



NATURALIZATION: BECOMING A US CITIZEN

INTRODUCTION

A citizen is an individual with certain rights and duties under a government and who, by birth or by choice, owes allegiance to that government. To become a citizen through naturalization, a person must demonstrate knowledge of American history and principles and the ability to read, speak, and write words in ordinary usage in the English language. Thomas Jefferson drafted the first naturalization act, which was ratified in 1795, and has been amended multiple times since.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the end of this lesson plan middle school students will be able to:

- Explain what naturalization is
- How does an individual become a citizen?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What is naturalization?
- How does a person become a citizen?

LEARNING STANDARDS

This lesson is compatible with:

- *Virginia Standard of Learning CE.3a*—The student will demonstrate knowledge of citizenship and the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizens by describing the processes by which an individual becomes a citizen of the United States.

PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS

Resources:

- *Naturalization: Becoming a US Citizen at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello* vodcast from the Monticello Project
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4RqYWeqMTBQ&feature=BFa&list=PL10023C9689614BF3>

Equipment and Handouts:

- Equipment to screen vodcast (computer, project, etc.)
- *Naturalization Think/Pair/Share* worksheet

VODCAST DESCRIPTIONS

- *Naturalization: Becoming a US Citizen at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello*: Students from Sutherland Middle School in Charlottesville, Virginia look at naturalization--becoming a US Citizen. They also address the question, "What is citizenship and why is it important?"

LESSON ACTIVITIES

Activity 1

Pretest/Warm up: Students will be formatively assessed on their understanding of the word naturalization. Teachers should have the question "What is naturalization?" displayed on the board when students enter the classroom. Teachers should give students time to write the answer to this question while they walk around to observe their responses. Then teachers should have a whole-class discussion of the word.

Activity 2

Vodcast Viewing: *Naturalization: Becoming a US Citizen at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello*: Students will watch the vodcast *Naturalization: Becoming a US Citizen at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello*, which features interviews and discussions with staff at Monticello on the topic of citizenship as well as an interview with a naturalized citizen. It will give students a fuller explanation of the process of naturalization and explains Thomas Jefferson's interest in establishing the rights of a citizen.

Activity 3

Think/Pair/Share Naturalization Test: Distribute the *Naturalization Think/Pair/Share* worksheet. Explain to students that in order to become a naturalized citizen, one must pass the naturalization test. Ask students to consider what knowledge about the United States—be it history, government, or rights and responsibilities—is so fundamental to being an American that every citizen must know it. Then have students individually brainstorm questions that would appear on the naturalization test. Once students have had time to write 3-5 questions, pair them with partners. Partners should discuss the questions they came up with on their own, then work together to choose the best or write four new questions to complete the bottom of the worksheet. Finally, give students the opportunity to share their questions with the whole class. Encourage students to share what kind of information they thought was important for all citizens to know. Complete the activity by sharing four actual questions from the Department of Homeland Security Immigration and Naturalization Services' "Naturalization self test". Four sample questions are listed below. More can be found at <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>.

1. Why did the colonists fight the British?
2. What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves?
3. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?
4. What does the President's Cabinet do?

Extending the Lesson

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership's educational program, Of the Student, By the Student, For the Student®, offers additional student-created content on the Civil War at the YouTube channel "Take the Journey." <http://www.youtube.com/user/TakeTheJourney/videos?view=1>

Extended content includes student created vodcasts for:

- Battle of First Manassas
- Battle of Second Manassas
- Battle of Balls Bluff
- Harpers Ferry
- Battle of Antietam
- Chesapeake and Ohio Canal
- Battle of Gettysburg
- Battle of the Wilderness and the start of the Overland Campaign

For additional information on the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership's educational programs and resources, please contact us at:

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Naturalization Think/Pair/Share

Directions: In the box below, brainstorm four (4) questions that you think should be included on the citizenship test for the United States. Consider fundamental events, people, and ideals that you believe every citizen in the United States should know. Then share them with your partner.

Directions: After you have shared your questions with a partner, look together at all eight (8) of your questions and decide which four (4) should be included in the citizenship test for the United States.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____
