



# Somerville Public Schools

---

Office of Curriculum and Instruction

## **Civics in Modern America**

### **Elective**

Students in Civics in Modern America collaborate in order to study the key components of being an effective citizen in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century through both global and local perspectives. In order to do this, students will analyze the structure and function of our democratic government- on the local, state, and national levels. Students will analyze key documents that have helped establish these governments and apply learned concepts to current affairs in our world. Students will develop key skills in analysis, synthesis, and application when evaluating key initiatives within the US government at all levels. Lastly, students will research current public policy issues, evaluate current policies put forth by government to address these issues, and develop their own viable solutions using public policy as a platform for reform.

*Adopted by the Somerville Board of Education on November 22, 2016*

**Civics in Modern America**

**Grades 11 - 12**

<b>Month/ Marking Period</b>	<b>September/February</b>	<b>October/March</b>	<b>November/April</b>	<b>December/May</b>	<b>January/June</b>
<b>*2016 New Jersey Student Learning Standards</b>	RH. 11-12. 1-10; WHST. 11-12. 1-10; SL.11-12. 1-6 Technology: 8.1.12.A.3	RH. 11-12. 1-10; WHST. 11-12. 1-10; SL.11-12. 1-6 Technology: 8.1.12.A.3	RH. 11-12. 1-10; WHST. 11-12. 1-10; SL.11-12. 1-6 Technology: 8.1.12.A.3	RH. 11-12. 1-10; WHST. 11-12. 1-10; SL.11-12. 1-6 Technology: 8.1.12.A.3	RH. 11-12. 1-10; WHST. 11-12. 1-10; SL.11-12. 1-6 Technology: 8.1.12.A.3
<b>2014 New Jersey Social Studies Student Learning Standards (NJSLS)/ Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)</b>	6.1.8.A.3.b, 6.1.8.A.3.c, 6.1.8.A.3.d, 6.1.8.A.3.g, 6.1.4.D.5, 6.1.12.A.14.b  Standards found within the Social Studies Skills Table of NJSLS for Social Studies.	6.1.12.A.2.b, 6.1.12.A.13.a  Standards found within the Social Studies Skills Table of NJSLS for Social Studies.	6.1.12.A.2.b  Standards found within the Social Studies Skills Table of NJSLS for Social Studies.	Standards found within the Social Studies Skills Table of NJSLS for Social Studies.	6.1.12.A.2.a  Standards found within the Social Studies Skills Table of NJSLS for Social Studies.
<b>Essential Question:</b>	<u><i>Foundations of the Federal Government</i></u> What is the purpose/function of the federal government?	<u><i>New Jersey State Government</i></u> What is the purpose/function state government?	<u><i>Local Government/Public Policy</i></u> What is the purpose/function of local government?	<u><i>Action Research</i></u> How can an individual inspire change?	<u><i>Global Citizenry</i></u> What does it mean to be an effective citizen?
<b>Content:</b>	Declaration of Independence, US Constitution, Structure and Function of Federal Government	NJ State Constitution, Structure and Function of NJ State Government	Related materials associated .	Content will be focused on relevant public policy of the students choosing.	US Constitution, UN Declaration of Human Rights.
<b>Skills and Topics:</b>	- Recognize pertinent topics within history and civic development. - Analyze how political interests, factions, and individual choices of those in politics affect the political system, democracy, and individual rights historically and currently for shared and differentiated characteristics and themes.	- Analyze the branches of government, their functions, and powers and their relationship to developed understandings of personal liberties.  -Recognize pertinent topics within history and civic development. - Critically analyze content area and take a creative approach to tackling the issues.	- Recognize pertinent topics within history and civic development. - Critically analyze content area and take a creative approach to tackling the issues.  - Advancing social and historical competency in order to be able to work cooperatively with their peers.	- Recognize pertinent topics within history and civic development. - Critically analyze content area and take a creative approach to tackling the issues.  - Advancing social and historical competency in order to be able to work cooperatively with their peers.	- Understand the foundational impact globalization has on the entire world. -Understand the malleability of the term “citizen” through the multitude of factors and perspectives of the individual society. - Critically analyze content area and take a creative approach to tackling the issues.

	<p>-Apply introductory knowledge toward deeper levels of critical thought.</p> <p>- Advancing social and historical competency in order to be able to work cooperatively with their peers.</p> <p>-Critically analyze content area and take a creative approach to tackling the issues.</p> <p>-Research and Analyze current events related to applicable content.</p>	<p>Advancing social and historical competency in order to be able to work cooperatively with their peers.</p> <p>-Research and Analyze current events related to applicable content.</p>	<p>-Research and Analyze current events related to applicable content.</p>	<p>-Research and Analyze current events related to applicable content.</p>	<p>-Research and Analyze current events related to applicable content.</p>
--	--	--	--	--	--

