

What can educators do for Civics Awareness Month?

Elementary Educators

- Explain what a Governors Proclamation is.
From most state Governor's Offices, "***What is a proclamation?***":
A proclamation is an official document issued by a Governor to commemorate a specific time period (day, week, or month) for the purpose of raising awareness about an issue, or celebrating milestones. Here, the idea of civics in the classroom is of great importance and the proclamation raises awareness across the state on the importance of civics education.
- What is civics? From the Brookings institute: "The aim of civics education is broader and includes **providing students with an understanding of how democratic processes work**, as well as how to engage in these processes... Classroom instruction in civics, government, history, law, economics, and geography."

Ask students to create a brochure/one-page explaining what civics means to them. Involve symbols as well as imagery in explaining your definition.

- Research the Constitution, from its origins to today. Utilize izzit.org's (you may need to register at izzit.org @ no cost) The Pups of Liberty animated videos. (There are two.) This will provide your students with great understanding on the origins of our country, while entertaining them as well.
- Pretend students are TV reporters from your state's local channel. (Maybe even invite a reporter to the class.) What civics news story can they "report on?" Use a cardboard background and recreate a newsroom, then have students create a 2-3 minute report. Invite lower grade classes, parents, etc. Have fun making civics (and the importance of freedom of the press!) come alive.

Middle & High School Educators

- Pretend students are TV reporters from your states local channel (Maybe even invite a reporter to the class.) What civics news story can they “report on?” See if at morning announcements, students can recreate a newsroom-report 4-6 minutes over the school’s intercom. Touch upon major news stories relating to civics. Perhaps an interview about why civics is important - reach out to governor’s office.
- Why a Bill of Rights? izzit.org’s educational video from the minicourse, [First Amendment](#). Think and respond to the following questions (From the First Amendment minicourse Discussion/Essay questions):

Why did some of the Framers resist the idea of a bill of rights? Why did some insist it was needed? Which group do you agree with? Explain your position. Do you agree with the woman in the video that we often take our rights, especially our First Amendment rights, for granted? Why or why not?

- What is a Republic? Why is it in the Pledge? Pose these questions to your students. After a few attempts toward answering the prompt, immediately show the izzit.org **Teachable Moment** (a short video that both gets to the point and shakes things up) “[A Republic](#).” The **Teachable Moment** allows you to then repeat the question, why did the founders believe a republic would be better than a democracy? Student answers should be more along the lines of our Framers intent.
- The idea of liberty can be introduced, and you can begin to discuss individual & property rights and what liberty means to each of your students. LIBERTY may be put on the whiteboard and students add their thoughts. Since a republic form of government and liberty are synonymous, perhaps turn the class discussion to what gave our founders the impetus, the ideals of both individual liberty & property rights and how government serves the people? To help stimulate the conversation, queue up **Teachable Moment**, “[Magna Carta](#).” While this “great charter” happened over 800 years ago, underscore the concept that each document safeguards a person’s right to property. It will begin to help your students piece the puzzle together.
- Plan before and prepare what barter means [utilizing the **Teachable Moment**, “[Barter & Entrepreneurship](#)”]. In addition, discuss how people “vote with their wallets”, and focus on “[Consumer Choices Drive Price, Supply & Demand](#).” [another izzit.org **Teachable Moment**].

With a brief explanation of trade (restricted versus open), begin the simulation game [Win-Win](#), found in izzit.org Educational Videos. *Win-Win* is a classroom trading game that gets every student involved. Through the experience of actually trading items, students will learn important lessons about economics and trade. The real-life dimension of the game (that students get to keep traded items) engages them in a way few classroom exercises can match.

- Utilize the course, [The U.S. Constitution and Black History](#) on the izzit.org website. Great explanations and mini synopsis of key civics “must-knows” for all students.