



## Maggie's Civics Corner

### Lesson 29 – Our Place in the World

#### Maggie Says...

*In these difficult times, as our nation and the world pull together, it is more important than ever to understand our role as a citizen.*

**Today's lesson is about international relations and the United Nations:** When I play with other dogs, I try my best to get along with them! I learned this from my Mom and Dad – they have always taught me that both people and dogs should be courteous and cooperative with others. This principle of maintaining civility with others also applies when different countries interact with one another. As one of the strongest and most established countries, the

United States of America frequently interacts with other countries through things like trade and treaties, which are international agreements. The United States is also a member of the United Nations, which is an intergovernmental organization made up of 195 countries. Some of the goals of the United Nations are to maintain international peace, promote international cooperation, and improve living conditions for people all over the world.

**About the United Nations:** The United Nations was formed in 1945 after the end of World War II, which was the deadliest conflict in human history. After experiencing this war, many countries from around the globe wanted to form an international organization devoted to maintaining world peace and solving problems between countries through peaceful means. These countries decided to call their new international organization the United Nations.

The United Nations is made up of 6 principal sections and each plays a different role in maintaining international relations. The main part of the United Nations is the General Assembly (like an international legislature), where each member country gets one vote on things like peace issues, admitting new members, and setting the organization's budget. Another section of the United Nations is the International Court of Justice, which solves disputes between member countries. The Security Council is the section charged with maintaining international peace and addressing international security issues. The Economic and Social Council is tasked with promoting development of and maintaining cooperation between countries regarding economic and social issues. The Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General, is the executive branch of the United Nations and plays an important role in setting the agenda for the organization and its different organs.

The creation of the United Nations has promoted international relations and has provided a forum for countries to work together to solve problems and make the world a better place. Besides striving to keep peace in international relations, one of the United Nations' primary purposes promoting human rights. Member countries of the United Nations pledge to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms for all people without distinction as to race, sex, or religion. The World Health Organization, which focuses on international health issues and the eradication on disease, is also part of the United Nations. Additionally, the United Nations helps improve trade between countries and works to eliminate poverty and hunger around the world. As a member of the United Nations, the United States of America plays an important role in the international relations of our world by promoting peace and progress.

**Activity:** United Nations Day, a day to celebrate the founding and ideals of the United Nations, is held annually on October 24<sup>th</sup>. Let's get a head start on creating a United Nations Day decoration! Look at the attached photo of the United Nations' flag. Take a blank piece of paper and try to draw the flag. Next, locate the United States of America on the flag you drew. It might take some time to find it because of the perspective of the world map that is used. Finally, color your United Nations flag. Store your new United Nations Day decoration and be sure to remember to proudly display it on October 24<sup>th</sup>!

**Extra Activity:** You might notice that the world map is surrounded by two olive branches. With your parents' permission, use Google to search for the symbolic meaning of the olive branch. Why do you think the United Nations' flag includes two olive branches?

**Civic Resources:** With your parents' permission, check out this Kids Encyclopedia website about the United Nations: [https://kids.kiddle.co/United\\_Nations](https://kids.kiddle.co/United_Nations)

