

# **Lesson Plan: Understanding U.S. Citizenship and Naturalization**

**Grade Level:** 6th Grade

**Time Allotment:** One 50-minute period

**Topic:** Citizenship and Naturalization

**Resource:** Gilder Lehrman 10-Question Citizenship Test

## **I. Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Define **citizenship** and **naturalization**.
- Explain key rights and responsibilities of a U.S. citizen.
- Analyze ten sample naturalization test questions and connect them to historical and civic concepts.
- Reflect on what it means to be an active citizen in a democratic society.

## **II. Rationale**

Understanding citizenship is essential for students to recognize their place and power in a democracy. This lesson introduces the foundational concepts of citizenship and naturalization, tying them to civic engagement, U.S. history, and students' rights and responsibilities. It builds civic identity while fostering a deeper appreciation of American democracy, especially for diverse and Indigenous students navigating identity within U.S. society.

## **III. Standards Alignment**

### **Arizona State Standards – 6th Grade Social Studies**

- **SS06.C1.01** – Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- **SS06.C2.02** – Explain the process of becoming a citizen (naturalization).
- **SS06.H2.01** – Explain connections between historical events and contemporary issues.
- **ELA Literacy RH.6-8.1** – Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

## **IV. Materials**

- Printed copy of the **10-Question Citizenship Test**
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- “Citizenship Identity Badge” worksheet (optional)
- Video clip: “What is Citizenship?” (3–5 min; any age-appropriate clip introducing the concept)
- Markers, sticky notes, sentence frames for ELLs
- Projector/screen

## V. Methodology (Instructional Procedures)

### A. Warm-Up (5–7 mins)

#### **Bell Ringer Question:**

*“What does it mean to be a good citizen?”*

Students write or draw on sticky notes. Share a few aloud and place them on a poster labeled *Citizenship Wall*.

### B. Input / Mini-Lesson (10 mins)

1. **Define Terms:** Citizenship, Naturalization, Rights, Responsibilities
2. **Watch a brief video** explaining citizenship and how immigrants become naturalized.
3. **Guided Discussion:**
  - “Why do we need citizens to be informed?”
  - “What responsibilities do citizens have to keep democracy strong?”

### C. Activity – Citizenship Test Stations (25 mins)

**Setup:** Divide class into 5–6 groups. Each station includes 1–2 questions from the 10-question test, written on chart paper with 3 tasks:

- **Identify** the correct answer.

- **Explain** why this question matters to being a citizen.
- **Connect** the question to a current event or personal example.

#### **Differentiation:**

- Sentence starters for ELLs (e.g., *"This question is important because..."*)
- Picture support and simplified vocabulary for students with learning needs
- Challenge task: "Design your own question for the naturalization test."

#### **D. Sharing Out (5–7 mins)**

Each group shares one insight from their station with the class.

#### **E. Exit Ticket / Reflection (3–5 mins)**

**Prompt:** *"If you were writing a question for the citizenship test, what would you ask and why?"*  
Students respond in writing or drawing.

### **VI. Creativity and Engagement**

- Citizenship Test Stations encourage movement, discussion, and collaboration.
- Bell ringer and exit tickets promote self-reflection.
- Use of real naturalization test questions sparks real-world connection.
- The Citizenship Wall remains on display as a reminder of class values.

### **VII. Differentiation for Diverse Learners**

- **Visual learners:** Use infographics, images of the Statue of Liberty, Capitol, etc.

- **ELLs:** Vocabulary cards, sentence starters, visual glossary
- **Gifted students:** Create their own mock citizenship test or role-play a naturalization interview.
- **Students with learning differences:** Simplified text, verbal responses, one-on-one support during stations

## **VIII. Assessment**

- Informal: Observation during group discussions and stations
- Formal: Exit Ticket + Citizenship Test answers (modified or full)
- Optional Extension: Students interview a community member who became a U.S. citizen