An active citizenship curriculum for youth

Through Public Adventures youth will contribute to the public good and develop a life-long commitment to active citizenship.

Acknowledgments

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Special thanks to:
• the Earth Force curriculum developers and the Public Achievement students at St. Bernard’s School in St. Paul, MN, for helping us to rethink the format of our curriculum,
• our many dedicated pilot testers and reviewers, without whom these materials wouldn’t come close to fulfilling their promise; and
• the University of Wisconsin-Extension Service, the University of Minnesota-Extension Service, the Center for Democracy and Citizenship at the University of Minnesota, National 4-H Curriculum, and the Kellogg Foundation for making this project possible.

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions of the following programs and materials to the Public Adventures curriculum.

• By the People, Melissa Bass, Center for Democracy and Citizenship, Minneapolis, MN, 1995.
• The Center for Democracy and Citizenship, University of Minnesota, 130 Humphrey Center, 301 19th Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55455.
• The Close Up Foundation, 44 Canal Center Plaza, Alexandria, VA 22314.
• The Constitutional Rights Foundation. 601 South Kingsley Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90005.
• Earth Force. 1908 Mount Vernon Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22301.
• 4-H. Contact your local county Extension office.
• The Walt Whitman Center, Rutgers University, 89 George Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901.
• Youth Venture. 1700 North Moore Street, Suite 1920, Arlington, VA 22209.

For information on other organizations involved in citizenship, service and civic education, see the Public Adventures web site.

This web site also includes additional activities, more in-depth “postcard tips” and “how to’s,” a resource library, a “kids to kids” exchange and an extensive guides’ resource and training section.

www.4-h.org/curriculum/citizenship

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Contents and Assembly Instructions

In your Citizenship Adventure Kit, you will find:

- 2 Public Adventures cover pages
- 1 Public Adventures passport
- 1 set of Public Adventures postcards
- 8 notebook divider pages

Putting your Adventure Kit together:

1. Write your name on the Public Adventures cover sheets.
2. If your 3-ring binder has a plastic cover, slip the non-hole punched cover sheet into that.
3. Put the passport in the pocket of your 3-ring binder.
4. Cut out your postcards. Punch holes using the light green circles as guides.
5. Put the 3-hole punched cover sheet and hole-punched postcards into your 3-ring binder, followed by the notebook divider pages.

Now your kit is ready, and so are you!

What you or your guide will need to provide:

- one 3-ring binder
- 3-hole punched loose-leaf paper
- recommended—a 3-hole punched zip-lock® plastic pencil pouch

Good luck on your adventure!

Explore more at www.4-hcurriculum.org
National 4-H Curriculum
Step 1

Rules of the Road

In Step One, you will:

- Define active citizenship
- Create ground rules
- Learn various decision-making methods

Public Adventures is designed to help you contribute to the world around you and become an active citizen. Through Public Adventures you will:

- find out about issues that are important to you and others,
- gain new skills so you can make things happen,
- discover new ideas to help you make sense of what you’re doing, and
- most importantly, take what you are learning and put it into action!

The heart of Public Adventures is the project that your group plans. Your project will create, change, or improve something that is valuable to many people. Then you do it! This is what being an active citizen in a democracy is all about.

You can find definitions of bolded words in your Phrase Book.
Adventure Activity:

Discovering Citizenship

There are lots of ways to think about citizenship, and they are all important. Take a look at the front of this Step 1 Diviner Page. On it, we’ve hidden 17 pictures that have to do with citizenship and democracy.

- Can you find and identify all 17 pictures?
- What is important about each picture? What does each have to do with citizenship or democracy?
- These pictures don’t cover all of the ways to think about citizenship and democracy. So, what other words come to mind when you think about citizenship and democracy? Why are they important?
- While there are many ways to think about citizenship, Public Adventures focuses on active citizenship. Look up active citizen in your Phrase Book. Do you agree with the definition? Why or why not?

Use this voting graph to explore different methods of group decision making.

### Voting Graph

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Voting Method</th>
<th>Did you get what you wanted?</th>
<th>Are you happy with the results of this method?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Majority</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromise</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensus</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe</td>
<td>☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Travel Log

While you’re here... think about how your group is going to work together.

On your adventure, you’ll be working with other youth and adults. Together you’ll decide what you are going to do and how you are going to do it. By working in a group, you’ll be able to benefit from everyone’s experiences and ideas. But working in a group can be hard. To make it easier, your group might want to...

