

Adult Learning Resource Center  
Arlington Heights, Illinois

# Citizenship Educator Orientation Packet

Revised November 2006



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## ***About This Packet***

The materials included in this packet come from over eight years of teacher workshops and program consultations provided by the Adult Learning Resource Center in the area of citizenship preparation. These materials have been used successfully by teachers and tutors in preparing students for naturalization in the area served by the Chicago District of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Please note that some procedures and practices (such as the use of the *30 Sentences for Dictation/Writing Test*) are followed *only* by the USCIS Chicago District Office.

## **Sections**

- I. Components of Naturalization . . . . . Page 1**  
This section contains the core documents and basic content necessary for citizenship preparation.
- II. Classroom Techniques . . . . . Page 31**  
This section offers effective teaching strategies, techniques, and activities for preparing students to deal with the various aspects of the USCIS naturalization experience.
- III. Citizenship Materials List . . . . . Page 57**  
This document includes a wide range of citizenship resources including textbooks, videos, websites, and more.

Contact the Adult Learning Resource Center for information on upcoming citizenship trainings or see our website at [www.thecenterweb.org/alrc](http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc) .

**Note:** The Naturalization Test is in the process of change. The changes will be announced after the Pilot Testing is done (currently projected to finish in late spring, 2007). The changes to the test will go into effect one year later (most likely late spring, 2008). Therefore, some of the materials and information in this packet will not be correct after that date. To view the progress of the redesign of the citizenship test, visit the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services website often: [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov). Information about the pilot test of the new materials, the new set of history/civics questions, and the new dictation process is posted there.

# I. Components of Naturalization

## *Section Overview*

### Page

**3 Foundations for Citizenship Instructors**

This document contains a list of the skills and knowledge that effective citizenship instructors should possess. Use this to assess your own level of knowledge and to decide which areas you need to develop more. This document can also assist you in choosing which professional development opportunities to take part in.

**5 Should You File for Citizenship Now?**

This is designed to give an overview of citizenship requirements, including eligibility and English language ability. It is designed to help applicants make a decision about whether they are ready to file for citizenship. Advise your students that there may be other considerations, such as special circumstances they may have, which will influence their decision. Note: This document is a product of the Adult Learning Resource Center Citizenship Working Group with funds from the Illinois Refugee & Immigration Citizenship Initiative.

**7 The Citizenship Path**

This diagram provides an overview of the naturalization process. Refer to it while explaining the process to your students.

**8 Understanding The Citizenship Path**

This document provides more information and useful reminders about each step of the naturalization process.

**11 Student Profile**

This 2-page record allows you to keep track of each student's abilities, strengths, and weaknesses. The first page has spaces for notes about the student's English skills and abilities, while the second page has space for notes on any potential problems the student might have. Be sure to keep a Student Profile for each of your students.

**13 Sample Civics Questions by Subject**

This document contains the same sample civics questions grouped by subject area. It will help you teach your students this information in conjunction with lessons on U.S. history.

**17 30 Sentences for Dictation/Writing Test**

Adjudicating Officers have students read and write one of these 30 sentences only in the Chicago USCIS District Office which includes Illinois and Wisconsin. The 30 sentences will only be used until the redesigned naturalization test is implemented (currently scheduled for spring 2008.) Make sure that your students understand the meaning of these sentences, can read them, and can write them when dictated.

18 **30 Sentences for Dictation/Writing Test by Subject**

This list gives the same 30 sentences grouped by subject area.

19 **USCIS Naturalization Interview Components**

This page outlines the different sections of the naturalization interview and shows how adjudicators can present the sections in any order. When giving a mock interview to students, it is very important to practice the components in many different sequences so that students will be able to track what is happening at the actual interview.

20 **Sample Naturalization Interview**

This document gives an overview of how a naturalization interview might occur. Try to recreate the conditions of the actual interview as much as possible when using it with your students. Also, vary the order of the different parts of the sample interview with your students.

30 **Sample Interview Rating Sheet**

This page, developed by the YWCA of Elgin, can be used to judge how well your students are handling the non-verbal aspects of the sample interview, such as eye contact, gestures, confidence, and more.

# Foundations for Citizenship Instructors

*Effective citizenship instructors demonstrate the following skills and knowledge:*

## ***A. Background Knowledge: Teaching Adult Learners***

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1. Have the ability to communicate clearly in English and model effective English language skills.
2. Possess knowledge of adult learning and second language acquisition.
3. Demonstrate cross-cultural awareness and sensitivity for age and gender differences.

## ***B. Content Areas for Citizenship Preparation***

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1. Teach lessons that cover the U.S. history and civics information included in the *USCIS 96 Questions*.
2. Teach lessons that prepare students for the dictation/writing part of the USCIS test.
3. Teach lessons that cover the vocabulary and content of the N-400 application.
4. Conduct mock interviews that closely resemble the conditions of the actual USCIS interview and test.
5. Understand the historical and legal bases for immigration and naturalization.
6. Possess a sound understanding of the application process, the USCIS examination process and government and history.

## ***C. Lesson Planning***

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1. Use a variety of teaching methods and techniques appropriate to the needs and levels of learners.
2. Plan lessons that integrate presentation, practice, application, and review.
3. Recognize the importance of learner roles (family member, worker, community member) in student retention and motivation, and promote learner involvement in community and societal issues.
4. Incorporate learners' experiences and cultural heritage into instruction.

### ***C. Lesson Planning Continued***

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5. Sequence and pace lessons appropriately using a variety of resources and accommodate a range of learning styles.
6. Effectively use technology (including the Internet) as a tool for instruction.

### ***D. Classroom Management***

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1. Manage a multilevel classroom effectively.
2. Group students effectively according to study material and student skill levels.
3. Use cooperative learning structures as appropriate.

### ***E. Assessment***

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1. Work with learners to identify their needs, strengths, and goals.
2. Use results of assessment data on a regular basis to plan lessons, track progress, and manage classes.
3. Modify instruction based on learner feedback and peer evaluation.
4. Monitor student progress to ascertain readiness for the USCIS interview and test.

### ***F. Professional Development***

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1. Keep abreast of updates and changes in the USCIS naturalization procedures.
2. Engage in a variety of ESL/Citizenship professional development activities and integrate new skills and knowledge into lesson planning.

### ***G. Provide Learner Guidance and Referral***

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1. Know how to access information about community resources, especially immigration legal services for naturalization applicants.
2. Share information with students and colleagues about educational resources, opportunities, and support services.



## Should You File for Citizenship Now?

If you are 18 or older and have been a lawful permanent resident for over 5 years (or 3 years if married to a U.S. citizen), answer these questions before filing.



## Do You Need Legal Assistance?

	YES	NO
Have you traveled out of the U.S. for more than 6 months at any time during the past 5 years (or past 3 years if married to a U.S. citizen)?		
Have you been out of the U.S. for more than a total of 30 months during the past 5 years (or for more than 18 months during the past 3 years if married to a U.S. citizen)?		
Have you <b>ever</b> been stopped or arrested by the police or Immigration and Customs Enforcement?		
Have you <b>ever</b> gone to court?		
Have you <b>ever</b> been told by a judge or lawyer that your record was cleared?		
Have you <b>ever</b> registered to vote in the U.S.?		

If you answered “**YES**” to any of the above questions, or if you have other issues that may cause a problem, **DO NOT FILE NOW.**

Contact an agency recognized by the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) for help (see back page) →



## English is Required!

You may only have 6 months or less between filing your application and taking the citizenship test.

	YES	NO
Can you speak <b>English</b> well enough to answer all questions on the citizenship application?		
Can you answer U.S. history/civics questions in <b>English</b> ?		
Can you read a sentence in <b>English</b> ?		
Can you write a sentence that is read to you in <b>English</b> ?		

If you answered “**NO**” to any of the above questions, **DO NOT FILE NOW.**

Call the Illinois Adult Learning Hotline for the location of English and/or Citizenship classes: **1-800-321-9511**

**Operators on duty 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday-Friday. Operators speak English, Spanish and Polish.**

