

## Citizenship in Action

**Subject and Grade Level: Social Studies Gr 2-4**  
**Time: 80-100 minutes**

**Guiding Question:** How can you be a good citizen in your school or community?

### Overview

Young children can take meaningful actions in their schools and communities, setting them on a lifelong path of engaged citizenship. In this lesson, students will learn about citizenship, explore examples, and consider how they can take action to be effective citizens in their community.

### Objectives

#### Knowledge

- Students will understand the citizenship roles they can have in their schools and communities.

#### Skills

- Students will identify ways they can become good citizens in their communities.
- Students will create an action plan to bring about a change.

#### Dispositions

- Students will recognize the importance of being a good citizen in their school and community.

### Wisconsin Model Academic Standards

- C.4.1 Identify and explain the individual's responsibilities to family, peers and the community, including the need for civility and respect for diversity. (CCSS C 4.5 Explain how to be a good citizen in a community.)

### Wisconsin Disciplinary Literacy Standards

Speaking and Listening Gr.3 Comprehension and Collaboration

- 1. Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on Grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

### Materials

- Whiteboard, chalkboard, or chart paper for anchor chart, or copies of *The 5 Ws's of Citizenship*
- Copy of Children's Book: City Green by DyAnne DiSalvo-Ryan, or another citizenship themed children's book of your choice.
- Copies of *Our Citizenship Plan* for each pair/group
- Projector, computer or TV to play WisEye interview with Will Allen of Growing Power in Milwaukee

### Plan of Instruction/Lesson Procedures

1. INTRODUCE: Building on previous discussions and lessons on community, introduce the topic of being a better citizen. Citizenship means taking action to help make the community you live in a better place for everyone. Relevant introductory questions include; What does it look like? Who does it involve? Where and when does this happen? Why is it important? How can you become a better citizen? (5-10-minutes)
2. BRAINSTORM: Present the anchor chart on citizenship (*The 5 W's of Citizenship*) and ask students to provide specific ideas about how they can be good citizens. Aim for a list of ten ideas, added to the "HOW" section of the chart. If students have a hard time coming up with ideas, prompt them to think of community problems that they could help solve through their own actions. (10 minutes)
3. READ: Read "City Green" by Anne DiSalvo-Ryan (or another citizenship-themed book of your choice). Apply the 5 Ws of citizenship to the book. *Who was acting as a good citizen? Why did they see the need to act? What did they do? When and where did they do it?* (20 minutes)
4. WATCH: Watch the [WisEye video clip](#), from a longer interview with Will Allen of Growing Power in Milwaukee. (Allen started Growing Power to provide healthy fresh produce to urban areas, to help kids learn about where their food comes from, to provide jobs and training, and to demonstrate innovative techniques in sustainable agriculture.) (4 minutes)
5. REVIEW: After watching, again review the 5 Ws related to the video. *Who was acting as a good citizen? Why did they see the need to act? What did they do? When and where did they do it?* Edit the anchor chart to clarify or add specific new ideas on how to be a good citizen, based on the book, interview, and other new ideas. (10 minutes)
6. PLAN: In pairs or table groups, instruct students to choose one idea from the anchor chart, or generate a new idea, for citizen action that they could actually accomplish in school or in the community. They should discuss and record the 5 Ws related to their idea on the *Our Citizenship Plan* worksheet, and prepare to present their plan. Every student should be involved in the presentation. (10 minutes)
7. PRESENT: Give each group 2 minutes to share their idea with the class. Record each plan on the board or post worksheets, and number each plan. (20 minutes)

### Assessment

OPTION 1- Vote and Take Action: Be sure to tell students to pay attention and ask questions during the presentation, since they'll be voting on the plan they like best.

1. Voting is an important part of citizenship, allowing each person an equal voice. After all students have presented, hold a vote on which idea the class wants to pursue together by providing each student with a piece of paper and having them write down the number of the idea they want to enact. The vote is a secret ballot, just like in a real election, so students should not write their names on the paper. Have them deposit their "ballot" in a "ballot box" and ask for two volunteers to tally the ballots.
2. Once you have determined which plan will be implemented, ask students to write a paragraph addressing one or all of the following questions:
  - a. Why do you think this is valuable to the community?
  - b. Who will this project benefit?

- c. How can you contribute to this action?
3. Implement the plan, as you are able!

OPTION 2- Reflect

After students have presented, each student will choose one plan that they like best, it could be their own or another student's plan. Have them create a small poster with a picture or collage showing the citizenship action, and attach a paragraph describing the plan and answering one of the following questions;

- a. Why do you think this is valuable to the community?
- b. Who will this project benefit?
- c. How can you contribute to this action?

# The 5 W's of Citizenship

**Why:** Make our classroom, school, town, and state better

**What:** Take responsibility and action for our community

**Who:** All of us

**When:** Anytime

**Where:** School, home, in town or anywhere.

**How:** (student ideas)

# *Our Citizenship Plan*

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Names \_\_\_\_\_

**Why** do we need to take action?

**What** will we do?

**Who** will be involved?

**When** will we do it?

**Where** will we do it?

**How** will we know if we were successful?