



CIVICS

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT IN US AND GERMANY

How do youth and immigrant communities in the US and Germany use civic engagement to create change?

**Middle
School**

Civic Engagement in US and Germany: How do youth and immigrant communities use civic engagement to create change?

C3 Framework Indicator	D2.Civ. 2.6-8, D2. Civ.2. 6-8, D2. Civ.7. 6-8, D2.Geo 6.6-8	
Staging the Compelling Question	How do youth and immigrant communities in the United States and Germany use civic engagement to create change?	
Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
What does civic engagement look like for youth and immigrants in the United States and Germany?	How do specific case studies show different individuals participating in civic engagement? What impact do these actions have?	What issues do you see in the world around you? How could you use civic engagement to address these issues?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Gallery Walk - Examples of civic engagement in the US and Germany	Case Studies - Review four cases studies of civic engagement	Brainstormin real world issues and developing solutions
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
Slideshow of images, article snippets, and headlines available to download	Case studies and notes sheet to download	Brainstorm document to download
Summative Performance Task	Argument: Students will work individually or in teams to create an organization that will promote youth civic engagement. Students will create a mission statement, logo, and a 30-second elevator pitch to convince people to join their organization.	
	Extension: Students could create a website, video or infographic explaining the issues that they have chosen to address and ways for other youth/people to get involved in possible solutions.	
Taking Informed Action: Using your voice to make change	Understand: Different ways that people can influence and push for change in their community and how that civic engagement can look different for everyone and that even small actions can make a big impact.	
	Assess: Students will demonstrate their understanding by assessing the issues and ways that others have created change through civic engagement.	
	Act: Apply their learning through creating a plan of informed civic action. Students will identify issues and strategies they could use to create a change.	

A Hands-on Look into Civic Engagement in the US and Germany

Target Grade Level: 7

Target Course: Civics

Compelling Question:

How do youth and immigrant communities in the United States and Germany use civic engagement to create change?

Inquiry Overview

The lesson will have a variety of hands-on and collaborative activities designed to deepen students' understanding of civic engagement and provide practical tools for their classroom. The session activities include case study analysis and discussion, where students will review and discuss real-world examples of civic engagement initiatives among youth and immigrants in the US and Germany.

Teacher Background Information

Civic engagement comes in many different forms, from voting and running to office to protesting, organizing groups in a community, and being a digital activist. Civic engagement includes activities that allow citizens to participate and engage with their communities.

Suggested Time Frame

Two to three class periods (90 - 120 minutes)

Concept List

- Global Citizenship
- Cultural Understanding & Exchange

Instructional Resources

- Slideshow on examples of Civic Engagement
- Case Studies on Civic Engagement

All non web based Resources are available
for download from the TOP website

Introductory Activity

Students will work together to define “Civic Engagement”. After defining the term, students will brainstorm a list of examples that show civic engagement.

Supporting Question 1

What does civic engagement look like for youth and immigrants in the US and Germany?

► Formative Performance Task 1

Students will do a gallery walk of examples of civic engagement in the United States and Germany. Slideshow of images, article snippets, and headlines linked here.

► Resources

7 Young Leaders Reimagining America’s Civic Life.” Institute for Citizens & Scholars, 16 Oct. 2025, citizensandscholars.org/7-young-leaders-reimagining-americas-civic-life/. Accessed 19 Dec. 2025.

Supporting Question 2

How do specific case studies show different individuals participating in civic engagement? What impact do these actions have?

► Formative Performance Task 2

Students will look at one of four specific case studies around youth and immigrant civic engagement in either the United States or Germany. Students will prepare a short summary to share with the other groups (jigsaw) when they have completed their analysis.

► Resources

“The 13-Year-Old Tree Ambassador.” WWF, 2 Mar. 2011, <https://wwf.panda.org/es/?199519/The-13-year-old-tree-ambassador>. Accessed 20 Dec. 2025.

“Autumn Peltier: a long walk for First Nations’ water rights.” CIWEM, <https://www.ciwem.org/the-environment/autumn-peltier-a-long-walk-for-first-nations%E2%80%99-water-rights>. Accessed 20 Dec. 2025.

Maida, Kim. “Xiuhtezcatl Martinez: Guarding the Earth for Future Generations.” Cultural Survival Quarterly, 4 June 2018, <https://www.culturalsurvival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/xiuhtezcatl-martinez-guarding-earth-future-generations>. Accessed 20 Dec. 2025.

Turner, Tracey. “Overseas Children Run for Zululand Kids.” Zululand Observer, 13 Oct. 2025, <https://www.citizen.co.za/zululand-observer/news-headlines/local-news/2025/10/13/overseas-children-run-for-zululand-kids/>. Accessed 20 Dec. 2025.

Supporting Question 3

How do the other case studies compare to the first case study that was read/analyzed and how do they all show civic engagement and action?

» Formative Performance Task 3

Jigsaw: Students will share the information that they gathered during their case study (task 2) with other students who read other case studies.

» Resources

“Die Idee dahinter – Sozialer Tag.” Schülerinnen Helfen Leben*, <https://www.schueler-helfen-leben.de/sozialer-tag/die-idee-hinter-dem-sozialen-tag/>. Accessed 25 Dec. 2025.

Summative Performance Task

Essay / Presentation	<p>What issues do you see in the world around you? How could you use civic engagement to address these issues?</p> <p>Students will brainstorm issues that they see in the world. Students will be encouraged to move from analysis to application. Students will come up with real-world examples of problems that they see that could be solved.</p>
Extension Option	<p>Students could create a poster, an informative video, or a comic of each of the people highlighted in the case studies. Students might also choose to create a poster of ways to take action using the case studies as examples.</p>

Taking Informed Action

Understand	Students will understand different ways that people can influence and push for change in their community. Students will understand that civic engagement can look different for everyone and that even small actions can make a big impact.
Assess	Students will demonstrate their understanding by assessing the issues and ways that others have created change through civic engagement.
Act	Students will act by applying their learning through creating a plan of informed civic action. Students will identify issues and strategies they could use to create a change.

Modifications for Differentiation

To slim the lesson down to one class period, an instructor could stop after supporting question 2. This would allow for students to understand civic engagement examples in the US and Germany without having students come up with their own action plan.

If completing the lesson as written, instead of reading one of the four case studies in small groups, a class could look at one or more case studies as a whole class. This would allow for more guided discussion.



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