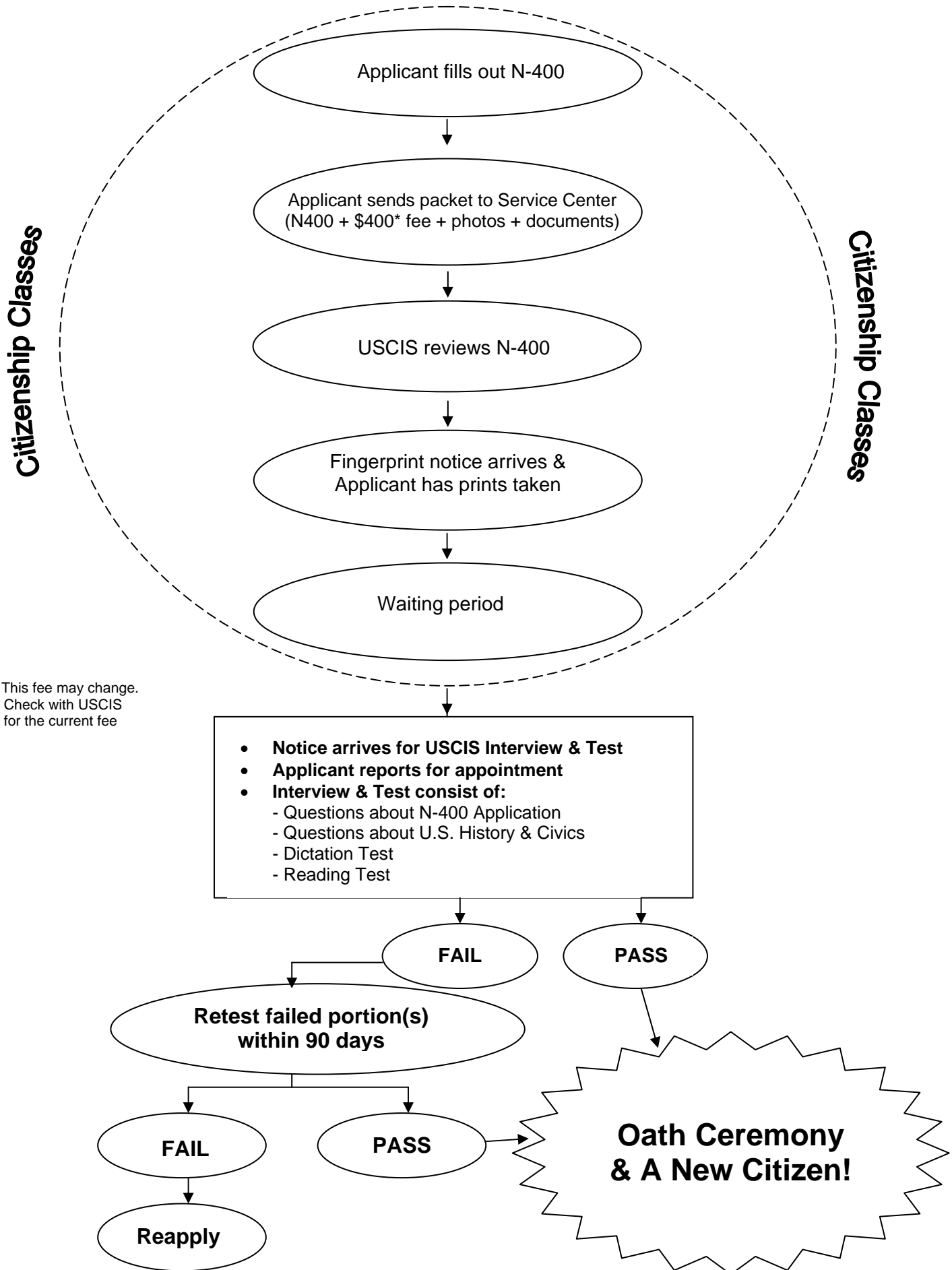
# Accredited Community-Based Organizations in the Chicago Area

This list gives the names of accredited organizations and individuals who are entitled to represent individuals before the USCIS, Immigration Courts, and the Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA).

<p><b>Archdiocese Latin American Committee Immigration and Refugee Services</b> 126 N. Des Plaines Chicago, IL 60661 (312) 427-7078</p> <p><b>Catholic Charities Diocese of Rockford</b> 300 N. Alpine Rockford, IL 61107 (815) 399-1709</p> <p><b>Centro de Información y Progreso</b> 28 N. Grove Avenue Elgin, IL 60120 (847) 695-9050</p> <p><b>Centro Romero</b> 6216 N. Clark Chicago, IL 60660 (773) 508-5300</p> <p><b>ChildServ</b> 1103 Greenwood Avenue Waukegan, IL 60087 (847) 263-2200 (847) 662-0663</p> <p><b>Chinese American Service League</b> 310 W. 24th Place Chicago, IL 60616 (312) 791-0418</p> <p><b>Counseling Center of Lake View</b> 3225 N. Sheffield Avenue Chicago, IL 60657 (773) 549-5886</p>	<p><b>Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society</b> 216 W. Jackson Chicago, IL 60606 (312) 357-4666</p> <p><b>Immigration Project</b> 1320 Neidringhaus Avenue PO Box 753 Granite City, IL 62040 (618) 452-7018</p> <p><b>InterFaith Refugee and Immigration Ministries</b> 4753 N. Broadway, Suite 401 Chicago, IL 60640 (773) 989-5647</p> <p><b>Latinos Progresando</b> 1624 W.18TH St., 2nd Floor Chicago, IL 60608 (312) 850-0572</p> <p><b>Legal Services Center for Immigrants</b> 111 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 300 Chicago, IL 60604 (312) 341-1070</p> <p><b>Life Span</b> 20 E. Jackson Blvd. Suite 500 Chicago, IL 60604 (312) 408-1210</p> <p><b>National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is Refugee Center</b> 1233 Central Street Evanston, IL 60201 (847) 733-3547</p>	<p><b>Polish American Association</b> 3834 N. Cicero Avenue Chicago, IL 60641 (773) 282-8206 Ext. 353</p> <p><b>Travelers and Immigrants Aid Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center</b> 1817 S. Loomis Chicago, IL 60608 (312) 435-4550</p> <p><b>Travelers and Immigrants Aid Midwest Immigrant and Human Rights Center</b> 208 S. LaSalle St., Suite 1818 Chicago, IL 60604 (312) 660-1370</p> <p><b>United Neighborhood Organization</b> 954 W. Washington, 3rd floor Chicago, IL 60607 (312) 432-6301</p> <p><b>World Relief</b> 3507 W. Lawrence, Suite 206 Chicago, IL 60625 (773) 583-3010</p> <p><b>World Relief DuPage Office</b> 1825 College Avenue, Suite 230 Wheaton, IL 60187 (630) 462-7566</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 10px; padding: 10px; background-color: #f0f0f0; margin-top: 20px;"> <p><b>Note:</b> This list is from <a href="http://www.uscis.gov">www.uscis.gov</a> and is current as of June, 2006. Check the website for future changes.</p> </div>
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# The Citizenship Path

Nov. 2006



# Understanding The Citizenship Path

The following tips are just a basic overview of the naturalization process. For more information refer to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) website at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) and *A Guide to Naturalization*, Publication M-476 which can be printed from the website.

**Note:** People need special training before they can help students file for citizenship. Teachers should not be helping students file but should be familiar with the process so that they refer their students to places that can help them file.

## **Applicant Fills Out the N-400**

The N-400 is the Application for Naturalization. It can be printed out at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov)

### ***Keep in mind:***

- Applicants should make sure that they are eligible for naturalization before applying in order to avoid wasting time and money as well as risking legal repercussions. Refer to *A Guide to Naturalization* for comprehensive eligibility requirements or check out the basic requirements on the USCIS website.
- All sections of the N-400 must be filled out accurately and completely.
- In many programs, volunteers with special training help applicants fill out the form. The Illinois New Americans Initiative offers many workshops where students can go to get help filing their N-400. Check out the schedule at [www.becomeacitizennow.org/](http://www.becomeacitizennow.org/)
- All applicants should make a copy of their N-400 to keep before they send it in.

## **Applicant Sends Packet to Service Center**

The applicant must submit the completed N-400 along with the fee, photographs, and any necessary documents to the appropriate regional Service Center.

### ***Keep in mind:***

- The application fees are subject to change. Check the USCIS website for the current cost.
- Information about where to send the application and about the photo specifications are at the USCIS website.
- Applicants will need to submit several documents with their N-400. The exact documents needed depend on the applicants' circumstances. Refer to the "Document Checklist" at the end of *A Guide to Naturalization*.

## **USCIS Reviews N-400**

After the application is received, the documents and photographs are checked for the proper format, the applicant's check is processed, and a file is begun for each applicant.

### ***Keep in mind:***

- This process can take anywhere from a few months to over a year.
- To check the average processing times for various forms, go to <https://egov.immigration.gov/cris/jsps/ptimes.jsp;jsessionid=bq1u2-i5C397> Then select the appropriate District Office or Service Center and look up the processing times for the various forms.

## **Fingerprint Notice Arrives & Applicant Has Prints Taken**

USCIS will send the applicant a letter telling when and where to get fingerprinted. Applicants will need to take that letter, their permanent residence card, and another acceptable form of ID with them. Fingerprints are taken electronically.

## **Waiting Period**

During this waiting period, USCIS might need additional documents from the applicant. If so, it will send a letter to the applicant. When everything is ready, USCIS will send an interview notice, called the "Request for Applicant to Appear for Naturalization Initial Interview" that tells the date, time, and place of the interview.

### ***Keep in mind:***

- It is extremely important that applicants notify USCIS right away if they move so that notices from USCIS will go to the right address. Applicants who have already filed can call 1-800-375-5283. They also must file form AR-11, Change of Address, which is available at the USCIS website. This can also be done online at: <https://egov.immigration.gov/crisgwi/go?action=coa>
- Applicants can find out about the status of their cases at <https://egov.immigration.gov/cris/jsps/index.jsp>

## **USCIS Interview and Test**

The applicant receives the interview notice and reports to the Citizenship Office or other designated place at the time and date given in the letter.

### ***Keep in mind:***

- Applicants will be asked questions about the information on their N-400 and may need to update the answers and clarify when necessary.
- Applicants will also be asked questions from the *USCIS 96 Questions* on US history and government.
- Applicants will be asked to read aloud from selected material and write one or two dictated sentences. Different USCIS districts use different material for the reading and writing tests.

## **Results of the Interview and Test**

At the end of the interview, applicants will receive Form N-652, which has the results of their test.

### ***Keep in Mind:***

- If applicants fail a portion of the test, another interview will be scheduled within 30-60 days of the first one. If applicants fail a second time, their application will be denied. Then they must reapply, submit all the paperwork, and pay the fees again.

## **Oath Ceremony**

If citizenship is granted, USCIS will send form N-445, "Notice of Naturalization Oath Ceremony," that tells the place, date, and time of the ceremony.

