Hi! My name is Maggie Rendell and welcome to my special Summer Civics Learning Kit. I am pleased to share with you some fun Summer activities and lessons on what it means to be a citizen. These are activities you can share with your family and friends as you enjoy the Dog Days of Summer! See you at the pool!

The first activity you should try is the Rendell Center’s Civics Treasure Game which can be found at [https://www.rendellcenter.org/grade-4/story_html5.html](https://www.rendellcenter.org/grade-4/story_html5.html). The game will take you on a treasure hunt as you learn about the Constitution. You can follow up this activity with the following lessons on the Constitution and being an active citizen. I have also included some great reading material and questions in our Read Aloud section. You can read or listen to the books while you are at the beach or pool. The books look at people who have been positive change agents. Hopefully, they will provide an opportunity for you to discuss some of the recent protests in our country with your family and the power of the youth voice.

The Constitution and the Branches of Government

**Lesson #1 Maggie Says...**

In these difficult times, the government needs to work well in order to support its citizens. Different people within the government have different roles. This is because the government is divided into three separate branches: 1) the executive branch 2) the legislative branch 3) and the judicial branch. The government is divided up into three branches so that no individual or group has too much power. Each branch plays a very important role in running our country. This lesson asks us to think about the three branches of government. Before we start, brainstorm what you already know about each branch of government.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What I know</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I know that the executive branch…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know that the legislative branch…</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know that the judicial branch…</td>
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</table>

Laws are very important in our country. Each branch of government works with the law in some way. The legislative branch makes the laws, the executive branch carries out the laws, and the judicial branch interprets the laws.
Activity: Part 1: Have a conversation about the different roles of the three branches of government.

Part 2: Identify which branch of government would handle each task below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Branch of Government</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creates a stay-at-home order in your city.</td>
<td>Legislative / Executive / Judicial (Circle one)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fines people (charges them a fee) for not staying at home.</td>
<td>Legislative / Executive / Judicial (Circle one)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goes on the news to tell people about the stay-at-home order.</td>
<td>Legislative / Executive / Judicial (Circle one)</td>
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</table>

Sticky Situation: Your school has a district-wide school board—a group of adults that make the rules for the school. They set the budget, determine how many students can be in school, and give each school general guidelines for the operations of the school.

Discussion Questions: If the school board makes the rules, what branch of government is the school board most like?

Civic Resources: Check out this short video “How Power is Divided in the United States Government” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuFR5XBYLjU

Lesson #2 Maggie Says...

Times of crisis and uncertainty are not new for the United States. This country started during a time of crisis, where a group of people had to fight a war for their independence. In 1787, a few years after the war ended, the U.S. Constitution was signed into law. The document served as the supreme law of the land—the law that every citizen, government official, and institution was bound to. Today, in the year 2020, our country is relying on the Constitution to grant power to our legislators to pass laws to support the American people in this time of crisis. I often wonder, what makes the constitution such a powerful document? I am just a pup, but it seems like this country would not exist without the Constitution. I hope the original document is forever safe and secured—pups love chewing on paper!

This lesson asks us to think about the Constitution as the foundation for our government. What makes this document so powerful? To answer this question, we have to think about the purpose behind the Constitution and what the Constitution says. Then we can understand how the Constitution serves as the supreme law of the land and the foundation of our society.

Our Constitution begins with these words: “We the people…” The framers of the Constitution started the document by acknowledging all of us. We, the citizens of this country, make the Constitution the foundation of our society by exercising the principles, rules, and regulations it established for us.

There are seven Articles in the U.S. Constitution. Think of each article as a chapter. These articles give power to government officials and establish rights for citizens. They establish and explain the duties of the branches of government and give recognition to the individual states. In addition to these articles, there are twenty-seven amendments that modify the constitution as the country changes.

Discussion Question(s):
What is the purpose of having amendments? Think about your school handbook—do you think an amendment (a change) should be added to make sure students are able to learn from home if we are faced with another global health crisis?
Activity: Why do you think the Constitution is important?

I think the Constitution is important because…

Sticky Situation: Right now, you might miss going to school. What do you miss about going to school? Some of you might miss the comfort of the routine, your classroom, or after school activities. Those are all good things to miss. Some of you might miss the people—your friends and teachers. Your school exists because of all of the people who make it work—students, teachers, and principals. The people make the place.

