



## What You Will Learn...

## Main Ideas

1. The duties and roles of citizenship help to make representative government work.
2. Good citizens accept their responsibilities for maintaining a strong democracy.
3. The type of government in some societies influences the roles of the citizens in those societies.

## The Big Idea

Along with the rights and freedoms of citizenship in representative democracies like the United States come important duties and responsibilities.

## Key Terms

representative government, *p.* 112

draft, *p.* 113

jury duty, *p.* 113

nonrepresentative government, *p.* 115



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TAKING NOTES

Use the annotation tools in your eBook to take notes about the roles of citizens.

# Citizenship

## If YOU were there...

Your older brother and his friends have just turned 18. That means they must register with the Selective Service System. But it also means that they are old enough to vote in national elections. You are interested in the upcoming elections and think it would be exciting to have a real voice in politics. But your brother and his friends don't even plan to register to vote.

## How would you persuade your brother that voting is important?

**BUILDING BACKGROUND** Imagine living in a society in which people did not take good citizenship seriously. For instance, what if people stayed home and did not vote? What would happen if people did not speak up when they saw an injustice? We cannot have a government "by the people"—as Abraham Lincoln said—unless people participate.

## Duties and Roles of Citizenship

The United States has a democratic, **representative government**. In such a system, people are the ultimate source of government authority. Elections are free and fair. Elected representatives closely follow the wishes of the people. Citizens typically enjoy rights and privileges such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion. For a representative government to work well, citizens must participate actively and perform certain duties. Let's look at some duties of U.S. citizens.

### Obeying the Law

Of course, all Americans must obey the law. Otherwise our society would collapse. To obey laws, you must know what they are. For example, if you are stopped for speeding, it will not help to claim that you did not know the speed limit. It is your duty to find out what the speed limit is and to obey it.

### Attending School

You have to go to school, at least until age 16. A democracy cannot function without educated citizens. That is why we have

free, public schools. People need good reading and thinking skills so they can wisely choose their leaders and understand issues that affect them. Education also provides workforce skills so people can get jobs and help the economy grow.

### Paying Taxes

If you work or buy things, then you probably have to pay taxes. We might not love paying taxes, but we enjoy the services that result from them, such as police and fire protection, road maintenance, public schools, and countless other services. Tax money also pays the huge costs of national security and defense.

### Serving in the Armed Forces

Volunteers have fought in every war in U.S. history. When the country's need has exceeded the number of volunteers, however, it sometimes has had to establish a **draft**. Draft laws require men of certain ages and qualifications to serve in the military.

The United States has not had a draft since 1973, during the Vietnam War. However, 18-year-old men must still register their names and addresses with the Selective Service System. If a crisis required that the country quickly expand its armed forces, a draft could be launched and registered citizens could be called up.

### Appearing in Court

Citizens must report to serve as members of a jury, if they are called to do so. This service is called **jury duty**. Jury duty often involves sacrifice. Many citizens must take time off work to serve on a jury, and they are paid very small sums. This sacrifice is necessary because the Constitution guarantees citizens the right to a trial by jury of their peers—that is, their fellow citizens. Citizens must also testify in court if called as witnesses. For our system of justice to function, citizens must fulfill their duty to serve on juries and appear as witnesses.

**READING CHECK** Summarizing Describe five duties of American citizenship.

### Rights and Responsibilities

Civic participation in representative government includes both duties, or the things we *must* do, and responsibilities. Responsibilities are the things we *should* do as citizens. These tasks are not required by law; yet, in the United States, most people accept them as their responsibility. Several of these responsibilities are listed below.

### Voting

United States government is based on the consent, or the approval, of the governed.

### FOCUS ON READING

What things have to happen before we can benefit from government services?

Cadets from the U.S. Air Force Academy commit to several years of military service.





Therefore, we must let our legislators know when we approve or disapprove of their actions. One way to do this is by voting for people whose views we support and who we believe to be good, honest candidates.

### Being Informed

To cast your vote wisely, you must be well informed about candidates, current events, and key issues. You also have a responsibility to tell your representatives what you think about topics of public concern. On occasion, you may even need to stand in protest for what you believe. Yet protest, like civic participation in any form, must also be peaceful, respectful of the law, and tolerant of others' rights and liberties.

### Taking Part in Government

For a representative government to remain strong, people must participate in the political process at all levels. Citizens are needed to join political parties as well as lead, and educate others, and influence public opinion.

Especially needed are people to run for political office and serve wisely if elected. The quality of any democratic government depends on the quality of the people who serve it.

### Helping Your Community

Have you ever volunteered to help your community? There are so many ways to

help, from giving your time at the public library to participating in a walk for hunger. Citizens should volunteer to improve their communities. The government cannot be aware of every small problem, much less fix them all. Yet solving small problems is something volunteers can do in many ways. Think of how small acts of kindness—such as cheering up a sick person or caring for a stray animal—make community life better.

