



Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson 9

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 Freedom of Speech: I love to bark and share my voice. Did you know the Constitution allows us to speak and express ourselves, even if we have different opinions than our neighbors? This is important because it lets us share our ideas and make change in the community!

Sticky Situation: Imagine that your school wants to make the school week 6 days instead of 5 days. That means you get one less day of the weekend! You want to tell your teacher that you think the school week should be 5 days. Are you allowed to respectfully tell your teacher about your opinion?

Instead of telling the teacher, you decide to wear a shirt that says, "School should be 5 days." Is this still free speech, even though you did not speak it out loud?

Free Speech in Public Schools: *The Supreme Court said students have the right to free speech while they are at school as long as it is not disruptive. The landmark court case is Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, where students were allowed to wear armbands protesting a war because it expressed their opinion and was not disruptive.*

Activity: Think of something you believe. Maybe you believe that vanilla ice cream is better than chocolate, or that dogs are better than cats, for example. Practice free speech by explaining to a friend or family member why your opinion is right. Then let them explain to you why they think their own opinion is right. Even if you disagree with each other, you both practiced your right to share your ideas!

Civic Resources: To learn more about the First Amendment and the other forms of expression that it protects, check out: <https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/first-amendment/>.