### ***Keep in mind:***

- Applicants must arrive at the ceremony early to check in.
- At the ceremony, applicants must turn in their permanent residence cards and receive their Certificates of Naturalization.
- Applicants must take the Oath of Allegiance during the ceremony.

# Student Profile

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **A. Language**

Instructor: Keep a record of each citizenship student's language strengths and weaknesses so that you will know which areas to focus on. Make notes next to each of the skills and competencies below.

### **Skill Areas** *(Note skill levels and any areas in need of special attention.)*

Speaking

Listening

Reading

Writing

### **Literacy** *(Note general mastery and needs.)*

Numbers

Alphabet

Dictation

## **B. Special Life Situations**

Instructor: Find out and make a note below about any potential problems the student may have during the naturalization process. Many of these areas are very sensitive. However, students must be prepared to discuss them during the naturalization interview. In some cases, students may need to talk to a legal representative before filing.

Name changes

Disability/waiver

Trips out of country – too many, too long

Marriages/divorces

Spousal problems

Non-support of spouse or children

Children - special circumstances (such as death, adoption, step-child)

Mental problems

Communist Party membership

Tax problems or debt

Crimes/arrests/jail/deportment

Drinking or drug problems

Military service

Reservations about taking the oath

Other

## **Sample Civics Questions by Subject (Taken from USCIS 96 Questions)**

### **U.S. Flag**

1. What are the colors of our flag?
3. How many stars are there on our flag?
4. What color are the stars on our flag?
2. What do the stars on the flag mean?
7. What colors are the stripes on the flag?
5. How many stripes are there on our flag?
6. What do the stripes on the flag represent?

### **U.S. Beginning**

50. Why did the Pilgrims come to America?
69. What is the name of the ship that brought the Pilgrims to America?
68. Who helped the Pilgrims in America?
53. What holiday was celebrated for the first time by American colonists?

### **U.S. Independence**

10. Independence Day celebrates independence from whom?
11. What country did we fight during the Revolutionary War?
70. What were the 13 original states of the United States called before they were states?
40. What were the original 13 states?
41. Who said, "Give me liberty or give me death"?
56. What are some of the basic beliefs of the Declaration of Independence?
54. Who was the main writer of the Declaration of Independence?
55. When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?
  9. What do we celebrate on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July?
12. Who was the first President of the United States?
66. Which President was the first Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Army and Navy?
57. What is the national anthem of the United States?
58. Who wrote The Star-Spangled Banner?
65. Which President is called the "Father of our Country?"

### **US Civil War**

62. Who was President during the Civil War?
63. What did the Emancipation Proclamation do?

## **Twentieth Century Happenings**

90. Name one of the purposes of the United Nations.
42. Name some countries that were our enemies during World War II.
45. Who was Martin Luther King, Jr.?
8. How many states are there in the Union (the United States)?
43. What was the 49<sup>th</sup> state added to our Union (the United States)?
67. What was the 50<sup>th</sup> state to be added to our Union (the United States)?

## **The Constitution**

17. What is the Constitution?
73. In what year was the Constitution written?
76. What is the introduction to the Constitution called?
18. What do we call changes to the Constitution?
92. Can the Constitution be changed?
19. How many changes, or amendments, are there to the Constitution?
72. Name the amendments that guarantee or address voting rights.
74. What are the first 10 amendments to the Constitution called?
35. What is the Bill of Rights?
87. Where does freedom of speech come from?
75. Whose rights are guaranteed by the Constitution and the Bill of Rights?
80. Name one right or freedom guaranteed by the first amendment.
89. What kind of government does the United States have?
96. How many branches are there in the United States government?
20. What are the three branches of our government?
59. What is the minimum voting age in the United States?
34. What is the supreme law of the United States?

## **Legislative Branch**

21. What is the legislative branch of our government?
77. Who meets in the U.S. Capitol building?
22. What makes up Congress?
95. What is the United States Capitol?
23. Who makes the Federal laws in the United States?
71. What group has the power to declare war?
24. Who elects Congress?
25. How many Senators are there in Congress?
26. For how long do we elect each Senator?
27. Name two Senators from your state.
28. How many voting members are there in the House of Representatives?
29. For how long do we elect each member of the House of Representatives?
84. How many times may a Senator or Congressman be re-elected?
85. What are the two major political parties in the United States today?
47. Why are there 100 Senators in the United States Senate?

## **Executive Branch**

86. What is the executive branch of our government?
30. Who is the head of the Executive Branch of the U.S. Government?
13. Who is the President of the United States today?
14. Who is the Vice President of the United States today?
78. What is the name of the President's official home?
94. What is the White House?
79. Where is the White House located?
15. Who elects the President of the United States?
82. In what month do we vote for the President?
31. For how long is the President elected?
44. How many full terms can a President serve?
46. What are some of the requirements to be eligible to become President?
83. In what month is the new President inaugurated?
16. Who becomes President if the President dies?
38. Who becomes President if both the President and Vice President die?
60. Who signs bills into law?
64. What special group advises the President?
81. Who is Commander-in-Chief of the United States military?

## **Judicial Branch of U.S. Government**

32. What is the highest part of the Judiciary Branch of our Government?
61. What is the highest court in the United States?
33. What are the duties of the Supreme Court?
49. How many Supreme Court Justices are there?
48. Who nominates judges for the Supreme Court?
39. Who is Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

## **State and Local Government**

36. What is the capital of the state you live in?
51. What is the executive of a state government called?
37. Who is the current Governor of the state you live in?
52. What is the head executive of a city government called?

## **Citizenship Process**

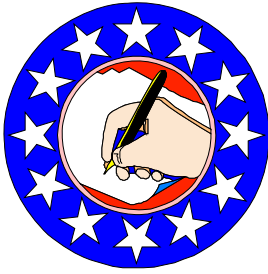
88. What U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services form is used to apply for naturalized citizenship?
91. Name one benefit of being a citizen of the United States.
93. What is the most important right granted to United States citizens?

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## 30 Sentences for Dictation/Writing Test\*

1. The President lives in the White House.
2. The American flag is red, white, and blue.
3. Citizens have the right to vote.
4. The President has the power of veto.
5. There are fifty states in America.
6. The American flag has thirteen stripes.
7. The American flag has fifty stars.
8. The White House is in Washington, DC.
9. America is the land of the free.
10. America is the home of the brave.
11. The House and the Senate are parts of Congress.
12. There are three branches of government.
13. The President is elected every four years.
14. The President must be born in the United States.
15. Many people come to America for freedom.
16. The President signs bills into law.
17. The people have a voice in the government.
18. Congress passes laws in the United States.
19. People in America have the right to freedom.
20. A Senator is elected for six years.
21. The American flag has stars and stripes.
22. Many people have died for freedom.
23. Congress meets in Washington, DC.
24. People vote for the President in November.
25. Only Congress can declare war.
26. Congress is a part of the American government.
27. The President lives in Washington, DC.
28. The stars of the American flag are white.
29. The President must be an American citizen.
30. The stripes of the American flag are red and white.

\* These sentences are used only by the Chicago USCIS District Office. They will be used only until the redesigned naturalization test is implemented (currently anticipated to be in late spring 2008.)



## 30 Sentences for Dictation/Writing Test Arranged by Subject\*

### President

The President lives in the White House.  
The President has the power of veto.  
The President is elected every four years.  
The President must be born in the United States.  
The President signs bills into law.  
The President lives in Washington, DC.  
The President must be an American citizen.

### American Flag

The American flag is red, white, and blue.  
The American flag has thirteen stripes.  
The American flag has fifty stars.  
The American flag has stars and stripes.  
The stars of the American flag are white.  
The stripes of the American flag are red and white

### Congress

The House and the Senate are parts of Congress.  
Congress passes laws in the United States.  
Congress meets in Washington, DC.  
Only Congress can declare war.  
Congress is a part of the American government.

### America

America is the land of the free.  
America is the home of the brave.  
There are fifty states in America

### People

Many people come to America for freedom.  
The people have a voice in the government.  
People in America have the right to freedom.  
Many people have died for freedom.  
People vote for the President in November.

### Other

There are three branches of government.  
Citizens have the right to vote.  
A Senator is elected for six years.  
The White House is in Washington, DC.

\* These sentences are used only by the Chicago USCIS District Office. They will be used only until the redesigned naturalization test is implemented (currently anticipated to be in late spring 2008.)

# USCIS Naturalization Interview Components

The Citizenship Interview and Test consists of several distinct sections. The adjudicator can present these sections in any order he or she wants. This can be difficult for applicants because their anxiety is at a very high level. During these interviews, the applicant tries very hard to understand what the adjudicator is saying and figure out what is expected of him or her.

Citizenship Instructors must prepare applicants for many possible scenarios so that they stand a good chance of comprehending what the adjudicator is asking. Repeated practice of the various steps of the interview in many different orders may give applicants the reassurance needed to orient themselves during the process.

## Components of Interview

- **Introductions and Small Talk:** The adjudicator tells the applicant his/her name and explains what will happen during the interview. Depending on the personality of the officer this segment may vary from a few seconds to 3-4 minutes or more. The adjudicator may also make small talk with the applicant. This small talk helps the adjudicator judge the applicant's English ability, but it is very hard on the applicant because the small talk could be about anything.
- **Verification of identity:** The adjudicator asks the applicant to show documents that prove his/her identity such as: alien registration card, driver's license, state ID card, and/or passport.
- **Truth Oath:** The adjudicator asks the applicant to raise his/her right hand and swear to tell the truth during the interview. The adjudicator may also give commands such as "Please remain standing" or "Please put your things on the middle chair."
- **History/Civics/Literacy Tests:** The adjudicator asks ten questions from the list of *USCIS 96 Questions* for the history/civics test and then has the applicant write one dictated sentence and read a sentence from an approved list.
- **N-400:** The adjudicator asks questions about the candidate's N-400 form. The adjudicator could ask about any part of the N-400, so it is essential that applicants are prepared to discuss it. The adjudicator might ask the applicant to sign or initial parts of the N-400. The applicant also needs to be prepared to update or change any information on the N-400 if necessary.

