

American Government Game

WHO WANTS TO BE A U.S. CITIZEN?

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Objectives

Students will

- ◆ learn and demonstrate their knowledge of different aspects of the American Government
- ◆ learn new vocabulary in a group environment
- ◆ improve their oral communication



Level

My class consists of high beginners, high intermediate, and advanced level ESL students.

Time

Our class meets three days a week and four hours a day. We spent two hours daily for two weeks working on flashcards, reviewing the naturalization questions, and—finally—playing the game.

Student Prepare to Compete

Students worked in groups of three to review the USCIS Naturalization Test Questions by using flashcards and handouts with 100 naturalization questions. Beginners used the Spanish version of the questions.



Students also reviewed questions online by playing matching games at <http://www.quia.com/mc/1427698.html> and by using the handouts for Competency One. (See the document called *Reviewing for the Redesigned Naturalization Test.*)



Game Cards

At the end of these materials are the reproducible red and blue game cards that I made for “Who Wants to be an American Citizen?”

My materials list for making the game cards is as follows:

- 1 red poster: Cut 15- 5”x7” game cards for one team.
- 1 blue poster: Cut another 15- 5”x7” game cards for other team.
- 1 sheet: for scoreboard
- 2 sheets for 2 teams’ name plates
- Labels of different sizes:
 - 30 labels; 1 for each question
 - 120 labels; 4 for four answer choices on each question
 - 30 labels; 1 for each correct answer with its point value, and 50/50 lifeline

I selected a total of 30 questions from the “American Government” section of the USCIS naturalization questions (15 questions for each team) and made two sets of 5”x7”question cards—a set for each group, one red and one blue.

In each set, I arranged the 15 questions in a progressive order of difficulty. The easiest question in a set carries a score of 100 points and the most difficult question carries a score of 1500 points. The two sets of questions are evenly matched: Two same-level questions always carry the same number of points.

I helped students understand this scoring while they were preparing for the game, and they reviewed their questions accordingly.



Graphic from <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/clipart/default.aspx>

Who Wants to be an American Citizen?

The Rules for Playing

Divide the class into two teams: the **Loyalists** and the **Patriots**.

Have the first student from the Loyalist team come to the front to sit in the “hot seat.” Give the first question with four answer choices. The “hot seat” student may have as much time as needed to select the answer to the question. Members of the Loyalist team may help the “hot seat” player, who eventually chooses a final answer.



If the “hot seat” player selects the correct answer, the Loyalist Team earns the points. An incorrect answer earns no points. In either case, a member of the Patriot team gets the next question, and the entire process is repeated.



Ask each team questions that come from their own set of cards. Being able to rely on teammates for answers keeps everyone involved and takes the pressure off the individual.

Keep track of the progress of Loyalists and Patriots with the scoreboard that accompanies the game cards in the following pages.



Lifelines

Each team has 3 Lifelines per game to add to the excitement.

Lifeline-1: 50/50.

Out of the four choices of answers, this lifeline eliminates two wrong ones, leaving a choice between two answers.

Lifeline-2: Make two guesses.

Players have two chances to answer a single question, but only in this particular lifeline round.

Lifeline-3: Ask your opponent group for the correct answer.

Can you trust your enemy? Maybe so: If the opposing team gives the wrong answer, that team is awarded negative points for the whole point value of that particular question!

For example, a Patriot needs help from a Loyalist on Question 10, which is worth 1000 points. If the Loyalist picks the wrong answer, s/he'll lose 1000 points from the total Loyalist score. (Negative scores are possible.) On the other hand, if s/he picks the correct answer, s/he will earn half of the question point-value. So, while the Patriot gets 1000 points, the helpful Loyalist earns 500 points for his/her team at the same time.

Bonus Question

When both teams finished all 15 rounds of questions, they have a final chance to increase their total scores with the **BONUS QUESTION!**

There is one single bonus question for both teams: Say the **Pledge of Allegiance**. It is worth 3000 points! If both teams say each word correctly, both teams earn 3000 bonus points!

The Winner

Based on the total score, the winner is announced. At the end, to make the game more interesting, I announced winners as **ELIGIBLE NATURALIZED U.S. CITIZENS!** I gave The Oath of Allegiance to the winning team to read aloud in class--both to emphasize its importance and at the same time to focus on reading and pronunciation. The winners took the oath holding U.S. flags (self-made) in their hands. The Oath of Allegiance is included in *Handouts* for this competency.



Reproducible Game

WHO WANTS TO BE A U.S. CITIZEN?





Who is the President of the United States today?

(A) George W. Bush

(C) Bill Clinton

(B) Dick Cheney

(D) John Kennedy

Answer	A
Value (Points)	100
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

Who becomes President if both the President and Vice President can no longer serve?

(A) The Speaker of the House

(C) Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

(B) Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

(D) An election is held immediately

Answer	A
Value (Points)	200
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

What is the minimum voting age in the United States?

(A) 18

(C) 16

(B) 21

(D) 35

Answer	A
Value (Points)	300
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

What are the two major political parties in the United States today?

(A) Democratic and Liberal

(C) Republican and Democratic

(B) Democratic and National

(D) House of Representatives and Senate

Answer	C
Value (Points)	400
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or B

Who is in charge of the executive branch of our government?

(A) Congress

(C) President

(B) Vice President

(D) Chief Justice

Answer	C
Value (Points)	500
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or B

What are the two parts of The U.S. Congress?

(A) Republican and Democratic Party

(C) The Capitol building and Supreme Court

(B) President and Vice President

(D) The Senate and the House of Representatives

Answer	D
Value (Points)	600
Life Line: 50- 50	No B or C

For how long do we elect each U.S. Representative?

