NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

Statistical Analysis Report April 2001

What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders:

U.S. Results From the International IEA Civic Education Study

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement

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What Democracy Means to Ninth-Graders: U.S. Results From the International IEA Civic Education Study

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COMMISSIONER'S STATEMENT

It has been almost 30 years since the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) conducted its first study of civic education in nine countries. Much has changed in that time, including the formation of new democratic governments in several countries. In addition, the world has become more of a global and multicultural society. Therefore, 1999 was an opportune time to conduct a second civic education study, referred to as CivEd. An indication of the interest in such a study at this time was the number of countries that participated—28 including the United States. The participation of the United States reflects our historical and ongoing commitment to nurturing democracy and citizenship at home and abroad. Among the other countries participating are some of the other industrialized nations with large economies, such as the G-8 countries including Germany, Italy, Russia, and England (but not the United Kingdom). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) sponsored the study in the United States and also contributed funding for the international coordinating center activities.

It was a challenge to design an assessment of civic knowledge that was not country-specific, but rather measured an understanding of the fundamental concepts of democracy and citizenship. It was recognized that students acquire their knowledge and attitudes on this subject not only in school but also from influences outside the school. Experts in civic education, as well as authorities in educational measurement, were involved in developing the study framework and assessment instruments. Through a concerted effort by the countries to identify items and then test them, the final assessment is relevant and fair to all. However, civic education is a subject area where students' achievement is important, but not the sole focus. More than half the items were in the areas of concepts, attitudes, and actions. Through these items, we can see how students view their national identity, international relations, their society as a whole, and the individual pieces making up that society. This is one of the major differences between CivEd and another NCES study, the NAEP Civics study, which does not address such issues in detail.

This report analyzes the U.S. results in depth, concentrating on the attitudes, actions, and conceptual views of U.S. students, as well as the school and classroom context of civic education. It provides only a brief overview of the civic achievement of U.S. students compared with that of students in the other 27 countries. A subsequent report will cover these types of comparisons in more detail. Other countries also are analyzing the information for their country and will be releasing national reports.

The results for the U.S. students are enlightening, and it is interesting to note that they performed well on the assessment. Although this report does not recommend policies, it should be useful to education policymakers, researchers, and the general public who are interested in the way civic education is taught in our schools. This information can serve as a starting point for discussions about the future civic education of U.S. students.

Gary W. Phillips
Acting Commissioner

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Civic Education Study (CivEd) is a two-phased study sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Phase 1, begun in 1994, was designed to collect extensive documentary evidence and expert opinions describing the circumstances, content, and process of civic education in 24 countries. Phase 2, the assessment phase of the study, conducted in 1999 and analyzed in this report, was designed to assess the civic knowledge of 14-year-old students across 28 countries. The assessment items in CivEd were not designed to measure knowledge of a particular country's government but were developed instead to measure knowledge and understanding of key principles that are universal across democracies. Another key component of the Phase 2 study focused on measuring the attitudes of students toward civic issues. Although the study was designed as an internationally comparative one, the data collected allow individual countries to conduct in-depth, national-level comparisons and analyses. These national-level analyses are particularly helpful in furthering our understanding of civic knowledge and attitudes among adolescents. The results from the national analyses are presented in this report to inform education practitioners, policymakers, parents, and concerned citizens of the status of civic education in the United States today.

The civic achievement of U.S. students in international perspective

The civic achievement of students in all 28 countries was measured by a total civic knowledge scale composed of two subscales: a civic content subscale and a civic skills subscale. Civic content refers to the content knowledge of civic principles or pivotal ideas (e.g., the knowledge of what constitutes a democracy), whereas civic skills refer to the interpretative skills needed to make sense of civic-related information (e.g., the skills needed to interpret a newspaper article or a political cartoon).

- U.S. ninth-graders scored significantly above the international average on the total civic knowledge scale. Furthermore, in no other country did students significantly outperform U.S. students.
- U.S. students' average scores on the civic content subscale did not differ significantly from the international mean. Students in six countries performed better than U.S. students on this subscale.
- U.S. students performed significantly higher than the international mean on the civic skills subscale and also performed significantly higher than students in every other country participating in CivEd.
- Overall, the results indicate that ninth-grade U.S. students performed well when compared with students in the other 27 participating countries.

The school and classroom context of civic knowledge

This section of the report examines the context in which civic education is delivered in U.S. schools and the relationship between school and classroom factors and civic achievement.

- In 1999, 70 percent of U.S. schools with a ninth grade reported having a ninth-grade civic-related subject requirement.
- In 55 percent of U.S. schools, principals reported that ninth-grade students are required to take 5 to 6 periods a week in civic-related subjects such as social studies, history, or civics.
- Sixty-five percent of students reported studying social studies in school almost every day. However, 12 percent of students reported never or hardly ever studying social studies in school.
- The majority of U.S. ninth-graders typically spent less than 1 hour a week on social studies homework.
- Students who studied social studies in school almost every day had higher scores on all three civic achievement scales than students who studied social studies once or twice a week or even less frequently.
- Students in low-poverty schools (with a low percentage of children eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program) outperformed students in high-poverty schools.
- Students in U.S. schools were more likely to study domestic civic issues than international civic issues.
- U.S. students were more likely to report reading from a textbook or filling out worksheets when studying social studies than engaging in activities such as receiving visits from leaders or writing letters to give their opinion.
- Eighty-five percent of students reported being encouraged by teachers to make up their own minds about issues, and about two-thirds reported being encouraged by teachers to discuss political or social issues about which people have different opinions.

The demographic, socioeconomic, and out-of-school context of civic knowledge

This chapter examines the role of demographic, socioeconomic, and out-of-school variables that other studies have shown are frequently related to the educational achievement of U.S. students.

- White and multiracial students scored higher, on average, than black and Hispanic students on the content and skills subscales and the total civic knowledge scale. In addition, Asian students scored higher than black students on all three civic achievement scales, and higher than Hispanic students on the content subscale.
- Female students scored higher, on average, than male students on the skills subscale, but there were no differences between males' and females' average scores on the content subscale or the total civic knowledge scale.
- Performance on the CivEd assessment was positively related to the number of books students reported having in their home, as well as to the receipt of a daily newspaper.

- Students' civic achievement was also positively related to their parents' educational attainment.
- Students born in the United States demonstrated a higher civic knowledge, on average, than foreign-born students.
- Students who had higher expectations for their own continued education also did better on the CivEd assessment.
- Students who reported that they were not absent from school at all during the month prior to the CivEd assessment scored higher on the civic assessment than students who reported being absent 3 or more days during the month prior to the assessment.
- Students who participated in meetings or activities sponsored by any type of organization, even if they participated only a few times a month, had higher civic knowledge than students who did not participate at all.
- Although participation in extracurricular activities sponsored by a school or community organization was positively related to civic achievement, the frequency of participation was not.
- On average, students who engaged in nonschool activities directly related to academics did better on the CivEd assessment than their peers who did not.

Concepts of democracy, citizenship, and government

The analyses in the last three chapters focus on the results from the survey items. This chapter examines ninth-grade U.S. students' opinions on what constitutes democracy and what defines good citizenship, as well as their concepts of the responsibilities of our government.

- About 90 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students reported that it is good for democracy when everyone has the right to express opinions freely.
- Approximately 80 percent of U.S. students reported that voting in every election and showing respect for government leaders were two important factors in being good citizens.
- Eighty-nine percent of ninth-grade U.S. students thought that it was important for a good citizen to participate in activities to help people in the community.
- Ninth-grade U.S. female students were more likely than their male peers to report social movement-related activities, such as promoting human rights and protecting the environment, as important.
- U.S. students reported average scores higher than the international mean on the importance of conventional citizenship scale and the importance of social movement-related scale, but lower than the international mean on the economy-related government responsibilities scale.
- Eighty-four percent of ninth-graders said that the government should be responsible for keeping prices under control.

- Fifty-nine percent of U.S. ninth-graders said that it was the responsibility of the government to provide an adequate standard of living for the unemployed.
- Asian and black U.S. ninth-graders were more likely than their white peers to report that the government should be responsible for economy-related issues.
- Between 87 and 92 percent of U.S. ninth-graders said that the government should be responsible for ensuring equal political opportunities for men and women, providing free basic education and health care for all, guaranteeing peace and order within the country, and providing an adequate standard of living for old people.

Attitudes of U.S. students toward national and international civic issues

CivEd probed the attitudes of students on many national and international civic issues. This chapter addresses questions of students' trust in government-related institutions, their perceptions of how much citizens can influence government decisions, and their support for the rights of immigrants and women.

- A majority of ninth-grade students reported that they trust local and national government institutions in the United States. (In contrast, only 35 percent of students reported trusting political parties.)
- Female ninth-graders were more likely to report that they trust government-related institutions than their male counterparts.
- Ninety-two percent of U.S. ninth-graders reported that we should always be alert and stop threats from other countries to the political independence of the United States.
- Fifty-three percent of male U.S. ninth-graders agreed that we should stop outsiders from influencing the United States' traditions and cultures compared with about 35 percent of females.
- Nine out of 10 students supported women's political rights and agreed that women should run for public office and have the same rights as men. A greater proportion of female ninth-graders supported women's rights than did males.
- Hispanic, Asian, and multiracial ninth-graders reported having more positive attitudes toward rights for immigrants than did their white peers.
- U.S. students reported average scores higher than the international mean on both the support for women's rights scale and the positive attitude toward immigrants' rights scale.

Current and expected activities related to politics

This last chapter examines U.S. ninth-graders' reports of current activities related to politics as well as their expected political actions as adults.

- Ninth-grade U.S. students reported discussing political issues with teachers and parents, but discussions of U.S. politics were more likely to occur than discussions of international politics.
- Male ninth-grade students were more likely to report discussing international political issues with people their own age than were their female counterparts.
- Students who reported using newspapers as a source of political information were more likely to read about domestic politics than to read about international politics.
- Television was the primary source that ninth-grade U.S. students relied on to obtain information about politics.
- Female and male students as well as U.S.-born and foreign-born students all reported television as their primary source of political news and radio as their least likely source.
- U.S. students' average score on the expected participation and political activities scale was higher than the international average.
- Female ninth-grade students were more likely than their male counterparts to expect to be politically active as adults.
- Results indicated no differences in expected political participation by race or country of birth.
- Students in households containing 100 or fewer books were less likely to report expecting to participate in political life as adults than students in households containing more than 200 books.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Public knowledge of government and civic life has long been considered central to the endurance of the United States as a democratic republic. Thomas Jefferson held that an uneducated citizenry was a contradiction in terms. John F. Kennedy, recalling the old saying that the course of civilization is a race between catastrophe and education, insisted that in a democracy such as ours "we must make sure that education wins."

Learning about citizenship and civic issues does not happen only in school, but is also acquired in families and social groups and from the media, institutions, and the wider culture. However, civic education is an indispensable part of educating U.S. youths to be responsible and active citizens. Results of a recent Gallup Poll indicate that the public considers preparing students to be responsible citizens to be the most important goal of public schools, surpassing preparing youths to be economically self-sufficient, promoting cultural unity, or improving social conditions (Rose and Gallup, 2000).

A majority of schools in this country provide civic education throughout the school years. An analysis of transcripts of high school graduates conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) determined that in 1994, 78 percent of high school graduates had taken at least one semester of civics or government (NCES, 1997). Furthermore, students acquire much in terms of civic education through history lessons, other social studies courses, and the informal curriculum of the school (Hahn, 1999). The purpose of the IEA Civic Education Study (CivEd) was to assess U.S. students' civic knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes, and actions in terms that could be compared with comparable samples of students in 27 other countries.

Although the study was designed as an internationally comparative one, the data collected allow individual countries to conduct in-depth, national-level comparisons and analyses. These national-level analyses are particularly helpful in furthering our understanding of civic knowledge and attitudes among adolescents. The results from the national analyses are presented in this report to inform education practitioners, policymakers, parents, and concerned citizens of the status of civic education in the United States today.

Overview of IEA and CivEd

IEA was founded in 1959 for the purpose of conducting comparative studies focusing on educational policies and practices in various countries and, as of 2000, consisted of 54 member countries. IEA conducted its first study of civic education in 1971 (Torney, Oppenheim, and Farnen, 1975). This was the first IEA study to place equal weight both on attitudinal measures and on measures of knowledge. In 1993, the Standing Committee of IEA commissioned a proposal for a possible second IEA study in the area of civic education. Changes in the world since 1971 had brought urgency to understanding, first, how students view and define their citizenship identity and, second, how their views are influenced by the political, educational, and social contexts in countries that are democracies or striving to become democracies.

The second Civic Education Study was approved by the IEA General Assembly in 1994 as a two-phased study. The data collected during Phase 1 of the study

consisted of extensive documentary evidence and expert interviews describing the circumstances, content, and process of civic education in 24 countries (Torney-Purta, Schwille, and Amadeo, 1999). The Phase 1 study also summarized what experts in each participating country believed that 14-year-olds should know about a number of topics related to democratic institutions, including elections, individual rights, national identity, political participation, and respect for ethnic and political diversity (see Hahn, 1999; Hahn, Dilworth, and Hughes, 1998; Hahn et al., 1998; and Hahn, Hughes, and Sen, 1998 for a summary of Phase 1 results in the United States).

Fourteen-year-olds were chosen as the target population for two reasons. It is a standard IEA population and the age group that was successfully sampled in IEA's first study of civic education. More important, in some countries, testing an older group would have meant a substantial loss of students who had ended their secondary education. For sampling purposes, countries were instructed to select the grade in which most 14-year-olds were enrolled at the time of the study.

Phase 2, the assessment phase of the study that is analyzed in this report, was administered in 1999 to a nationally representative sample of 14-year-olds, their respective teachers, and school administrators in 28 countries. The 28 participating countries included countries with a substantial tradition of democratic government, some that have experienced recent transitions, Latin American and Baltic countries, and a number of G-8 countries. CivEd provided the United States with an opportunity to compare the civic knowledge of its students with that of students across a wide range of countries. Table 1.1 provides the list of countries participating in Phase 2 of CivEd. (For further background information on the study, see Torney-Purta et al., 2001.)

Table 1.1.—Countries participating in Phase 2 of CivEd

Australia	Finland	Portugal
Belgium (French)	Germany	Romania
Bulgaria	Greece	Russian Federation
Chile	Hong Kong (SAR)	Slovak Republic
Colombia	Hungary	Slovenia
Cyprus	Italy	Sweden
Czech Republic	Latvia	Switzerland
Denmark	Lithuania	United States
England	Norway	
Estonia	Poland	

SOURCE: Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H., and Schulz, W., 2001. *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries: Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen.* Amsterdam: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

How CivEd differs from NAEP Civics

In 1998, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), also known as the nation's report card, assessed U.S. students' civics achievement through NAEP Civics. Several major differences between the NAEP Civics study and

CivEd prevent comparisons between the two. First and foremost, whereas NAEP is designed to measure content related to civics and government in the United States, CivEd measures a more global understanding of civic concepts. CivEd is not limited to an assessment of civic knowledge and skills, but puts equal importance on measures of student attitudes and experiences. Because there is evidence that civic attitudes are related to civic participation (Damico, Damico, and Conway, 1998; Miller and Kimmel, 1997; Wade and Saxe, 1996), CivEd can address some questions regarding the role of schools in civic engagement that cannot be examined through NAEP data.

There are several additional differences between the two studies. NAEP provides a combination of multiple-choice and constructed-response (i.e., open-ended) assessment questions. In contrast, all assessment items in CivEd are in the form of multiple-choice questions. Also, the populations tested were different between the studies: fourth-, eighth-, and twelfth-graders were assessed in NAEP compared with ninth-graders in CivEd. Finally, results from CivEd allow international comparisons across countries in both civic achievement and attitudes; NAEP Civics results cannot be compared internationally.

The CivEd framework

The CivEd framework was established through an international consensus process. Because of the international nature of the study, the goal was not to identify a single best approach to civic education in a democracy. Rather, the study was premised on a model that would invite the expression and analysis of many points of view that significant actors and thinkers saw as relevant to civic education in a democracy. As a result, the assessment items in CivEd were not designed to measure knowledge of a particular country's government but were developed instead to measure knowledge and understanding of key principles that are universal across democracies.

To reflect the assumption that within every political system are different and often contrasting views of what constitutes good citizenship, the first step in the two-phased study was to develop 18 framing questions designed to encourage countries to reflect the rich diversity of ways in which important groups and individuals think about civic education. The 18 framing questions were geared at defining the universe of domains considered relevant to countries, while ensuring that the participating countries would orient their work around similar topics. (For a complete description of the 18 framing questions, see appendix A.)

Each country was asked to respond to each of the 18 framing questions in terms of what its importance was to the country, whether its topic had been addressed in the official curriculum goals of the country, what sort of public discussion or controversy (if any) there had been relating to the topic of the question, what organizations had taken a well-known interest in the question, and what sources should be consulted. Each country's expert panel was also invited to submit a vote designating the most important framing questions. The responses and the votes were used by the IEA International Steering Committee in reformulating three international core domains that formed the basis for developing the study's instruments.

The first core international domain has to do with what 14-year-olds have learned about the *meaning of democracy in their national context*. More specifically, "What does democracy mean, and what are its associated institutions and practices (including constitutions, rights, and obligations of citizens)?" The second core domain focuses on describing *a sense of national identity or national loyalty* among 14-year-olds and how it relates to their *orientation to other countries and to regional and international organizations*. The third core domain is concerned with what 14-year-olds have learned about issues of *social cohesion and social diversity*.

From these three core domains, statements of what 14-year-old students might be able to know and believe about the three domains were developed and used as the basis for defining the types of items planned to be included in the instruments. Five types of items were developed for the student questionnaire:

- Civic content items (Type 1) assessed knowledge of key civic principles and pivotal ideas (e.g., key features of democracies) measured by multiple-choice items.

- Civic skills items (Type 2) assessed skills in using civic-related knowledge through multiple-choice items (e.g., understanding a brief political article or a political cartoon).

- Survey items measured students' concepts of democracy, citizenship, and government (Type 3); attitudes toward civic issues (Type 4); and expected political participation (Type 5).

Additional survey questions assessed students' perceptions of the climate of the classroom as well as other background variables.

Intersecting the five types of items with the three domains of the study produces the matrix shown in figure 1.1, which served as the basis for the test and survey design.

Figure 1.1.—Framework for the development of the CivEd items

Domain	Assessment		Survey		
	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4	Type 5
I—Democracy					
II—National identity and international relations					
III—Social cohesion and diversity					

Source: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

A little less than half of the final testing time was devoted to multiple-choice cognitive items in the "assessment," in contrast to the "survey," which refers to the items in the areas of concepts, attitudes, and actions.

