

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #31 - Making New Friends



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 MAKING NEW FRIENDS. As a dog, I love making friends of both the new dogs and new kids in my neighborhood. It always makes me feel good to know that I have a new buddy.

Sticky Situation: There are a lot of new dogs that move into my neighborhood. I try making friends, but it is not always easy. Imagine that a new student has just arrived at your school and has been assigned to your classroom. She is from another part of the United States and, therefore, has a different accent than you and your friends have. As you go over to introduce yourself at lunchtime, you hear several of your really good friends making fun of her because of her accent. What would you do and why?

Activity: Maggie shared that there are always new dogs moving into her neighborhood. She often tries to make new friends with the dogs but recognizes that it is not always so easy. Picture a new student arriving at your school and being assigned to your classroom. It is the middle of the year, a very difficult time to be the new student in the room. Think of all the ways you could make a new student feel safe and welcome in your classroom.

Civics Resources: George Washington had **Rules of Civility** that he often referred to. George Washington wrote out a copy of these **110 Rules of Civility** in his schoolbook when he was about 14 years old.

The Mt. Vernon website is dedicated to all things George Washington. Visit the website to learn about his [Rules of Civility](#) and think about how they might apply today.

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Lesson #32 – Building Community



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 BUILDING COMMUNITY. There are always people and new animals moving into our community. I especially like it when a new dog arrives. It might take us a little time to become friends, but it always seems to end up that way. Let's all think of ways we can make new people and animals in our neighborhood feel welcome.

Sticky Situation: New families move in and out of our neighborhoods on a fairly regular basis. Some families move in because they have changed jobs and need to move closer to where they work. Others might move because they want to be closer to their other family members.

Imagine that a new student has just arrived at your school and is placed in your classroom. The student comes to your community from another country; they have an unusual name; and, they speak with a very noticeable accent. During lunch, you overhear some of your friends making fun of the new student both because of their name and their accent. You have choices about what you can do. Things to consider:

Is it a good thing to join your friends and make fun of this new student?

Do you think that your friends are saying unkind things about the new student?

If you do, what would you say to them to help them understand their unkindness?

What else might you do to get your point across to them?

Activity: It is never just new families in a community who are teased for one reason or another. To build a strong community it is important that **everyone** in the community **feels welcomed and valued**. Think of an activity that you might plan that would bring all the different families in your community together. Take the following steps to **Create a Plan of Action** that would bring lots of people from your community together to have fun:

1. Brainstorm ideas that would bring many families in your community together to have fun.
2. Pick one BIG IDEA from your list and put it in writing so that others know what you want to do.
3. Develop a way to encourage others in your community to read your plan, then volunteer to help you make it happen.
4. Identify the funds for supplies you will need to implement your plan.
5. Identify those you might need to ask for permission to implement your plan.

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #33 – Community & Citizenship



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.

A citizen is someone who is legally recognized as a member of a country. In the United States, being a citizen grants you certain rights and responsibilities. For example, in the U.S., every citizen has the right to freedom of expression – you can speak openly

about your religion, politics, and personal opinions. At the same time, every U.S. citizen has the responsibility to respect the rights, beliefs, and opinions of other people.

As a pup, I feel like a citizen in my community. I want to do whatever I can to help the people (and pups) I see every day. But even if I am not a citizen, that's okay! I still feel proud and protected by the people around me. Everyone who lives in my community, and the United States, should get a chance to contribute to their community. Let's do it together!

Today's lesson asks us to think about our COMMUNITY & CITIZENSHIP. Being a citizen of the U.S. is a privilege – it is a gift. Not everyone gets to experience that gift. Even if someone is not a citizen, she or he still belongs and should be able to enjoy the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness.

Sticky Situation: In the United States, citizens have rights but they also have responsibilities. Here is a list of a few of the rights and responsibilities that we U.S. citizens have:

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
Freedom to express yourself	Support and defend the Constitution
Freedom to worship as you wish	Stay informed of the issues affecting your community
Right to vote in elections for public officials	Participate in the democratic process
Right to run for elected office	Respect and obey federal, state, and local laws
Freedom to pursue "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"	Respect the rights, beliefs, and opinions of others
	Participate in your local community

Activity: Think of yourself as a citizen of your home. What rights and responsibilities do you have as a citizen there? Fill in the chart below. If you need more information, view the video in the Civics Resources section guidance.

