

BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA
MERIT BADGE SERIES

CITIZENSHIP IN THE NATION



"Enhancing our youths' competitive edge through merit badges"



BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA®

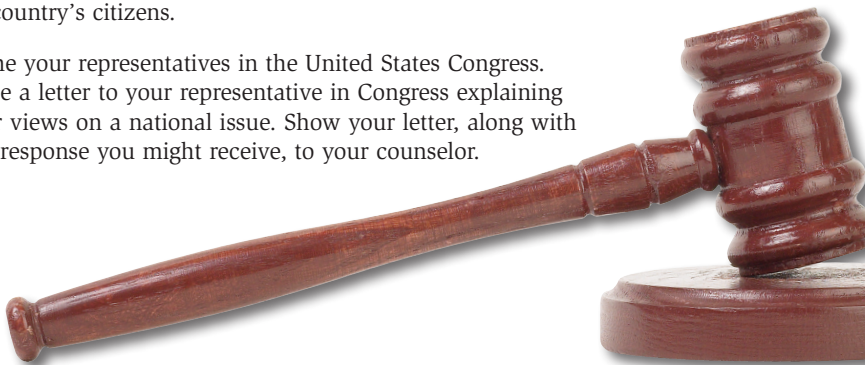
Requirements

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?
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?
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.
4. Discuss the importance of:
 - a. 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.

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

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.
 - 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 national monument that interests you. Using books, brochures, the internet (with your parent'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. Show your letter, along with any response you might receive, to your counselor.



Resources

Scouting Literature

The Constitution of the United States; American Business, American Cultures, American Heritage, Citizenship in the Community, Citizenship in the World, and Law merit badge pamphlets

With your parent's permission, visit the Boy Scouts of America's official retail website, www.scoutshop.org, for a complete listing of all merit badge pamphlets and other helpful Scouting materials and supplies.

Books

- Feinberg, Barbara Silberdick. *The Articles of Confederation: The First Constitution of the United States*. Twenty-First Century Books, 2002.
- Freedman, Russell. *Give Me Liberty! The Story of the Declaration of Independence*. Holiday House, 2002.
- Jaffe, Steven H. *Who Were the Founding Fathers? Two Hundred Years of Reinventing American History*. Henry Holt and Co., 1996.
- Kassinger, Ruth. *U.S. Census: A Mirror of America*. Raintree Steck-Vaughn Publishers, 1999.
- Krull, Kathleen. *A Kid's Guide to America's Bill of Rights: Curfews, Censorship, and the 100-Pound Giant*. HarperCollins, 2015.
- Mackintosh, Barry. *The National Park Service*. Chelsea House Publishers, 1988.
- Maestro, Betty. *A More Perfect Union: The Story of Our Constitution*. HarperCollins, 2008.
- McHugh, Erin. *National Parks: A Kid's Guide to America's Parks, Monuments, and Landmarks*. Black Dog & Leventhal, 2012.
- McIntire, Suzanne, ed. *The American Heritage Book of Great American Speeches for Young People*. John Wiley & Sons, 2001.
- Panchyk, Richard. *Keys to American History: Understanding Our Most Important Historic Documents*. Chicago Review Press, 2009.
- Selzer, Adam. *The Smart Aleck's Guide to American History*. Delacorte Press, 2009.
- Zeinert, Karen. *Free Speech: From Newspapers to Music Lyrics*. Enslow Publishers, 1995.

Organizations and Websites

American Civil Liberties Union

125 Broad St., 18th Floor
New York, NY 10004
Telephone: 212-549-2500
Website: www.aclu.org

Congress.gov

Website: www.congress.gov

Democratic National Committee

Telephone: 202-863-8000
Website: www.democrats.org

GovSpot

Website: www.govspot.com

League of Women Voters

Telephone: 202-429-1965
Website: www.lwv.org

National Constitution Center

Independence Mall
525 Arch St.
Philadelphia, PA 19106
Telephone: 215-409-6600
Website: www.constitutioncenter.org

National Park Service

1849 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20240
Telephone: 202-208-6843
Website: www.nps.gov

Republican National Committee

Telephone: 202-863-8500
Website: www.gop.com

U.S. Census Bureau

4600 Silver Hill Road
Washington, DC 20233
Telephone: 301-763-4636
Website: www.census.gov

The U.S. Constitution Online

Website: www.usconstitution.net

U.S. Government Publishing Office

Telephone: 202-512-1800
Website: www.gpo.gov

U.S. House of Representatives

Telephone: 202-224-3121
Website: www.house.gov

U.S. Senate

Telephone: 202-224-3121
Website: www.senate.gov

U.S. Supreme Court

Telephone: 202-479-3000
Website: www.supremecourt.gov

USA.gov

Website: www.usa.gov

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20500
Telephone: 202-456-1414
Website: www.whitehouse.gov

Acknowledgments

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