



CIVICS EDUCATION: Critical Thinking Worksheet

1. Jamie complains, “Oh, no! Why do we have to learn about the U.S. government? It’s going to be *so boring!*”

On the lines below, answer Jamie. Give him at least three reasons why it’s important for everyone to learn about how the U.S. government works.

2. On Election Day, a reporter asked voters coming out of the polls why they had taken the time to vote in a LOCAL election. Here are some reasons they gave. Put a check mark next to the answers you think are good reasons for voting in a local election. On the blank lines, write any other reasons you can think of.

- a. Local officials create a budget and decide how my tax dollars are spent.
- b. My professor said he’d give me an “A” if I voted today.
- c. I want to elect officials who share my views on issues I think are important.
- d. Local school board members decide what is taught in schools, and I want to elect school board members who think the way I do.
- e. I promised my grandmother I’d vote in every election.
- f. I want to elect officials who will keep my community safe.
- g. One of the candidates gave me a \$10 gift card to vote for him today.



ANSWERS/DISCUSSION

1. Answers will vary. Take turns reading aloud your answers about why it's important to learn about U.S. government. Here are some sample answers.
 - a. The United States is a representative democracy, which means that we elect representatives who make decisions that impact everyone.
 - b. I need to be informed about how our government works so I can vote for the best candidates.
 - c. By voting for representatives who share my views on important issues, I can "make my voice heard."
 - d. I want to learn about how the court systems work. It's confusing.
 - e. Some people I know only vote in presidential elections every four years. I want to vote in all elections, and I need to know what exactly I'm voting for.

2. Most people will agree that answers b and g in question 2 are not good reasons for voting in a local election. Some will think that answer e is a good reason, others won't. Here are some additional reasons. You may have thought of different ones. Share your reasons with your group.
 - a. I want to elect local officials who are honest and trustworthy.
 - b. I want elected officials who will treat everyone fairly.
 - c. I want elected officials who will help this community to grow and prosper.
 - d. I want to elect local officials who know this community well.

Your feedback is important to us. Please answer the questions below and add your name and contact information if you would like us to provide you with updates or voter registration information:

1. Was the discussion civil?
2. Do you agree with the answers on the back of the page?
3. What did you like best about the exercise?
4. Was there a part of the exercise that you did not like? Why?
5. Would you like to suggest additional topics? If yes, please list below.

NAME: _____

CONTACT INFORMATION: _____