The CivEd instruments

The final student questionnaire consisted of a total of 38 cognitive items: 25 civic content items (Type 1) and 13 civic skills items (Type 2). In addition, the instrument included 52 concept items (Type 3), 70 attitude items (Type 4), and 24 action items (Type 5). As part of the questionnaire, students answered general background questions that asked them to identify their sex, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic background and to supply information on civic-related subjects studied, participation in student organizations, peer activities, and homework habits. These background questions were given in separately timed sections. (Further details on the development of the CivEd student instrument are given in appendix B.)

In addition, a school questionnaire and a teacher questionnaire were administered. The school questionnaire, completed by the principal, contained questions designed to gather information on the school's general environment, such as size, length of school year, and characteristics of the student body. The school questionnaire also asked questions designed to provide a picture of how civic education is delivered through the school curriculum, and school-sponsored activities, as well as the number of staff involved in teaching civic-related subjects.

The teacher questionnaire asked respondents for background information (age, sex, educational background, etc.) as well as questions about the importance of civic education, the amount of time they spent teaching civic-related topics, and the means of assessing students in civic-related courses. However, because the organization of civic education and the role of civic education teachers in U.S. schools differ from those of many other countries in the study, results from the teacher questionnaire were not analyzed in the U.S. report.

Description of the school and student samples

In the United States, CivEd was administered to a representative sample of 2,811 students among 124 public and private schools at the beginning of ninth grade, the grade in which most 14-year-olds were enrolled at the time of the assessment (October 1999). The overall sample design was intended to approximate a self-weighting sample of students as much as possible, with each ninth-grade student in the United States having an approximately equal probability of being selected within the major school strata.

Thus, the results presented in this report are based on a representative sample of students. Each selected school that participated in the study, and each student assessed, represents a portion of the population of interest. As a result, after adjustments for student and school non-responses, the findings presented are representative of all ninth-graders in the nation.

Reporting CivEd results

Item response theory (IRT) methods were used to produce the scales presented in this report. For the cognitive items, a one-parameter Rasch model was fitted to

the data. For the attitudinal items, the Generalized Partial Credit Model was applied. (Appendix C provides further details on these IRT models.)

CivEd results are reported for three cognitive scales: a total civic knowledge scale based on student responses to all 38 cognitive items, and two subscales—a civic content subscale made up of the 25 Type 1 content items and a civic skills subscale made up of the 13 Type 2 skills items. The international mean for these scales was set at 100 with a standard deviation of 20. In addition, results are presented for 10 attitudinal scales. The international mean for these attitudinal scales was set at 10 with a standard deviation of 2. For consistency, all titles for the scales come from the IEA International Release Report (Torney-Purta et al., 2001).

Furthermore, to be consistent with results reported in the IEA International Release Report (Torney-Purta et al., 2001), the analyses in the current report are based on data that have not been imputed for missing responses. In effect, this procedure is equivalent to substituting the sample mean for missing cases. As a result of this non-imputation, percentage distributions of various subgroups may differ across tables. Appendix C provides the list of variables for which 5 percent or more of responses were missing.

Interpreting CivEd results

The average scores and percentages presented in this report are estimates because they are based on sampling rather than on testing an entire population. As such, the results are subject to a measure of uncertainty (i.e., sampling error), reflected in the standard errors of the estimates. Also reflected in the standard errors are errors of measurement associated with the imprecision of the instruments. The standard errors for the estimated scale scores and percentages provided throughout this report are displayed in appendices D and E.

The differences between scale scores or percentages discussed in the following chapters take into account the standard errors associated with the estimates. The comparisons are based on statistical tests that consider both the magnitude of the difference between the group average scores or percentages and the standard errors of these statistics. Throughout this report, differences are defined as significant only when they are significant from a statistical perspective. This means that observed differences are unlikely to be due to chance factors associated with sampling variability. Hence, the term "significant" does not reflect any judgment about the absolute magnitude of differences. All differences reported are statistically significant at the .05 level, with appropriate adjustments for multiple comparisons. (Appendix C provides further information on how to compute tests of significance and draw proper inferences from the results.)

Furthermore, because all the scales presented in this report have identical means and standard deviations (i.e., the international means and standard deviations), results cannot be compared across scales in any meaningful way. For example, one cannot compare the mean score on the *trust in government-related institutions* scale with the mean score on the *positive attitude toward one's nation*

scale and conclude that either is higher, since the scales have no common items. Hence, such cross-scale comparisons are neither meaningful nor possible.

The reader also is cautioned against using the results in this report to make simple causal inferences regarding subgroup differences (e.g., *x* causes what we observe in *y*). The focus of this report is descriptive rather than explanatory, and many of the relationships presented between variables do not reveal the underlying causes of these relationships, which may be influenced by a number of additional variables not included in the results. Differences in civic content knowledge, skills, concepts, attitudes, or actions may reflect a range of socioeconomic and educational factors not discussed in this report or measured by the CivEd instruments. Hence all results discussed in this report should be interpreted in light of this caveat.

Finally, because U.S. students were tested in October 1999, about one month after the beginning of the school year, readers should use caution when interpreting the results that examine relationships involving school- and classroom-level factors. These relationships speak only to the brief time students had spent in ninth grade at the time of testing.

Organization of the report

This report is organized in seven chapters. Following this introduction, chapter 2 presents a brief overview of the civic achievement of U.S. students on the assessment component of the student instrument compared with that of students in the other 27 participating countries. This brief international comparison should be seen as providing context for the in-depth, national-level analyses that follow.[*] Chapter 3 examines the school and classroom context of civic knowledge, with particular emphasis on the status of civic education in schools and what students learn in civic education. Chapter 4 presents results on the demographic, socioeconomic, and out-of-school context of civic knowledge. Chapters 5 through 7 analyze the survey component of the instruments, with chapter 5 focusing on concepts of democracy, citizenship, and government; chapter 6 examining the attitudes of U.S. students toward national and international civic issues; and chapter 7 looking at the current and expected activities of U.S. ninth-grade students related to politics.

[*] Comprehensive internationally comparative analyses are the focus of the IEA International Release Report (Torney-Purta et al., 2001) and a forthcoming NCES report.

CHAPTER 2

THE CIVIC ACHIEVEMENT OF U.S. STUDENTS IN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Key Points

U.S. ninth-graders scored significantly above the international average on the total civic knowledge scale. Furthermore, in no other country did students significantly outperform U.S. students.

U.S. ninth-graders scored significantly above the international average on the civic skills subscale and did not score significantly differently from the international average on the civic content subscale.

The U.S. international standing was stronger in civic skills than in civic content, with the performance of U.S. students on the civic skills subscale higher than that of students in every other country in the study.

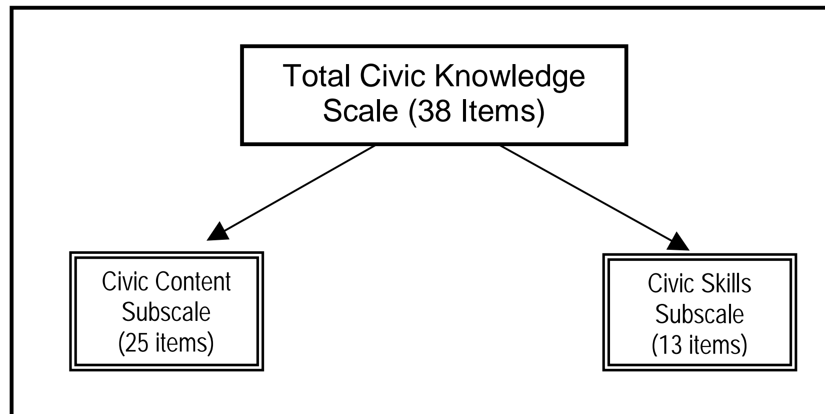
How well are young people prepared to exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship around the world? This is one of the key questions CivEd was designed to answer. The CivEd assessment was designed to measure both the knowledge and the skills that students are expected to need in order to take part as informed citizens in the civic life of their country. However, because the study is comparative in nature, the questions asked of the students are not tied to the school curriculum of their respective country. Instead, they cover the broad concepts of citizenship and government that are vital to the proper functioning of democratic countries or emerging democracies. As such, the results provide a glimpse of how well prepared students in different nations are to function in the political world.

This chapter examines the performance of U.S. students in relationship to students from other participating countries to provide context for the national analyses presented in the following chapters. Because precise scores cannot be determined with perfect accuracy, to fairly compare the United States with other countries, nations have been grouped into broad bands according to whether their performance was significantly higher than, not significantly different from, or significantly lower than that of the United States.

The civic achievement of U.S. students relative to students in other countries

What is the status of U.S. students in terms of general civic knowledge relative to students in other participating countries? As discussed in chapter 1, the total civic knowledge scale is made up of items on two subscales: a civic content subscale and a civic skills subscale. Civic content refers to the content knowledge of civic principles or pivotal ideas (e.g., the knowledge of what constitutes a democracy), whereas civic skills refer to the interpretive and thinking skills needed to make sense of civic-related information (e.g., the skills needed to make sense of a newspaper article or a political cartoon). The relationship of these two subscales to the total civic knowledge scale is presented in figure 2.1.

Figure 2.1.—Relationship of the CivEd content and skills subscales to the total civic knowledge scale



SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

Figure 2.2 presents the results for the performance of students across all 38 assessment items—the total civic knowledge scale. On the total civic knowledge scale, ninth-grade U.S. students performed significantly above the international mean. Furthermore, in no other country did students significantly outperform U.S. students. Students in 11 countries performed similarly to U.S. students (Poland, Finland, Cyprus, Greece, Hong Kong (SAR), Italy, Slovak Republic, Norway, Czech Republic, Hungary, and Australia), and students in 16 countries (Slovenia, Denmark, Germany, Russian Federation, England, Sweden, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Portugal, French Belgium, Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, Latvia, Chile, and Colombia) scored significantly below students in the United States.

Figure 2.2.—Average total civic knowledge achievement of ninth-grade students, by nation: 1999

Nation	*Average*
(none)	
Poland	111
Finland	109
Cyprus	108
Greece	108
Hong Kong (SAR)	107
United States	**106**
Italy	105
Slovak Republic	105
Norway	103
Czech Republic	103
Hungary	102
Australia	102
Slovenia	101
Denmark	100
Germany	100
Russian Federation	100
England	99
Sweden	99
Switzerland	98
Bulgaria	98
Portugal	96
Belgium (French)	95
Estonia	94
Lithuania	94
Romania	92
Latvia	92
Chile	88
Colombia	86
International average	100

Average is significantly higher than the U.S. average.
Average does not differ significantly from the U.S. average.
Average is significantly lower than the U.S. average.

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

Ninth-grade students' performance on the two subscales making up the total civic knowledge scale is presented in figure 2.3. The mean of U.S. students' average scores did not differ significantly from the international mean on the civic content subscale. Students in six countries performed better than U.S. students (Poland, Greece, Finland, Cyprus, Hong Kong (SAR), and Slovak Republic). In 10 countries, students did not perform significantly differently from U.S. students (Italy, Norway, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Russian Federation,

Figure 2.3.—Average civic knowledge achievement of ninth-grade students, by subscale and nation: 1999

Civic content	
Nation	*Average*
Poland	112
Greece	109
Finland	108
Cyprus	108
Hong Kong (SAR)	108
Slovak Republic	107
Italy	105
Norway	103
Czech Republic	103
United States	**102**
Hungary	102
Slovenia	102
Russian Federation	102
Denmark	100
Australia	99
Germany	99
Bulgaria	99
Sweden	97
Portugal	97
England	96
Switzerland	96
Belgium (French)	94
Estonia	94
Lithuania	94
Romania	93
Latvia	92
Chile	89
Colombia	89
International average	100

Civic skills	
Nation	*Average*
(none)	
United States	**114**
Finland	110
Cyprus	108
Australia	107
Poland	106
Greece	105
Italy	105
England	105
Hong Kong (SAR)	104
Slovak Republic	103
Norway	103
Czech Republic	102
Sweden	102
Switzerland	102
Hungary	101
Germany	101
Denmark	100
Slovenia	99
Russian Federation	96
Belgium (French)	96
Bulgaria	95
Portugal	95
Estonia	95
Lithuania	93
Latvia	92
Romania	90
Chile	88
Colombia	84
International average	100

Average is significantly higher than the U.S. average.
Average does not differ significantly from the U.S. average.
Average is significantly lower than the U.S. average.

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

Denmark, Australia, Germany, and Bulgaria), and students in 11 countries (Sweden, Portugal, England, Switzerland, French Belgium, Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, Latvia, Chile, and Colombia) performed below U.S. students.

Ninth-grade U.S. students scored significantly higher than the international mean on the civic skills subscale and also performed significantly higher than students in every other country participating in the study. This finding indicates that U.S. students are able to use analytical skills to process information related to political and social issues.

Overall, these results indicate that U.S. students performed well when compared with students in the other 27 participating countries, exceeding the international average on the total civic knowledge scale and the civic skills subscale and performing at the international average on the civic content subscale.

What students were asked to do on the CivEd assessment

As discussed in chapter 1, the CivEd assessment was made up of two types of items: items measuring students' factual knowledge of civic content (Type 1), and items assessing students' skills in using civic-related knowledge (Type 2). The final assessment consisted of 25 content items and 13 skills items. Below are examples of both types of items, along with the percentage of students responding correctly to each example item, both in the United States and across all participating countries.

Examples of content items

The item shown in figure 2.4 is a relatively easy item requiring students to identify the function of having more than one political party in a democracy. Seventy-two percent of U.S. ninth-graders responded to this item correctly. The international average on this item was 75 percent correct.

Figure 2.4.—Example content item 1

In democratic countries, what is the function of having more than one political party?

(A) To represent different opinions in the national legislature (Congress)

(B) To limit political corruption

(C) To prevent political demonstrations

(D) To encourage economic competition

Correct answer: A *U.S. average: 72%* *International average: 75%*

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

The item in figure 2.5, another fairly easy item, especially in the United States, requires students to identify the purpose of organizations in a democracy. Seventy-eight percent of U.S. ninth-graders responded to this item correctly. The international average for this item was 69 percent correct.*

Figure 2.5.—Example content item 2

In a democratic country, having many organizations for people to join is important because this provides…

- (A) A group to defend members who are arrested.
- (B) Many sources of taxes for the government.
- (C) Opportunities to express different points of view.
- (D) A way for the government to tell people about new laws.

Correct answer: C *U.S. average: 78%* *International average: 69%*

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

The item presented in figure 2.6 asks students to demonstrate an understanding of what constitutes discrimination in employment. Eighty percent of U.S. ninth-graders responded correctly to this item. The international average was 50 percent correct. Although internationally this is one of the hardest items, for U.S. students it was an easy one that allowed them to demonstrate their greater familiarity with and understanding of discriminatory practices than students in other countries.

Figure 2.6.—Example content item 3

A woman who has a young child is interviewed for a job at a travel agency. Which of the following is an example of discrimination? She does not get the job because…

- (A) She has no previous experience.
- (B) She is a mother.
- (C) She speaks only one language.
- (D) She demands a high salary.

Correct answer: B *U.S. average: 80%* *International average: 50%*

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

* This and the following statements related to the relative ease or difficulty of items in the U.S. compared with the international mean are based on the size of the U.S. and international standard errors for the 5 public release items published in the IEA International Release Report (Torney-Purta et al., 2001). These standard errors range from 1.4 to 1.7 for the U. S. average, and from 0.3 to 0.4 for the international average, suggesting that they are quite stable. Tests of significance were computed using the average of the 5 standard errors.

Figure 2.7 presents an item that asks students to demonstrate an understanding of the role of mass media in a democracy. In the United States, 59 percent of students responded correctly to this item. Internationally, 57 percent of students answered this item correctly.

Figure 2.7.—Example content item 4

Which of the following is most likely to happen if a large publisher buys many of the smaller newspapers in a country?

- (A) Government censorship of the news is more likely.
- (B) There will be less diversity of opinions presented.
- (C) The price of the country's newspapers will be lowered.
- (D) The amount of advertising in the newspapers will be reduced.

Correct answer: B *U.S. average: 59%* *International average: 57%*

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

The item presented in figure 2.8 requires students to identify what makes a government non-democratic. Fifty-three percent of U.S. students responded correctly on this item. The international average on this item was also 53 percent correct.

Figure 2.8.—Example content item 5

Which of the following is most likely to cause a government to be called non-democratic?

- (A) People are not allowed to criticize the government.
- (B) The political parties criticize each other often.
- (C) People must pay very high taxes.
- (D) Every citizen has the right to a job.

Correct answer: A *U.S. average: 53%* *International average: 53%*

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

Examples of skills items

The item shown in figure 2.9 is an example of a skills item using stimulus material based on a mock political advertisement. Students are expected to identify which party is most likely to have issued this advertisement. Eighty-three percent of U.S. students answered this item correctly. The international average on this item was 65 percent.

Figure 2.9.—Example skills item 1

We citizens have had enough!

A vote for the Silver Party means a vote for higher taxes.

It means an end to economic growth and a waste of our nation's resources.

Vote instead for economic growth and free enterprise.

Vote for more money left in everyone's wallet!

Let's not waste another 4 years! VOTE FOR THE GOLD PARTY.

This is a political advertisement that has probably been issued by ...

(A) The Silver Party.

(B) A party or group running against the Silver Party.

(C) A group which tries to be sure elections are fair.

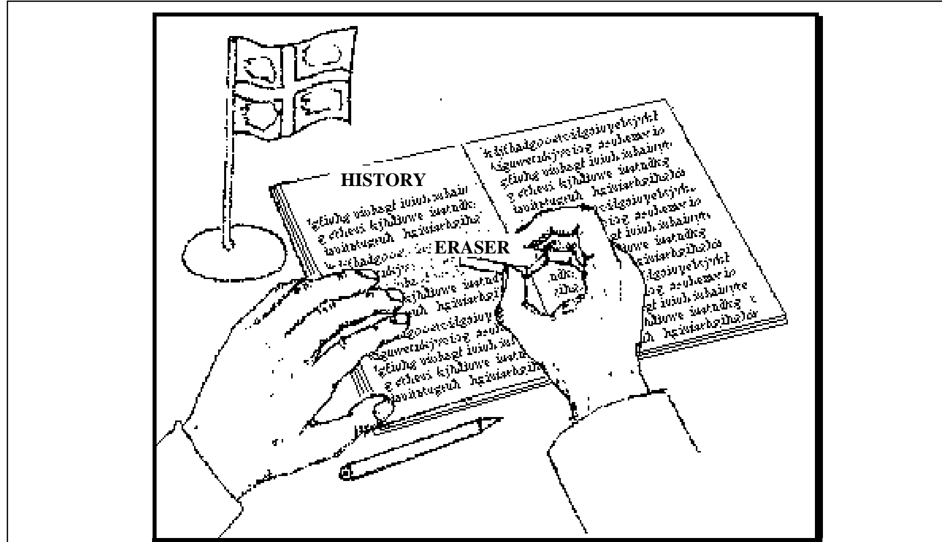
(D) The Silver Party and the Gold Party together.