## Possible Sequencing of Interview Components

These are examples of ways the interview might be organized. There are other possibilities as well.

<b>A.</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introductions and Small Talk</li> <li>2. Verification of identity</li> <li>3. History/Civics/Literacy Tests</li> <li>4. Truth Oath</li> <li>5. N-400</li> </ol>	<b>B.</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Verification of identity</li> <li>2. Introductions and Small Talk</li> <li>3. Truth Oath</li> <li>4. History/Civics/Literacy Tests</li> <li>5. N-400</li> </ol>
<b>C.</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Small Talk</li> <li>2. Verification of identity</li> <li>3. Truth Oath</li> <li>4. Introductions</li> <li>5. N-400</li> <li>6. History/Civics/Literacy Tests</li> </ol>	<b>D.</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Introductions and Small Talk</li> <li>2. Verification of identity</li> <li>3. Truth Oath</li> <li>4. N-400 Parts 1-3</li> <li>5. History/Civics/Literacy Tests</li> <li>6. N-400 Parts 4-14</li> </ol>

# Sample Naturalization Interview

The following sample shows how a typical USCIS interview/test might be conducted. The purpose of this sample is to give citizenship applicants an idea of the **general steps** they will follow. **These are not the exact questions that will be asked.**

**Recommended Process:** Conduct this mock interview in a manner closely resembling the actual USCIS interview experience. Be formal with your student and act like an adjudicator. Also, vary the order of the sections of this sample interview each time you conduct it because USCIS adjudicators can present the sections in any order (see *USCIS Naturalization Interview Components*). Each time you give this interview, change the order of some of the sections.

**History/Civics Questions:** At some point during the USCIS and Test, applicants will be asked ten questions from the *USCIS Sample Questions* list. At the end of this sample interview (pg. 27-29) are three different lists of questions so that you can ask your students different questions each time you give the sample interview. Be sure to also vary the sequence of when you ask these questions. Sometimes possible places to include the ten questions:

- Before you discuss the N-400 with the applicant
- Between Parts 3 and 4 of the N-400
- After discussing the N-400, but before asking the student about the Oath of Allegiance

## Introductions and Small Talk

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*At the USCIS testing facility, the adjudicator calls the applicant's name and leads him/her to an office. There the adjudicator often begins with general conversation, or small talk, to get some idea of the applicant's command of English. If the officer is unable to communicate with the applicant due to insufficient English, the interview will be terminated.*

### **Adjudicator:**

- Hi. I am Officer Smith and I am going to go through your N-400 Citizenship Application with you to verify or check the information. I will also be asking you some U.S. history and civics questions. Do you understand what we will be going through today?
- Do you have any questions before we begin?
- Have you studied for the citizenship test?
- How did you study? What did you do?

## The Truth Oath

---

**Adjudicator:**

- O.K. Let's begin. Please stand and raise your right hand. Do you promise to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

## Verification of Identification

---

**Adjudicator:**

- You can sit down. At this point I have to check your identity. I'd like to see your passport and alien registration card. Give them to me.

## Discussions of the N-400

---

**Adjudicator:**

- What is your full name?
- Spell your last name.
- Have you ever used any other names?
- Do you want to change your name?

N-400 Part 1

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

- How long have you been a permanent resident?
- When did you first come to the U.S.?

N-400 Part 2

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •

- What is your Social Security number?
- Date of birth?
- Where were you born?
- Your marital status?
- Have you ever been divorced?

N-400 Part 3

• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •



**Adjudicator:**

- Have you ever claimed to be a U.S. citizen in writing or any other way?
- Have you ever registered to vote in any Federal, state, or local election in the United States?
- Have you ever voted in any Federal, state, or local election in the United States?
- Since becoming a Lawful Permanent Resident, have you ever failed to file a required Federal, state, or local tax return?
- Do you owe any Federal, state, or local taxes that are overdue?
- Do you have any title of nobility in any foreign country?
- Have you ever been declared legally incompetent or been confined to a mental institution within the last five years?
- Have you ever been a member of, or associated with, any organization, fund, foundation, club or similar group in the U.S.?
- Have you ever been a member of or in any way associated with: the Communist Party? Any other totalitarian party? A terrorist organization?
- What is a “terrorist organization”?
- Have you ever advocated the overthrow of any government by force or by violence?
- Have you ever persecuted (*either directly or indirectly*) any person because of race, religion, national origin, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion?
- Between March 23, 1933, and May 8, 1945, did you work for or associate in any way with: the Nazi government of Germany? Any government in any area (1) occupied by, (2) allied with, or (3) established with the help of the Nazi government of Germany? Any German, Nazi, or S.S. military unit, paramilitary unit, self-defense unit, vigilante unit, citizen unit, police unit, government agency or office, extermination camp, concentration camp, prisoner of war camp, prison, labor camp, or transit camp?

Adjudicator:

- Since becoming a Lawful Permanent Resident of the United States, have you ever called yourself a "nonresident" on a Federal, state, or local tax return?

N-400 Part 10  
Continuous Residence

- Have you ever failed to file a Federal, state, or local tax return because you considered yourself to be a "nonresident"?
- Have you ever been a member of or associated with any organization, association, fund, foundation, party, club, society, or similar group in the United States or in any other place?



- For the purposes of this application, you must answer "Yes" to the following questions, if applicable, even if your records were sealed or otherwise cleared or if anyone, including a judge, law enforcement officer, or attorney, told you that you no longer have a record.

N-400 Part 10  
Good Moral Character

- Have you ever committed a crime or offense for which you were NOT arrested?
- Have you ever been arrested, cited, or detained by any law enforcement officer including USCIS and military officers for any reason?
- Have you ever been charged with committing any crime or offense?
- Have you ever been convicted of a crime or offense?
- Have you ever been placed in an alternative sentencing or a rehabilitative program, for example, diversion, deferred prosecution, withheld adjudication, deferred adjudication?
- Have you ever received a suspended sentence, been placed on probation, or been paroled?
- Have you ever been in jail or prison?
- What is a prison?
- Have you ever:
  - a. been a habitual drunkard?
  - b. been a prostitute, or procured anyone for prostitution?
  - c. sold or smuggled controlled substances, illegal drugs or narcotics?
  - d. been married to more than one person at the same time?
  - e. helped anyone enter or try to enter the United States illegally?
  - f. gambled illegally or received income from illegal gambling?
  - g. failed to support your dependents or to pay alimony?

**Adjudicator:**

- Have you ever given false or misleading information to any U.S. government official while applying for any immigration benefit or to prevent deportation, exclusion, or removal?
- What does “deportation” mean?
- Have you ever lied to any U.S. government official to gain entry or admission into the United States?
- Are removal, exclusion, rescission or deportation proceedings pending against you?
- Have you ever been removed, excluded, or deported from the United States?
- Have you ever been ordered to be removed, excluded, or deported from the United States?
- Have you ever applied for any kind of relief from removal, exclusion, or deportation?

N-400 Part 10  
Removal, Exclusion,  
Deportation Proceedings



- Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces?
- Have you ever left the United States to avoid being drafted into the U.S. Armed Forces?
- Have you ever applied for any kind of exemption from military service in the U.S. Armed Forces?
- Have you ever deserted from the U.S. Armed Forces?

N-400 Part 10  
Military Service



- Are you a male who lived in the United States at any time between your 18th and 26th birthdays in any status except as a lawful nonimmigrant?

N-400 Part 10  
Selective Service



- Do you support the Constitution and form of government of the United States?
- Please read the Oath to yourself. Do you understand the Oath of Allegiance to the United States?
- Are you willing to take the full Oath of Allegiance to the United States?

N-400 Part 10  
Oath Requirements

**Adjudicator:**

- In your own words, tell me what the Oath of Allegiance says.
- If the law requires it, are you willing to bear arms on behalf of the United States?
- What does “bear arms” mean?
- If the law requires it, are you willing to perform noncombatant services in the U.S. Armed Forces?
- If the law requires it, are you willing to perform work of national importance under civilian direction?
- Please sign your N-400 and check that the spelling of your name is correct on the form. Also, sign your photos along the side.
- Congratulations, you have passed all parts of the citizenship test and interview. You will receive a notice of an Oath Ceremony where you will be issued a Certificate of Naturalization.

**Note:** *This document was created through a collaboration of the Immigration & Naturalization Service, Chicago (presently U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services); and Illinois citizenship educators working with the Adult Learning Resource Center, Des Plaines.*

At some point during the interview, use one of these sets of questions or randomly pick ten questions from flashcards to ask the student.

## History/Civics Questions A

**Adjudicator:** All right. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about U.S. history and government.

1.	How many stripes are there on our flag?
2.	Who said, "Give me liberty or give me death"?
3.	When was the Declaration of Independence adopted?
4.	Where is the White House located?
5.	Who becomes president if the president dies?
6.	How many Supreme Court justices are there?
7.	What is the name of the ship that brought the Pilgrims to America?
8.	What are the two major political parties in the United States today?
9.	How many changes, or amendments, are there to the Constitution?
10.	What is the legislative branch of our government?

**Note:** Applicants must get at least six right to pass. Sometimes, if the applicant gets the first six right, the adjudicator will only ask six. Other times, he/she might ask all ten.

