

# FOUNDATIONS *of* DEMOCRACY



**AUTHORITY**

**PRIVACY**

**RESPONSIBILITY**

**JUSTICE**

## CIVIC EDUCATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The primary goal of the Foundations of Democracy program is to promote civic competence and responsibility among the nation's elementary and secondary students. The curriculum fosters attainment of this goal by

- Promoting an increased understanding of the institutions of American constitutional democracy and the fundamental principles and values upon which they are founded
- Developing the skills needed by young people to become effective and responsible citizens
- Increasing understanding and willingness to use democratic processes when making decisions and managing conflict, both in public and private life

The Foundations curriculum is based on four concepts fundamental to an understanding of social and political life. These concepts are Authority, Privacy, Responsibility, and Justice.

The curriculum is interdisciplinary, drawing from, rather than focusing on, the teaching of specific disciplines such as political science, law, psychology, sociology, economics, anthropology, and philosophy.

Knowledge, skills, and dispositions are best developed when begun at an early age. The Foundations curricular materials are therefore designed to progress sequentially in scope and complexity through four levels: Grades K-2, 3-5, 6-9, and 10-12. Teacher's guides for each level present lesson plans and suggested activities to enrich classroom instruction.

Independent studies reveal that the Foundations of Democracy program has a significant impact on the civic knowledge of young people, their civic skills, and their propensity to participate in civic and political life.

Fifth- and sixth-grade students showed an increase in self-control, an increase in positive attitudes toward the community, and greater awareness about their rights and responsibilities as citizens.



## INTERNATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION



The Center for Civic Education works with domestic and international partners to offer a range of activities and programs that share the common objectives of creating student-centered interactive curricula for the next generation of citizens. The curriculum has been translated and adapted for use in more than thirty nations in programs supported by the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of State, and the U.S. Agency for International Development, as well as by Ministries of Education and nongovernmental organizations.

Many countries cooperate with U.S. state partners to conduct ongoing civic education activities through the Center's Civitas International Programs. These partnerships are designed to identify the civic education needs in each U.S. state and international site and to develop programs to address those needs.

The Foundations of Democracy program, originally developed for U.S. students, has proven remarkably adaptable to the realities of other nations. Currently, countries in every region of the world use Center materials that have been translated and adapted for each national and cultural context. For information about participating in these programs contact:

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## FOUR CONCEPTS

### AUTHORITY

Curriculum helps students

- distinguish between authority and power
- examine different sources of authority
- use reasonable criteria for selecting people for positions of authority and for evaluating rules and laws
- analyze benefits and costs of authority
- evaluate, take, and defend positions on the proper scope and limits of authority

### PRIVACY

Curriculum helps students

- understand the importance of privacy in a free society
- analyze the benefits and costs of privacy
- evaluate, take, and defend positions on the proper scope and limits of privacy

### RESPONSIBILITY

Curriculum helps students

- understand the importance of responsibility in a free society
- analyze the benefits and costs of responsibility
- evaluate, take, and defend positions on how conflicts among competing responsibilities should be resolved
- evaluate, take, and defend positions on personal and civic responsibility

### JUSTICE

Curriculum helps students

- understand and apply the basic principles of justice set forth in the fundamental documents of our political and legal systems
- consider fair distribution of the benefits and burdens of society
- consider fair responses to remedy wrongs and injuries
- consider fair practices for gathering information and making decisions
- evaluate, take, and defend positions on issues of justice



## CURRICULAR MATERIALS

### PRIMARY SUGGESTED GRADES K-2

Each concept is featured in a separate oversized storybook designed to facilitate the instructor's reading while allowing the group to see the illustrations. Each storybook is divided into four chapters. Each chapter stresses an important aspect of the concept and requires critical thinking to solve a problem. A prereaders guide accompanies each storybook and contains instructional procedures, including masters to be used in role-playing activities.

Activity books for each concept contain six to seven lessons. Four of these lessons refer to the chapters in the storybooks. These reusable workbooks are targeted at grade two. The lessons include whole-class activities, small-group activities, and individual activities that develop critical thinking skills and allow the instructor to assess the student's learning.

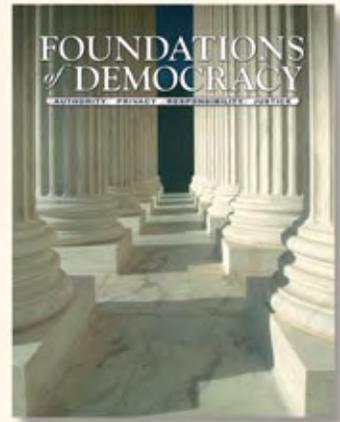


### ELEMENTARY SUGGESTED GRADES 3-5

Each concept of the elementary-level series is featured in a separate book. These books have approximately twelve lessons organized into four units of instruction. Units conclude with a whole-class participation exercise. Many of the lessons make use of "intellectual tools" or other charts that students complete during instruction. The illustrations are designed as instructional devices and are meant to stimulate discussion.

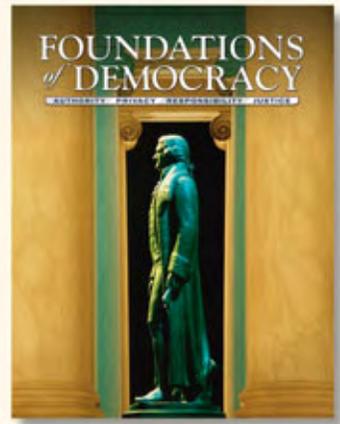
### MIDDLE SCHOOL SUGGESTED GRADES 6-9

The student text is divided into four units of study, each designed to answer a fundamental question about the nature and application of one concept. *Foundations of Democracy* may be taught in its entirety, or the teacher may select specific concepts as they relate to general curriculum goals and learning outcomes in a school or district.



### HIGH SCHOOL SUGGESTED GRADES 10-12

*Foundations of Democracy* is about ideas, values, and principles fundamental to understanding constitutional democracy. Each of the four concepts is organized into four to five units of study, each designed to answer a fundamental question about the nature and application of that concept. *Foundations of Democracy* may be taught in its entirety, or the teacher may select specific concepts as they relate to general curriculum goals and learning outcomes in a school or district.



## YOU CAN GET INVOLVED

The Center for Civic Education supports the implementation of the Foundations of Democracy program in schools throughout the nation. For more information about participating in this program contact:

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Foundations of Democracy is funded with the assistance of the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the U.S. Department of Education, under the Education for Democracy Act approved by the United States Congress