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES

Civics Resources: To learn more about teaching laws, rights, and responsibilities to kids, check out this video from [Kids Academy](#).

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #34 – Conflict & Compromise (Bullying)



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 CONFLICT & COMPROMISE, particularly as they relate to BULLYING. Nothing makes my tail wag quite as fast as when I get to go to the park to play with my dog friends. We love to chase the squirrels! When we are together in groups, we know that we must play nice with one another. The same principle applies to humans! When you are with other people, it is important to make sure that everyone is treated kindly. If you notice someone being mean or bullying another, you should say something and take action.

Sticky Situation: Imagine you are eating lunch in the cafeteria with your friends from class. While you are talking, your classmate Alex accidentally trips while carrying her lunch tray to the table, causing her food to spill onto the floor. One of the boys eating lunch with you stands up from the table and points at Alex while laughing and screaming, "You're such a klutz! Don't sit with us!" During this, you noticed that Alex becomes upset.

- What would you do in this situation? Why?
- Why do you think it is important to tell the boy at the table who made fun of Alex and made a rule without asking his tablemates if they agreed that what he did isn't okay? Bullying isn't okay?
- What could you say to Alex to make her feel better in this situation?

Activity: With your friends or family, talk about the things you could say to a bully if you saw them being mean to someone. Practice saying these things out loud. How could you let the bully know that being nice to others is always the right thing to do?

Next, talk to your friends or family about the ways you could help someone that is a victim of bullying. How could you stand up for them? What could you say to comfort them? Is there anyone you could tell about the bullying in order to get help, perhaps your teacher?

Civics Resources: Watch this video about [McGruff the Crime Dog](#) to learn how he "takes a bite" out of bullying!

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #35 – The United Nations - 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 THE UNITED NATIONS and our place in the world. The United Nations is about international relations. 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 following the end of World War II. After experiencing the horrors of this war, many countries around the world wanted to form an international organization devoted to maintaining world peace and solving problems between countries through peaceful means. These countries got together to work out an agreement to establish this new international organization and they decided to call it the United Nations.

The United Nations is made up of six (6) principal sections, with each playing a different role in helping to maintain international relations. Five (5) of these are based at the **UN Headquarters in New York City** – the **General Assembly**, which is the main part of the United Nations and functions like an international legislature. There each member country gets one vote on things like peace issues, admitting new members, and setting the organization's budget. **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 the development of cooperation between countries regarding economic and social issues and maintaining it. **The Trusteeship Council** was established to provide international supervision for 11 territories to ensure they were well-prepared for self-government and independence. The Council's work on that project was completed by 1994 so it suspended operation and now meets when the need requires. **The Secretariat**, led 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 final, sixth section, the **International Court of Justice** solves disputes between member countries and is housed at The Hague in the Netherlands.

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** ("**WHO**"), which focuses on international health issues and the eradication of diseases, 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: Each year on **October 24th**, we observe **United Nations Day** – a day to celebrate the founding and ideals of the United Nations.

Let's create a United Nations Day decoration! Look at the following photo of the flag of the United Nations. Now take a blank piece of paper and try to draw that flag. Locate the United States on the flag you drew – it might take some time to find it because of the perspective of the world map that is used. When you find the U.S., color it bright yellow so you can always find it quickly. Then color the rest of the flag as it is in the picture. Ask to display your flag in your classroom or at home.

If October 24th has already passed, save your new United Nations Day decoration and remember to proudly display it on October 24th next year!

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

Civics Resources: Kiddle, a children's website, is a great place for kids to further explore the [United Nations](#).

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #36 – Be a Helper



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 PEOPLE WHO HELP US. Part of being a good citizen – and dog – is helping people who need it! Our country looks to all kinds of helpers: firefighters, healthcare workers, police officers, teachers, and more. Think of the last time someone helped you, maybe with homework or a chore.

People help you all the time, and I bet you help others, too. In a couple of states – Rhode Island and Vermont, for example – citizens are even required by law to help out other people if they see them in need. Why do you think it is important for us to help others?