Correct answer: B *U.S. average: 83%* *International average: 65%*

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

The item shown in figure 2.10 is an example of a skills item based on a political cartoon. It asks students to identify the message of the cartoon about history books. Seventy-nine percent of U.S. students answered this item correctly. The international average on this item was 57 percent. Hence, although this was a relatively hard item internationally, it was much easier for U.S. students.

Figure 2.10.—Example skills item 2



What is the message or main point of this cartoon? History textbooks…

- (A) are sometimes changed to avoid mentioning problematic events from the past.
- (B) for children must be shorter than books written for adults.
- (C) are full of information that is not interesting.
- (D) should be written using a computer and not a pencil.

Correct answer: A *U.S. average: 79%* *International average: 57%*

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

The item presented in figure 2.11 is an example of a skills item asking students to identify the difference between fact and opinion, a needed skill when attempting to analyze political speeches and debates. Sixty-nine percent of U.S. students answered this item correctly. The international average was 49 percent correct.

Figure 2.11.—Example skills item 3

Three of these statements are opinions and one is a fact. Which of the following is a FACT?

- (A) People with very low incomes should not pay any taxes.
- (B) In many countries rich people pay higher taxes than poor people.
- (C) It is fair that some citizens pay higher taxes than others.
- (D) Donations to charity are the best way to reduce differences between rich and poor.

Correct answer: B *U.S. average: 69%* *International average: 49%*

SOURCE: IEA Civic Education Study, Standard Population of 14-Year-Olds Tested in 1999.

Summary

This chapter examined the performance of U.S. students in relationship to the performance of the students from the other 27 participating countries. Results were presented for a total civic knowledge scale and two subscales: a civic content subscale and a civic skills subscale. Overall, U.S. ninth-graders scored above the international average on the total civic knowledge scale. Furthermore, in no other country did students significantly outperform U.S. students.

U.S. students' average scores on the civic content subscale did not differ significantly from the international mean. Students in six countries performed significantly better than U.S. students on this subscale. On the civic skills subscale, U.S. students scored significantly higher than students in any other participating country. Overall, these results indicate that ninth-grade U.S. students performed well when compared with students in the other 27 participating countries.

CHAPTER 3

THE SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM CONTEXT OF CIVIC KNOWLEDGE

Key Points

In 55 percent of U.S. schools, principals reported that ninth-grade students are required to take five to six periods a week in civic-related subjects such as social studies, history, or civics.

The majority of U.S. ninth-graders study social studies on almost a daily basis, although they typically reported spending less than 1 hour a week on social studies homework.

Students who reported studying social studies in school almost every day have higher civic achievement scores than students who reported studying social studies once or twice a week or even less frequently.

Students in U.S. schools were more likely to report studying domestic civic issues than international civic issues.

In civic-related subjects, U.S. students reported being more likely to read from a textbook or to fill out worksheets than to receive visits from leaders or to write letters to give their opinions.

Eighty-five percent of students reported being encouraged by teachers to make up their own minds about issues.

There is no widely agreed upon curriculum for civic education in the United States. This is reflected by the fact that civic education in school takes place across a wide range of courses, such as social studies, civics, history, government, global studies, and geography. Furthermore, in several school districts across the country, there is no requirement that students take a civics or government course during their school years. Additionally, little is known about the school and classroom context in which civic education happens in the United States or the status of civic education as an explicit goal for schools. Despite much research documenting a relationship between school and classroom characteristics and mathematics and science achievement (Arnold and Kaufman, 1992; Chaney, Burgdoff, and Atash, 1997; Raudenbush and Bryk, 1986), comparatively little is known about the relationship between such school and classroom characteristics and civic knowledge.

This chapter examines the context in which civic education is delivered in U.S. schools and the relationship between school and classroom factors and civic achievement. The first section provides descriptive information on the school environment in which civic education occurs, answering such questions as how often do U.S. ninth-grade students study civic-related subjects and what are principals' views on how civic education should be taught. In the United States, civic-related subjects were defined as one of the following: civics, citizenship, government, problems in democracy, law, political science, political behavior, U.S. history, state history, social studies, economics, world history, geography, global studies, anthropology, psychology, sociology, and other social studies. The second section examines the relationship between various school-level characteristics and U.S. ninth-graders' civic achievement. The third and last section presents data on various characteristics of the classroom context, addressing issues of what students learn in civic-related subjects, the classroom climate under which they learn, and the teaching methods through which they learn.

The school context of civic education

Several studies have found that the context in which civic education occurs in schools is related to students' civic knowledge, political attitudes, and political participation (Ehman and Gillespie, 1974; Hepburn, 1983; Niemi and Junn, 1998; Patrick and Hoge, 1991). A number of authors reported that a democratic school environment is necessary for developing democratic ideals in students. For example, Ehman and Gillespie (1974) argued that the underlying characteristics of schools make a difference in the attitudes of students toward political participation. Students are more likely to develop civic skills and positive political attitudes in schools where they have a voice in how the school is run (Metzger and Barr, 1978).

Democratic political attitudes are further enhanced in students through participation in extracurricular activities, especially those related to civic education (Hepburn, 1983; Patrick and Hoge, 1991). Student involvement in civic-related activities is positively related to the development of high levels of political efficacy and involvement in civic activities in contexts other than the school. A few studies found that community service and other civic-related programs in schools can have a positive impact on students, including citizen

efficacy and civic understanding (Battistoni, 2000; Hepburn, 2000; Marks, 1994; Newmann and Rutter, 1986; Torney-Purta, Hahn, and Amadeo, 2001; Wade and Saxe, 1996).

Table 3.1 presents data on two school characteristics related to the context of civic education. Seventy percent of U.S. schools offering a ninth grade have a ninth-grade civic-related subject requirement. Additionally, 81 percent of schools participate in a special program or project related to civic education.

Table 3.1.—Percentage of U.S. schools with policies related to civic education in ninth grade, by policy: 1999

	Percentage
Require civic-related subject	70.0
Participate in program(s) related to civic education	81.3

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table 3.2 presents the percentage of schools participating in each of the 16 programs related to civic education asked about in the school questionnaire. Close to half of all U.S. schools have service clubs and conflict-resolution or peer-mediation programs. In addition, about one-third of schools offer *Girls/Boys State* or *Junior Statesmen*, character or values education, and stock market game programs. In contrast, 10 percent of schools or fewer have a *Model United Nations* program or a *We the People* competition.

Table 3.2.—Percentage of U.S. schools with a ninth grade participating in various civic education programs, by program: 1999

	Percentage
Service clubs	48.6
Conflict-resolution or peer-mediation program	48.4
Girls/Boys State, Junior Statesmen	39.3
Character or values education program	37.7
Stock market game	36.6
Mock trial competitions	25.1
Project Citizen or other service learning or community service program	24.0
Close Up, Presidential Classroom, or other program that takes students to Washington, D.C.	20.4
Program in which students work in state legislature	20.3
History Day	18.5
Debate team or program	18.4
Kids Voting USA or other mock election program	18.2
Junior Achievement	12.0
Model United Nations	8.2
We the People competition	1.4
Other civic education programs or service organizations	15.1

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Principals' reports on the number of class periods that students are required to take in various civic-related subjects at grade 9 and how civic education should be delivered are presented in tables 3.3 and 3.4.

Table 3.3.—U.S. principals' reports on the number of class periods per week that ninth-grade students are required to take in various civic-related subjects*: 1999

	Percentage
Less than one period	19.6
One to two periods	10.5
Three to four periods	14.9
Five to six periods	55.0

* Civic-related subjects include social studies, civics, citizenship, history, law, and economics.
NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table 3.4.—Percentage of U.S. principals who agree or strongly agree with various statements about how civic education should be taught: 1999

	Percentage
Integrated into subjects related to human and social sciences	95.3
Integrated into all subjects taught at school	78.5
Taught as a specific subject	64.0
Extracurricular activity	27.0

NOTE: Multiple responses allowed.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

In 55 percent of U.S. schools, principals reported that ninth-grade students were required to take five to six periods a week in various civic-related subjects. However, in 20 percent of schools, principals also reported that ninth-grade students were required to take less than one period a week in civic-related subjects. These findings are consistent with a recent analysis of high school students' transcripts that indicated that 17 percent of ninth-graders take a course specifically in civics or government. Another 65 percent of students take such a course in grades 10 through 12 (Niemi and Smith, in press).

Ninety-five percent of principals agreed that civic education should be integrated into subjects related to human and social sciences, and 78 percent agreed that civic education should be integrated into all subjects. About two-thirds agreed that civic education should be taught as a specific subject (64 percent). About one-third (27 percent) of principals agreed that civic education should be taught as an extracurricular activity.

Ninth-grade U.S. students' reports on activities related to civic education in school are presented in table 3.5. Sixty-five percent of students reported studying social studies in school almost every day. However, 12 percent of students reported never or hardly ever studying social studies in school. Similarly, there

is variation in the time that students spend on social studies homework in a week. Thirty-six percent of students reported spending less than one hour a week on social studies homework. When combined with students who were not assigned social studies homework and those who reported not doing their homework, this percentage increases to 60 percent. This is contrasted with 5 percent of students who reported doing more than 5 hours of social studies homework a week. Overall, these results indicate that about 65 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students study social studies on almost a daily basis, and 60 percent reported that they spend less than one hour a week on social studies homework.

Table 3.5.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' reports on school activities related to civic education: 1999

	Percentage
Time spent studying social studies in school	
Never or hardly ever	12.0
Once or twice a month	6.7
Once or twice a week	16.7
Almost every day	64.6
Time spent weekly on social studies homework	
Not assigned	17.7
Does not do it	6.4
Less than 1 hour	35.8
1 to 2 hours	25.7
3 to 4 hours	9.8
5 hours or more	4.7
Time spent writing long social studies answers	
Never	8.4
Once or twice a year	11.6
Once or twice a month	38.1
At least once a week	41.9

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Students' reports on how often they write long answers to questions on tests or assignments involving social studies are consistent with the variation nationwide in the teaching of social studies and civic education. Although 42 percent of students reported writing long answers at least once a week, 8 percent reported never, and an additional 12 percent reported once or twice a year.

The relationship between school factors and civic achievement

Past research has documented the role of such school characteristics as school size or sector on the achievement of students, especially in the area of mathematics and science (Lee, Croninger, and Smith, 1997). However, much less is known about the role of these school-level characteristics on civic achievement. Metzger and Barr (1978) reported that an inverse relationship exists between school size and the level of student political activity. In his review of research on U.S. high schools, Ehman (1980) stated that small schools foster political efficacy and reduce student alienation. Hepburn (1983) reported that small schools tend to generate more positive political attitudes by providing

greater opportunity for student participation in extracurricular activities and school governance. This section examines the relationship between school-level characteristics and students' civic knowledge.

Table 3.6 presents the civic achievement of ninth-grade U.S. students by various school-level characteristics. In interpreting these results, the reader is reminded again to use caution. Because U.S. students were tested in October 1999, about one month after the beginning of the school year, the relationships presented here speak only to the brief time students had spent in ninth grade at the time of testing.

Table 3.6.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by school-level characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Total	100.0	106.5	101.9	113.6
Civic-related subject required				
Yes	59.2	108.2	103.6	114.9
No	40.8	104.0	99.4	111.9
School participation in programs related to civic education				
Yes	88.8	105.9	101.3	113.3
No	11.2	103.8	100.0	110.2
School type				
Public	93.6	106.1	101.6	113.1
Private	6.4	109.9	104.7	118.9
School size				
500 or fewer	13.1	101.3	97.6	108.2
501–1,000	20.6	110.7	105.8	117.2
1,001–1,500	21.3	109.2	104.7	115.2
1,501–2,000	25.2	109.0	104.2	115.2
More than 2,000	19.8	104.5	99.4	113.1
Percent of students eligible for free lunch				
1st quartile (0–13)	31.1	111.8	106.6	119.0
2nd quartile (14–25)	30.8	110.7	106.0	116.5
3rd quartile (26–48)	17.4	100.8	96.1	110.2
4th quartile (49–100)	20.7	95.5	92.2	103.0
Class size				
20 or fewer	15.8	102.8	97.9	112.1
21 to 25	37.1	109.6	105.1	115.6
26 to 29	27.7	106.8	102.2	113.5
More than 29	19.4	102.2	97.9	109.8

NOTE: The percentages reported here differ from those in table 3.1 because they are based on student-level data rather than school-level data. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Students in schools with a low percentage of children eligible for the free or reduced-price school lunch program (first and second quartiles) outperformed students in schools with a high percentage of children eligible for this program (third and fourth quartiles) on both the total civic knowledge scale and the civic content subscale. On the civic skills subscale, students in schools with the highest percentage of children eligible for the free or reduced-price school lunch program (fourth quartile) scored lower than their peers in the two quartiles with the lowest percentage of eligible children (first and second quartiles). Similarly, NAEP Civics (NCES, 1999) found that at grades 8 and 12, students who were eligible for the free or reduced-price school lunch programs had lower average civic scale scores than students who were not eligible. Other school-level factors presented in table 3.6 appear to have no significant relationship with civic achievement.

The next table, table 3.7, examines the relationship between civic achievement and various instructional variables. Students who studied social studies in school almost every day had higher scores on all three civic achievement scales than students who studied social studies once or twice a week. Furthermore, students who were assigned homework but did not do it scored significantly lower than all other students, except those spending 5 hours or more a week on homework, on the skills and content subscales and the total civic knowledge scale. The results also indicate that students who had been asked to write long answers to questions on tests or assignments that involved social studies once or twice a month or even more frequently performed better than students who were never asked to write long answers.

The classroom context of civic education

This section turns to the classroom to understand what is taught in civic-related subjects to ninth-grade U.S. students and how it is taught. In considering the role of the classroom, research has underscored how open classroom climates in which students feel comfortable expressing their opinions in class discussions are associated with positive political attitudes, including high levels of political efficacy and low levels of political alienation (Angell, 1991; Ehman, 1980; Hahn, 1998). Classrooms are important, not just in terms of their climate, but also in terms of classroom practices. Teachers' approach to teaching civic-related subjects is of crucial importance in shaping students' attitudes toward civic issues and their understanding of civic issues (Hahn, 1996a; Niemi and Junn, 1998; Parker and Kaltsounis, 1986; Thornton, 1991).

Figure 3.1 presents ninth-grade U.S. students' reports on the topics they had studied over the previous year. Ninth-grade students in U.S. schools were more likely to report studying domestic civic issues than international civic issues. Among domestic topics, students reported studying the U.S. Constitution

Table 3.7.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by instructional practices: 1999

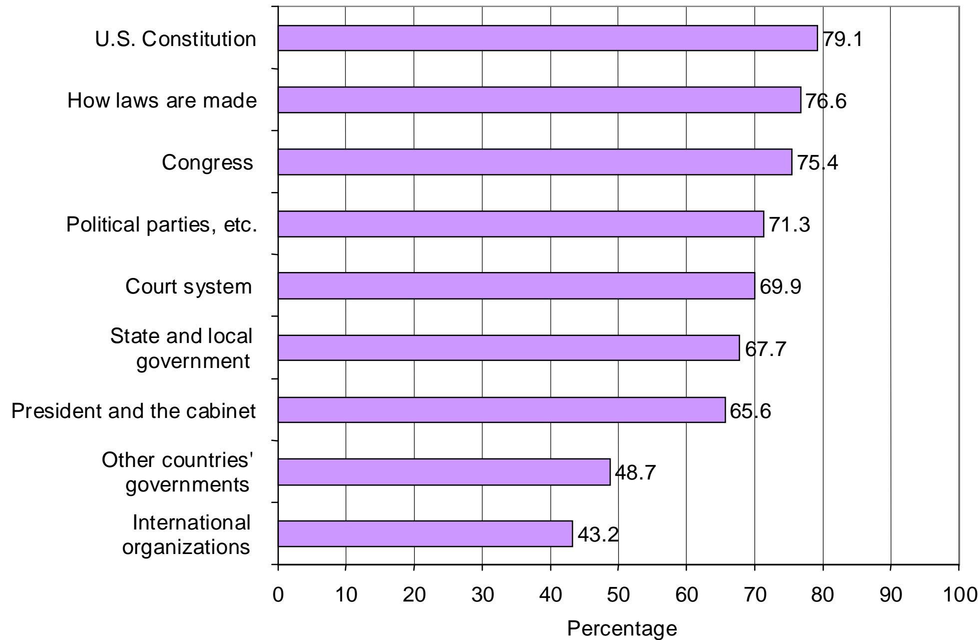
	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Time spent studying social studies in school				
Never or hardly ever	12.0	103.1	98.6	111.4
Once or twice a month	6.6	99.7	96.0	105.4
Once or twice a week	16.7	102.5	98.6	109.5
Almost every day	64.7	109.8	104.8	117.1
Time spent each week on social studies homework				
Not assigned	17.6	105.4	100.5	113.7
Does not do it	6.4	95.0	92.1	101.8
Less than 1 hour	35.9	109.3	104.6	116.3
1 to 2 hours	25.8	107.2	102.4	114.4
3 to 4 hours	9.7	111.7	106.9	117.6
5 hours or more	4.7	104.0	99.4	111.8
Time spent writing long answers to social studies questions				
Never	8.4	97.7	94.0	106.0
Once or twice a year	11.6	102.9	98.1	111.5
Once or twice a month	38.1	110.6	105.8	116.8
At least once a week	42.0	107.0	102.4	114.6
Time spent each day on homework				
Not assigned	6.6	95.9	92.6	103.5
Does not do it	5.2	97.1	93.9	103.8
1/2 hour or less	16.4	102.7	98.4	110.0
1 hour	28.6	106.7	101.9	114.3
More than 1 hour	43.2	111.9	106.8	119.0

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

(79 percent), how laws are made (77 percent), and Congress (75 percent), with fewer students reporting that they studied the judicial and executive branches. This is not surprising in light of students' having been tested in October. Many students would have studied these topics in eighth-grade U.S. history courses, and they are often the first topics covered in ninth-grade civics courses (Hahn, 1999; Hahn et al., 1998). Reports from NAEP 1988 and NAEP 1998 also noted that students reported studying the Constitution and Congress more than the president and cabinet, courts, and state and local government (Niemi and Junn, 1998; NCES, 1999). Moreover, in those two assessments, students were also least likely to report studying other countries, governments, and international organizations.

