

Civics Study Guide




- A **community** is a place where people live, work, and play.
- Rules and Laws
 - Rules are what people must or must not do.
 - Laws are important rules written and carried out by the government.
 - Rules and laws protect rights, property and safety.
- Basic Principles and Equality
 - **Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness** are *basic rights* that people are born with and that cannot be taken away.
 - **Equality under the law** means that all people are treated fairly.
- Government
 - A **government** is a group of people who make rules and laws, carry out rules and laws, and decide if rules and laws have been broken.
 - The basic purpose of a government is to **make laws, carry out laws, and decide if laws have been broken**. Government is necessary because they develop the laws and protect the rights and property of individuals.
 - A **Representative democracy** is the type of democracy where people elect leaders who will make the laws and run the government.
- Many American citizens have worked to defend our rights
 - **George Washington** was the first president of our new nation. He helped put our basic principles into practice for the new nation.
 - **Thomas Jefferson** was born in Virginia. He was the 3rd President of the United States and he wrote the Declaration of Independence.
 - **Abraham Lincoln** was the U.S. President when the country was divided over the issue of freedom for all people (slavery). He helped free African American people who were being forced to serve as slaves.
 - **Rosa Parks** was an African American woman who refused to give up her seat on a public bus. She helped to bring about changes in laws and worked so that all people would have equal rights.



- **Thurgood Marshall** was a lawyer who defended people at a time when not all people had equal rights. He was the first African American justice (judge) on the U.S. Supreme Court.
- **Martin Luther King, Jr.** was an African American minister who worked for equal rights for all people. He helped bring about changes in laws through peaceful public action.
- **Cesar Chavez** was a Mexican American leader who worked to improve conditions for farm workers in the U.S.

• We honor other citizens who protect our rights

	When observed?	Who is honored?
Memorial Day	May	Americans who <u>died</u> in wars while serving the country in the military.
Veterans' Day	November	Americans who <u>served</u> in the military.

• How can YOU contribute?

- Volunteer to help your neighborhood or school
- Get involved in community projects
- Share your cultural ideas and heritage with neighbors, friends, and community
- Serve in the military or in the government
- When you turn 18, VOTE!

• Diversity

- The American people come from different countries, but are united as Americans by the basic principles (life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; and, equality under the law).
- The benefits of diversity include: Learning from people with different ideas and experiences; music, art, food and clothing.