Sticky Situation: Imagine you go to the park and see someone sitting on a bench who is crying. You don't know why they are crying, but you see that they are alone at the park. You have four options:

1. You can choose to walk by without saying anything.
2. You can play with your friends instead.
3. You can tell an adult and ask them to help. Or,
4. You can try to cheer them up yourself.

Which would you choose? Is there something else you might do instead?

Helping others is a wonderful thing to do. **Remember to always be safe.** Never approach a stranger unless you have a trusted adult with you.

Activity: Think of a way you can help someone today. Maybe you have a sibling who needs help with homework, or perhaps you can help with preparing dinner this evening. Look for someone in your home who needs help with something and offer to be a helper.

Tell us whom you helped and what you did. How did helping them make you feel? Write down words that describe the feelings you had both during and after helping them. Now write down ways you can help your friends and try to put them into practice.

Civics Resources: Involving your child in volunteer efforts is a great way to teach them empathy and compassion. Check out the KidsHealth website to learn more about [Volunteering with Your Child](#).

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #37 - Immigration



Maggie says ...

We live in a community. Sometimes, somebody will leave our community and go join another community, or somebody else will leave their community and join our community. That's immigration!

Today's lesson is about IMMIGRATION. I love our community, and I am really excited when somebody new joins us, too. When we were at the dog park the other day I played with a new dog I

had never met before. She and her family are new to our community – they moved from a country halfway around the world to here! They're learning English and about how we live here, and I am learning from them about how they lived in their old community.

Sticky Situation: Imagine that a new student joins your class. This student moved from another country far away. The new student is trying to learn English; trying to fit in at school; and trying to find their place in your community. What could you do to help make this new student's transition to school in the U.S. a little bit easier? Moving to a new place can be hard and moving to a new place in a different country can be even harder. If you had just moved to a new place, what kinds of things do you think would be important to learn? What do you think communities can do to help welcome new people to the community?

Activity: The United States is a country of immigrants. Ask your parents about when your family came to this country. Then ask them about when they moved to the community that you live in today. Ask your friends about their families' immigration stories. How are your stories similar? How are they different?

Civics Resources: To learn more about immigration, visit:

[Learning for Justice – Exploring Young Immigrant Stories](#)

[Kids Discover – Unit: Immigration](#)

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #38 - Earth Day



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 EARTH DAY. I love being outside! I am always begging my Mom to take me outside or to the park. I like running in the grass, digging holes, and swimming in ponds.

Turns out I'm not the only one who loves nature – every April 22nd, more than 175 countries celebrate Earth Day! Isn't that neat? People all over the world come together on this day to protect and honor our planet.

It's important to remember that Earth Day was created to help protect the environment from things like litter, pollution, and deforestation. We can all do things like using one paper towel at a time, taking shorter showers, and recycling to help make a difference!

Sticky Situation: The last time I went to the dog park, I noticed someone drink out of a plastic water bottle and then throw it on the ground. Circle all the things below that this person could have done instead to help the environment:

Use a reusable water bottle instead of a single-use plastic water bottle

Throw the empty water bottle into the lake

Bury the water bottle so no one sees it

Recycle the empty water bottle

Take the empty water bottle home to use in a craft

Activity: Make an Earth Day Poster! On a piece of paper, design a poster celebrating the Earth and include as many plants and animals as possible. Somewhere on the poster, write 3 things you love about nature. Hang it up in the house to help your family celebrate on April 22!

Civics Resources: View this video from PBS Learning Media about the [origin of Earth Day](https://www.pbslearningmedia.org/asset/primary/sci-env/58888888-8888-4888-8888-888888888888).

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #39 – Memorial Day



Today's lesson is about the MEMORIAL DAY holiday. The Memorial Day holiday in the United States honors the men and women who died while serving our country in the military. As you read through this lesson think about our heroes from past wars – like [General Dwight D. Eisenhower](#), who later became our 34th U.S. President.

Read or [listen to this read-aloud](#) of the book **The Wall** by Eve Bunting (with illustrations by Ronald Himler). Then read and think about the questions below:

1. [The Vietnam Veterans Memorial](#) is in Washington, D.C. Its design was created by an unknown 21-year-old Yale college student named [Maya Lin](#), who beat out more than 1,400 competitors for the honor. Built to honor the soldiers who died or were missing in action during the Vietnam War, there are over 58,000 names on the “Wall”. Millions of visitors stop at this memorial every year to reflect and remember.

