

Citizenship Education: Definition, Introduction and Concept

“Refugees: Respect and Rights”

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- *It is a federal public authority providing citizenship education and information on political issues for all people in Germany.*
- *Its work focuses on fostering an awareness of what democracy is and on furthering participation in politics and social life.*

Citizenship Education

Citizenship education can be defined as educating children, from early childhood, to become clear-thinking and enlightened citizens who participate in decisions concerning society. 'Society' is here understood in the special sense of a nation with a circumscribed territory which is recognized as a state.

Citizenship/Civic/Political Education

Understanding civic duties and responsibilities are essential components of any social studies curriculum.



Components Of Citizenship

- **Global Responsibility**
- **National Responsibility**
- **Local Responsibility**
- **Family Responsibility**

“I have a responsibility as a citizen to my community. It is both a responsibility and a privilege, because as I work to make my community a better place, I receive intrinsic benefits as well.”
- Anna Morton

Essential Questions

- **What does it mean to be a responsible citizen?**
- **Who are you responsible to?**
- **Why teach citizenship?**
- **How does it benefit young people?**
- **What are its essential elements?**
- **Who else does it benefit?**

What does it mean to be a responsible citizen?

- Responsible citizens have **knowledge** about their role in their communities, their country, and their world.
- Responsible citizens **participate** in activities that make their world a better place.
- Responsible citizens are **change agents** that act out against social, economic, and environmental injustices.

Who are you responsible to?

The country you live in now with its Legal, Social and Moral Obligations

- No one can be a responsible citizen without staying within the law.
- We should help our communities and those who live in them, e.g. by volunteering
- Different people have different moral codes. But one place we can all start is in helping the environment.

Why teach citizenship?

- **Citizenship education is important because it builds character and develops the soft skills such as communication, initiative, social interaction and teamwork.**
- **Democracies need active, informed and responsible citizens; citizens who are willing and able to take responsibility for themselves and their communities and contribute to the political process.**

How does it benefit young people?

- It helps them to develop **self-confidence** and successfully deal with significant life changes and challenges;
- It gives them a **voice**: in the life of their schools, in their communities and in society at large;
- It enables them to **make a positive contribution** by developing the expertise and experience needed to claim their rights and understand their responsibilities and preparing them for the challenges and opportunities of adult and working life.

What are its essential elements?

- **Knowledge and understanding:** About topics such as: laws and rules, the democratic process, the media, human rights, diversity, money and the economy, sustainable development and world as a global community; and about concepts such as democracy, justice, equality, freedom, authority and the rule of law;
- **Skills and aptitudes:** Critical thinking, analyzing information, expressing opinions, taking part in discussions and debates, negotiating, conflict resolution and participating in community action;
- **Values and dispositions:** Respect for justice, democracy and the rule of law, openness, tolerance, courage to defend a point of view and a willingness to: listen to, work with and stand up for others.

Who else does it benefit?

Citizenship also brings benefits for schools, other educational organizations and for society at large by producing **motivated and responsible learners**, who relate positively to each other and the surrounding community. For society it helps to create an **active and responsible citizenry**, willing to participate in the life of the nation and the wider world and play its part in the **democratic** process.