-week fitness program.
- ☐ Research a disease.
- ☐ Create an advertisement warning of the health dangers of nicotine, alcohol, or drugs.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Create a plan and calendar for a long-term fitness program				
Track progress using an exercise log				
Summarize findings from medical research				
Identify health risks related to nicotine, alcohol, or drugs				
Combine visuals and text to communicate health risks				

Lesson 11/12

Landmark Cases and Civic Debate

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Learn about a landmark court case.
- ☐ Complete “Landmark Case: Differing Opinions.”
- ☐ Write a summary of the court’s decision and your opinion of it.
- ☐ Give an opinion on an emotional issue.
- ☐ Express the position of the opposing side.
- ☐ Complete “Weighing Two Sides of an Issue.”
- ☐ Create a mediation plan to help resolve the issue.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Locate primary source material				
Identify key aspects of a court case				
Summarize a court decision				
Cite direct quotations in a relevant context				
Express an opinion on a court case				
Articulate opposing sides of an issue				
Develop a mediation plan to bring about a resolution				

UNIT III: Foundations of Government

Lesson 13

Government of the People, by the People, for the People

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Explore the values and expectations of different social groups.
- ☐ Write a three-paragraph essay related to the role of government.
- ☐ Analyze a news article about a clash of values.
- ☐ Choose an assignment to complete.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify different social groups				
Compare values of each group				
Analyze how behavioral rules are related to values				
Speculate on potential problems related to a clash of values				
Explain the role of government				
Give an accurate summary of a news article				
Differentiate between objective and biased reporting				

SKILLS (<i>continued</i>)	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Analyze word choice and phrasing to detect bias				
Organize ideas into a three-paragraph essay				
Use paragraphs to focus on main ideas				

Lesson 14

The Political Heritage of the United States of America

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Complete an assignment related to founding documents of the U.S.
- ☐ Show how art and music were used to express the political atmosphere of the time.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Read primary source material				
Identify key ideas in founding documents				
Analyze how art or music was used to express political ideas				

Lesson 15

The U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Complete an assignment related to the U.S. Constitution or Bill of Rights.
- ☐ Write an essay on a topic related to a Constitutional Amendment.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Read primary source material				
Identify key ideas in founding documents				
Relate Amendment rights to real-life scenarios				
Express an opinion using reasoning and evidence				
Organize ideas into a logical sequence				
Introduce main ideas with topic sentences				
Revise writing for clarity and effectiveness				
Edit writing to eliminate errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.				
Proofread final draft				

Lesson 16

Separation of Church and State

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Write an essay on a topic related to the separation of church and state.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Analyze primary source material				
Explain real-world applications of separation of church and state				
Provide specific examples to support ideas				
Organize ideas into a logical sequence				
Introduce main ideas with topic sentences				
Revise writing for clarity and effectiveness				
Edit writing to eliminate errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc.				
Proofread final draft				

Lesson 17/18

Landmark Cases and Civic Debate

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Learn about a landmark court case.
- ☐ Complete “Landmark Case: Interpreting the Bill of Rights.”
- ☐ Identify one significant aspect of the case.
- ☐ Choose an issue to argue for or against and explain your choice.
- ☐ Complete “Constructing an Argument.”
- ☐ Complete a learning reflection.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Locate primary source material				
Identify key aspects of a court case				
Summarize a court decision				
Cite direct quotations in a relevant context				
Express an opinion on a court case				
Construct an argument based on reasoning and evidence				
Complete a learning reflection				

UNIT IV: Political Systems

Lesson 19

Voting Rights and Responsibilities

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Answer questions related to voting rights.
- ☐ Explain rights granted in certain constitutional Amendments.
- ☐ Create a graph related to voter turnout.
- ☐ Complete an assignment related to voter participation.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Explain rights granted by constitutional amendments related to voting rights				
Graph data to highlight specific information				
Label graph accurately and clearly				
Cite data source for graph				
Generate and express original ideas				

Lesson 20

Political Parties

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Write a five-paragraph essay on the Electoral College or political parties.
- ☐ Conduct a public opinion poll.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Demonstrate content knowledge related to political systems				
Organize ideas into a five-paragraph essay				
Use topic sentences to highlight main ideas				
Demonstrate revision, editing, and proofreading skills				
Incorporate relevant information in a visual form				
Cite sources using MLA format				
Compile data from a public opinion poll				
Present a clear, accurate, labeled graph of data				
Summarize results				
Reflect on how a process could be improved				

Lesson 21

Checks and Balances

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Answer questions related to the legislative process.
- ☐ Identify local issues important to your community today.
- ☐ Write a letter to a legislator or research a special interest group.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Demonstrate content knowledge related to the legislative process				
Conduct research on current congressional issues				
Identify issues impacting the local community				

Lesson 22

State and Local Governments

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Learn about and/or participate in state and local politics.
- ☐ Identify issues currently being debated by state or local legislators.
- ☐ Explore tribal government, land acknowledgment statements, or obstacles to tribal self-government.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Demonstrate content knowledge related to state and local politics				
Conduct research on issues currently being debated at the state or local level				
Summarize details of current political debates				

