

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

## Citizenship

What does citizenship mean to you? You probably haven't had to think about being a citizen very much. Our citizenship and our rights are guaranteed by the Constitution, but most of us take them for granted. We are simply used to the freedoms we have.	11 24 38 45
We feel free to express our opinions. We allow others to express theirs. We read newspapers, watch TV, or visit websites to find out what is going on in the world. We worship or not, as we please. We gather together for discussions. We vote to elect people to positions in the government. These are some of the rights we all have as citizens of the United States.	58 72 87 99 113
If you were born in any of the fifty states, you automatically became a citizen of the United States at birth. The Fourteenth Amendment of the Constitution grants you this right, whether your parents are citizens or not.	126 139 151
Still, how does someone who was not born in the United States become a citizen? The process is called naturalization. It takes several years to become a naturalized citizen and involves several steps and requirements. Becoming a citizen is a long and sometimes difficult process. However, the benefits of citizenship make it all worthwhile!	164 176 186 198 205
Fortunately, children do not have to go through this process. Only people eighteen years old or older have to become naturalized. When parents become naturalized citizens, their children who are not yet eighteen years old also become citizens of the United States. Once a person is a citizen, that person gains the rights and freedoms granted under the Constitution of the United States. That person's minor children gain these rights as well.	217 228 239 254 266 277