Figure 3.1.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they studied various topics over the previous year: 1999

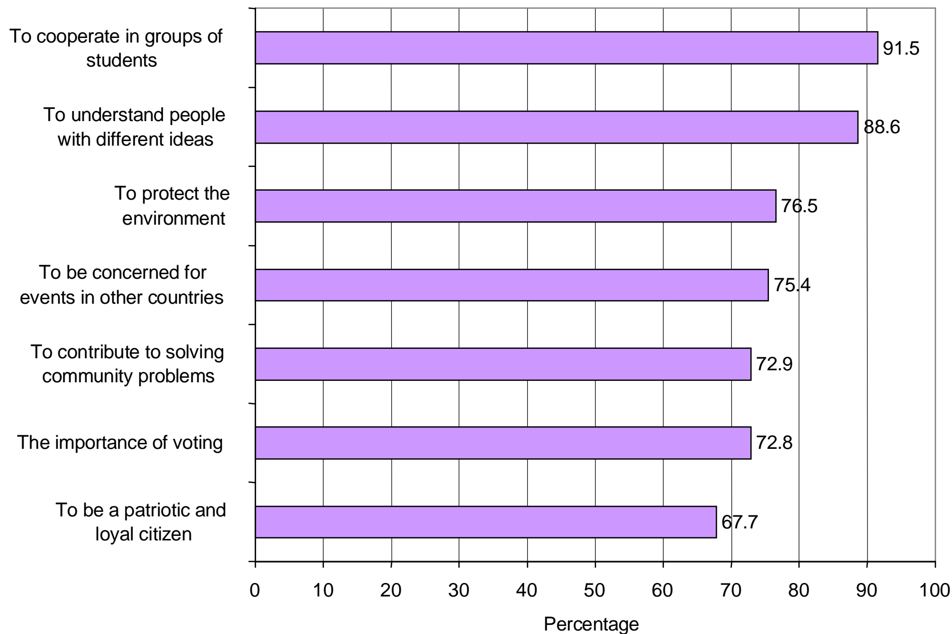


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

When asked about their perceptions of what they had learned in school (figure 3.2), students were significantly more likely to agree that they had learned about cooperating in groups of students and understanding people with different ideas than about being a patriotic and loyal citizen, the importance of voting, contributing to solving community problems, protecting the environment, or being concerned about events in other countries.

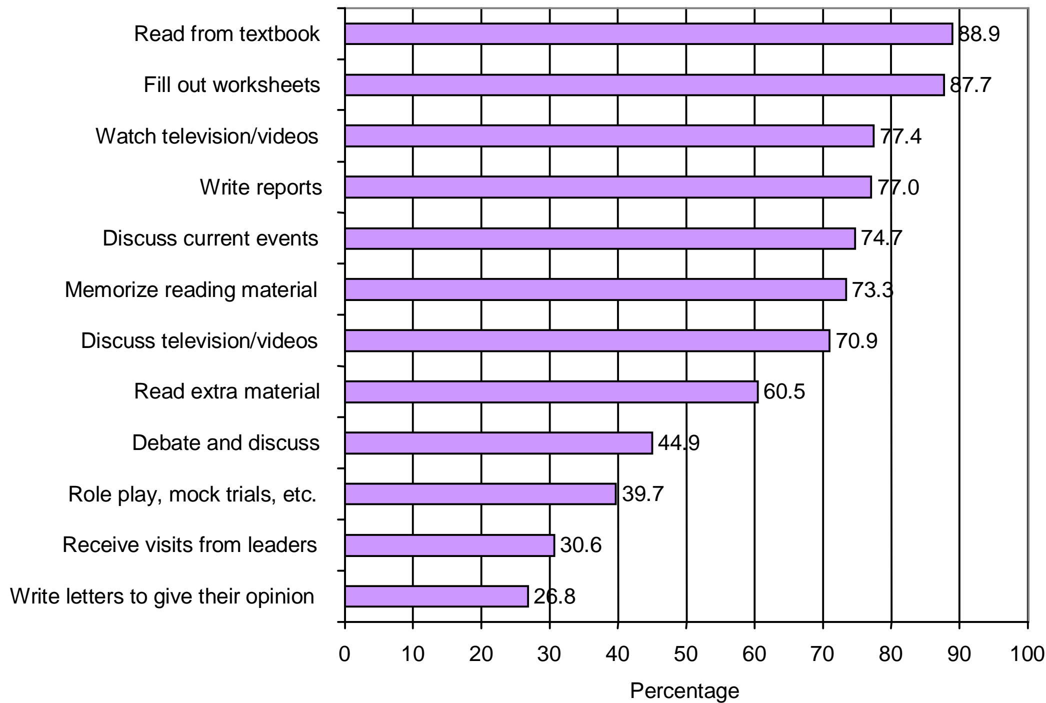
What students do when studying social studies is reported in figure 3.3. Students were more likely to report reading from textbooks and filling out worksheets than any other instructional activities when studying social studies. Students were least likely to report that they received visits from leaders (31 percent) or wrote letters to give their opinion (27 percent).

Figure 3.2.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree that they have learned various issues in school: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Figure 3.3.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting doing various activities when they study social studies: 1999

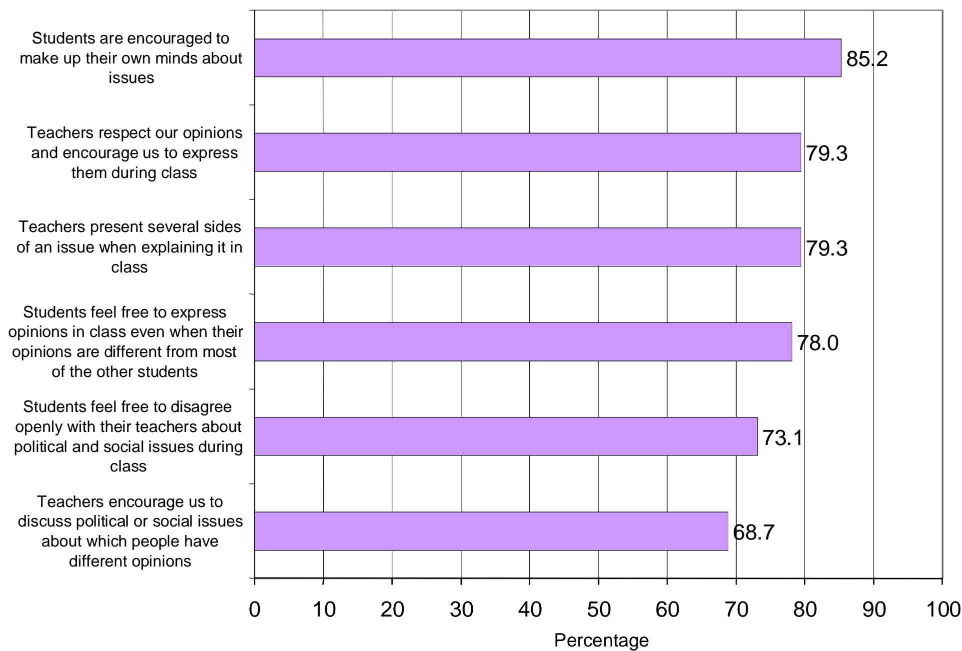


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Ninth-grade U.S. students' perception of their classroom climate was measured by a six-item scale. These items are presented in figure 3.4. The majority of students answered that they thought that each statement applied sometimes or often to the climate in their classroom. More students reported being encouraged to make up their own minds about issues than any of the other five statements applied to their classrooms. Overall, 85 percent of students reported being encouraged to make up their own minds about issues, and about two-thirds reported being encouraged by teachers to discuss political or social issues about which people have different opinions.

Table 3.8 shows U.S. students' classroom climate score by selected student background characteristics. This score is computed through an item-response-theory (IRT) model combining students' responses to the six items making up the open classroom climate for discussion scale (see appendix C for further details on IRT models). This scale has a mean of 10 and a standard deviation of 2. U.S. students' report on open classroom climate for discussion is significantly higher than the international mean for all 28 countries. Furthermore, ninth-grade U.S. female students reported a more positive perception of classroom climate for open discussion than did their male counterparts. However, there were no differences in reported perceptions of classroom climate by either country of birth or race/ethnicity. Finally, students in households with 10 or fewer books had lower perceptions of their classroom climate than students in households with 11 or more books.

Figure 3.4.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various statements apply sometimes or often to the climate in their classrooms: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table 3.8.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the open classroom climate for discussion scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	10.5
Sex		
Male	48.2	10.3
Female	51.8	10.8
Race/ethnicity		
White	65.1	10.6
Black	11.9	10.2
Hispanic	13.2	10.2
Asian	4.0	10.4
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.1	10.6
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.7	10.5
Foreign-born	10.3	10.3
Number of books in the home		
0–10	7.9	9.6
11–50	20.9	10.5
51–100	22.1	10.6
101–200	20.2	10.5
More than 200	28.8	10.8

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.
NOTE: The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean is significantly higher than the international mean. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Summary

This chapter examined the context of civic education in U.S. schools as well as the relationship between school and classroom factors and civic achievement. The majority of ninth-grade students reported studying social studies on almost a daily basis, although they typically spent less than one hour a week on social studies homework.

Several school-level variables showed a significant relationship with civic achievement, including the percentage of children eligible for the free or reduced-price lunch program (negative relationship), the frequency of studying social studies in school, and the frequency of doing social studies homework (both positive relationships).

U.S. students reported being more likely to study domestic civic issues than international civic issues, and more likely to read from a textbook or to fill out worksheets than to receive visits from leaders or to write letters to give their opinion.

Finally, in terms of the climate in their classrooms, students reported a more open classroom climate for discussion in the United States when compared with the international mean. More students reported that they were encouraged to make up their own minds about issues than students who reported being encouraged by teachers to discuss political or social issues about which people have different opinions, or students who reported feeling free to disagree openly with their teachers about political and social issues during class.

CHAPTER 4

THE DEMOGRAPHIC, SOCIOECONOMIC, AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL CONTEXT OF CIVIC KNOWLEDGE

Key Points

The results support recent findings from the 1998 NAEP Civics assessment indicating that sex differences in civic achievement have either disappeared or shifted in favor of females.

Students who have high expectations for their own educational attainment did better on the CivEd assessment than their peers with comparatively low expectations.

As in many other studies, the student's home literacy background, such as parents' education and the number of books in the home, is related to his or her achievement.

Students who actively participated in school and community organizations had higher civic achievement than students who never participated.

Participation in extracurricular activities sponsored by a school or community organization had a positive relationship with civic achievement, but the frequency of participation did not.

Watching television 5 or more hours a day and spending time in the evening outside of home with one's peers almost daily are both negatively related to civic achievement.

Every student arrives at school with characteristics that influence the way she or he reacts to a particular school setting. These characteristics include the demographic groups to which the student belongs, the family environment in which the student is raised, and the ways the student spends his or her time when not in school or at home. Policymakers and educators often assert that although what goes on in schools is important, other influences are equally important, or even more important, in determining a child's academic success.

This chapter examines out-of-school characteristics that other studies have shown are frequently related to educational opportunities and, ultimately, to student achievement. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section explores the relationship between various demographic characteristics, including sex, race/ethnicity, country of birth, mobility, and region of the country, and CivEd achievement. The second section examines the family context for civic achievement, reporting on the relationships between civic achievement and the number of books in the home, receipt of a daily newspaper, parents' education, students' expected educational attainment, student absences from school, number of parents living in the home, language spoken in the home, and family size. The final section of the chapter looks at the relationship between civic achievement and how students spend their time when not in class, including time spent participating in various school and community organizations, time spent outside of school doing things not related to academics, and time spent outside of school engaged in activities related to academics.

Demographic characteristics

Past research has shown that there is frequently a strong association between certain demographic characteristics and student academic achievement. Two demographic characteristics that have been associated with lower levels of academic performance among U.S. students include being a member of a minority group and being born in a country other than the United States. For example, the 1988 and 1998 NAEP Civics assessments found an achievement gap between black or Hispanic and white students, with white students scoring higher (NCES, 1999; Niemi and Junn, 1998).

Table 4.1 shows the relationship between various student demographic characteristics and student performance on the CivEd assessment. Minority group status, country of birth, and school mobility are all significantly related to student achievement on this assessment.

White and multiracial students scored higher, on average, than black and Hispanic students on the content and skills subscales and on the total civic knowledge scale. In addition, Asian students scored higher than black students on all three civic achievement scales, and higher than Hispanic students on the civic content subscale. Students born in the United States did better, on average, than foreign-born students on both subscales and the total civic knowledge scale. Students who did not change schools as a result of moving during the two years prior to the CivEd assessment also scored higher on average than students who changed schools during the two years prior to the assessment on both subscales and the total civic knowledge scale.

Table 4.1.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by background demographics: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Sex				
Male	49.0	105.6	101.7	111.1
Female	51.0	107.5	102.3	116.3
Race/ethnicity				
White	63.4	111.6	106.5	118.4
Black	12.8	92.7	89.8	100.2
Hispanic	13.7	97.1	92.9	106.0
Asian	3.9	109.4	104.5	116.2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***	***	***
Multiracial	3.5	109.1	104.4	115.5
Country of birth				
U.S.-born	89.5	107.6	102.9	114.8
Foreign-born	10.5	97.9	94.4	104.8
Region				
Northeast	23.2	109.7	105.7	114.5
Southeast	20.3	102.7	98.3	110.7
Central	26.2	109.3	104.5	115.8
West	30.4	104.2	99.2	113.1
Frequency of changing schools in past 2 years as a result of moving				
Never	77.7	108.8	104.0	116.2
Once	12.1	102.5	98.3	109.7
Twice or more	10.1	99.4	96.1	104.8

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

The sex of the student is also associated with academic achievement in some subjects. However, the relationship between sex and performance in civic education is somewhat ambiguous. Historically, males have scored higher than females on assessments of civic achievement. In the 1971 IEA civic education study, U.S. males outperformed U.S. females (Torney, Oppenheim, and Farnen, 1975). In the 1988 NAEP Civics study, Anderson et al. (1990) found that males in grades 8 and 12 were more likely than females to reach the higher levels of proficiency. However, females scored higher than males on the items that required students to read and interpret text material (Niemi and Junn, 1998). When NAEP last assessed civics achievement in 1998, females in grades 8 and 12 had higher overall average scores than males (NCES, 1999).

On the CivEd assessment, females scored higher on average than males on the skills subscale, but there were no differences between males' and females' average scores on the content subscale or the total civic knowledge scale. Thus,

the results from this study support the findings of recent NAEP Civics assessments and indicate that sex differences in civic achievement have either disappeared or shifted in favor of females on items measuring skills of analysis and interpretation.

Table 4.2 looks at students' scores by their sex for race/ethnicity categories. Within racial groups, there were no differences in achievement based on sex. However, for males and females, there were differences based on their race/ethnicity. On all three civic achievement scales, male white students had higher average scores than male Hispanic or male black students, and female white students had higher average scores than female Hispanic or female black students.

Table 4.2.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by sex and race/ethnicity: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Males				
White	30.7	111.2	106.7	116.4
Black	6.1	90.1	87.7	96.7
Hispanic	6.7	95.6	92.3	102.0
Asian	***	***	***	***
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***	***	***
Multiracial	***	***	***	***
Female				
White	32.7	112.0	106.4	120.4
Black	6.7	95.2	91.8	103.6
Hispanic	7.0	98.7	93.7	110.0
Asian	***	***	***	***
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***	***	***
Multiracial	***	***	***	***

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.
NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Family context

Multiple studies have shown a relationship between student academic achievement and home and family characteristics, including the availability of educational resources in the home, parents' educational attainment, the number of parents in the home, the language spoken in the home, and the educational expectations that parents communicate to their children. In particular, other researchers have found that students who had college educated parents, two parents living at home, a variety of reading materials at home, and only English spoken at home tended to have higher civics achievement than students from homes without those characteristics (Anderson et al., 1990). Similarly, in the 1998 NAEP Civics, levels of parental education correlated with students'

performance for eighth- and twelfth-graders (NCES, 1999). However, it is likely that rather than direct influences on student achievement, the home and family characteristics discussed in this section are proxies for the factors that actually influence student academic performance. For example, rather than parents' educational attainment directly influencing student achievement, parents with higher education levels may be more likely to interact with their children in ways that improve their academic performance. Parents with higher education levels may also be more likely to have the means to choose where they live on the basis of the quality of the schools.

Table 4.3 shows the relationship between home literacy and performance on the CivEd assessment. Performance on the CivEd assessment was positively related to the number of books students reported having in their home, as well as to the receipt of a daily newspaper, two frequently used measures that serve as proxy for socioeconomic status. On the content and skill subscales, as well as on the total civic knowledge scale, students who reported having 200 or more books in their home had higher average scores than students who reported having 100 or fewer books in their home. Conversely, students who reported having 10 or fewer books in their home did worse on average on the content and skills subscales and the total scale than students who reported having 11 or more books in their home. Students whose parents received a daily newspaper also scored higher on average on the content and skill subscales and the total scale than students whose parents did not receive a daily newspaper at home.

Table 4.3.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by home literacy: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Number of books in the home				
0–10	8.6	90.7	88.0	97.4
11–50	21.6	99.0	94.6	108.3
51–100	22.2	104.9	100.2	113.2
101–200	19.6	111.5	106.3	118.6
More than 200	28.0	115.3	110.5	120.1
Receives a daily newspaper				
Yes	58.0	109.7	104.8	116.3
No	42.0	102.5	98.3	110.3
Parents' highest level of education				
Elementary or less	4.7	91.0	88.2	98.1
Some high school	6.1	94.5	90.2	105.1
Finished high school	19.6	101.4	97.0	109.9
Some vocational/technical education	7.8	107.4	102.2	116.1
Some college	27.0	108.9	104.0	116.3
Completed a bachelor's degree	34.9	118.7	113.4	123.1

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Students' civic achievement was also related to their parents' educational attainment. Students who had at least one parent who finished high school had higher average scores on the content and skill subscales and the total civic knowledge scale than students whose parents stopped their schooling at the end of elementary school; students who had at least one parent who completed a bachelor's degree at a college or university had higher average scores on the content subscale and the total civic knowledge scale than students who did not have at least one parent who was a college graduate.

Students who had higher expectations for their own continued education also did better on the CivEd assessment (table 4.4). Students who expected to complete at least an additional seven or more years of school (that is, students who expected to finish college) had higher average scores on the content and skills subscales and the total civic knowledge scale than students who expected to complete fewer than an additional seven years of schooling (that is, students who expected to end their schooling before completing high school or at the completion of high school). This finding is consistent with results from the 1988 NAEP assessment; students who planned to attend college had higher civics achievement than students who did not aspire to college (Niemi and Junn, 1998).

School absentee rate is often used as a proxy for educational commitment. Students who are more concerned about doing well in school will often make an effort to come to school when they are feeling slightly ill or have other demands on their time. Similarly, parents who are concerned about their children's education may make more of an effort to encourage their children to attend school. As shown in table 4.4, students who reported that they were not absent from school at all during the month prior to the CivEd assessment scored higher, on average, on the content and skills subscales and the total civic knowledge scale than students who reported being absent three or more days during the month prior to the assessment.