- Set some ground rules. Ground rules say what members of your group are going to do and how they are going to act so that the group works well together.
- Check out Postcard #1 & 2 for ideas on how to have a successful meeting.

Describe what the words “citizenship” and “democracy” mean to you. Draw or write this on a piece of loose-leaf paper and include it in your notebook.

Think about working with your group, then answer these questions and put them into your notebook.

- Give one example of how your group worked together at your meeting.
- What would have happened if your group hadn’t worked together?
- What’s the most important thing to remember when working in a group?

Don’t forget to mark your passport!
Step 2
First Steps
Out the Door

In Step Two, you will:

- Define the differences between “public” and “private”.
- Consider your community issues and choose one.
- Make a map of your community.

Fill in the scales with things that are private and public for you.

ARE YOU WILLING...

☐ To respect the different experiences and diversity of the members in your group?

☐ To work through conflicts respectfully, remembering your common goals?

☐ To work for the public good?
Adventure Activity:

Map Making

Your Public Adventure is going to give you the chance to build the kind of community and world you want to live in. So, what do you want to see in your community and world?

- Draw a map or picture of your school, neighborhood, town, country, earth, or some other public area. Then, add things to make it as you’d like it to be, for yourself and for others. This is your vision. Go ahead and include ideas that are wild as well as realistic!

- What possible public issues can you find in your community?

While you’re here...

Your group needs to decide which public issue you want to work on. Check out Postcard #2 for tips and strategies for making group decisions.

Travel Log

Put your description from the “Map Making” activity into your notebook.

Think about your group deciding on its public issue. Answer these questions and put them into your notebook.

- Do you think it was important that your group got to decide its issue? Why or why not?
- What would be different for you and your group if someone just told you what issue you were going to work on?
- Why do you think it is important for people to take part in making decisions that affect them?

Don’t forget to get your online passport stamped!

www.4-h.org/curriculum/citizenship
Step 3
Choose Your Destination

In Step Three, you will:
- explore interests,
- define your group’s goal and decide on a project, and
- write a mission statement.

OUR Issue:

Examples of Issues:
- Harassment in schools
- Loss of the natural environment
- Lack of communication between Seniors and Youth

OUR Goal:

Examples of Goals:
- To reduce the amount of harassment in our school.
- To improve the natural environment of our city park.
- To create opportunities for Seniors and Youth to communicate.

Projects:

PROJECTS:
Examples of Projects:
- Create a team of Peer Mediators to serve every recess and lunch hour.
- To plant and nurture trees in the city park
- To host a series of forums between Seniors and Youth.
If you are involved with the public, chances are there are other people and groups who are concerned with your issue. To complete the questions in the grid below you may have to go exploring and do some research. See Postcard #5 for research tips.

**Our Goal:**

**Our Project:**
- Can we accomplish this goal?
- Do we have enough time to accomplish this goal?
- Can we get the resources we need to accomplish this goal?
- Can other people help us? Is this part of a larger public goal? Does our goal affect the public?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Will doing this project accomplish our goal?</th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NOT SURE</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Could we successfully complete this project?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will the results of this project last after it is done?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there people we can recruit to help us with this project?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do we have enough time and resources to do this project?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Would we have fun doing this project?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adventure Activity:**

**Mission Possible!**

Another way to think about your adventure is as a mission. You know what you are going to do, and you are going to do it!

Write a mission statement for your group that tells...

- who you are
- what your issue and goal are
- why reaching your goal is important, and
- what project you are going to do to reach your goal.

**Our Mission:**

When you're done, try one or more of these ideas:

- Create a slogan or jingle. This is a quick, easy to remember phrase or song that sticks in people's heads when they hear it.
- Make copies of your mission statement that you can give to people you talk to about your project. The copy will help people remember you. Add your names and phone numbers so people can get back to you.
- Make a poster with your mission statement and pictures that illustrate your group's purpose and beliefs. Hang the poster up at your meetings to help keep you on track. Bring it with you when you talk to other groups. People will remember the poster and your group!

**Travel Log**

Think about these questions. Jot down your answers and put them in your notebook.

- What was hardest about choosing a goal and a project?
- How did thinking about your interests affect your decisions? Why or why not?
- Why is it important to think about everyone's interests when you are making a decision?

See Postcard #4

www.4-h.org/curriculum/citizenship