

Online Merit Badge Syllabus Citizenship in the World

Introduction:

We are not just part of our nation or local community. Increasingly with globalization we truly live in an international world. How is our nation similar and different from the other members of this community? How does the United States involve itself in this community? How does this community function? What is our role in it? While these questions consume entire careers and have vast amounts written on them, this course provides a basic introduction. While we will not fully answer these questions, Citizenship in the World Merit Badge provides Scouts with a grounding in the topic of World Citizenship.

Program:

Day 1:

Scouts will be welcomed to the class and we will begin our study of Citizenship in the World by exploring what Citizenship in the World means to us and what we think it takes to be a good world citizen. (Requirement 1)

We will then prepare our first set of individual assignments. Scouts will have an opportunity to research global issues which they find interesting as part of fostering personal engagement with world citizenship. First Scouts will visit the state department website and use it as a resource to research an issue which they find interesting. Next Scouts will use a foreign news service (or foreign government) to learn about an example of a right realized in the United States which is still not realized in a foreign country. This will give us an opportunity to reflect about how fortunate we are and the diverse circumstances of our global community. (Requirement 7.)

Day 2:

Continuing on the theme of comparing rights and duties in different countries, we will discuss the differences in rights, obligations and duties of citizens in the United States, [Germany](#) and South Korea (NB Originally the plan was to use the United Kingdom but Germany has a far more accessible resource). This will provide us with an opportunity to see how different democracies approach the concept of rights and obligations of citizens. This will give us an opportunity to compare and contrast our country with other members of the global community. (Requirement 2)

As part of becoming informed global citizens an article about a current world event will be assigned. This article will change week to week depending on the class and world events. Scouts will be expected to read it to be prepared for the next day's discussion. (Requirement 3a)

To foster a global mindset, we will then research how a country's geography, natural resources, and climate influence its economy and its global partnerships with other countries. As a case study we will use Saudi Arabia as it is a relatively accessible example. In order to prepare for this discussion Scouts will analytically read the CIA World Factbook page on Saudi Arabia. (Requirement 3b)

Day 3:

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We will start the day with a discussion of the world event which we prepared. Scouts will have an opportunity to engage in a discussion about this world issue and share their perspectives as part of a respectful and educational dialogue. (Requirement 3a)

After we finish with our discussion of a world event we will turn to our case study of Saudi Arabia to think critically about the impact of geography on international relations and nation's economies. We will engage in a socratic dialogue which will build on the foundation which Scouts will have created for themselves during their own research. (Requirement 3B)

Day 4:

In order to better appreciate the variation in the function of governments across the world we will look at basic differences between types of government. First we will look at the difference between constitutional and non-constitutional governments. Then we will learn about the different types of governments in power in the world today. We will look at five different types of governments and locate an example of a country for each. This will provide us a far greater understanding of how different yet similar our world can be! (Requirement 5)

In order to prepare for the next day's class, Scouts will be assigned a number of readings about international institutions. This will give Scouts a better understanding of the concept of the global community, a group of nations working together towards a common set of goals. First Scouts will read about the role of international law and how it differs from national law. They will also research how it can be used as a tool for conflict resolution. Secondly, Scouts will read about the International Red Cross in order to be able to give a brief description of what they are and to understand the incredibly important role which they have in the world. Finally, Scouts will read about the clearest example of the global community, the United Nations. For the next day's discussion, they will reach a basic understanding of the role which the United Nations plays. This sounds like a lot of reading, but it should be manageable for our group of dedicated Scouts! Especially when they remember that we are trying to reach a basic understanding for the next day's discussion, not master the content for a test. (Requirement 4)

Day 5:

We will engage in a socratic dialogue about the topics which the Scouts were tasked with researching. They will be able to show off their new knowledge of these key global organizations! (Requirement 4)

For our last take home assignment, Scouts will learn the basics of how the mechanics of how the US conducts foreign relations. This means reading about the role of an Ambassador, a consul, the Bureau of International Information Programs, the Agency for International Development and the United States and Foreign Commercial Service. More generally it means learning how the United States government is represented abroad and is accredited to international organizations. (Requirement 6)

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Day 6

We will end with our discussion of the basic mechanics of US diplomacy. This will give a chance for Scouts to show their new understanding of the global community through a group discussion. Once this is done Scouts will be one badge closer to Eagle!

Congratulations!

Of course there will be time at the end to discuss any loose ends.