Other family and home environment characteristics that showed a relationship to student performance on the CivEd assessment include the number of parents a student lived with, the number of people living in a student's home, and the language spoken in a student's home (table 4.5). Students who lived with two parents had higher average scores on all three civic achievement scales than students who lived with only one parent or no parents. Students who had more than six people living in their home had lower average scores on the content and skills subscales and the total civic knowledge scale than students who had three, four, or five people living in their home. Students who always spoke English at home had higher average scores on all three scales than students who sometimes spoke English at home.

Table 4.4.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by expected years of further education and school absenteeism: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Expected years of further education				
0–2	3.1	89.0	88.0	92.1
3–4	13.2	91.3	88.2	99.4
5–6	16.2	98.5	94.3	107.9
7–8	43.1	110.5	105.4	118.1
9–10	14.4	117.0	111.6	122.0
More than 11	10.0	113.2	108.4	118.2
Number of days absent from school last month				
0	54.6	109.2	104.4	116.2
1–2	30.4	107.3	102.5	115.0
3–4	8.5	100.5	97.0	107.1
5–9	3.7	100.0	96.2	106.1
More than 10	2.7	93.2	89.9	101.5

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table 4.5.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by family and home environment characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Number of parents in the home				
Two parents	75.9	109.2	104.3	116.5
One parent	21.6	99.3	95.8	106.0
No parents	2.4	96.1	92.8	103.3
Total number of people in the home				
1 or 2	4.0	102.5	98.8	109.3
3	15.8	107.5	103.0	113.7
4	34.2	108.7	103.9	116.0
5	25.4	107.2	102.8	114.1
6	10.8	105.8	100.4	115.2
More than 6	9.8	99.4	95.6	106.1
Frequency of English spoken in the home				
Never	***	***	***	***
Sometimes	7.3	96.2	93.2	103.1
Always or almost always	91.4	108.0	103.2	115.1

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Student use of time outside of classes

Various studies have shown a relationship between the way students spend their time when they are not in academic classes and their civic knowledge and beliefs. The 1996 National Household Education Survey found that students who regularly participated in community service demonstrated higher levels of civic knowledge than students who did not regularly participate in these types of activities (Niemi and Chapman, 1998). Wade and Saxe (1996) found that when community-service experiences accompany a systematic study of relevant issues, students become more aware and active citizens as adults. One of the reasons high schools in the United States emphasize extracurricular activities is that school administrators believe that participating in a rich associational life in high school will prepare students to become active citizens later in life (Hahn, Dilworth, and Hughes, 1998).

Many studies of student participation in extracurricular activities have focused on average grades or other general measures of academic achievement rather than on specifically civic-related courses. For example, Cooper et al. (1999) administered questionnaires to 424 students and their parents and obtained the students' grades from their schools. They found that participation in extracurricular activities offered through the school fostered positive identification with the school and was positively associated with students' levels of academic achievement as measured by their grades. They also found a positive relationship between after-school activities that are directly related to achievement, such as doing homework, and students' average grades. Researchers have also found that at-risk students who participate in extracurricular activities are less likely to drop out of school before high school graduation than other at-risk students (Mahoney and Cairns, 1997). However, activities that displace schoolwork (such as television watching) or replace school identities with other identities (such as being a paid employee) were negatively related to academic achievement.

The negative relationship between hours spent viewing television and academic achievement has been found in multiple studies, including those based on NAEP data (Clarke and Kurtz-Costes, 1997; Fetler, 1984; Ridley-Johnson, Cooper, and Chance, 1983). Cooper et al.'s (1999) findings of a negative relationship between paid employment and academic achievement are contradicted by some other studies. Steinberg et al. (1988) suggested that employment might have a positive effect on academic achievement up to a threshold, at which point it begins to interfere with time for schoolwork and negatively influences student achievement.

Participation in organized extracurricular activities

Students were asked whether they had ever participated in any of a list of organized extracurricular activities. Tables 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8 show the relationship between students' participation in organized extracurricular activities and their performance on the CivEd assessment. Students who participated in meetings or activities sponsored by any type of organization, even if they participated only a few times a month, scored higher on the content and skills subscales and the total civic knowledge scale than students who did not

participate at all. However, the frequency of students' participation was not related to their civic achievement level as measured by the CivEd assessment. Students who participated at least weekly did not score any higher than students who participated only a few times each month. This finding indicates that any participation in extracurricular activities sponsored by a school or community organization is related to civic achievement, not the frequency with which students participate.

Table 4.6.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by frequency of participation in organized extracurricular activities: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Never or almost never	17.0	98.6	95.1	105.7
A few times each month	22.4	108.0	103.2	114.9
Several days a week	30.7	109.2	104.4	116.2
Almost every day	29.8	109.2	104.1	116.9

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table 4.7.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students who reported ever participating in various organized extracurricular activities, by organization: 1999

	Percentage
Student council or student government	33.0
Youth organization affiliated with a political party or union	10.1
School newspaper	20.8
Environmental organization	24.1
United Nations or UNESCO club	2.1
Student exchange or school partnership program	11.7
Human rights organization	5.9
Group conducting voluntary activities to help the community	50.0
Charity collecting money for a social cause	39.9
Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts	39.3
Cultural organization based on ethnicity	9.1
Computer club	15.9
Art, music, or drama organization	61.5
Sports organization or team	80.6
Organization sponsored by a religious group	44.7

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table 4.8.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by whether they reported participating in various organizations: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Student council or student government				
Yes	33.0	111.8	106.9	118.1
No	67.0	104.8	100.2	112.4
School newspaper				
Yes	20.8	110.5	105.6	117.4
No	79.2	106.4	101.8	113.7
Environmental organization				
Yes	24.1	108.3	103.5	115.9
No	75.9	106.8	102.2	114.0
Group conducting voluntary activities to help the community				
Yes	50.0	110.9	105.8	118.0
No	50.0	103.6	99.2	111.1
Charity collecting money for a social cause				
Yes	39.9	109.7	104.6	117.6
No	60.1	105.6	101.2	112.4
Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts				
Yes	39.3	110.9	106.0	117.4
No	60.7	104.8	100.2	112.7
Art, music, or drama organization				
Yes	61.5	109.5	104.6	116.6
No	38.5	103.6	99.2	111.0
Sports organization or team				
Yes	80.6	108.5	103.7	115.6
No	19.4	101.5	97.3	109.1
Organization sponsored by a religious group				
Yes	44.7	112.4	107.1	119.7
No	55.3	103.2	99.0	110.5

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

The CivEd questionnaire did not ask students whether activities were sponsored by the school or another organization. However, students who participated in one activity that presumably was sponsored by a school, student council or student government, scored higher on the content and skills subscales and the total civic knowledge scale than students who did not. Students who participated in the four activities with the highest levels of participation—sports, arts, community volunteer work, and religious organizations—also scored higher on all three civic achievement scales than students who did not. Results were mixed for participation in other types of organizations. The percentage of ninth-grade students who reported participating in voluntary activities to help the community—50 percent—was the same percentage of twelfth-graders who had reported such experiences in the 1998 NAEP (NCES, 1999).

Out-of-school activities

Table 4.9 shows the relationship between "hanging out" with friends, television viewing, and civic achievement. There is no relationship between the frequency of time students spent after school talking or hanging out with friends and their civic achievement. However, students who spent time during the evening with their friends outside their home almost every day did worse on all three civic achievement scales than students who spent several days a week, or only a few times each month, with friends outside their home. On the content subscale and the total civic knowledge scale, students who spent time during the evening almost every day with friends outside their home also did worse than students who never or almost never spent time with friends in the evening outside their home. However, there was no difference between these two groups on the skills subscale.

Table 4.9.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by frequency of time spent in various out-of-school activities: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Time spent after school talking or "hanging out" with friends				
Never or almost never	8.2	103.4	99.1	110.6
A few times each month	10.9	107.8	102.9	114.8
Several days a week	25.4	108.8	104.0	115.4
Almost every day	55.5	106.4	101.8	113.9
Time spent outside the home with friends in the evening				
Never or almost never	9.2	106.1	101.9	112.0
A few times each month	19.9	111.3	106.3	117.9
Several days a week	41.7	110.0	104.9	117.0
Almost every day	29.2	99.8	95.9	108.1
Time spent watching television or videos on school days				
No time	5.8	108.7	104.5	114.5
Less than 1 hour	20.9	111.3	106.0	118.4
1–2 hours	38.2	107.7	103.0	115.2
3–5 hours	23.1	106.7	102.1	113.5
More than 5 hours	12.0	96.5	92.9	104.1

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Frequent television viewing was negatively related to civic achievement. Students who reported watching more than 5 hours of television a day scored lower on the content and skills subscales and the total civic knowledge scale than students who watched fewer hours of television or no television each day.

Nonschool activities related to academics

Table 4.10 shows the relationship between student participation in various nonschool activities directly related to academics and civic achievement. These nonschool activities were using a computer at home for schoolwork, doing homework, and discussing topics studied in school with someone at home. On average, students who engaged in nonschool activities directly related to academics did better on the CivEd assessment than nonparticipating students. Students who reported using a computer at home for schoolwork once a month or more did better on both subscales and the total civic knowledge scale than students who did not have a computer at home to use for schoolwork or who had a computer at home but never or hardly ever used it. Students who did over an hour of homework a day did better on average on all three achievement scales than students who did one-half hour or less of homework a day. Finally, there was no relationship between frequency of discussion of school-related topics with someone at home and civic achievement.

Table 4.10.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by nonschool activities related to academics: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Frequency of computer use at home for schoolwork				
No computer in the home	16.1	99.0	95.2	107.1
Never or hardly ever	11.4	97.9	93.7	106.6
Once or twice a month	21.2	107.3	101.6	116.7
Once or twice a week	26.3	111.9	107.2	117.9
Almost every day	25.1	111.3	106.8	116.5
Time spent on homework each day				
Not assigned	6.6	95.9	92.6	103.5
Does not do homework	5.2	97.1	93.9	103.8
1/2 hour or less	16.4	102.7	98.4	110.0
1 hour	28.6	106.7	101.9	114.3
More than 1 hour	43.2	111.9	106.8	119.0
Frequency of discussing things studied in school with someone at home				
Never or hardly ever	22.9	102.8	98.6	110.5
Once or twice a month	14.6	104.4	99.4	113.6
Once or twice a week	30.4	110.0	105.1	116.6
Almost every day	32.1	108.6	104.1	115.1

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Summary

This chapter examined the role of demographic, socioeconomic, and out-of-school variables related to educational achievement of U.S. students. Female ninth-graders scored higher, on average, than male ninth-graders on the skills subscale, but there were no differences between males' and females' average scores on the content subscale or the total civic knowledge scale. White and multiracial students in the United States scored higher, on average, than black and Hispanic students on the content and skills subscales and the total civic knowledge scale. In addition, Asian students scored higher than blacks on all three civic achievement scales, and higher than Hispanic students on the content subscale. Students born in the United States demonstrated a higher civic knowledge, on average, than foreign-born students.

The socioeconomic variables also demonstrated some association with students' performance on the CivEd assessment. Performance was positively related to the number of books that students reported having in their home, as well as to the receipt of a daily newspaper. Students' civic achievement was also positively related to their parents' educational attainment. Students who had higher expectations for their own continued education also did better on the CivEd assessment.

Students who reported that they were not absent from school at all during the month prior to the CivEd assessment scored higher, on average, on the civic assessment than students who reported being absent 3 or more days during the month prior to the assessment. Students who lived with two parents had higher average scores on all three civic achievement scales than students who lived with only one parent or no parents.

Students who engaged in nonschool activities directly related to academics did better on the CivEd assessment than their peers who did not, and frequent television viewing was negatively related to civic achievement.

Finally, participation in activities both sponsored by and held outside of school was associated with CivEd achievement. Students who participated in meetings or activities sponsored by any type of organization, even if they participated only a few times a month, had higher civic knowledge than students who did not participate at all. In addition, students who engaged in nonschool activities directly related to academics did better on the CivEd assessment than their peers who did not.

CHAPTER 5

CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRACY, CITIZENSHIP, AND GOVERNMENT

Key Points

According to ninth-grade U.S. students, voting in every election and showing respect for government leaders are two important factors in being good citizens.

U.S. ninth-graders are aware of the importance of social movement-related citizenship and are particularly concerned with activities to help people in the community.

U.S. ninth-graders had average scores higher than the international mean on both the importance of conventional citizenship and the importance of social movement-related citizenship scales.

Over half of all U.S. ninth-graders believe that the government should be responsible for economy-related issues, such as keeping prices under control, guaranteeing jobs for everyone who wants one, and providing an adequate standard of living for the unemployed.

Asian and black students are particularly sensitive to the government's responsibility for ensuring equality through economy-related issues.

Most U.S. ninth-graders think the government should be responsible for society-related issues, including ensuring equal political opportunities for men and women, providing free basic education and health care for all, guaranteeing peace and order within the country, and providing an adequate standard of living for old people.

Civic education is more than teaching factual knowledge of key laws, governing bodies, and historical documents. It is also about developing students' attitudes toward their government, their concept of rights and responsibilities, and the meaning of democracy in their country. In a democratic society, such as the United States, it is important to understand how students view and define citizenship and how their views are influenced by their educational and social context. A central goal of civic education is to prepare students to participate in the political processes of the nation by influencing, evaluating, responding to, and implementing civic decisions (Angell, 1991; Hahn, 1999; Patrick and Hoge, 1991; Hahn, Dilworth, and Hughes, 1998). An understanding of students' attitudes toward citizenship and government will help educators, parents, and policymakers prepare young people for future citizenship.

Research on U.S. students' conception of democracy and citizenship has shown that today's students are "fundamentally loyal and supportive—but not rabidly patriotic" (Branson, 1988, p. 7). In previous studies, U.S. students were found to have a favorable attitude toward the Constitution, the U.S. system of government, and the nation (Hahn, 1999; Hahn et al., 1998; Patrick and Hoge, 1991). Branson (1985) explains that even when U.S. students have hostile feelings toward the way the government is run, they continue to view the system as a whole in a positive light.

Up to this point in the report, the focus has been on examining students' civic achievement. Starting with this chapter, the remainder of the report presents the results from the survey items. This chapter focuses on concepts of democracy, citizenship, and government. Ninth-grade students' opinions on what constitutes democracy and defines good citizenship, as well as their concepts of the responsibilities of our government, are as important as their knowledge of civic education.

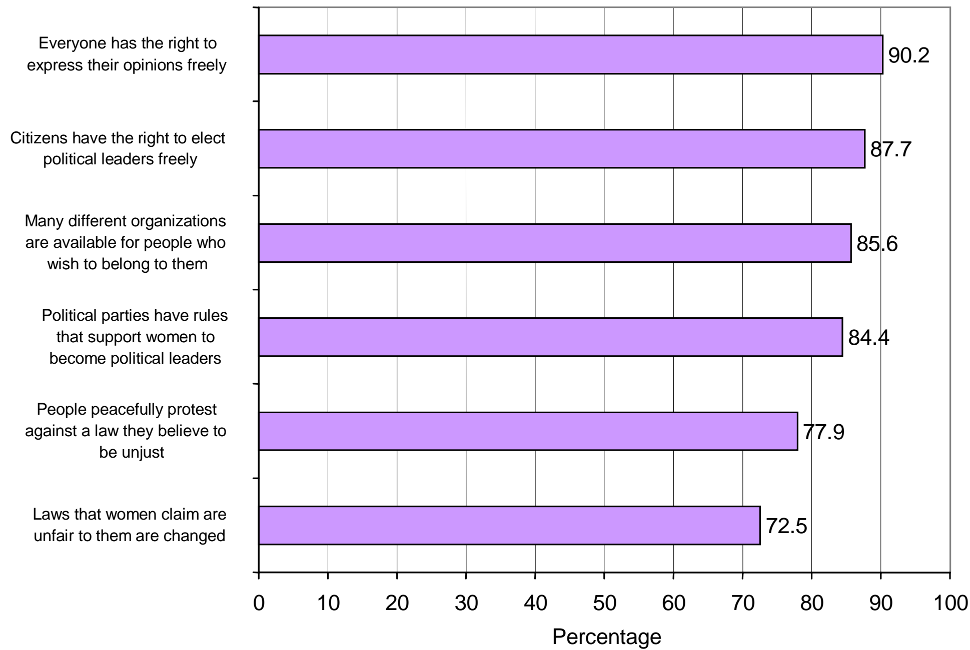
Concept of democracy

In the 1971 IEA study of civic education, young people thought that democracy had a particular role in "giving people a chance to write or say what they think" and in "helping people to make important decisions about their lives." Ten years later, Sigel and Hoskin (1981) asked 1,000 U.S. twelfth-grade students in an interview to imagine that they had to explain to a student from a nondemocratic country what makes a country democratic. The most prevalent themes stressed having individual political freedoms or having a voice in government through elections. CivEd again asked students about their concepts of what is good and bad for democracy.

Rights of citizens

Figure 5.1 shows the six items relating to democratic rights of citizens and the percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students who reported that these actions or ideas were somewhat or very good for democracy.

Figure 5.1.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various citizen rights and freedoms are somewhat good or very good for democracy: 1999

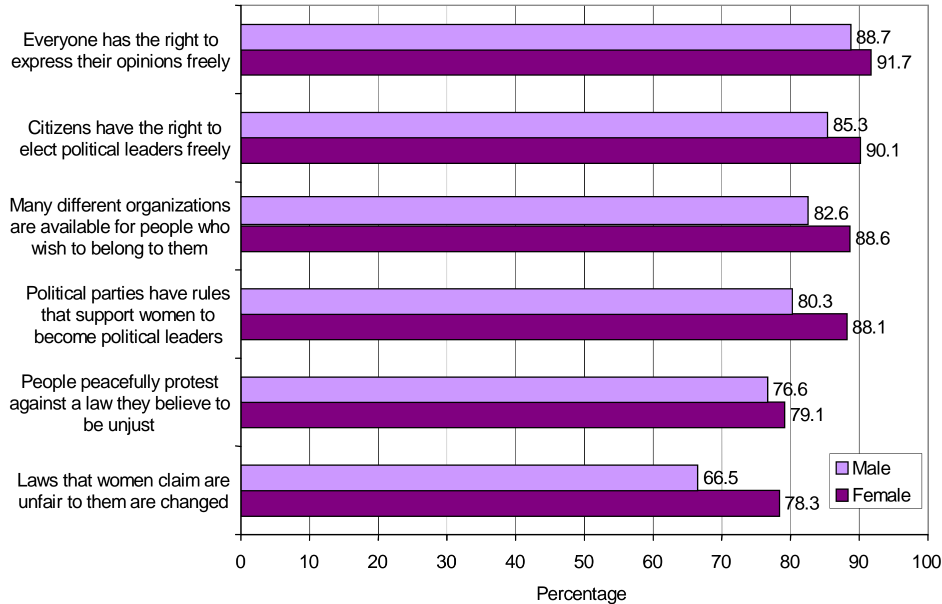


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

About 90 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students reported that it is good for democracy when everyone has the right to express opinions freely. A large majority (88 percent) also thought that when citizens have the right to elect political leaders freely, it is good for democracy. Slightly fewer ninth-grade U.S. students reported that people protesting peacefully against a law they feel is unjust and changing laws that women claim are unfair to them are also good for democracy (78 and 73 percent, respectively). Approximately 85 percent of U.S. ninth-graders said that it is good for democracy when many different organizations are available for people who wish to belong to them and when political parties have rules that support women to become political leaders.