### Writing/Dictation Test

**Adjudicator:** Now I'd like you to write the sentence that I say. "A senator is elected for six years." *Say the sentence slowly 1-3 times*

### Reading Test

**Adjudicator:** I'm going to show you a sentence now. Read it aloud. *Show the applicant a sentence from the USCIS 30 Sentences*

At some point during the interview, use one of these sets of questions or randomly pick ten questions from flashcards to ask the student.

## History/Civics Questions B

**Adjudicator:** All right. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about U.S. history and government.

1.	What do the stars on the flag mean?
2.	How many voting members are in the House of Representatives?
3.	What were the 13 original states of the United States called before they were states?
4.	Who is the commander-in-chief of the United States military?
5.	What do we call changes to the Constitution?
6.	What is the highest part of the judiciary branch of our government?
7.	How many times may a senator or congressman be re-elected?
8.	Who elects the president of the United States?
9.	Who was Martin Luther King, Jr.?
10.	What are the three branches of our government?

**Note:** Applicants must get at least six right to pass. Sometimes, if the applicant gets the first six right, the adjudicator will only ask six. Other times, he/she might ask all ten.

### Writing/Dictation Test

**Adjudicator:** Now I'd like you to write the sentence that I say. "The people have a voice in the government." *Say the sentence slowly 1-3 times*

### Reading Test

**Adjudicator:** I'm going to show you a sentence now. Read it out loud. *Show the applicant a sentence from the USCIS 30 Sentences*

At some point during the interview, use one of these sets of questions or randomly pick ten questions from flashcards to ask the student.

## History/Civics Questions C

**Adjudicator:** All right. Now I'm going to ask you some questions about U.S. history and government.

1.	What colors are the stripes on the flag?
2.	What are the duties of the Supreme Court?
3.	Who was the main writer of the Declaration of Independence?
4.	In what month do we vote for the President?
5.	What is the Constitution?
6.	Who helped the pilgrims in America?
7.	What U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services form is used to apply for naturalized citizenship?
8.	What makes up congress?
9.	What kind of government does the United States have?
10.	Who elects congress?

**Note:** Applicants must get at least six right to pass. Sometimes, if the applicant gets the first six right, the adjudicator will only ask six. Other times, he/she might ask all ten.

### Writing/Dictation Test

**Adjudicator:** Now I'd like you to write the sentence that I say. "The White House is in Washington, D.C." *Say the sentence slowly 1-3 times*

### Reading Test

**Adjudicator:** I'm going to show you a sentence now. Read it aloud. *Show the applicant a sentence from the USCIS 30 Sentences*

# Sample Interview Rating Sheet

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** This is one way to help your students prepare for the interview. It is not used by USCIS. It was created by teachers at the YWCA in Elgin, Illinois.

**Instructor:** Go through the Sample Citizenship Interview with the student just as if you were the USCIS adjudicator. In addition to noting how well the student handled the parts of the Interview and Test, make notes on the aspects below.

How well did the applicant ...	needs to improve	good	great
- smile?			
- use eye contact?			
- appear positive and friendly?			
- answer questions well?			
- answer questions clearly?			
- answer questions promptly?			
- use appropriate body language to indicate understanding?			
- write with acceptable accuracy?			
- ask for clarification if needed?			
- ask for repetition if needed?			
- state when he/she didn't understand?			

Overall Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Classroom Techniques

### *Section Overview*

#### Page

33 **Foundations for Citizenship Students**

This document contains a list of the skills and knowledge that citizenship students will need in order to be successful at their naturalization interview and test. Use this list to make sure you design your citizenship classes to meet all of your students' needs.

35 **Pre-Interview Challenges**

This document outlines some of the conversational abilities students will need on the day of the interview. Adjudicating officers often use small talk to gauge an applicant's English ability.

36 **Line Up: Oral Practice Activity**

This activity lets the students practice exchanging personal information such as the kind in the beginning of the N-400. It also gets students moving around the classroom, which is often a good way to motivate adult students who are tired of sitting.

37 **Using Total Physical Response**

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a way to help students understand imperatives. It is especially useful in the citizenship classroom for teaching directions/instructions such as "please stand and raise your right hand."

38 **Answer the Question: A Listening Activity**

At the naturalization interview, students may get an adjudicator who has a very different accent than what they're used to. In addition, students are often very nervous. Consequently, students may not always understand the adjudicator's every word. This activity teaches students how to listen for keywords to understand what is being asked.

39 **Tell Me All About**

The USCIS history/civics questions need to be thoroughly understood, not just memorized. After the students have learned the answers to these questions, this activity asks students "Tell me everything you know about George Washington" to help students focus on the content, not just a memorized answer. This activity contains a page of instructor notes and then 3 pages of student cards to be photocopied and cut out for student use.

- 44 **Numbers Game**  
This game tests students' knowledge of all the history/civics questions that contain numbers, such as how many supreme court justices, senators per state, or members of the house of representatives there are. This activity contains an instructor note page and a student page.
- 46 **Teaching a Reading Passage**  
This page gives several strategies for using reading passages with students.
- 47 **George Washington – First President**  
This is a reading and writing activity with basic information about George Washington. It contains an instructor note page and a student page.
- 51 **Teaching Dictation Skills**  
This document gives some techniques for teaching dictation skills to students. Dictation is an important part of the naturalization interview.
- 52 **Word Cards Activity**  
This activity is good for basic reading and listening practice. It helps students with reading, word order, and sentence development. This activity contains a page of instructor notes and then a sample sentence with one word per card to be photocopied and cut out for student use.
- 54 **Oath of Allegiance**  
This page provides some strategies for helping students deal with questions about the Oath at the naturalization interview.
- 55 **What Does the Oath Mean?**  
This page breaks the oath down into sections. Towards the end of a citizenship course, the teacher can guide the class to rephrase each part of the oath in simple English.
- 56 **Using Videos in the Citizenship Preparation Class**  
This page provides an overview of how videos that show sample interviews can be used effectively in class.

# Foundations for Citizenship Students



Successful applicants need the following skills and knowledge:

## I. Citizenship Process

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- Clear understanding of what will take place on the day of the interview, from responding to their name in the waiting room to receiving the form (N-652) that shows the results of the interview and tests
- Knowledge of what will be expected of them at the interview – use of English, physical actions, and documents that they should have with them

## II. English Language: listening, speaking, reading, and writing

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- Oral skills to understand, answer, and clarify examiner's questions or provide updates and corrections to their N-400 at the interview
- Sufficient literacy to write a sentence dictated in English
- Ability to read aloud one or more sentences in English

## III. History/civics from the *USCIS 96 Questions*

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- Mastery and understanding of all 96 questions beyond mere memorization

## IV. Information from the N-400

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- Understanding of the vocabulary
- Ability to verify and clarify information, even to change information on N-400
- Ability to explain special individual circumstances
- Knowledge of the legal importance of telling the truth under oath and the penalties for omitting or falsifying information

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# Pre-Interview Challenges

## I. Small Talk



Many USCIS adjudicators begin interviews with a period of “small talk.” This is a few minutes of casual conversation that can be on any topic, such as weather, traffic, or time of day. This brief conversation is used as an opportunity for examiners to assess the language ability of the applicant. From the viewpoint of the applicants, this can be one of the most difficult parts of the interview. Without an obvious context to help them, listening comprehension can be very difficult.

One of the best ways to prepare students for small talk is to begin all classes and the start-up period after breaks with non-contextual questions. Possible questions include:

- What did you do last night? – yesterday? – last weekend?
- What did you have for breakfast? – for lunch?
- How did you get here (come here) today?
- Who came with you today?
- Where did you park?

## II. Additional Questions

The citizenship pre-interview assessment may include questions like the following: “Do you know what you are here for today?” or “Do you know why you are here?” or the request, “Tell me what you are here for today.”

Familiarize your students with the questions above and help them generate answers. Possible answers include:

- I got a letter in the mail to come for a test to be a citizen.
- I am here to have an interview to be a U.S. citizen.
- I must take a test to be a citizen.
- I have an appointment to take a test to be a citizen.

Practice these questions and answers in mini-dialogues. Allow students to choose the answer they feel most comfortable with.

## Line Up: Oral Practice Activity

**Goal:** This activity provides students with oral English practice in a cooperative learning situation. It practices personal information questions such as those found in the N-400.

**Notes:** This activity works well in a multi-level class. The students with stronger language skills carry more of the language load while everyone participates. Teach the questions before beginning the activity, especially when working with beginning-level students. This exercise is a very good icebreaker. It is fun and it gets everyone up and talking.

### Process:

*Clearly explain to the group that only English can be used in this activity. The teacher should not direct the line up (except to keep it in English).*

- Ask the class to line up starting at a certain point in the classroom, according to a selected criterion, e.g., distance to place of birth, distance from present home birth date, farthest traveled, family size, number of years in the U.S. or in a certain state.
- Ask students what questions they will need to get the necessary information to select their place in line. Put the questions up on the board and do some choral repetitions.
- After the students have determined their place in line, ask them to explain why they occupy that place with respect to the people on either side of them. *Example: "I am from Bolivia and he is from Chile."*

### Variations & Suggestions:

- This exercise can be effectively used for alphabet and spelling practice. During the naturalization interview, applicants are often asked to spell their names, the names of family members, their place of employment, etc. To practice these skills, ask students to put themselves in alphabetical order according to their first or last names. Have them use questions like, "What is your first/last name?" and "How do you spell it?"
- For more advanced students, have each one introduce the person next to him/her in line. Discuss (and write on the board) facts that should be included in the introduction, such as name, nationality, marital status, years in the U.S., reason that he or she wants to become a citizen, etc. Be sure to teach the questions if students are unsure of them.
- Asking students to line up according to the distance from their home to class can make some helpful travel connections and build an atmosphere of friendship that promotes good attendance.