Lesson 23/24

Landmark Cases and Civic Debate

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Learn about a landmark court case.
- ☐ Complete “Landmark Case: Political Debate.”
- ☐ Gather information about a local issue and complete “Debate: Refuting a Claim.”
- ☐ Formulate a thoughtful opinion about a local issue.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Locate primary source material				
Identify key aspects of a court case				
Provide evidence of how justices refute claims of the other side in writing their opinion				
Cite direct quotations in a relevant context				
Research the claims of citizens on both sides of a current issue				
Construct an argument refuting the claims, reasoning, and evidence of the opposition				
Formulate and express a well-reasoned opinion				

UNIT V: Media Influence and News Literacy

Lesson 25

Freedom of Information

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Describe an incident of book banning or censorship.
- ☐ Compare news articles about net neutrality.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify key ideas in an article				
Summarize the information in an article				
Compare two articles that take opposing sides of an issue				
Use direct quotations in a relevant way				
Attribute direct quotations correctly				
Differentiate between fact and opinion				
Give examples of fact and opinion				
Analyze the writer's purpose				
Identify how word choices and writing techniques are used for a specific purpose				

Lesson 26

The Influence of Advertising

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Critique advertisements to identify claims, facts, and opinions.
- ☐ Create a public service announcement or learn about a socially-responsible company.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Explain the concept of corporate social responsibility				
Analyze advertisements to identify claims				
Differentiate between fact and opinion				

Lesson 27

Media Messages and Fake News

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Compare presentation of top news stories in four newspapers.
- ☐ Write two accounts of an event.
- ☐ Analyze a story suspected of being fake news.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Analyze how word choice, formatting, and graphics are used to influence readers				
Demonstrate how perspective is conveyed through word choice, reasoning, omission, and other writing techniques				
Evaluate the validity of exaggerated claims				
Explain how to evaluate the validity of a source or article				

Lesson 28

Positive News

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Summarize stories of work being done to help others.
- ☐ Give examples of effective writing techniques.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify key elements of an article				
Summarize an article by addressing <i>who, what, why, when, where, and how</i>				
Explain how writing techniques are used to create a mood or to convey a purpose				
Identify examples of effective writing techniques				

Lesson 29/30

Landmark Cases and Civic Debate

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Learn about a landmark court case.
- ☐ Complete “Landmark Case: Impact and Influence.”
- ☐ Research good work being done in the local community.
- ☐ Write an article about an individual or organization doing something to benefit the community or help others.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Locate primary source material				
Identify key aspects of a court case				
Identify how a court decision can influence future cases and actions				
Gather data from community members				
Conduct interviews				
Cite direct quotations in a relevant context				
Record data in an organized way				
Write a comprehensive news article based on local research				
Incorporate feedback from peer or teacher review				
Demonstrate skills in revision, editing, and proofreading				

UNIT VI: Civic Involvement

Lesson 31

Volunteering

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Reflect on and discuss lesson topics.
- ☐ Volunteer in your community and keep a journal of your experience.
- ☐ Complete a project relating to the qualities of a good friend, neighbor, or citizen.
- ☐ Give a well-reasoned opinion about citizenship and the law.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify local volunteer opportunities				
Demonstrate time management skills by organizing a schedule to allow for volunteering				
Learn new skills related to volunteering				
Work cooperatively with others				
Follow instructions and take direction from others				
Use journaling to reflect on volunteer experience				
Convey knowledge of attributes of friendship, neighborliness, and good citizenship				
Convey knowledge in creative form				

Lesson 32

Earth Stewardship

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Complete reading selections.
- ☐ Complete an assignment related to land use.
- ☐ Continue volunteer activities and journal.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Conduct research in the local community				
Demonstrate engaging writing (varied sentence structure and length, original wording, careful word choice, effective sequencing, etc.)				
Use relevant visuals to expand on or illuminate ideas				
Demonstrate time management skills by organizing a schedule to allow for volunteering				
Learn new skills related to volunteering				
Work cooperatively with others				
Follow instructions and take direction from others				
Use journaling to reflect on volunteer experience				

Lesson 33/34/35

Call to Action: Community Service Project

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Plan and carry out a community service project of your own design.
- ☐ Continue volunteer activities and journal.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify a community need				
Develop an action plan for a community service project				
Identify and collect necessary project materials				
Demonstrate time management skills by organizing a schedule for a crew of volunteers				
Learn new skills related to a community service project				
Work cooperatively with others				
Explain instructions and give direction to others				
Use journaling to reflect on experiences				

Lesson 36

Learning Reflection

ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

- ☐ Give a progress report on your community action project.
- ☐ Reflect on your learning experience.

Learning Checklist

SKILLS	Developing	Consistent	Competent	Notes
Identify a community need				
Develop an action plan for a community service project				
Identify and collect necessary project materials				
Demonstrate time management skills by organizing a schedule for a crew of volunteers				
Learn new skills related to a community service project				
Work cooperatively with others				
Explain instructions and give direction to others				
Reflect on learning experiences				