

GOOD CITIZENS IN ACTION: RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND JURY DUTY



TIME

60-75 Minutes

STANDARDS

WV SS.4.2 and WV ELA 4.4

TOPIC

Rights & Responsibilities

GRADE

4th Grade

LEARNING OUTCOMES



Civics: I can identify and explain at least three rights and responsibilities of U.S. citizens using evidence from informational and literary texts. They will compare examples such as voting and jury duty and demonstrate understanding through discussion and a completed graphic organizer (SS.4.2).



ELA: I can refer to details and examples in both texts to answer who, what, when, where, why, and how questions. They will use academic vocabulary in written and oral responses and complete a bubble map to show connections between main ideas and supporting details (ELA 4.4).

MATERIALS

- Printed [SS.4.2 Text & Text Dependent Questions](#)
- Printed [Bubble Map Graphic Organizer](#)
- "[American Government - Jury Duty](#)" story and [comprehension questions](#)
- Chart paper or whiteboard
- Markers or crayons
- Sentence stems (e.g., "I think ___ is a responsibility because...")
- Optional: highlighters for text marking

VOCABULARY

- **diverse**- Having many different kinds of people or things.
- **responsibilities**- Things you are expected to do because of your role or position.
- **participate**- To take part in something.
- **government**- The group of people who make laws and decisions for a country or state.
- **assemble**- To come together in a group.
- **accuse**- To say someone has done something wrong or illegal.
- **decision**- A choice made after thinking about different options.
- **defendant**- The person who is accused or sued in court.
- **evidence**- Information that helps prove something is true or false.

1) VOCABULARY WARM-UP & ENGAGEMENT (10-15 MINUTES)

- Project or hand out the vocabulary lists from both texts:
 - diverse, responsibilities, participate, government, assemble, accuse, decision, defendant, evidence
- Read the words aloud together. Use hand motions or visual cards to match meanings.
- Complete the syllable sort or "how well do I know these?" self-check chart from the Jury Duty vocabulary (page 4).
- Optional: Have students act out vocabulary terms or draw a simple symbol for each word in their notebooks

2) READ-ALoud AND TEXT WALKTHROUGH: "AMERICAN GOVERNMENT - JURY DUTY" (15 MINUTES)

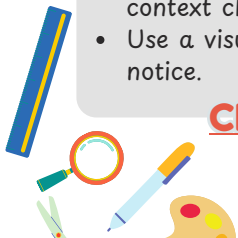
- Conduct a teacher read-aloud (or shared reading) of the Jury Duty story (pages 1-2).
- Stop after key paragraphs to ask:
 - "What is the narrator asked to do?"
 - "Why is it important to be unbiased?"
 - "What are some rules the jurors have to follow?"
- Highlight vocabulary in context and prompt students to infer meanings using context clues (e.g., "deliberate," "unbiased").
- Use a visual anchor: Display the image of the courtroom and ask what they notice.

If this reading is too challenging for your students, we recommend using these resources and their transcripts:

[Jury Duty](#)

[The Rights & Responsibilities of a U.S. Citizen](#)

CLICK HERE FOR SUMMARY & EXTENSION ACTIVITIES, DIFFERENTIATION, AND ASSESSMENT IDEAS



3) COMPREHENSION DISCUSSION + TEXT-DEPENDENT QUESTIONS (15 MINUTES)

- Assign 2–3 questions from the multiple choice and short answer comprehension pages (pages 5–7).
- Practice using the strategy “Prove it with the text”—students highlight or underline the part of the story that helped them answer.
- Provide sentence stems for answering questions (e.g., “I think the answer is ___ because the text says ___.”).
- Students may respond in writing or turn-and-talk before writing.

4) INFORMATIONAL TEXT READING: RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES (15–20 MINUTES)

- **Before reading:** Ask students to predict what rights or responsibilities they’ll learn about.
- Read or partner-read the informational passage from SS.4.2 Text & Text Dependent Questions.
- **During reading:** Use a “Stop & Jot” method—students write or draw one responsibility or right they hear every few paragraphs.
- **After reading:** Create a class anchor chart with two columns: Rights and Responsibilities.
Examples:
 - Rights: freedom of speech, religion, fair trial
 - Responsibilities: obeying the law, voting, helping others

5) COMPARE THE TWO TEXTS (5–7 MINUTES)

- Ask:
 - “How did the story show the responsibility of a citizen?”
 - “Which rights from the (SS.4.2) reading were mentioned or shown in the jury duty story?”
- Students can answer aloud, with a partner, or write on sticky notes to post on the anchor chart.

6) GRAPHIC ORGANIZER: BUBBLE MAP (15 MINUTES)

- Distribute the Bubble Map Graphic Organizer.
- In the center: “We have responsibilities like obeying the law, participating in our government, and helping our community.”
- Students fill in surrounding bubbles with:
 - Vocabulary words from either text
 - Concepts (jury duty, voting, laws, kindness, fair trial)
 - Two visuals (draw a courtroom, flag, ballot box, etc.)
- In the writing section below, students complete the prompt:
 - “___ connects to the reading because ____.”
 - Provide sentence stems or examples on the board.

7) SHARE & REFLECT (5–10 MINUTES)

- Students pair up and share their favorite bubble map connection.
- Ask for 3–4 volunteers to present one bubble aloud to the class.
- Wrap up by revisiting the essential question:
- “What does it mean to be a responsible citizen?”