Figure 5.2 shows the percentage of male and female U.S. ninth-graders who reported that each item is somewhat or very good for democracy. A greater percentage of ninth-grade U.S. females reported that four of the items, two of which were related to women's rights, are good for democracy than did their male peers. About 88 percent of female ninth-grade U.S. students reported that it is good for democracy when political parties have rules that support women to become political leaders compared with 80 percent of their male peers. Likewise, 78 percent of ninth-grade U.S. females said that when laws that women claim are unfair to them are changed, that is good for democracy, whereas only 66 percent of males thought that this was good for democracy. In addition, more females than males thought that citizens having the right to elect political leaders freely and many different organizations being available for people who wish to belong to them were good for democracy.

Figure 5.2.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various citizen rights and freedoms are somewhat good or very good for democracy, by sex: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

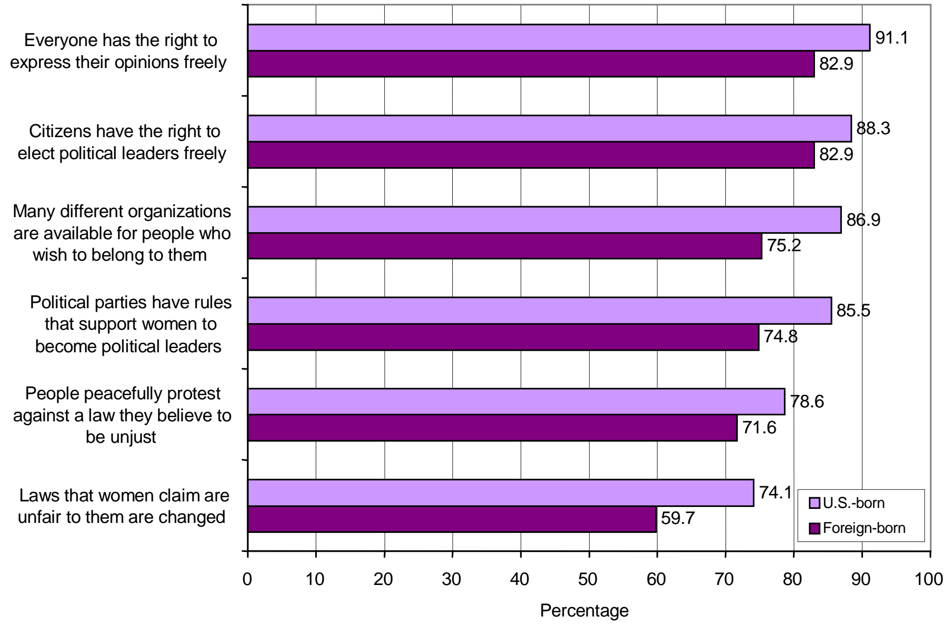
Figure 5.3 shows the percentage of U.S.- and foreign-born U.S. ninth-graders who reported that each item is good for democracy. For half of the items, there is no statistical difference between the two groups. However, a greater percentage of U.S.-born ninth-grade students said that it is good for democracy when many different organizations are available for people who wish to belong to them than did their foreign-born peers. In addition, 74 percent of U.S.-born ninth-grade students said that it is good for democracy when laws that women claim are unfair to them are changed, whereas 60 percent of foreign-born ninth-graders thought that this was good for democracy. More U.S.-born than foreign-born ninth-graders also reported that it was good for democracy when political parties have rules that support women becoming political leaders.

Negative influence

Although students appreciate the rights guaranteed in a democracy, they also seem to recognize that unlimited power is bad for democracy. Figure 5.4 shows the percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students who reported that five items relating to negative influence and unchecked power were bad for democracy.

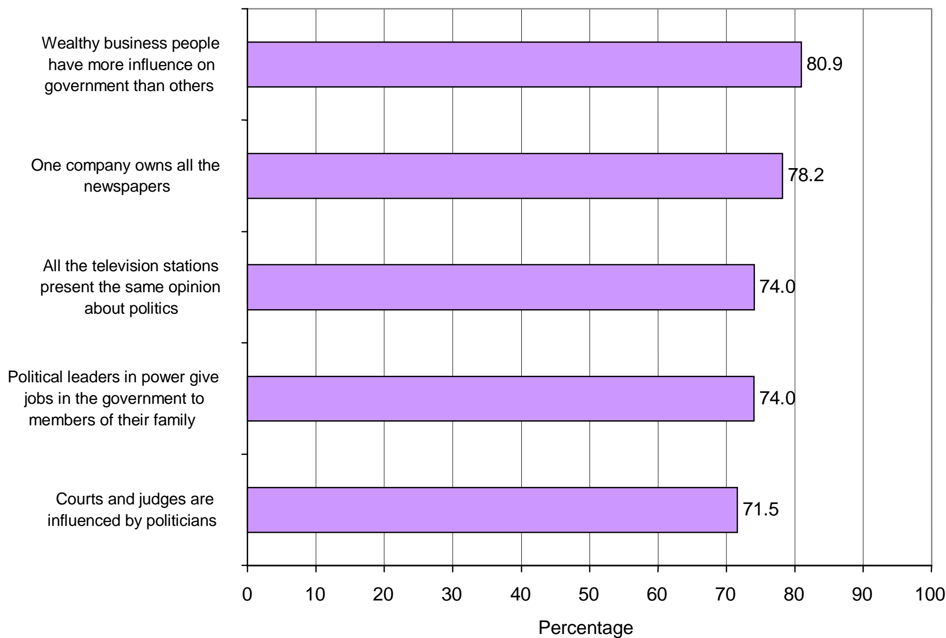
The majority of students thought that all five examples of political power would be bad for democracy. Eighty-one percent of ninth-grade U.S. students indicated that it is bad for democracy when wealthy business people have more influence on government than others. Fewer students, 72 percent, thought that courts and judges being influenced by politicians was bad for democracy.

Figure 5.3.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various citizen rights and freedoms are somewhat good or very good for democracy, by country of birth: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

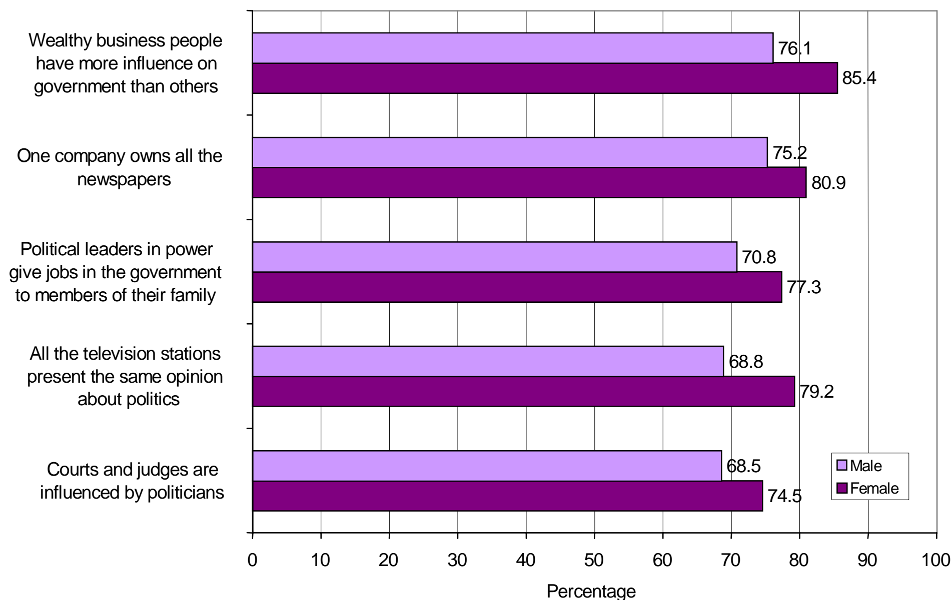
Figure 5.4.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various types of negative influence are somewhat bad or very bad for democracy: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Figure 5.5 shows how ninth-grade U.S. males and females responded to these same items. The responses were relatively similar between males and females for two of the items. The other three items, however, showed differences between males' and females' opinions on what is bad for democracy. More female ninth-grade U.S. students (79 percent) than their male peers (69 percent) thought that it was bad for democracy when all television stations present the same opinion. More female than male ninth-graders also thought that one company owning all the newspapers was bad for democracy (81 and 75 percent, respectively). Finally, 85 percent of females thought that it was bad for democracy for wealthy business people to have more influence on government than others, compared with a smaller percentage of male ninth-graders (76 percent).

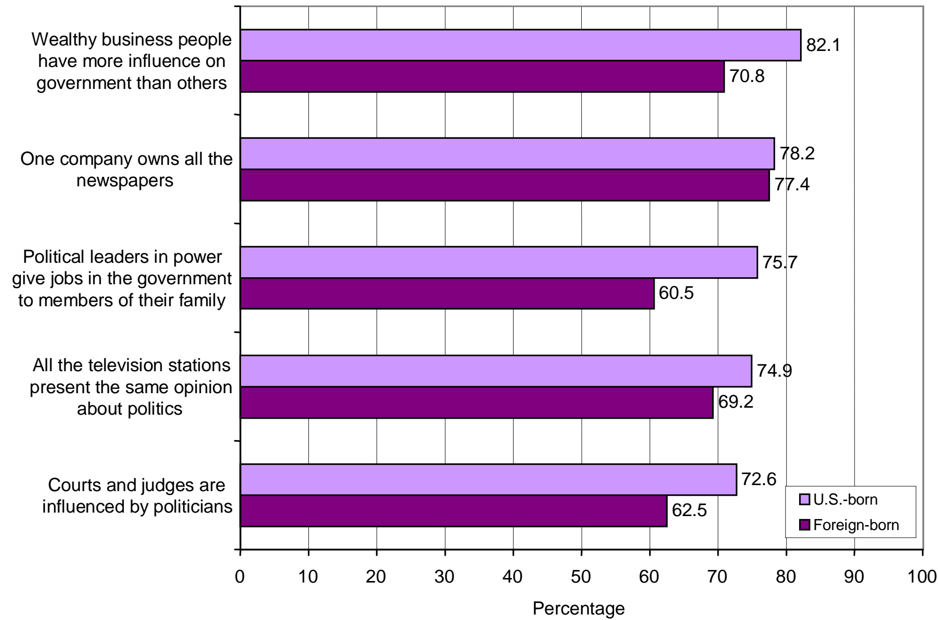
Figure 5.5.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various types of negative influence are somewhat bad or very bad for democracy, by sex: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Figure 5.6 shows that, again, there are no differences between U.S.-born and foreign-born students on three of the items. However, more U.S.-born students agreed with two of the items than their foreign-born counterparts. Seventy-six percent of U.S.-born ninth-graders responded that it is bad for democracy when political leaders in power give jobs in the government to members of their family, compared with 61 percent of foreign-born ninth-graders. In addition, a greater percentage of U.S.-born than foreign-born students agreed that it is bad for democracy when wealthy business people have more influence on government than others. It is important to keep in mind while analyzing the results by country of birth that no data are available on how long these foreign-born students had been in the United States. Thus, students who had been here since infancy are considered with those who immigrated the previous year.

Figure 5.6.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various types of negative influence are somewhat bad or very bad for democracy, by country of birth: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Concept of citizenship

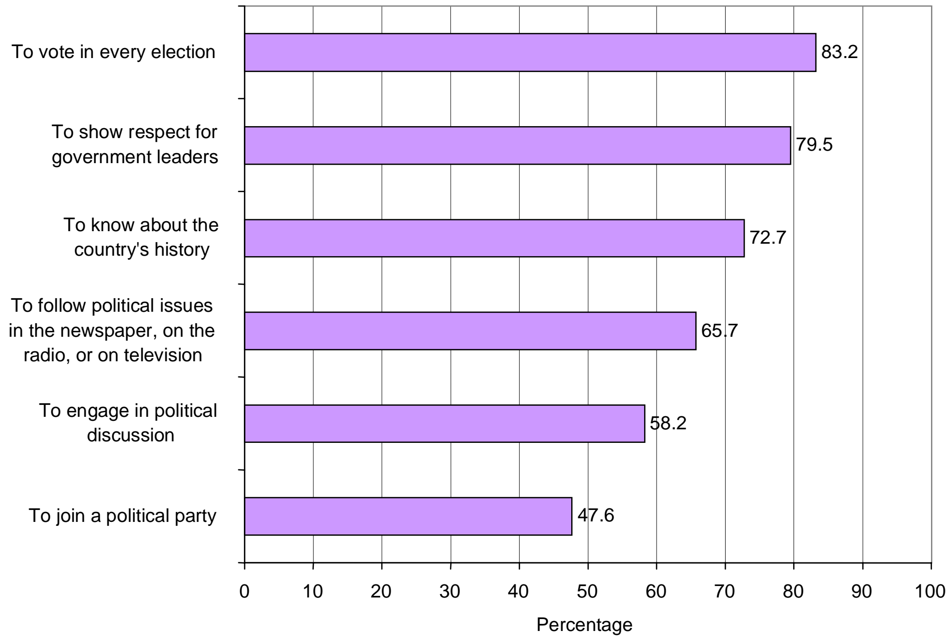
There are diverse opinions about what constitutes "good" citizenship. Some people emphasize citizen duties, such as voting and obeying laws; others emphasize exercising one's rights to express opinions and dissent (Hahn, Hughes, and Sen, 1998). In the past, studies that have examined citizenship found that U.S. youth focused more on rights than on responsibilities (Niemi and Junn, 1998; Hahn, 1999). This section addresses how students define and understand the concept of citizenship, and whether this conception differs by sex, race/ethnicity, country of birth, or socioeconomic status.

The concept of citizenship was measured by two scales: an "Importance of conventional citizenship" scale and an "Importance of social movement-related citizenship" scale. Ninth-grade U.S. students were given a list of activities, attitudes, and actions on each scale and asked to report how important they believed each one was for explaining what a good citizen is or does.

Importance of conventional citizenship

A six-item scale measured ninth-grade U.S. students' perceptions of conventional citizenship. These items ranged from voting and understanding the history of the country to discussing politics. Figure 5.7 shows the percentage of students reporting that each item on the conventional citizenship scale is somewhat important or very important in relation to being a good citizen.

Figure 5.7.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various civic behaviors are somewhat important or very important for good citizenship: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Overall, most students thought that voting in every election and showing respect for government leaders were the two most important factors in being good citizens. Three-quarters or more of all ninth-grade U.S. students indicated that these two activities were somewhat or very important in demonstrating good citizenship. These results seem at odds with the fact that a relatively low percentage of adults typically do vote in elections in the United States, but could bode well for future generations of voters. These findings also match a previous study on attitudes of high school students, in which a majority of students emphasized respect for authority and obedience to the law as central to good citizenship (Jennings and Niemi, 1974; Johnson, 1986).

Next, two-thirds or more of ninth-grade U.S. students also thought that knowing about the country's history and following political issues in the news were important for good citizenship. Approximately one-half of the students said that it was somewhat or very important for an adult who is a good citizen to join a political party.[*]

[*] This item on joining a political party was taken from the international survey and may be more relevant to other countries than to the United States. In the United States, people are usually affiliated with political parties, but do not necessarily join them.

Table 5.1 reports results on the importance of conventional citizenship by a set of selected student background characteristics. The mean for U.S. students on the conventional citizenship scale is significantly higher than the international mean. Furthermore, the results indicate no differences between males and females, U.S.-born or foreign-born, or among different racial/ethnic or socioeconomic groups (as defined by the number of books in the home) in their reports of what is important for good citizenship.

Table 5.1.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the importance of conventional citizenship scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	10.3
Sex		
Male	48.8	10.2
Female	51.2	10.4
Race/ethnicity		
White	63.4	10.3
Black	13.2	10.5
Hispanic	13.5	10.2
Asian	4.0	10.2
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.5	10.2
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.5	10.3
Foreign-born	10.5	10.5
Number of books in the home		
0–10	8.4	10.0
11–50	21.5	10.4
51–100	22.2	10.4
101–200	19.8	10.3
More than 200	28.0	10.4

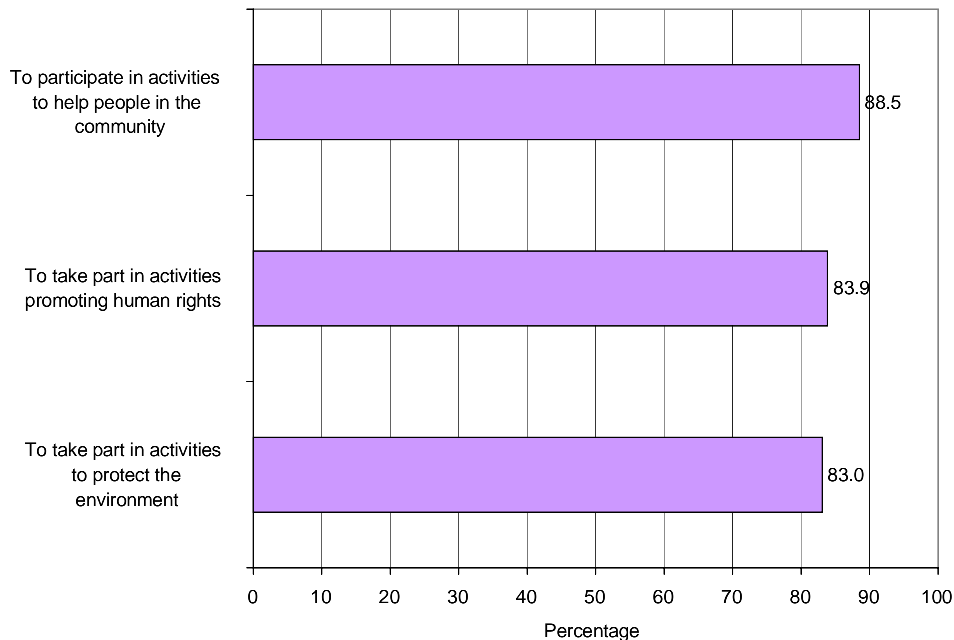
*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.
NOTE: The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean is significantly higher than the international mean. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Importance of social movement-related citizenship

A three-item scale measures the concept of social movement-related citizenship. On this scale, U.S. students were significantly higher than the international mean. As seen in figure 5.8, over 80 percent of students thought that all three items were somewhat or very important.