Civic Resources: Explore this student friendly site about the Constitution and the history surrounding it. Take a close look at the topics that make up the amendments. The Nation had to change when new circumstances and issues were presented: https://www.usconstitution.net/constkids4.html

Lesson #3 Maggie Says...
From the moment we start making minor decisions—when a baby chooses to fall asleep and wake up and when a child decides to smile—we are exercising our freedom. The ability to move, act, and speak freely is fundamental to the human experience. The first 10 amendments are the Bill of Rights. The Bill of Rights are a set of individual freedoms that limit the government’s power over its citizens. Today’s lesson asks us to think about individual freedom. Why is individual freedom important? To answer this question, we have to think about the specific freedoms that we take for granted. We should think about the purpose behind these every day freedoms we accept as normal. Then, we can understand how our country benefits from individuals exercising their individual freedoms granted to us way back in 1791 when the Bill of Rights was adopted.

Activity: You and your friends decide to right a Bill of Rights to establish a set of individual freedoms. What would you include in your Bill of Rights? Come up with as many as you can and place them in the spaces next to the original Bill of Rights.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>U.S. Constitution Bill of Rights</th>
<th>Your Bill of Rights</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The First Amendment grants freedom of speech, freedom of press, freedom of assembly, and the right to protest.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The Second Amendment grants the right to bear arms</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. The Third Amendment states that soldiers cannot take over a home during war or peace without the homeowner’s permission.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. The Fourth Amendment protects Americans from unreasonable and unlawful search and seizure of property.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. The Fifth Amendment allows all citizens due process and states that a person cannot be forced to serve as a witness against himself when accused of a crime.</td>
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</table>
6. The Sixth Amendment provides a speedy and public trial by jury for all who are accused of a crime.

7. The Seventh Amendment also allows a trial by jury to be held for certain civil disputes.

8. The Eighth Amendment prevents those accused of suffering cruel and unusual punishment.

9. The Ninth Amendment states that no one’s Constitutional rights should be used to infringe upon the rights of another citizen.

10. The Tenth Amendment provides each state with powers that are not specifically assigned to the nation’s government in the Constitution.

**Sticky Situation:** What if you and your friends had all of your individual freedom taken away? Think about this: you wake up tomorrow, and you are not able to read the book you love, watch your favorite movie, or listen to the song you like. You talk to your friends, and you all discover that it is because you no longer have freedom to do what you like.

**Civic Resources:** Check out “A 3-minute Guide to the Bill of Rights”: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yYEfLm5dLMQ

**Lesson # 4 Maggie says..**

**Today’s lesson is about the Separation of Powers:** Did you know the American Government is separated into three different branches? This works kind of like my family! Each parent has certain jobs, and other times they work together to get to the right answer. For example, it’s my Mom’s job to cut my hair, so my Dad isn’t allowed to. But if I want a doggy treat, both my parents have to agree to let me have one. Our Government works the same – the three branches (Legislative, Executive, and Judicial) each have jobs that only they can do, but also sometimes check and balance each other to make decisions together.

**Sticky Situation:** Imagine you are making a soccer team at recess. You can either have one team captain who makes all the decisions for the entire team, or three team captains who share the responsibility. Which would you choose? What are the benefits of giving each team captain specific jobs that they are responsible for?

**Activity:** Let’s learn the different powers of America’s three branches of Government. On the left are the three branches. On the right are their responsibilities, shuffled out of order. Draw a line from the branch connecting it to the correct responsibilities.

1. Legislative
   Includes the President and is responsible for enforcing the laws that Congress makes.

2. Executive
   Determines when laws are unconstitutional through court cases.

3. Judicial
   Made up of representatives from every state. This branch makes laws.
**Sticky Situation:** Imagine you are making a soccer team at recess. You can either have one team captain who makes all the decisions for the entire team, or three team captains who share the responsibility. Which would you choose? What are the benefits of giving each team captain specific jobs that they are responsible for?


**Lesson #5 Maggie Says….**

**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/](https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/first-amendment/).
Read Alouds and the Power of the Student Voice

The Pink Hat by Andrew Joyner

Throughout our history, there have been a lot of symbols that represent people’s points of view. In these difficult times, for example, people are putting hearts in their windows as one way to say thank you to the hard-working health care providers. *Listen to the read aloud The Pink Hat. (*Check YOUTUBE for a read aloud of this book.) Pink hats have become a symbol of women’s rights. After you listen to the story, think about your rights as you answer the following questions.