# Using Total Physical Response

During the interview, applicants will often be issued instructions, particularly when taking the Truth Oath and when Verifying Identity. Total Physical Response (TPR) is a language teaching approach well suited for citizenship students, especially those with lower levels of English. It prepares students to follow commands but also provides a way for them to learn by listening and comprehending first, before they produce the language.

When using TPR in the classroom, keep in mind:

- Teach only seven to ten new words/phrases for each lesson
- Use an action or picture that conveys the meaning of the target word or phrase
- Gradually delay your own response to a word or phrase until the students have tried to follow what you are saying
- Repeat until the students can respond appropriately without any prompting

## Sample Target Words:

hand	put down	raise
right hand	pick up	passport
sit down	stand up	listen

## Sample Target Phrases:

Raise your right hand.	Stand up and raise your right hand.
Show me your passport.	Sit down and pick up your passport.
Pick up your passport.	

## Procedure (repeat each step several times)

Good morning, let's learn some new words.

- Listen (*put hand to ear*) Listen (*speak slowly and clearly*)
- Hand (*point to your hand*)
- Raise your right hand (*raise hand*)
- Put your hand down (*put hand down*)
- Listen
- green card (*hold up green card*)
- Pick up your passport. (*demonstrate*)
- Put down your passport. (*demonstrate*)
- Raise your right hand. (*delay slightly in doing action*)
- Put down your right hand. (*delay slightly*)

As you progress through the lesson, keep reviewing the previously taught words and phrases. Delay longer and longer doing the action to represent each one.

## Answer the Question: A Listening Activity

**Goal:** This activity helps students listen and respond to words they can identify from questions in the *USCIS 96 Questions*. They may not hear every word contained in an individual question, but by identifying key words they can make very good guesses. This game tests listening skills by giving only the key words in a question. It encourages reasonable guesses which can be very helpful in real situations.

**Notes:** This activity is appropriate for all students who have studied the target questions and understand the vocabulary. It is best used as a review technique.

Explain to students that everyone (even in one's native language) does not hear some of the words spoken to him/her. In this game they will use the information that they *can* hear in a question to give a reasonable answer.

**Process:** Go around the room and ask each student an abbreviated question. If students don't know how to respond, they can pass. Encourage them to guess. Present questions from the *USCIS 96 Questions* in as few words as possible, such as:

**Question:** What colors flag? or (Colors...flag?)      **Answer:** red, white, blue

**Question:** What colors stars? or (Colors... stars?)      **Answer:** white

### From *USCIS 96 Questions*

1. What... stars... mean?
2. How many... states?
3. Why... 4th.... July?
4. What's ...Independence Day?
5. Who ...first.... President?
6. Who ...President... today?
7. Who...Vice President?
8. President dies...who's President?
9. Vice President dies...who's President?
10. President...how long?
11. What's ...Constitution?
12. Constitution...change?
13. Amendments...how many?
14. Branches...how many?
15. Branches...what?

To continue, select only the most important words for each question. Change the order or delete words, for example:

Senators Illinois...who? or  
 Illinois senators...who? or  
 Illinois senators?



## Tell Me All About...

**Problem:** Too often, citizenship students only memorize the answers to the *USCIS Sample Questions* that are used in naturalization testing. During testing, if the adjudicator varies the wording of the question even a little, the applicant is often unable to understand what is being asked.

**Solution:** To help students overcome this comprehension barrier, this “Tell Me All About...” activity will vary the traditional question/answer format. This is best used as a review technique. Simply instruct the students to tell you all about a subject or person from the *USCIS Sample Questions*. By summarizing everything they know about a subject or person, students will increase their ability to talk about U.S. history and civics and will also realize that they know more than they think they do.

**Example:** “Tell me all about George Washington.” “Tell me all about the American Flag.”

### Subject

Supreme Court

Constitution

Amendments

Bill of Rights

Electoral College

July 4<sup>th</sup>

American Flag

The 13 original Colonies

Thanksgiving Day

Washington, D. C.

White House

United Nations

Mayflower

Revolutionary War



### Person

Abraham Lincoln

Patrick Henry

Christopher Columbus

Francis Scott Key

Martin Luther King

Thomas Jefferson

George Washington

John Roberts

George W. Bush

Dick Cheney

Richard Durbin\*

Barack Obama\*

Rod Blagojevich\*



\*Note: These are elected officials in Illinois.

Tell me all about . . .

**The White House**

Tell me all about . . .

**The Constitution**

Tell me all about . . .

**Abraham Lincoln**

Tell me all about . . .

**Thomas Jefferson**

Tell me all about . . .

**The Bill of Rights**

Tell me all about . . .

**George W. Bush**

Tell me all about . . .

**Christopher Columbus**

Tell me all about . . .

**John Roberts**

Tell me all about . . .

**The Supreme Court**

Tell me all about . . .

**The United Nations**

Tell me all about . . .

**Patrick Henry**

Tell me all about . . .

**George Washington**

Tell me all about . . .

**The Electoral College**

Tell me all about . . .

**The Mayflower**

Tell me all about . . .

**July 4th**

Tell me all about . . .

**Dick Cheney**

Tell me all about . . .

## **The Amendments**

Tell me all about . . .

## **The American Flag**

Tell me all about . . .

## **The 13 Original Colonies**

Tell me all about . . .

## **Washington, D. C.**

Tell me all about . . .

## **Thanksgiving Day**

Tell me all about . . .

## **The Revolutionary War**

Tell me all about . . .

## **July 4th**

Tell me all about . . .

## **Francis Scott Key**

Tell me all about . . .

**Martin Luther King**

Tell me all about . . .

**Richard Durbin**

Tell me all about . . .

**Barack Obama**

Tell me all about . . .

**Rod Blagojevich**

# Numbers Game

**Goal:** This activity focuses on listening skills and mastery of the content of some of the most difficult questions in the *USCIS 96 Questions*.

**Notes:** This is a good review activity for the “number questions” of the *USCIS 96 Questions*. Students with low literacy are also able to participate because of its oral presentation. Students usually enjoy this game and the challenge of the material.

**Directions:**

- Review the numbers on the Student Sheet for comprehension and easy identification.
  - Have students point to the numbers as you read them in random order.
  - Ask about the significance of the numbers. Example: “What does the number “13” mean in citizenship studies?” Answer: 13 original colonies or 13 stripes on the flag
  - After reviewing well, read these directions to the students:
1. Write the letter A in the box next to the number of Supreme Court justices. (9)
  2. Write the letter B in the box next to the number of senators in Congress. (100)
  3. Write the letter C in the box next to the youngest age someone can be president. (35)
  4. Write the letter D in the box next to the number of representatives in Congress. (435)
  5. Write the letter E in the box next to the number of branches of the U.S. government. (3)
  6. Write the letter F in the box next to the number of stripes on the American flag. (13)
  7. Write the letter G in the box next to the minimum (lowest) voting age. (18)
  8. Write the letter H in the box next to the year the Constitution was written. (1787)
  9. Write the letter I in the box next to the number of senators per state in Congress. (2)
  10. Write the letter J in the box next to the number of amendments to the Constitution. (27)
  11. Write the letter K in the box next to the number of years in a president’s term. (4)
  12. Write the letter L in the box next to the number of years in a senator’s term. (6)
  13. Write the letter M next to the number of states in the United States. (50)
  14. Write the letter N next to the year the U.S. declared its independence. (1776)

## Numbers Game



Write the letter in the box next to the correct answer.

100

3

9

50

2

1787

13

18

435

1776

27

4

6

35

# Teaching a Reading Passage

**Goal:** This group of materials offers an instructional process or sequence for presenting a reading passage to citizenship preparation students.

**Notes:** The history and civics material required for citizenship testing is presented in question-answer form in the *USCIS 96 Questions*. One of the best ways to present this material is through reading passages. Teachers can assemble their own passages or use those found in commercial student texts. The following materials present an instructional reading sequence together with an annotated sample paragraph and sample student pages. These reading passages assume that students have already developed beginning to intermediate level literacy skills.

**Process:** See the following suggested instructional strategies.

**Introduction:** Generate conversation about the topic of the reading so that the students can offer prior knowledge on the subject. Show pictures. Ask for a native country equivalent of the topic if possible. (*Examples: Who is the president of your native country? What is the capital of your native country?*)

- Have students guess what might be included in the reading. What words or information will be important? List these on the board.
- Read the selection to the students at a slow/normal rate. Ask that the students follow the words with their fingers as you read.
- Ask the students to signal unknown words. Explain their meaning using examples, synonyms, or pictures. (*Native language can be used if possible.*)

**Duet reading:** Read the selection with the students at a slow/normal rate. It is helpful to have the reading on the board or overhead. Follow the words with your hand as they are being read. Repeat this reading for lower-level literacy students.

**Questions:** Ask questions about the reading. Start with true-false items. For more advanced work go to short answer questions. Questions that demand an explanation should be reserved for students with good oral production or for a review of material that they have already learned.

**Vocabulary:** Have the students make flash cards and use them to review new vocabulary and to create sentences. You can write native language translation on the back of the cards if necessary.

**Written Review:** Have the students complete fill-in and copy exercises above the reading material. Dictation practice should come from the *30 Sentences for Dictation/Writing Test* if the content allows it. (See the following lesson for examples.)