Almost 90 percent of U.S. ninth-grade students thought that it is important for a good citizen to participate in activities to help people in the community. More students thought that these activities were somewhat or very important compared with activities that promote human rights and protect the environment. Specifically, 84 percent and 83 percent, respectively, thought that taking part in activities promoting human rights and protecting the environment were also important for good citizens to do. Other studies of U.S. youth aged 16 to 24 also found that young adults associated good citizenship with helping activities in the community (Hepburn, 2000; National Association of Secretaries of State, 1999; People for the American Way, 1989).

Figure 5.8.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that participation in various social movement-related activities is somewhat important or very important for good citizenship: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Subgroup differences on the importance of social movement-related citizenship are presented in table 5.2. The mean for U.S. students on the social movement-related citizenship scale is significantly higher than the international mean. Ninth-grade U.S. female students were more likely than their male peers to report social movement-related activities as important. This is consistent with an earlier study that showed that female students tend to indicate an interest in a greater number of social issues than do their male peers (Hahn, 1996b). There were no differences among any racial/ethnic groups, between U.S.-born and foreign-born ninth-graders, or among those reporting various numbers of books in their homes.

Table 5.2.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the importance of social movement-related citizenship scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	10.3
Sex		
Male	48.7	10.0
Female	51.3	10.6
Race/ethnicity		
White	63.5	10.2
Black	13.1	10.6
Hispanic	13.5	10.2
Asian	4.0	10.3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.4	10.4
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.5	10.3
Foreign-born	10.5	10.2
Number of books in the home		
0–10	8.3	9.9
11–50	21.5	10.5
51–100	22.3	10.3
101–200	19.8	10.3
More than 200	28.0	10.2

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

NOTE: The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean is significantly higher than the international mean. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

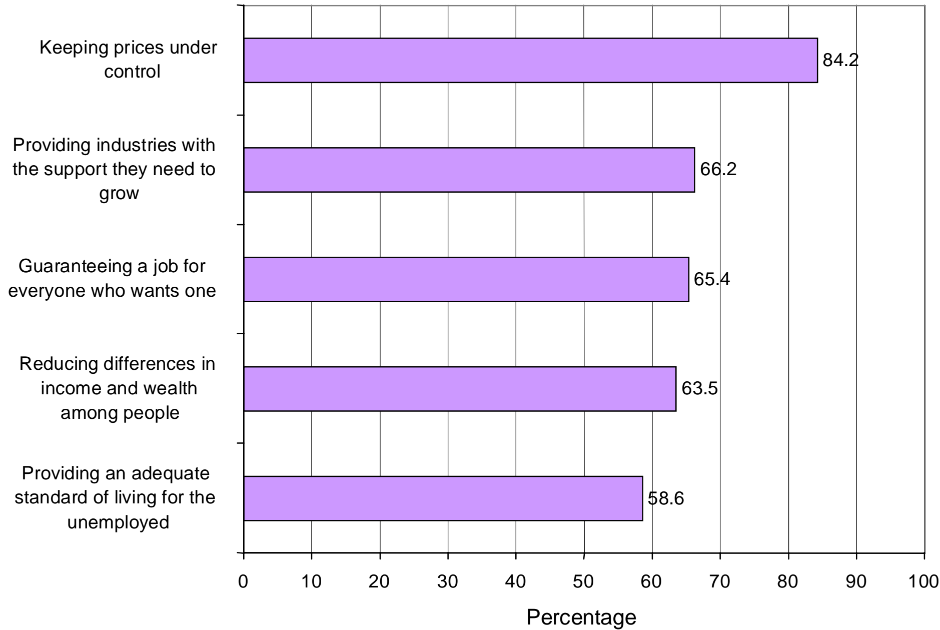
Concept of government

Understanding the rights of an individual and the responsibilities of both the individual and the government is a key component of civic education. However, past research has shown that students are more familiar with their rights than with their responsibilities (Hahn, 1999; Niemi and Junn, 1998). Potential responsibilities of the government can range from providing universal health care to controlling pollution to guaranteeing peace. Students' opinions on the responsibilities of government can also show their concepts of the ruling forces in their country and their views on their own responsibilities. CivEd included two scales measuring distinct concepts of government responsibilities: an economy-related scale and a society-related scale.

Economy-related government responsibilities

Five items make up the economy-related government responsibility scale. Figure 5.9 lists these five items and shows the percentage of students who thought that the government probably or definitely should be responsible for each.

Figure 5.9.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various economy-related actions probably or definitely should be the government's responsibility: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

A majority of ninth-graders thought that the government should be responsible for keeping prices under control. This was higher than the rest of the items, the next three of which showed no differences in the percentage of students who thought that they were the responsibility of the government. Approximately 65 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students reported that the government should be responsible for providing industries with the support they need to grow, guaranteeing a job for everyone who wants one, and reducing differences in income and wealth among people. Furthermore, fifty-nine percent of U.S. ninth-graders said that it was the responsibility of the government to provide an adequate standard of living for the unemployed.

In the area of government responsibility, a key interest for social policy is whether differences exist between males and females, among racial/ethnic groups, between U.S.-born and foreign-born people, or among socioeconomic

groups in their views on what falls under the purview of the government. Table 5.3 shows the average scores for different subgroups of students on the economy-related government responsibility scale. Overall, the average score for U.S. students on this scale was below the international mean.

Table 5.3.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the economy-related government responsibilities scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	9.2
Sex		
Male	48.7	9.1
Female	51.3	9.3
Race/ethnicity		
White	63.7	9.1
Black	13.0	9.5
Hispanic	13.3	9.3
Asian	4.0	9.7
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.5	9.1
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.7	9.2
Foreign-born	10.3	9.2
Number of books in the home		
0–10	8.3	9.3
11–50	21.6	9.3
51–100	22.3	9.2
101–200	19.9	9.3
More than 200	27.9	9.0

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

NOTE: The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean is significantly lower than the international mean. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

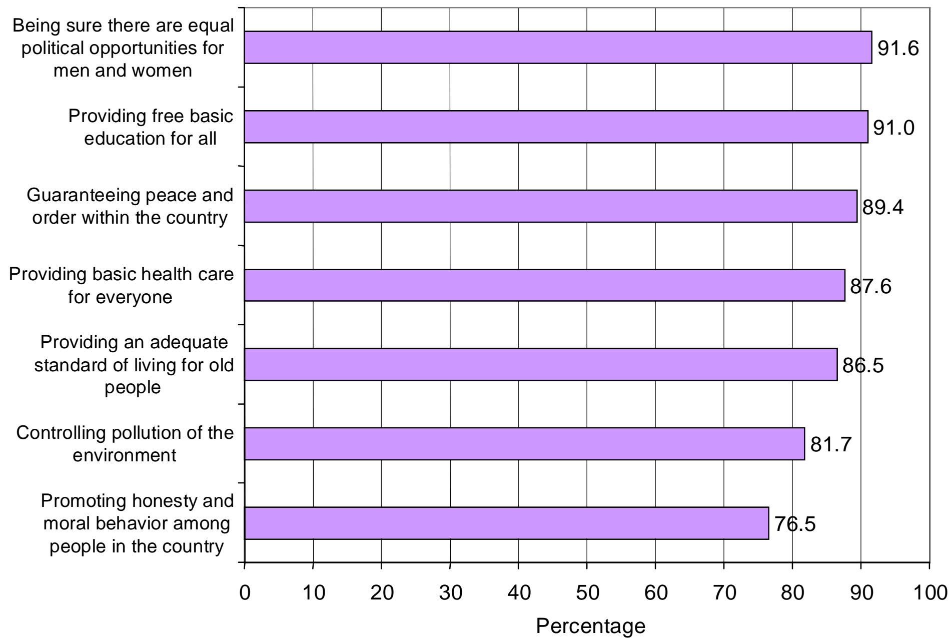
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Asian and black ninth-graders in the United States were more likely than their white peers to report that the government should be responsible for economy-related issues. This finding is consistent with the literature on this issue, which suggests that racial minorities think that the government should play a greater role in equalizing economic circumstances (Vanneman and Cannon, 1987). There are no differences among other racial/ethnic groups, among students with varying numbers of books in their household, or between U.S.-born or foreign-born students.

Society-related government responsibility

The scale measuring society-related government responsibility includes the seven items shown in figure 5.10, which relate to social concerns. Three-quarters or more of ninth-grade U.S. students reported that the government should be responsible for all seven of these issues.

Figure 5.10.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various society-related actions probably or definitely should be the government's responsibility: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Between 87 and 92 percent of U.S. ninth-graders said that the government should be responsible for ensuring equal political opportunities for men and women, providing free basic education and health care for all, guaranteeing peace and order within the country, and providing an adequate standard of living for old people. Seen as slightly less important was the government's responsibility to control pollution. And three-quarters of ninth-graders agreed that promoting honesty and moral behavior among people should be the responsibility of the government.

Table 5.4 examines how ninth-grade students differ on the society-related government responsibility scale by sex, country of birth, race/ethnicity, and number of books in the household. The U.S. mean on this scale was the same as the international mean.

Table 5.4.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the society-related government responsibilities scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	10.0
Sex		
Male	48.6	9.8
Female	51.4	10.2
Race/ethnicity		
White	63.9	10.0
Black	12.9	9.7
Hispanic	13.2	9.7
Asian	4.0	10.3
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.4	10.1
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.7	10.0
Foreign-born	10.3	9.7
Number of books in the home		
0–10	8.2	9.4
11–50	21.5	9.9
51–100	22.2	9.9
101–200	20.0	10.1
More than 200	28.0	10.2

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding. The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean does not differ significantly from the international mean.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Ninth-grade U.S. females were more likely than their male counterparts to report that the government should be responsible for society-related issues. In contrast to the previous scale on economy-related responsibilities, black ninth-graders fell lower on this scale than their white and Asian peers, indicating that they were less likely to state that these issues are the responsibility of the government. Also, U.S. students with 10 or fewer books in their household were less likely to report that these society-related issues were the responsibility of the government than students from households with more than 100 books. The finding that higher SES students were more likely to expect the government to take responsibility for society-related issues supports previous research showing that individuals who already have a basic standard of living (e.g., food, housing, jobs) can afford to focus on broader issues, such as protecting the environment and providing for the elderly (Piven and Cloward, 1977). There were no differences among racial/ethnic groups or between U.S.-born and foreign-born ninth-graders.

Summary

This chapter examined ninth-grade U.S. students' opinions on what constitutes democracy and what defines good citizenship, as well as their concepts of the responsibilities of government. Most U.S. students agreed that voting in every election and showing respect for government leaders were two important factors in being good citizens. Almost 90 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students agreed that it is important for a good citizen to participate in activities to help people in the community. Female students were more likely than their male peers to report social movement-related activities such as promoting human rights and protecting the environment as important.

Ninth-grade U.S. students had varying perceptions regarding the responsibilities of the government. On the society-related scale, between 87 and 92 percent of U.S. ninth-graders said that the government should be responsible for ensuring equal political opportunities for men and women, providing free basic education and health care for all, guaranteeing peace and order within the country, and providing an adequate standard of living for old people. On the economy-related scale, approximately 80 percent of ninth-graders reported that the government should be responsible for keeping prices under control. Fifty-nine percent of U.S. ninth-graders said that it was the responsibility of the government to provide an adequate standard of living for the unemployed. Overall, the average score for U.S. students on the economy-related scale was lower than the international mean. Asian and black U.S. ninth-graders were significantly more likely than their white peers to report that the government should be responsible for economy-related issues.

CHAPTER 6

ATTITUDES OF U.S. STUDENTS TOWARD NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CIVIC ISSUES

Key Points

Close to 70 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students report that they trust local and national government institutions in the United States.

Female ninth-graders were more likely than their male counterparts to report that they trust government-related institutions. Additionally, white ninth-graders were more likely than their black peers to report trusting government-related institutions.

Most U.S. ninth-graders, particularly white students, black students, and those born in the United States, report very positive feelings toward the nation.

Nine out of 10 students support women's political rights and agree that women should run for public office and have the same rights as men.

Hispanic and Asian ninth-graders report more positive attitudes than their white peers toward immigrants' rights.

Early research on student political attitudes found that U.S. students' levels of political efficacy, confidence, and interest increased over the course of the school years. However, at the high school level, political trust declined (Ehman, 1980; Hahn, Dilworth, and Hughes, 1998; Jennings and Niemi, 1974; Merelman, 1971). Early political socialization researchers, such as Hess and Torney (1967), reported that most young children in the United States held positive feelings toward their country and its system of government before they had much detailed knowledge about the government or its civic heritage. Later research also showed that high school students continued to have positive feelings toward government institutions (Patrick and Hoge, 1991) and have a strong sense of national identity regardless of their background (Barton and Levstik, 1998; Hahn, 1999). Numerous studies have also addressed students' perceptions of societal diversity, particularly in regard to the rights of women, minority groups, and immigrants. In general, students spoke positively of diversity at both the ninth- and eleventh-grade levels (Dash and Niemi, 1992; Hahn et al., 1998).

CivEd probed the attitudes of students about a variety of national and international civic issues, in addition to assessing civic knowledge. Attitudes were measured across three domains: democracy and democratic institutions, national identity and international relations, and social cohesion and diversity. This chapter examines students' trust in government-related institutions, their attitudes toward the United States and other nations, and support for the rights of minorities and women.

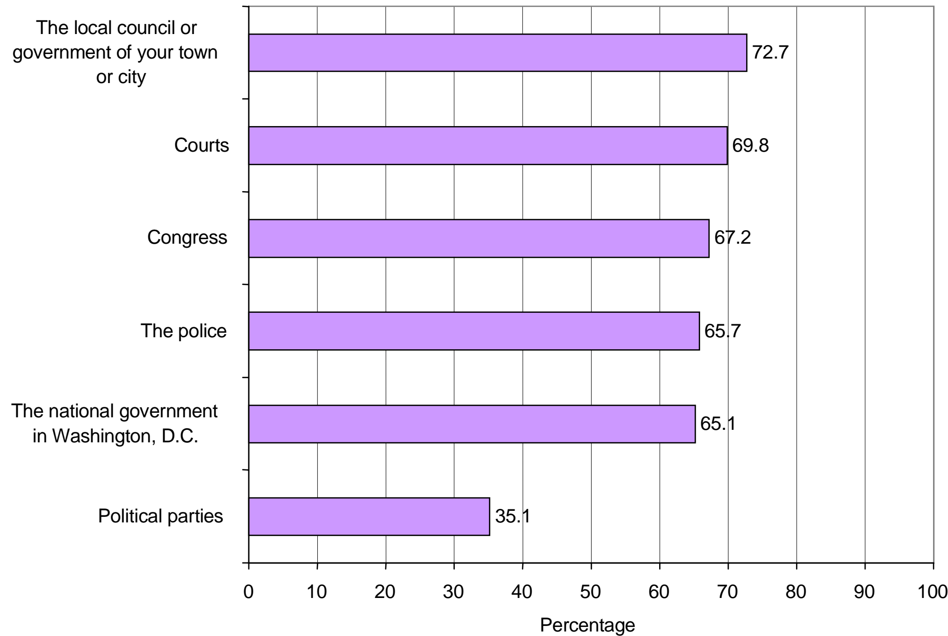
Trust in government-related institutions

Research about democracy and democratic institutions emphasizes the extent to which students trust political institutions, believe that citizens can influence government decisions, and possess political tolerance. A study of political attitudes and beliefs of adolescents in the United States found that students had low levels of political trust; that few students had met any elected government officials; and that they rarely heard adults talking about good, hard-working representatives (Hahn, 1998).

A six-item scale measured ninth-graders' trust in a variety of government-related institutions. Figure 6.1 shows the percentage of students reporting that they trusted these institutions either most of the time or always on each of the six items.

U.S. students had more trust in the local council or government of their towns or cities than they did in the national government in Washington, D.C. Similar findings have been obtained in surveys of U.S. adults, with 74 percent reporting confidence in the local government and 60 percent reporting confidence in the national government (Rose and Gallup, 1998). The proportions of students trusting local councils or governments did not differ from those trusting courts, Congress, or the police. Furthermore, approximately two-thirds of ninth-grade U.S. students reported trusting each of these government-related institutions. Far fewer students—about one-third of U.S. ninth-graders—said that they trusted political parties either most of the time or always.

Figure 6.1.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they trust various institutions most of the time or always: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table 6.1 provides the analysis of the six-item scale, showing the amount of trust U.S. ninth-graders placed in several government institutions by various subgroups. On average, U.S. students scored higher on the trust in government-related institutions scale than their international peers. This table shows that female students were more likely to report that they trusted government-related institutions than did their male counterparts. This finding differs from previous research that found no differences between males and females in issues of political trust (Hahn, 1998; Hahn, Dilworth, and Hughes, 1998; Jennings and Niemi, 1974). In addition, white ninth-grade students were more likely to report trusting government-related institutions than did their black peers on these indicators of trust. Although it appears that Asian students also reported higher scores than blacks and Hispanics on this scale, the differences were not statistically significant. There were no differences among other racial/ethnic groups or between U.S.-born students and foreign-born students. Students also reported similar levels of trust across various socioeconomic groups as indicated by the number of books in the home.

Table 6.1.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the trust in government-related institutions scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	10.4
Sex		
Male	48.7	10.3
Female	51.3	10.5
Race/ethnicity		
White	63.8	10.5
Black	12.8	10.1
Hispanic	13.3	10.1
Asian	4.0	10.5
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.5	9.8
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.6	10.4
Foreign-born	10.4	10.4
Number of books in the home		
0–10	8.3	10.0
11–50	21.5	10.4
51–100	22.3	10.6
101–200	20.0	10.4
More than 200	27.9	10.4

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

NOTE: The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean is significantly higher than the international mean. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Attitudes toward the nation and international relations

Previous studies analyzing students' national identity have reported that this identity appeared to be rooted in a sense of the nation's progress and historic commitment to freedom and individual rights (Barton and Levstik, 1998; Hahn et al., 1998). For example, in a study of middle school students' perceptions of historical significance, students talked about the American Revolution and the Bill of Rights by using pronouns such as "our" and "we" regardless of their economic background or sex or how recently their families had immigrated to the United States (Barton and Levstik, 1998).