In the book *The Wall*, a father and his young son visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial to search for the name of the boy's grandfather whom he never knew. Both the father and his son take great pride in finding the grandfather's name on *The Wall*. They also feel sadness because he isn't here to share their lives today.

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial is a large black structure that is as shiny as a mirror. It is so shiny, that visitors can see themselves reflected in the wall. When the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was constructed, there was a great deal of discussion about how it should look. Some felt it should be filled with bright colors. Others wanted a dark surface on which all the names would be written. If you were designing a memorial today to honor soldiers who have sacrificed their lives for our country, what would it look like and why?

2. In the book, a teacher brings her class to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. She tells her students, “The names are the names of the dead. But The Wall is for all of us.” What do you think she means by this statement? Be prepared to share your answer.
3. Try to find the name of someone in your neighborhood or beyond who was a soldier in the Vietnam War. Perhaps you could ask a community leader if they know a Vietnam War veteran. Before meeting with that person, make a list of questions you would like to them about what it was like to go to war to protect our country. If you cannot find a Vietnam War veteran with whom to speak, try to find another veteran, possibly one from the Persian Gulf War, the Iraq War, or the War in Afghanistan.

Continued

4. The boy's father in the book, *The Wall*, viewed his father (the boy's grandfather) as a hero. When we were all at home during the COVID pandemic, we saw many people who were heroes – our first responders. Do you know anyone who is one of those special heroes who helped to keep us safe and healthy during the pandemic? Consider how you might want to thank that person (or people) for the work they did. Now, think about what a memorial might look like to honor those **hero first responders** – doctors, nurses, teachers, bus drivers, grocery store workers, policemen, and many more – who were there for us throughout the COVID pandemic. 21-year-old May Lin designed an important memorial, and so can you. Share a drawing with the class of your vision for a memorial honoring first responders.

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #40 – Media Literacy



Maggie says ...

Nowadays, there are just so many different ways to get the news. Television, radio, the internet, newspapers, blogs, podcasts, and social media like Instagram and TikTok. – With so many different sources, it's more important than ever to know how to tell what's real as you learn about the world.

Today's lesson is about MEDIA LITERACY. I hear so much about what's going on these days – on our way to the park, we listened to the news on the radio. On our way home, we listened to a podcast about something else that had happened. Then when we had dinner, the television was on, and there were some folks on the television talking about the news, too! Later, my dad got on the internet and was reading about all sorts of things on lots of different websites. There are so many ways to learn things today!

Sticky Situation: Imagine you went to your favorite news website and there was a story about how school buses should all be painted blue. But then, you turned on the television and a news anchor was talking about how school buses should all be painted red! How do you decide which news outlet to believe??? Is each outlet sharing facts about the story? Is each presenting the information through an Opinion piece? Think about why a news website might say things one way and the television news anchor might phrase it another. This is important information to know because the type of information might influence how you interpret it.

What types of questions could you ask the journalist, anchor, or news representative for you to make an informed decision on the issue? What kinds of questions could you ask those who have a different opinion than you to better understand how they decided their position on the issue?

Activity: Watch a news program on television or visit your favorite news website on the internet. Watch/Look at the headlines of a few news stories there, then pick one story for this exercise. Now that you have chosen **your one news story**, try to identify other news sites, television programs, radio shows, or other media that you deem credible and that are talking about the **same story you picked**. Choose at least 3 of these news sources to study their coverage further. For each one, consider the following: What does this source say about the story you picked? Does this source have a similar reporting style to the original source you used? In what ways are they alike? Are there any differences (different information)? Why do you think some of the additional sources you selected have stories similar in content to the original source? Why do you think some sources' accounts of the story are different from the original story? Do these sources each approach the story from a different focus, or are they all essentially the same? Be prepared to explain your findings to the class. OR, Tell a friend or family member about your findings regarding the different ways news outlets convey the same story.

Civics Resources: For more information about media literacy, visit:

[Annenberg Classroom – NewsFeed Defenders](#)

[FactCheck.org](#)