**General Review:** For a class of low-level literate or elderly learners this entire process can be repeated in the next class and in following classes. The duet reading activity builds confidence and helps make necessary learning connections.

# George Washington - First President

- *Introduce topic by gathering all information that students know about Washington. Who he was, what he is famous for, etc. Ask where Washington’s picture can be seen. (on a dollar bill, quarter, etc.)*
- *Read paragraph at slow/normal rate. Have students follow along and point to the words on their paper as you read. Read at least twice.*
- *Ask students to tell you the words that they do not know. Explain meaning using examples, synonyms and/or pictures.*
- *Choral reading: Read paragraph aloud with students. Ask them to point to the words with their fingers as you read together.*

George Washington was born on February 22, 1732. His family owned a farm in the colony of Virginia. The farm was called Mount Vernon. Washington became a soldier. He fought against England. He was the leader of the American army during the Revolutionary War. After the war, Washington became the first president of the United States. Washington is called the “Father of our Country.”

## Vocabulary

- *Make sure that students understand the vocabulary words below and can give some examples to indicate meaning. Check vocabulary recognition by reading a word at random and then asking a student to point to the word on their paper. Ask the students to check to see if their neighbors need help. (This exercise is also very effective when the vocabulary words are written on the board.)*
- *Have students copy the vocabulary list for reinforcement after the lesson. Flash cards for individual or pair practice can be made using 3x5 cards and used for pair practice.*

born  
farm  
colony

soldier  
leader  
army  
fought

war  
president  
country  
England

## True or False

*Begin with T/F items, and create additional items if necessary. Use native language to check for understanding only if necessary.*

1. George Washington lived at Mount Vernon. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_
2. Mount Vernon is in Washington. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_
3. Washington fought in the Revolutionary War. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_
4. The American army fought against England. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_
5. After the war, Washington was a soldier. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_

# George Washington - First President (cont.)

## Practice

Read these fill-in items.. Allow students sufficient time to decide on an answer.

1. Washington lived on a \_\_\_\_\_ in Virginia.
2. He joined the American \_\_\_\_\_.
3. He became the first \_\_\_\_\_ of the U.S.
4. He is called the "Father of our \_\_\_\_\_."
5. The American army fought against \_\_\_\_\_.

## Questions

Be sure that the students understand the question and information that is targeted.  
Do all questions orally.

1. When was George Washington born?
2. Where did he live?
3. What did Washington do during the war?
4. What is Washington called?
5. Who did the Americans fight during the Revolutionary War?

## Ask student to copy.

1. Washington was the first president of the United States.
2. Washington is called the "Father of our Country."



**Our First President - George Washington**



**One Dollar Bill**

# George Washington - First President

George Washington was born on February 22, 1732. His family owned a farm in the colony of Virginia. The farm was called Mount Vernon. Washington became a soldier. He fought against England. He was the leader of the American army during the Revolutionary War. After the war, Washington became the first president of the United States. Washington is called the "Father of our Country."

## Vocabulary

born	soldier	war
farm	leader	president
colony	army	country
	fought	England

## True or False

- George Washington lived at Mount Vernon. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_
- Mount Vernon is in Washington. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_
- Washington fought in the Revolutionary War. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_
- The American army fought against England. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_
- After the war, Washington was a soldier. T\_\_\_\_ F\_\_\_\_

## Practice

- Washington lived on a \_\_\_\_\_ in Virginia.
- He joined the American \_\_\_\_\_.
- He became the first \_\_\_\_\_ of the U.S.
- He is called the "Father of our \_\_\_\_\_."
- The American army fought against \_\_\_\_\_.

## George Washington - First President (cont.)

### Questions

1. When was George Washington born?
2. Where did he live?
3. What did Washington do during the war?
4. What is Washington called?
5. Who did the Americans fight during the Revolutionary War?

### Copy

Washington was the first President of the United States.

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Washington is called the "Father of our Country."

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# Teaching Dictation Skills

**Goal:** This sheet offers some instructional strategies that can be useful when helping students build dictation or writing skills for the USCIS test.

**Notes:** Dictation can be a difficult skill for citizenship students to master. It should be practiced often.

To pass the USCIS dictation test, an applicant must write one dictated sentence that can be easily understood. In Illinois and Wisconsin, applicants are dictated one of the *30 Sentences for Dictation/Writing Test* (see pages 17-18). As noted on those pages, these sentences will not be used once the redesign of the naturalization test is implemented (scheduled for early 2008.)

## Dictation Techniques

- Read a sentence and ask students how many words are in it. Also ask that they repeat the sentence.  
*Teacher reads, students tell how many words are in the sentence, then students repeat*  
Examples: The President lives in the White House.  
There are fifty states in America.  
Congress passes laws in the United States.
- Practice dictation with short sets of high-frequency words (two to four words). *Teacher reads and students repeat and write.*  
Examples: law, America  
United States  
white, red  
flag, blue
- Dictate groups of words. *Teacher reads and students repeat and write.*  
Examples: Congress passes laws  
Washington, D.C.  
The American flag
- **For students with low-level literacy:** Dictate sentences giving students prepared fill-in blanks. *Teacher reads – students repeat and write.*  
Examples: The \_\_\_\_\_ lives \_\_\_\_\_ the White House.  
(*Teacher reads: The President lives in the White House.*)  
Only \_\_\_\_\_ can \_\_\_\_\_ war.  
(*Teacher reads: Only Congress can declare war.*)  
The American \_\_\_\_\_ is red, white, and \_\_\_\_\_.  
(*Teacher reads: The American flag is red, white, and blue.*)

**Note:** Spelling and punctuation are not priority considerations. Minor errors will not cause a sentence to be rejected. Capitalization of words such as *America, American, Washington D.C.*, etc. can be important. To avoid problems, teach students to use upper and lower case letters rather than all capital letters. Either printed or cursive letters are acceptable as long as they are legible.

# Word Cards Activity

**Goal:** The following activities provide basic reading and listening practice needed for the dictation and reading portions of the test.

**Notes:** These activities work best when each student is given his/her own set of word cards to use. Using one or more of the *USCIS 30 Sentences* or any citizenship-related sentence, prepare and cut the word cards like those on the accompanying page with sample cards.

**Process:** Give each student or pair of students a set of word cards that form a complete sentence. All students should have an identical set of cards. Go through the activities but make sure that the students can easily follow the basic level before going on to more demanding levels.

## Part I

- Select a target sentence.
- Explain that you will read the sentence three times. Tell students to listen well and count the number of words in the sentence. Tell them that they will also be asked to repeat the sentence.
- Read the sentence three times, slowly and clearly. Ask for the number of words and have them repeat it.
- Write the sentence on the board. Read it with the class various times. Read it forward and backward. Point to specific words and ask the students to read the words aloud.

## Part II

- Pass out the sets of word cards. Read the target sentence again. Leave the sentence on the board and ask students to put their cards in the same order. As practice, have them pick up a card after you read it. You can reinforce this by pointing to the word on the board so that students can check their choice.
- Read words from the sentence out of order and ask students to pick up that word card or turn it over, face down.
- For more advanced students, use direction words such as: “to the left of,” “to the right of,” “between.” Example: Use the word cards from the sentence, “The American flag is red, white, and blue.” Have the students mix the cards and then give directions like the following. Pick up the word “flag” and put it on the right of the word “American.” Put the word “The” on the left of the word “American.” What do you have? This builds listening skills and students like the challenge of keeping up with the directions.

## Part III

- Introduce a second sentence. Identify words and work as in Parts I and II.
- Make sure that students can repeat the sentence.
- Practice by giving groups of three words that students should assemble. Example sentence: “The American flag has thirteen stripes.” Word groups: “has thirteen stripes,” “The American flag,” “American flag has,” “flag has thirteen,” etc. Dictate a three-word phrase and ask students to raise their hand as soon as they have assembled the phrase. Then immediately go to the next phrase.

**Note:** Encourage students to check their answers with their neighbors after they have ordered their cards.

## Word Card Activity Samples

**The**

**American**

**flag**

**is**

**red**

**white**

**and**

**blue**

# Oath of Allegiance

**Goal:** This sheet helps teachers prepare students to paraphrase the Oath of Renunciation and Allegiance when asked to do so during the USCIS interview.

**Notes:** One of the last and most important parts of the USCIS interview is the Oath of Allegiance. The adjudicator hands the applicant a sheet of paper that has the Oath and the applicant's name and alien registration number.\* The adjudicator asks the applicant to read the Oath to him/herself and then explain it. After the applicant explains the meaning of the Oath and signs it, the interview is concluded.

According to Federal Statutes, applicants must demonstrate an "attachment to the United States and the Constitution." This includes a promise to:

- renounce all foreign allegiance
- support the U. S. Constitution
- serve the U. S. in the armed services, or through noncombatant service

*\*Applicants should carefully check the spelling of their names and the accuracy of the alien registration numbers.*

**Process:** Following are the Oath and some restatements of the Oath that have been accepted by USCIS adjudicators. One of these restatements or another designed by the instructor should be taught in order to prepare students for this part of the interview.

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## *Oath of Allegiance*

I hereby declare on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; That I will support and defend the Constitution and the laws of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; That I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; That I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law; That I will perform noncombatant service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by law; That I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; And that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion, SO HELP ME GOD. In acknowledgment whereof I have hereunto affixed my signature.

The adjudicator will ask the applicant to read through the oath and tell what it means in his/her own words. The applicant does not need to read this aloud. He or she should just read it silently and then restate what it means. Some examples:

**Applicant:** I promise to give up any other country. I promise to support the U.S. Constitution. I will fight for America. I will help the U. S.