<b>Integration of Technology:</b>	<a href="http://www.state.nj.us/education/">http://www.state.nj.us/education/</a> , content-related websites, Internet, Web Quests, ThinkQuest, wireless laptop computers, interactive maps, iPads, SMART Boards, Google apps, Google Docs, prezis, wikis, VoiceThread, video streaming, podcasting
<b>Writing:</b>	Open-ended responses, conclusions and analysis of exploratory activities
<b>Formative Assessments:</b>	Oral presentation, multimedia presentations, self-assessments, peer assessments, scoring rubric, benchmark assessments
<b>Summative Assessments:</b>	Section quizzes, unit investigations, reports, presentations, benchmark assessments
<b>Performance Assessments:</b>	Oral reports, debates, re-enactments, dramatizations, multimedia presentations
<b>21<sup>st</sup> Century College and Career Readiness</b>	CRP 1, 4, 7, 9, 12 9.2.12.C.1, 9.2.12.C.4, 9.2.12.C.5, 9.2.12.C.7
<b>Resources</b>	magazines, periodicals, newspapers, professional journals, maps, videos, CDs, YouTube, culturally-authentic documents, teacher-created resources
<b>Modifications and Accommodations</b>	<p>Adjustable Lexile level on all articles, daily reference to class outline (timeline), multisensory approach (video, infographics, audio, etc), graphic organizers, web-based curriculum allows for flexible completion of assignments, project-based learning, endless possibilities to expand on content, and differentiated capstone project.</p> <p>Intervention - Teachers will address intervention needs by using the following tools/strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer-assisted instruction</li> <li>• Instructional Level - Teachers will utilize texts that stretch the students' instructional level. Differentiated materials may be found in the book room and Newsela.com.</li> <li>• Text to Speech (Speak It!)</li> <li>• Book room/book talks</li> </ul> <p>Enrichment/Gifted-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Book room/book talks</li> <li>• Tired graphic organizers to add complex layers</li> <li>• Raise levels of intellectual demands</li> <li>• Differentiate content, process or product depending on students' readiness, interests and/or learning styles</li> <li>• expanded open-ended questions</li> </ul> <p>ELL Students-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sheltered Instruction Strategies</li> <li>• Text to Speech (Speak It!)</li> <li>• Discovery Education Techbook (English/Spanish)</li> </ul> <p>Special Education-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• IEP accommodations and modifications</li> <li>• Extra time as needed</li> <li>• Repeated directions</li> <li>• Read directions aloud</li> <li>• Additional scaffolding as needed</li> <li>• Modified assignments as needed</li> </ul>

- Guided reading

\*Please note – The noted accommodations and modifications for sub-groups of students are recommended, but teachers are not limited to these resources.

\*2016 New Jersey Student Learning Standards:

RL: Reading Literature	N: Real Number System
RI: Reading Informational Text	A: Algebra
W: Writing	F: Functions
SL: Speaking and Listening	G: Geometry
L: Language	S: Statistics and Probability

## KEY COMPONENTS OF CIVICS IN MODERN AMERICA

Civics in Modern America provides an all-inclusive overview of American Government. While within Civics in Modern America, students will be taught the content and skills necessary to be informed and active citizens. The developed learning objectives will encourage and emphasize student involvement in community service and career exploration through class projects, trips, and outside speakers. The end result will be students who can effectively engage as citizens within their local and global community.

### **Applicable Content-**

### **Content Assessment-**

### **Curriculum Assessment**

Students will construct a comprehensive student portfolio over the course of the curriculum that aims to answer the following questions:

1. How do/don't I identify myself as a citizen of America?
2. How do/don't I identify myself as a citizen of the world?
3. Is there a distinction between the two? Why or Why not?

Students will do (written, oral, or performance based) reflections based on these questions for a given classroom assignment/activity/reading. In addition to these questions, students will be required to include the following in their responses:

1. At least one reference and explanation of a key historical concept/event from their chosen assignment.
2. At least one personal perspective/understanding derived from their chosen historical concept(s)/event(s).
3. Identify at least one way they can further pursue their understanding of their chosen historical concept(s)/event(s).

At the end of each unit, students will write a letter to themselves that summarizes how the unit has/has not affected their identity as a citizen using the same criteria as above.

Grading will be based on peer reviews as well as by the teacher. Teachers should be focused on the progression of student improvement in the following areas.

1. Development of the ability to engage with concepts and materials from assignments/activities/readings in their reflections.
2. Development of a sound and coherent identity in relationship to content/material in class.
3. Development of reflection professionalism.

It is the obligation of each teacher, as a professional, to ensure that students are given the opportunity to complete their reflections in the medium of choice. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the teacher to develop rubrics and grading policies that are inclusive to diverse learners.

### **Critical Thinking-**

**Action Research:**

**“Project Citizen”:** The “Project Citizen” project demands that students use advanced search methods to gather information and evidence from multiple authoritative print and digital sources while maintaining and sustaining their focus on a researchable issue. This reflects our attempt to realize the goals of the NJSLS in an engaging and constructive activity. Project Citizen is an interdisciplinary curricular program that promotes competent and responsible participation in local and state government. The program helps participants learn how to monitor and influence public policy. In the process, they develop support for democratic values and principles, tolerance, and feelings of political efficacy. Students will work collaboratively to identify a public policy problem in their community. They then research the problem, evaluate alternative solutions, develop their own solution in the form of a public policy, and create a political action plan to enlist local or state authorities to adopt their proposed policy. Participants develop a portfolio of their work and present their project in a public hearing showcase before a panel of civic-minded community members.

**Conclusion**

Civics in Modern America provides an opportunity to widen student perspectives and provides them with practice in applying the required knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes of a responsible citizen. The provided materials are rich and designed to promote substantive classroom interaction around essential questions.