

Citizenship in the Nation Class Information

Updated 7/27/25

Scouts must do all requirements prior to attending class. We will explore each requirement in more detail during class and hold discussions on your answers.

Important information about how to prepare for the merit badge

Parents and guardians: We kindly ask that you take a moment to review the content of a merit badge before registering your Scout. Some badges may present challenges for younger Scouts due to their complexity or subject matter. Additionally, class discussions tend to be more engaging and productive when Scouts have reviewed the badge requirements in advance of the program.

A Scout's likelihood of successfully completing a badge increases significantly when they are motivated and the badge aligns with their age and readiness. For example, the *Citizenship in the Nation* badge involves complex, academic concepts and is generally more manageable for Scouts over the age of 13. This badge becomes relatively straightforward for Scouts who have already studied U.S. civics in school.

Please note that merit badges are not designed to be completed in a single day. They require independent effort from the Scout outside of the workshop setting. It is the Scout's responsibility—not the parent's—to fulfill the badge requirements.

While a Scout may use a parent's email account to submit their work, we ask that parents refrain from scanning or submitting the Scout's materials on their behalf. This is an important part of the Scout's responsibility and growth. Parents and guardians are also kindly requested not to act as intermediaries for their Scout in this process.

Please note a parent or guardian should be copied on all email correspondence the Scout sends to the Merit Badge Counselor.

Thank you for your support in helping your Scout succeed while fostering their independence!

Before attending, please make sure your Scoutmaster knows the Scout is taking this virtual merit badge class and indicates the Initial Unit Leader Signature in the merit badge in Scoutbook. [Click on the Scout in Scoutbook, click on their advancement, the merit badge and Initial Unit Leader Signature, enter a date.] (The Scoutmaster may alternately sign the front of a blue card for the badge. Blue cards are available here: <https://support.grandcanyonbsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/mb-app-blue-card-fillable.pdf> send the signed card to: bill.nelson@scouting.org)

Important: The Scout must individually do the requirements. They may not answer the requirements as a group and copying from others will result in the requirements not being accepted. You may assist with resources, but you nor anyone else may not answer any of the requirements for the Scout.

The merit badge will be held in two sessions about 2 hours long. There will be an individual quiz at the end of each session to assure that the Scout individually understands the information in each requirement covered.

Though not required, Scout workbooks are very useful and we prefer that Scouts use the workbook during the program. A workbook can be found at:

https://scoutingevent.com/Download/010161621/OR/Citizenship_in_the_Nation_Workbook.pdf

About blue cards: We will utilize Scoutbook.com and record requirement completion online. Blue cards can be printed by parents and unit leaders in Scoutbook by clicking on the Scout, the Scout's advancement, the merit badge, and print blue cards.

Requirements

- **First read the merit badge pamphlet.** The requirements for this badge are a lot easier to finish if you read through the merit badge pamphlet first. The pamphlet for this badge is available free at this link: <https://www.scouting.org/merit-badges/citizenship-in-the-nation/>
- Either fill out the workbook for each of these requirements, or enter your answers in a word document; and send them to me.
- All requirements need to be done **BEFORE** the first class.

1. What is the Constitution of the United States? What does the Constitution do? What principles does it reflect? Why is it important to have a Constitution?

Resources for answering this requirement may be found here:

<https://constitutioncenter.org/education/constitution-faqs>

2. List the six purposes for creating the United States Constitution set forth in the Preamble to the Constitution. How do these purposes affect your family and community?

The Preamble to the Constitution is:

"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America."

Resource for this requirement can be found here:

<https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/educational-resources/about-educational-outreach/activity-resources/us>

Especially watch the two videos. The first one reads the preamble, the second one discusses the six purposes in the preamble.

3. List the three branches of the United States government. Explain:

- (a) The function of each branch of government
- (b) Why it is important to divide powers among different branches
- (c) How each branch "checks" and "balances" the others
- (d) How citizens can be involved in each branch of government.

Resources for this requirement may be found at: <https://www.usa.gov/branches-of-government>

4. Discuss the importance of:

- (a) The Declaration of Independence
- (b) The Bill of Rights (the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution) and the 14th Amendment
- (c) The traditional United States motto "E Pluribus Unum."

5. Watch the national evening news for five days in a row or read the main stories in a national media organization (e.g., a newspaper or news website) for five days in a row. Discuss the national issues that you learned about with your counselor. Choose one issue and explain how it affects you, your family, and community.

6. With your counselor's approval, choose a speech of national historical importance. Explain:

- (a) Who the author was
- (b) What the historical context was
- (c) What difficulties the nation faced that the author wished to discuss
- (d) What the author said
- (e) Why the speech is important to the nation's history.

(f) Choose a sentence or two from the speech that has significant meaning to you, and tell your counselor why.

NOTE: You have my permission to choose any speech from a national figure, past or present.

7. Do TWO of the following:

(a) Visit a place that is listed as a National Historic Landmark or that is on the National Register of Historic Places. Tell your counselor what you learned about the landmark or site and what you found interesting about it.

Resources to help with this requirement:

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalhistoriclandmarks/list-of-nhls-by-state.htm#onthisPage-44> and

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm#table>

(b) Tour your state capitol building or the U.S. Capitol. Tell your counselor what you learned about the capitol, its function, and the history.

(c) Tour a federal facility. Explain to your counselor what you saw there and what you learned about its function in the local community and how it serves this nation.

(d) Choose a United States national monument that interests you. Using books, brochures, the Internet (with your parent or guardian's permission), and other resources, find out more about the monument. Tell your counselor what you learned, and explain why the monument is important to this country's citizens.

8. Name your representatives in the United States Congress. Write a letter to your representative in Congress explaining your views on a national issue. Send a copy of your letter, along with any response you receive, to your counselor.

They can be found at <http://house.gov> and <http://senate.gov> Write a letter to one of them explaining your views on a national issue. Send a copy of your letter, along with any response you receive, to your counselor. If you go to the webpage and put in your zip code you can find your representative and a web page where you can send them a message. Give me a screen shot of the message you send. Send the information to: bill.nelson@scouting.org

Please note when addressing your representative or senators in a letter, please be polite and formal. Use phrases like:

- For a U.S Representative:
 - Use "Dear Representative [Last Name]:" or "Dear Congressman/Congresswoman [Last Name]:"
 - Example: "Dear Representative Johnson:" or "Dear Congresswoman Johnson:"
- For a U.S. Senator:
 - Use "Dear Senator [Last Name]:"
 - Example: "Dear Senator Smith:"

RESOURCES

<https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/the-constitution>

<http://diplomacy.state.gov/wp-content/plugins/download-attachments/includes/download.php?id=827>

<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>