(A) 2 years

(C) 6 years

(B) 4 years

(D) No limit

Answer	A
Value (Points)	700
Life Line: 50- 50	No B or D

How many voting members are in the House of Representatives?

(A) 100

(C) 435

(B) 102

(D) 50

Answer	C
Value (Points)	800
Life Line: 50- 50	No B or D

How many amendments does the Constitution have?

(A) 13

(C) 27

(B) 9

(D) 10

Answer	C
Value (Points)	900
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or D

Name one right or freedom from the first amendment.

(A) The rights of freedom of speech

(C) The right to bear arms

(B) The right to vote

(D) The right to own property

Answer	A
Value (Points)	1000
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

Who is Chief Justice of the Supreme Court?

(A) John G. Roberts, Jr.

(C) Warren Burger

(B) William Rehnquist

(D) Alberto Gonzales

Answer	A
Value (Points)	1100
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

What is the supreme law of the United States?

(A) The Declaration of Independence

(C) The Bill of Rights

(B) The Constitution

(D) Freedom of Speech

Answer	B
Value (Points)	1200
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or D

What did the Declaration of Independence do?

(A) Announced the independence from Great Britain

(C) Announced the independence from Germany

(B) Announced the independence from Japan

(D) Announced the independence from Italy

Answer	A
Value (Points)	1300
Life Line: 50- 50	No B or D

What are the duties of the Supreme Court?

(A) To serve the President as Cabinet members

(C) To write laws

(B) To interpret and explain the laws

(D) To provide safety

Answer	B
Value (Points)	1400
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or D

What is one promise you make when you become a U.S. citizen?

(A) Serve in the U.S. military, if needed

(B) Join a political party

(B) Join a community group

(D) Run for office

Answer	A
Value (Points)	1500
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

Who is the Vice President of the United States now?

(A) George W. Bush

(C) Bill Clinton

(B) Dick Cheney

(D) John F. Kennedy

Answer	B
Value (Points)	100
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or D

Who becomes President if the President can no longer serve?

(A) His/Her Spouse

(C) The Vice President

(B) Chief Justice of the Supreme Court

(D) The Speaker of the House

Answer	C
Value (Points)	200
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or B

What is the highest court in the United States?

(A) District Court

(C) High Court

(B) The Supreme Court

(D) Chief Justice

Answer	B
Value (Points)	300
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or C

What are the three branches of our government?

(A) Democratic, Republican, and Independent

(C) Senate, House of Representatives, and Supreme Court

(B) Department of Justice, Department of State, and Department of Defense

(D) Legislative, Executive, and Judicial

Answer	D
Value (Points)	400
Life Line: 50- 50	No B or C

What is the legislative branch of our government?

(A) The Supreme Court

(C) Congress

(B) The Presidency

(D) The Cabinet members

Answer	C
Value (Points)	500
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or B

Who is the Commander-in-Chief of the United States military?

(A) The President

(C) The Cabinet

(B) The Congress

(D) The Senate

Answer	A
Value (Points)	600
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

For how long do we elect a U.S. Senator?

(A) 2 years

(C) 8 years

(B) 6 years

(D) 4 years

Answer	B
Value (Points)	700
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

How many Senators are there in Congress?

(A) 100 Senators, 2 from each state

(C) 435 senators

(B) 50 Senators, one from each state

(D) 150 senators, 3 from each state

Answer	A
Value (Points)	800
Life Line: 50- 50	No B or D

When is the last day to send in federal income tax forms?

(A) April 21

(C) March 15

(B) April 15

(D) August 15

Answer	B
Value (Points)	900
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or D

What are the first ten amendments to the Constitution called?

(A) The Preamble

(C) First ten amendments

(B) The Bill of Rights

(D) The Declaration of Independence

Answer	B
Value (Points)	1000
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

Who is the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

(A) Elizabeth Dole

(C) Condoleezza Rice

(B) Nancy Pelosi

(D) Colin Powell

Answer	B
Value (Points)	1100
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or D

What special group advises the President?

(A) The Cabinet

(C) The Supreme Court

(B) The Congress

(D) The Senate

Answer	A
Value (Points)	1200
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

What application form is used to apply for naturalized citizenship?

(A) Form N-200 "Petition for Naturalization"

(C) Social Security Card

(B) Form AR-11 "Alien's Change of Address Card"

(D) Form N-400 "Application for Naturalization"

Answer	D
Value (Points)	1300
Life Line: 50- 50	No B or C

What is the "rule of law"?

(A) Government is beyond the law.

(C) Citizens must serve in the U.S. military.

(B) Everyone must follow the law.

(D) Citizens must vote.

Answer	B
Value (Points)	1400
Life Line: 50- 50	No A or C

**What is one right that is only for
United States citizens?**

(A) To run for office

(C) To bear arms

**(B) Freedom to petition
the government**

(D) Freedom of speech

Answer	A
Value (Points)	1500
Life Line: 50- 50	No C or D

BONUS QUESTION (3000 POINTS)

Say The Pledge Of Allegiance:

**I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
AND TO THE REPUBLIC FOR WHICH IT STANDS,
ONE NATION UNDER GOD, INDIVISIBLE,
WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL.**

Scoreboard

Question	Point Value	Loyalist	Patriot
1	100		
2	200		
3	300		
4	400		
5	500		
6	600		
7	700		
8	800		
9	900		
10	1000		
11	1100		
12	1200		
13	1300		
14	1400		
15	1500		
Subtotal	12000		
Bonus	3000		
Life line bonus	750 Max.		
total	15750 MAX.		