**Applicant:** I will be an American. I will help the United States of America. I will fight or do work for America. I will follow the Constitution. I will sign the oath.



# What Does the Oath Mean?

Rephrase Here

I hereby declare on oath	
that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen	
that I will support and defend the Constitution and the laws of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic	
that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same	
that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law	
that I will perform noncombatant service in the armed forces of the United States when required by law	
that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law	
and that I take this obligation freely without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion	
so help me God	
in acknowledgment whereof I have hereunto affixed my signature	

# Using Videos in the Citizenship Preparation Class



Showing videos of the USCIS Interview is extremely effective in citizenship preparation classes. Viewing a video of the interview allows applicants to gain a clear idea of what they will face when they are asked to appear before an Immigration Officer. In addition, many instructors report that having their students view videos helps calm them and lessen their anxiety.

Here are ways in which citizenship interview videos can be used by citizenship instructors:

- During the first week of class, show a complete interview from beginning to end. Explain to students that there may be differences between what they see on the tape and what they will experience at their interviews. *Students should have their N-400 with them as they watch.*

Note that some older videos use the outdated version of the N-400. However, seeing these videos is still very useful.

- As the class progresses, present the video in short segments that target the topics you are teaching such as a particular section of the N-400. After viewing the segment that targets the new material, discuss it, rewind, and play it again. As a form of review, after you feel that the class has a command of the new material, start the video at the beginning and play it through the segment that targets the new material.
- Play a short segment of the interview, stop the tape, and ask the students some questions about what they have seen. For example, if on the video the adjudicator asks the applicant about his or her employment, pause the tape and ask your students how they would respond to those questions. After the students have given their own answers, play the tape to see how those questions are answered on the video.

No interview video will contain all the questions that are appropriate for a given applicant. Explain to your class that an adjudicator can ask many questions in addition to the ones they see on the video. This occurs especially when there has been a change of information since they filed their application.

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## Suggested Videos

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*Success at Your CIS Interview.* Available from Citizenship Resources Phone/ Fax: (831) 657-0289: <http://www.citizenshipresources.com/>

*The INS Citizenship Interview: Will They Pass?* Available from New Reader's Press (800) 448-8878 <http://www.newreaderspress.com/> and Miller Educational Materials, Inc. (800) 636-4375 [www.millereducational.com](http://www.millereducational.com) (This video uses the old N-400.)

# Citizenship Materials List

The following resources are just a partial listing of recommended materials available to citizenship educators. Student language levels are indicated after most materials:

**B** = Beginning

**I** = Intermediate

**A** = Advanced

**Note:** Due to the demands of citizenship preparation and its specialized vocabulary, there are few true-beginning level texts. Therefore, even books listed as “beginning” require some English ability.

## Textbooks

***Citizenship Now.*** Aliza Becker and Laurie Edwards. McGraw-Hill, 2003. (800) 621-1918. Fax (800) 998-3103. Audiotape available. **I, A**

***Citizenship: Passing the Test.*** Lynne Weintraub. New Readers Press, 2002 (800) 448-8878. Teacher’s guide and audiotape also available. **B, I**

***Citizenship: Ready for the Interview.*** Lynne Weintraub. New Readers Press, 2001 (800) 448-8878. Teacher’s guide and audiotape also available. **B, I**

***Entry Into Citizenship.*** Aliza Becker with Mary Ann Siegel. McGraw-Hill, 2000 (800) 621-1918. Teacher manual also available. **B, I**

***Getting Your Citizenship.*** Susan Echaore - McDavid and Winifred Ho Roderman. McGraw Hill, 1999. (800) 621-1918. Student text and teacher manual also available. **B, I**

***HIAS Guide to United States Citizenship.*** (Russian/English). Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), 1996. Russian/English cassette tape also available. (212) 967-4100. **I**

***Passport to Success in the U.S. Citizenship.*** Patricia Petherbridge-Hernandez and Kathleen P. O’Donnell. 2001. J. Weston Walch, Publisher. (800) 341-6094. **I**

***U.S. Citizen Yes, Interactive Citizenship Preparation.*** Ronna Magy. Heinle & Heinle Publishers, 1996. (800) 354-9706. Student cassette tape also available. (Request Millennium edition) **B, I**

***Voices of Freedom: English and Civics, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition.*** Bill Bliss with Steven Molinsky. 2002. Pearson Education ESL (800) ESL-2ESL. **B, I**

## Teacher Resources

***Building Bridges: A Resource Guide on Citizenship.*** Aliza Becker. Travelers & Immigrants Aid, Chicago, IL for the Illinois State Board of Education, 1996. Available through Curriculum Publications Clearinghouse. (800) 322-3905.

***Citizenship for Refugee Elders: Issues & Options in Test Preparation.*** Aliza Becker. Catholic Legal Immigration Network, Inc., 2000. Washington, DC, (202) 635-2556.

***ESL/CIVICS Integration: A Guide for Curriculum Development and Lesson Planning.*** Center for Adult Education, San Francisco State University Foundation, 1996. Available through The Center for Adult Education (415) 338-1083.

***The Uncle Sam Activity Book: Language Development Handouts to Teach U. S. History and Government.*** Carolyn Bohlman and Catherine Porter. McGraw Hill, 2000. (800) 621-1918. Audiotape also available.

## Audiotapes

**B** = Beginning    **I** = Intermediate    **A** = Advanced

***The INS Interview: 175 Questions and Answers.*** Joan Weinberg. Video Language Products, 2002. Available from Video Language Products (800) 367-3806. **I**

## Citizenship Videos

**B** = Beginning    **I** = Intermediate    **A** = Advanced

***Citizenship: Success at Your CIS Interview.*** An McDowell. Citizenship Resources. 498 Foam St. #6, Monterey, CA. (831)-657-0289. citizenshipresources.com.

***The INS Citizenship Interview: Will They Pass?*** Available from New Reader's Press, (800) 448-8878 <http://www.newreaderspress.com>, and Miller Educational Materials, Inc., (800) 636-4375. [www.millereducational.com](http://www.millereducational.com). (This video uses the old N-400.) **B, I, A**

***U.S. Citizenship: A Guide to the Naturalization Process*** (in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Korean, Tagalog, or Vietnamese.) Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC) (213)-977-7500 ext. 247. **I, A**

## Citizenship Teacher Resource Websites

### **Adult Learning Resource Center on Line**

[www.thecenterweb.org/alrc](http://www.thecenterweb.org/alrc)

This website has information about upcoming trainings and materials offered by the Adult Learning Resource Center.

### **Ben's Guide to U. S. Government for Kids**

<http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

This site is designed for children, but it has excellent explanations on how the U. S. government works that are appropriate for adults as well. Teachers can choose the reading level (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, or 9-12) and then access materials about the three branches of government, the election process, how laws are made, and more.

### **CASAS Bibliography of Citizenship Materials**

[http://www.casas.org/DirctDwnlds.cfm?mfile\\_id=1442&selected\\_id=808&wtarget=body](http://www.casas.org/DirctDwnlds.cfm?mfile_id=1442&selected_id=808&wtarget=body)

This site offers an extensive bibliography of citizenship instructional materials with an annotated index.

### **Citizenship News**

<http://www.CitizenshipNews.com>

This site can help keep citizenship educators updated on naturalization and citizenship test issues, including information about the new test and important changes in policy and practice.

### **CivNet**

<http://civnet.org>

Civnet is an online resource for civic education practitioners that aims at promoting civic education all over the world. It has lesson plans that can be used or adaptable for adult education and a CivTalk discussion group where educators can discuss and share ideas, teaching materials, and methodology.

### **National Immigration Forum**

<http://www.immigrationforum.org>

Advocates and builds public sentiment for immigrant issues. Has information on grants and special projects.

### **New Citizens Vote! Curriculum**

<http://www.immigrantvoice.org/ncv>

This is the link to a four-hour voter education curriculum (available in English and Spanish) called "New Citizens Vote! An Educational Curriculum About Voting." The goal of the curriculum is to increase the skills and self-confidence of participants regarding voting and other local decision-making processes. The curriculum emphasizes local issues and opportunities for civic participation.

## Citizenship Teacher Resource Websites Cont.

### Preparing Students for an INS Interview

<http://www.sabes.org/resources/fieldnotes/vol10/f01ins.htm>

This is an archived newsletter article with a list of pointers about "Preparing Students for an INS Interview" from Lynn Weintraub, experienced educator and author.

### Project Vote Smart

<http://www.vote-smart.org>

This site offers a variety of information about elected officials and candidates, biographies, voting records, and campaign particulars.

### Puzzlemaker

<http://puzzlemaker.school.discovery.com/>

This site gives educators tools to create crossword puzzles, word searches, quizzes, and a variety of other word games. It is useful for creating practice activities using citizenship vocabulary or information.

### “Questioning Citizenship Curricula,” by Erik Hugo Jacobson

<http://www.nelrc.org/cpcc/questioning.htm>

This paper examines teaching citizenship classes from a critical pedagogical perspective. The author discusses the citizenship process in view of the relationship between being a U. S. citizen and personal identity. The paper concludes that students can pass the citizenship test by learning about citizenship from a critical pedagogical perspective.

### The USCIS Website

<http://www.uscis.gov>

This website is the official site for all Immigration and Naturalization information and forms. It is an extremely important site for citizenship educators. Check it often to explore what is there and to stay abreast of changes.



#### Some useful USCIS Publications:

- *Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants*
- *A Guide to Naturalization*
- *Quick Civics Lessons*