ACTIVITY: So You Want To Be A U.S. Citizen?

c. Allegiance to the Constitution and laws. People must be willing to be loyal to our Constitution and laws.
d. Service in armed forces when required by law. People must be willing to serve our country if the law requires it.

Discuss what participants think about these requirements. How do they think it feels to agree to some of them? Why do they think they are important? Ask participants to consider everything that has been discussed to this point. Ask the question again, “What is citizenship?”

MATERIALS, EQUIPMENT, HANDOUTS

- Newsprint
- Markers
- Pens or pencils
- Paper
- Photocopy of handout U.S. Citizenship Sample Test for each participant (or see textbox on preceding page)
- Photocopy of handout Oath of Allegiance for Naturalized Citizens for each participant

TIME

45 minutes

SETTING

Tables and chairs arranged in a circle or semi-circle

REFLECTION

ACTIVITIES AND IDEAS

Reinforce the concepts participants have learned by asking the following reflection questions.

SHARE

- Which part of this activity did you enjoy doing?
- What did you like least about this activity?
- What are some reasons someone would want to become a citizen of the United States?

PROCESS

- What did you learn from doing this activity?
- What did you learn about what is required to be a naturalized citizen of the United States?
- What are the similarities and differences between the test to become a good citizen and what we said is a definition of being a good citizen?
- Are there additional ways to find out if someone would be a good citizen? Why do you think citizenship is based on a test and time lived in the United States?

APPLY

- Is our definition of citizenship inclusive of all groups? Are there people who are left out of our definition based on race, gender, ethnicity or class?
- A common stereotype is that people of color, including Latinos, Asian Americans, Arab Americans and others are “from somewhere else” and are not “real” citizens. People of color often get asked, “Where are you from?” even when they and their families may have lived in the United States for years—and even generations. What do you think about this statement? How can we ensure that we are inclusive of all groups? Are there times in the past where other people may have been stereotyped when they came to the United States?

TRY THIS, TOO

- Invite speakers to the meeting who have become naturalized citizens. Ask them to talk about what becoming an American citizen means to them.
- There may be parents of participants in the club who have taken the citizenship test or are in the process of learning about being a citizen. Ask them to talk about similarities and differences to their country of origin, including government and individual participation in government.
- Organize a good citizenship project for the community.
- Have the participants rewrite the Oath of Allegiance for Naturalized Citizens, putting it in their own words.

GENERALIZE

- Why is it important to understand how someone becomes a citizen and what it means to be a good citizen?
HANDOUT: U.S. Citizenship Sample Test

1. What is the supreme law of the land?

2. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?

3. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?

4. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?

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

6. Who is called the “Father of Our Country”?

7. Who is the President now?

8. Who is the governor of your state?

9. Why does the flag have 13 stripes?

10. What ocean is on the west coast of the United States?
HANDOUT: U.S. Citizenship Sample Test
Answer Sheet*

1. What is the supreme law of the land?  
   Constitution

2. What do we call the first ten amendments to the Constitution?  
   Bill of Rights

3. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?  
   Senate and the House of Representatives

4. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?  
   July 4, 1776

5. What group of people was taken to America and sold as slaves?  
   Africans (people from Africa)

6. Who is called the “Father of Our Country”?  
   George Washington

7. Who is the President now?  
   (Name of the current president)

8. Who is the governor of your state?  
   (Name of the current governor)

9. Why does the flag have 13 stripes?  
   Because there were 13 original colonies

10. What ocean is on the west coast of the United States?  
    Pacific Ocean

*Obtained as public domain from U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (July 2007). The questions and answers for the test were selected randomly from the official list of 142 Questions and Answers for New Pilot Naturalization Test from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). For a full list of questions, visit the USCIS web site at http://www.uscis.gov/natzpilot. When giving the test to persons desiring citizenship, the examiner selects any ten questions at their discretion to be posed orally to the examinees. According to the USCIS, most regional offices require a score of 6 out of 10 to pass.
Oath of Allegiance for Naturalized Citizens*

The U.S. Oath of Allegiance for Naturalized Citizens must be taken by all immigrants whom wish to become U.S. citizens.

The current oath is as follows:

I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by the law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God.

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