### Respecting and Protecting Others' Rights

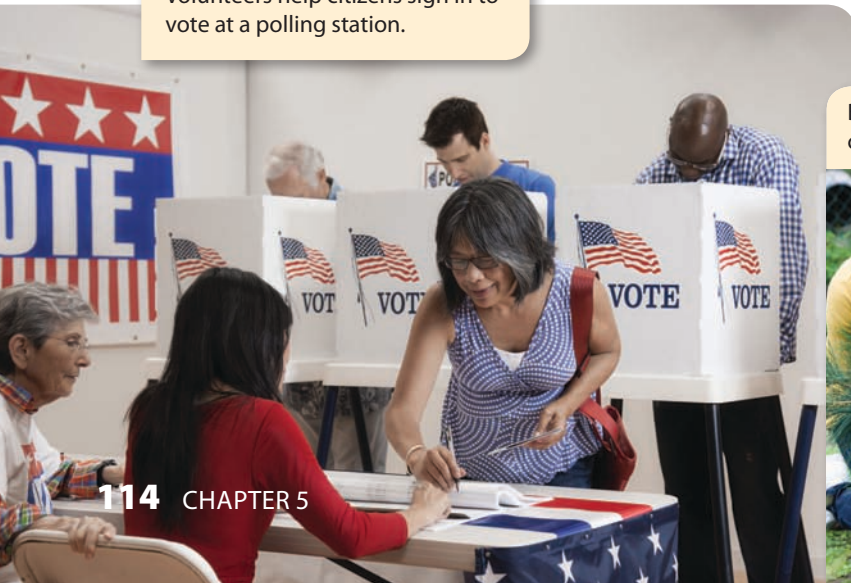
In return for performing civic duties and responsibilities, people in a representative government enjoy the privileges and rights of citizenship. The lasting success and the strength of the United States depends on the protection of its citizens' rights. You can play an important role in protecting these rights by knowing your own rights as an American citizen and knowing and respecting the rights of the people around you. For example, it is essential that community members respect others' property.

You should also know when people's rights are being violated. All Americans must help defend human rights. As a citizen, you have the responsibility to help make sure that our society works for everyone.

#### READING CHECK Making Generalizations

How can U.S. citizens contribute to society?

Volunteers help citizens sign in to vote at a polling station.



By planting a tree, these volunteers are beautifying their community.



## Citizenship in Other Societies

In other societies with representative governments, citizens' roles and rights are similar to, but not always the same as, those of U.S. citizens. For instance, German citizens are not called to serve on juries, because German courts do not use the jury system. The German constitution guarantees its citizens freedom of the press, but that freedom can be limited in order to protect youth or preserve a person's honor.

There are major differences, however, between the roles and rights of U.S. citizens and those of citizens from societies with **nonrepresentative governments**. In such systems, government power is unlimited and citizens have few, if any, rights. For example, citizens of Iran do not have the right of freedom of speech. Without this freedom, Iranians cannot voice their concerns to their leaders.

Citizens' perception of opportunities to participate in and influence the political process vary greatly among contemporary societies. For example, in countries where citizens do not trust the people that run their governments, voting turnout is much lower than in countries where citizens tend to trust their governments.

**READING CHECK** **Contrasting** How does citizenship in nonrepresentative governments differ from citizenship in representational governments?

**SUMMARY AND PREVIEW** In this section, you learned about the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizenship. In the next section you will learn how geographers study and understand world economies.

### Section 2 Assessment



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ONLINE QUIZ

#### Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and Places

- a. Define** What is **jury duty**?

**b. Explain** How is registering for the **draft** part of being a good citizen?

**c. Predict** What would happen in a representative government if only a small group of people performed their civic duties?
- a. Identify** In what ways can citizens participate in the political process?

**b. Interpret** How are a citizen's duties, rights, and responsibilities connected?

**c. Evaluate** Why is it important to respect other people's rights?
- a. Identify** What is an example of a **nonrepresentative government**?

**b. Explain** Why do the levels of civic engagement vary among different contemporary societies?

**c. Compare and Contrast** How are the roles and rights of German citizens and U.S. citizens alike? How are they different?

#### Critical Thinking

- Evaluate** Draw a chart like the one here to list and describe citizens' duties and responsibilities in representative governments. Use the chart to help answer this question: In your opinion, which duty or responsibility expected of citizens is the most important? Explain your answer.

DUTIES	RESPONSIBILITIES

#### FOCUS ON WRITING

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- Describing the Roles of Citizens** Take notes on civic participation covered in this section. In your article, be sure to compare examples from the United States with those from various societies around the world.