1. The pink hats in the story were worn by millions of women, men, and children who were part of a peaceful protest behind the message, “Women’s rights are human rights”. What do you think are some of the factors that were behind this Women’s March?

2. Do you think the story would have a different impact if the main character was a boy? If so, how would it have been different? If not, why do you think it would be the same?

3. Think of symbols in today’s world that clearly convey a message. 
   
   Example: Why do people wear red ribbons? (To call attention to the need to prevent drug abuse and drunk driving.)
   
   What others can you think of?

4. Black Lives Matter is a movement with the goal of bringing justice and equality. Like the idea that Women’s Rights are Human Rights that the pink hat represents, what symbol would you identify as one that could let people know you support the movement of Black Lives Matter.

5. In addition to calling attention to the Black Lives Matter movement with symbolic speech, what action steps would you share with people who recognize your symbol and want to know how they could help?
It is apparent that the voices of our youngest citizens are becoming more and more important. Think about Greta Thunberg and her campaign to save the earth. Think about the students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida and their campaign for gun control. The book The Youngest Marcher is about Audrey Faye Hendricks, a nine-year old who played an important role in the Civil Rights Movement. Now, in this challenging time, think about how each of us – young and old – can make a positive difference by following the guidelines, listening to the adults in our lives, and making sure we reach out to the people we love…by phone, by video, by mail….but all with love.

(Historical note: The Youngest Marcher takes place during the time in our country of segregation. Segregation is the practice of requiring separate housing, education and other services for people of color.)

After you read or *listen to (*Check YOUTUBE for a read-aloud of the book) The Youngest Marcher, think about the following questions:

1. What did Audrey want? Did she want to eat ice cream inside a restaurant with a counter? Did she want to sit downstairs at the movie theatre? Did she want to have a new school book? Do you think these were reasonable requests? Why or why not?

2. Why do you think Dr. King told the people at the church to, “Fill the jails. Pack cells up so tight that police will have to quit arresting people for demanding more rights”?

3. From your point of view, was Audrey a leader? A hero? Or both a leader and a hero? Be prepared to support your answer.

4. Who do you know who you would describe as leaders and/or heroes in these challenging times? What characteristics do you think make these people leaders and/or heroes?

5. There have been many peaceful protests recently. People of all ages are protesting racial injustice. Like Audrey Faye Hendricks, you can make a difference. What ideas do you have to help make equality a reality?
There is no doubt that these are tough times that we are all going through. As the first page of *Giant Steps to Change the World* tells us, there have been “those who had hard days but dared to make their dreams come true”. Read or *listen to the book (* you might want to check YOUTUBE for a read aloud) and then think about your dreams for your future, and how you - as an active citizen - are going to be a change agent for your world.

After you have read or listened to the book, think about the following:

1. Jesse Owens came from a very poor family. He faced racism as a young man. However, he never let anything stand in the way of his dreams. Jesse Owens competed in the 1936 Olympics and won 4 gold medals. The book shares a quote from Jesse Owens. He said, *One chance is all you need.*

   What would you like to have a chance to show your family and friends that you can do to make a difference?

2. Albert Einstein was a very famous scientist. As a person who changed the world, Albert Einstein said, *A person who never made a mistake never tried anything new.* Think about the scientists who are working around the clock to make a vaccine to prevent the corona virus. Do you think Einstein’s quote applies to what they are doing? Why or why not? Also, think about our day-to-day lives. Many of us do not like to make a mistake. However, considering Einstein’s quote, do you think it is important to accept making a mistake? Why or why not?

3. Harriet Tubman was an activist who was born into slavery. She rescued enslaved people using the Underground Railroad. Harriet Tubman said, *Every great dream begins with a dreamer.* What are some of the things you dream about doing being or doing while you are still in school? What are some of the things you dream about being or doing when you grow up? To achieve your dreams, *Giant Steps to Change the World* asks at the end of the book, “What is your next step going to be?” How would you answer that question?

4. Spike Lee, along with his wife Tonya Lewis Lee, are the authors of the book *Giant Steps to Change the World.* The protests happening around the country and the world today highlight the need for all of us to take *giant steps to change the world.* Imagine that Spike Lee and Tonya Lewis Lee were going to write *Giant Steps to Change the World, Part 2.* Who in your world would you suggest they include in this next book and why?