



Civics Education: Preparing for the Next Generation of Informed and Engaged Citizens

Discussion Guide

With only one in three Americans able to name all three branches of government, it's vital that we inspire girls to be informed, engaged, and civically minded individuals equipped with the tools to take action and make positive change in the world. Civics education is central to preserving and strengthening our country's democracy for the future. Informed citizens are far more likely to be engaged, active participants who stand up for issues they care about at the local, state, and national level.

Please use these questions to engage girls in a discussion about our government.

Recommendations for Leading a Discussion:

- Ask a girl to serve as a facilitator.
- Use whiteboards or online tools for discussion participants to capture their thoughts, including postevent follow-up. Ideas could be tied to Gold Award projects, earning of the Democracy badges in 2020, and/or other local civic education opportunities.
- Step in when you need to, but keep discussions girl-led as much as possible.

K- 5

Scenarios:

- If you could change any rule at your school, what would that be? How would you go about changing it?
- Have you ever gone to vote with a parent or guardian? If so, what did you see when you went?
- The Girl Scout Promise and Law talks about how Girl Scouts should act. What would your town be like if everyone followed the Girl Scout Promise and Law?
- How can someone be a good neighbor? What are some ways you can be one?

6-12

Warm up! Test your knowledge of the government–Civics 101:

- What is the capital of the United States?
- How old must you be to vote?
- How many branches of the U.S. government are there? Name them.
- Name one of your state's U.S. Senators.
- What are we celebrating on July 4 each year?
- What is the highest court in the United States?



6-12 Discussion Questions:

- What are some ways you interact with government on a day-to-day basis?
- What types of things does the government do or create?
- Who in your community works for the government? Name several who are not elected by voters.
- What are several ways citizens can participate in a democracy?
 - (Run for office, vote, work for a campaign, support or change a law)
- What are some ways to be a good citizen? How can we engage more young people to be good citizens?
- How has Girl Scouts taught you to be an active citizen?
- If you wanted to take action to change a law in your community, what law would you want to change?
How would you go about changing it?
 - (example: Ban straws in restaurants)
- Do you think it is important to understand how our government works? Why?