



Citizen You: SS.7.CG.2.2
Citizen Obligations and Responsibilities
READING #2

Name: _____

Date: _____



SS.7.CG.2.2 Benchmark Clarification 2: Students will recognize the concept of the common good as a reason for fulfilling the obligations and responsibilities of citizenship.

Each **citizen** in the United States has certain **obligations** and **responsibilities**. Both the government and citizens are responsible for 1) protecting the rights of individuals and 2) promoting the **common good**.

When citizens meet their obligations to the government, they are making the United States a safer and better place to live. By following the law and not committing crimes, communities are less dangerous places. By paying taxes, citizens ensure that the government can afford to provide services that benefit the general public. By defending the nation if asked to do so, citizens are ensuring that those living in the United States are protected from enemies who may hurt us. By serving on juries, citizens are making sure that the right to a trial by jury is protected.

All of these examples demonstrate how citizens, by living up to their obligations, and can protect and promote the common good. See the chart below for more examples:

Citizen Obligations	How the Obligation Relates to the Common Good
Obeying the laws	Obeying laws keeps order so that people are safe.
Paying taxes	Taxes pay for large programs that benefit everyone (roads, schools, and libraries, among others).
Jury duty	By participating in jury duty, citizens are protecting the constitutional right of trial by jury.
Defending the nation	Defending the nation benefits the entire country and protects the nation from those who might wish to harm us.

Citizen Responsibilities	How the Responsibility Relates to the Common Good
Voting	Voting relates to the common good because it is one way for citizens to be heard by the leaders who represent them.
Attending civic meetings	By attending civic meetings, a citizen can be heard by public officials (for example, attending a city council meeting or neighborhood watch group).
Petitioning the government	Petitioning the government allows citizens to share their opinions with the government and ask for help solving problems.
Community service	Community service helps the common good. It benefits everyone when a citizen sees a need in his or her community and takes that extra step to find the solution.

citizen - a legal member of a state and/or country

common good - beliefs or actions that are seen as a benefit to the community rather than individual interests, also known as the public good

obligation - a requirement, something a person has to do

responsibility - something a person should do