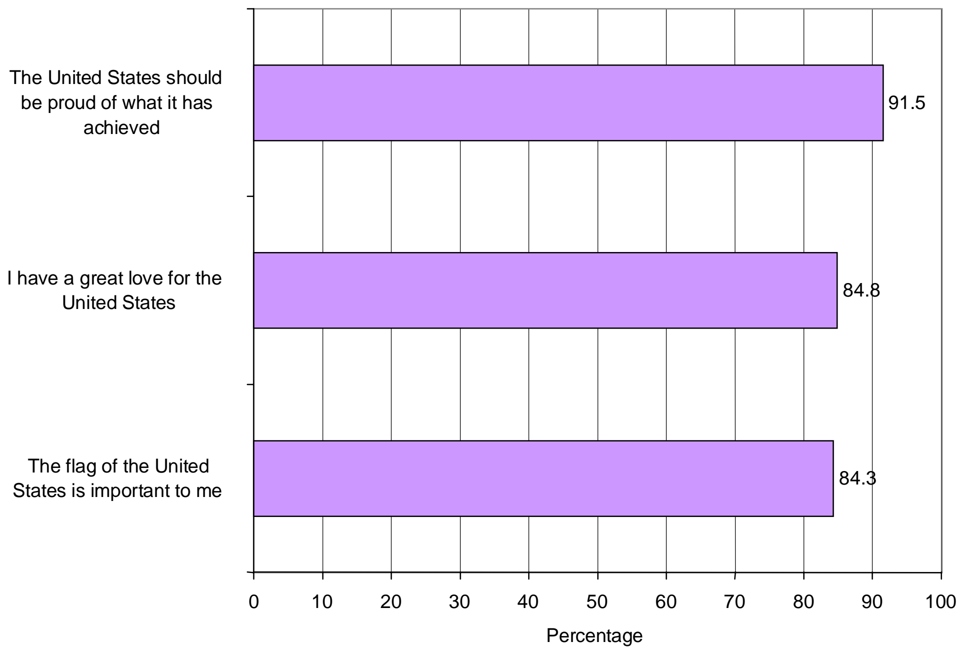
In addition to researching student attitudes toward the United States, studies have also been conducted that analyze student perceptions of other countries. Lambert and Klineberg (1967) conducted a study of U.S. children's perceptions of their own and other countries. The study found that by age 14, U.S. students in the sample were less open to positive views of foreign nations than were students at age 6 and age 10. A decade later, Pike and Barrows (1976) conducted a survey to investigate how children in the United States viewed foreign nations and peoples. They found that students in fourth grade held a "we-they" orientation, viewing the United States as the most desirable, richest, strongest, and largest

country. The eighth- and twelfth-graders in the study, however, saw the United States as more a part of the world, sharing characteristics with other countries.

National identity

CivEd measured students' attitudes toward national identity through a three-item scale. The percentages of students who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements of those three items are shown in figure 6.2.

Figure 6.2.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about the United States: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

The U.S. mean on the positive attitudes toward one's country scale was no different from the international mean. Approximately 90 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students agreed that the United States should be proud of what it had achieved, demonstrating a positive feeling toward the nation. Fewer, but still a majority of students, agreed that they have a great love for the United States and that the U.S. flag was important to them. Although overall the percentages were high for positive attitudes toward the United States, table 6.2 shows that there were some differences among subgroups.

Although whites and blacks did not differ in their attitudes toward the nation, white ninth-graders were more likely than their Hispanic peers to agree with the positive statements about the United States. In addition, U.S.-born students were more likely than foreign-born students to report positive attitudes toward the United States. There were no differences between male and female students or among students from different socioeconomic levels as measured by the number of books in the home.

Table 6.2.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the positive attitudes toward one's country scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	9.9
Sex		
Male	48.7	9.9
Female	51.3	10.0
Race/ethnicity		
White	63.6	10.2
Black	13.0	9.8
Hispanic	13.3	9.3
Asian	4.0	9.5
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.5	9.4
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.7	10.0
Foreign-born	10.3	9.3
Number of books in the home		
0–10	8.2	9.5
11–50	21.5	10.0
51–100	22.3	10.0
101–200	19.9	9.9
More than 200	28.1	10.0

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

NOTE: The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean does not differ significantly from the international mean. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

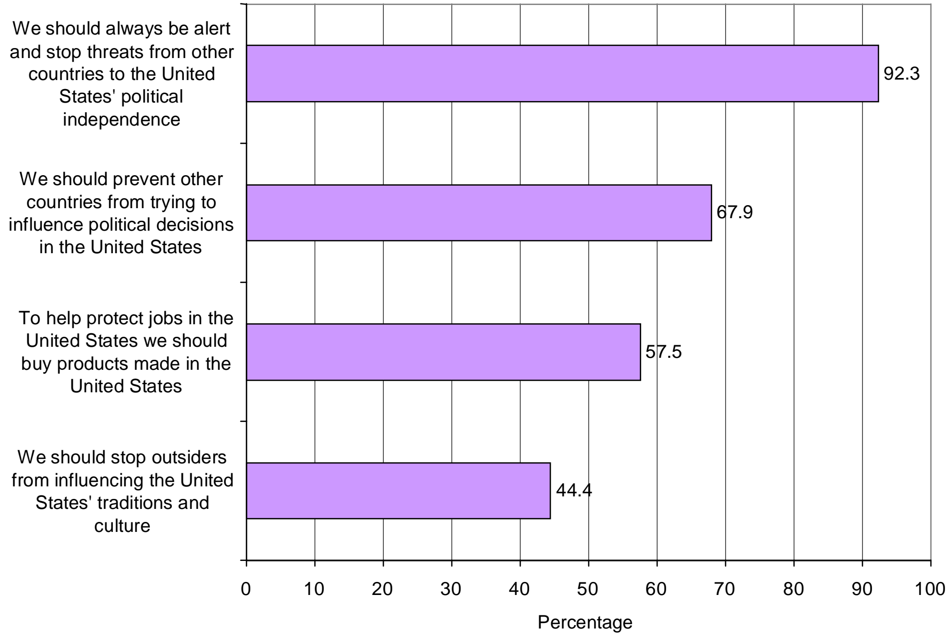
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

International relations

Although there is no composite scale for students' perceptions of the United States as compared with their perceptions of other countries, four items measure students' attitudes on the degree to which the United States should be influenced by other countries. Figure 6.3 shows the percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students who reported agreeing or strongly agreeing with various statements about the United States.

Overall, students appeared to show a strong sense of nationalism, as well as showing some evidence of being open to positive views of other countries. Ninety-two percent of U.S. ninth-graders reported that we should always be alert and stop threats from other countries to the political independence of the United States. Fewer students—approximately two-thirds—agreed that we should prevent other countries from trying to influence political decisions in the United States. About 57 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students stated that to help protect jobs in the United States, we should buy products made in the United States. However, less than half of ninth-grade U.S. students agreed that we should stop outsiders from influencing U.S. traditions and culture.

Figure 6.3.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about U.S. international relations: 1999



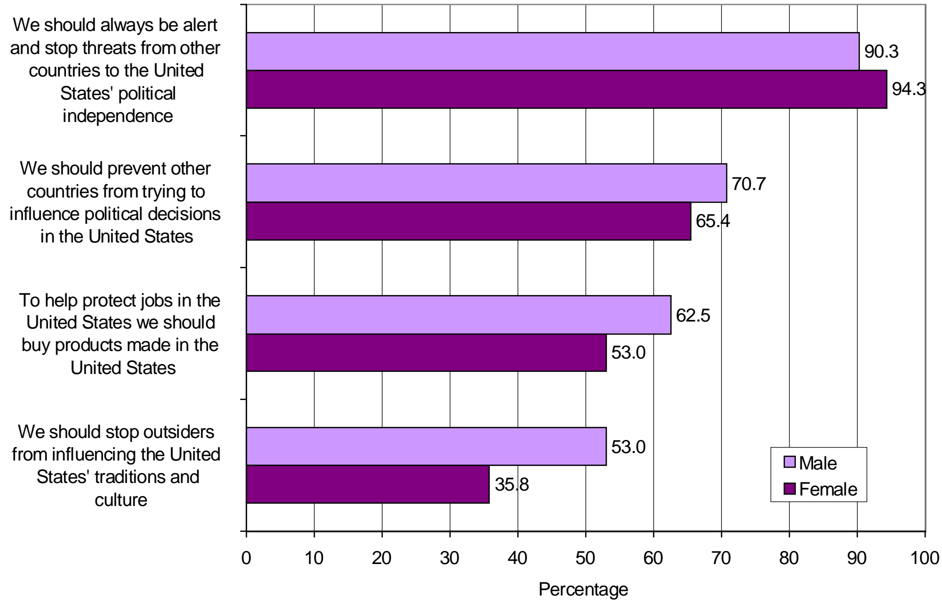
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

In summary, it appears that a majority of ninth-grade U.S. students are concerned about protecting the nation's political independence and are open to cultural influences and new traditions.

Figures 6.4 and 6.5 show the percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students who reported agreeing or strongly agreeing with these same statements, by sex and country of birth. Male students differ from females on three of the four items, and U.S.-born students differ from their foreign-born counterparts on two of the four.

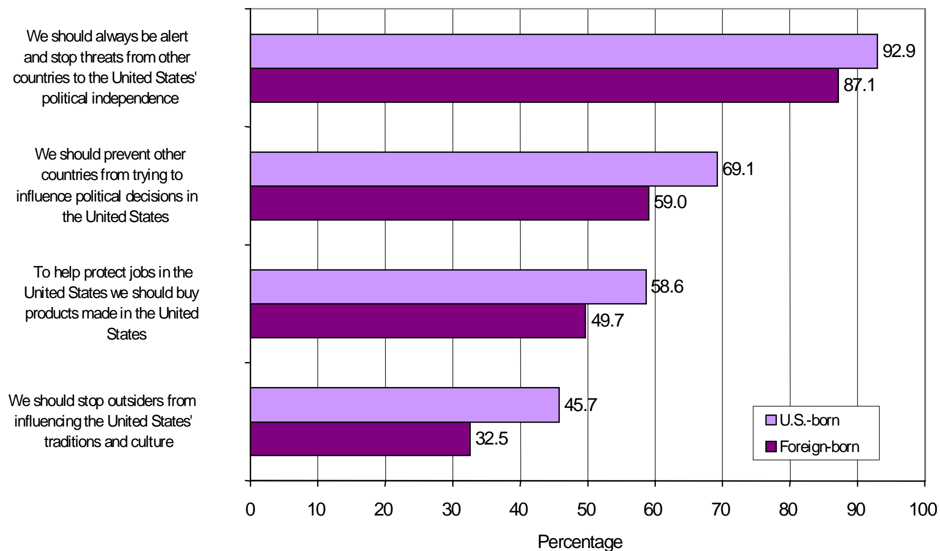
Approximately 90 percent of both male and female ninth-graders agreed that we should always be on alert and stop threats from other countries to the United States' political independence. More males than females, however, agreed with the remaining statements. For instance, approximately 71 percent of male ninth-graders compared with 65 percent of their female peers said that we should prevent other countries from trying to influence political decisions in the United States. A greater percentage of males (62 percent) than females (53 percent) also thought that we should buy products made in the United States to help protect U.S. jobs. Finally, more male than female U.S. ninth-grade students thought that we should stop outsiders from influencing U.S. traditions and culture. About 50 percent of male U.S. ninth-graders agreed that we should stop outsiders from influencing U.S. traditions and culture compared with about 35 percent of females.

Figure 6.4.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about U.S. international relations, by sex: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Figure 6.5.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about U.S. international relations, by country of birth: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

For country of birth, students born in the United States agreed more strongly with controlling the influences of outsiders than those born in other countries. A greater percentage of U.S.-born ninth-graders (69 percent) than foreign-born ninth-graders (59 percent) said that we should prevent other countries from trying to influence political decisions in the United States. Approximately 46 percent of U.S.-born ninth-graders agreed with the statement about stopping outsiders from influencing U.S. traditions and culture, whereas about 33 percent of foreign-born students did. Although it appeared that more U.S.-born students agreed with buying products made in the United States to help protect U.S. jobs and stopping threats from other countries to the United States' political independence, these differences were not statistically significant.

Social cohesion and diversity

Previous studies have been conducted on students' perceptions of social diversity, especially in regard to females and immigrants (Hahn, Dilworth, and Hughes, 1998). In one study of eleventh-graders in three countries, 37 percent of U.S. students said that diversity is a source of cultural strength and only 14 percent said that it leads to disunity and conflict in the nation (Dash and Niemi, 1992).

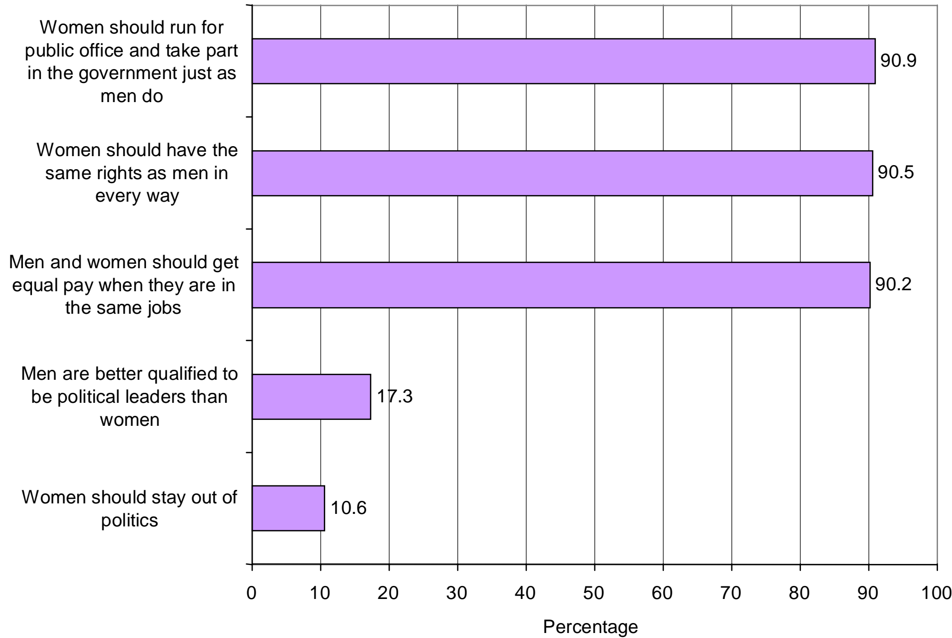
There is also research on student attitudes about women's opportunity and rights. In the 1971 IEA Civic Education Study, researchers found that young people in the United States were not very supportive of women holding political office. In studies conducted in the 1980s and 1990s, however, students were found to be more supportive of women in government, having observed more female candidates and politicians than did their counterparts in earlier generations (Gillespie and Spohn, 1987; Hahn, 1998). CivEd includes two social cohesion scales: a scale on support for women's political rights and a scale on positive attitudes toward immigrants' rights.

Support for women's political rights

A five-item scale measures students' support for women's political rights. Figure 6.6 shows the five opinion items on women's political rights and the percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed with each statement. Note that the first three statements are positive toward women's rights, while the last two are framed negatively.

About 90 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students reported being supportive of women's rights. Students agreed that women should run for public office, have the same rights as men, and receive equal pay for the same jobs. Seventeen percent of U.S. ninth-graders thought that men were better qualified to be political leaders than women, and an even smaller proportion, about 11 percent of ninth-grade U.S. students, agreed that women should stay out of politics.

Figure 6.6.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about women's political rights: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table 6.3 shows the degree of support for women's political rights from U.S. ninth-graders with various background characteristics, based on the five-item scale. The average score for the U.S. on the support for women's rights scale was higher than the international mean. A greater proportion of female ninth-graders supported women's rights than did males. This finding supports previous research, which shows that male adolescents tend to be less supportive of women holding political office than are their female counterparts (Hahn, 1998; Torney, Oppenheim, and Farnen, 1975).

Ninth-graders born in the United States were also more likely to support women's political rights than were their foreign-born peers. And U.S. white ninth-graders were generally more positive toward issues of women's political rights than were U.S. black ninth-grade students. Asian students also appear to be more positive than black or Hispanic students, but these differences are not statistically significant. Finally, students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, as measured by the number of books in the home, were less likely to support women's rights than were students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds. Ninth-grade U.S. students who live in households with 10 or fewer books were less positive toward issues of women's political rights than their peers living in households with more than 100 books.

Table 6.3.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the support for women's political rights scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	10.5
Sex		
Male	48.4	9.6
Female	51.6	11.4
Race/ethnicity		
White	64.0	10.7
Black	12.7	10.1
Hispanic	13.2	10.3
Asian	4.0	10.7
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.4	10.8
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.6	10.6
Foreign-born	10.4	10.1
Number of books in the home		
0–10	8.0	9.9
11–50	21.4	10.3
51–100	22.5	10.4
101–200	20.0	10.7
More than 200	28.1	10.8

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

NOTE: The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean is significantly higher than the international mean. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

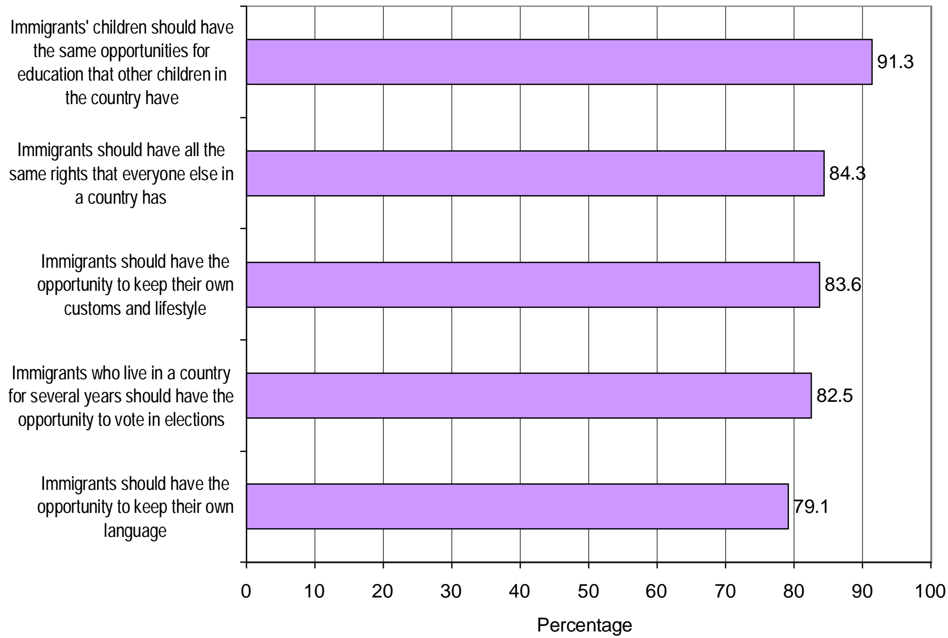
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Positive attitudes toward immigrants' rights

Civic education attempts to educate students on such issues as discrimination. In many countries, discrimination directed specifically toward immigrants or foreign-born individuals is considered a problem relative to social cohesion and diversity. CivEd assessed ninth-grade students' attitudes toward immigrants' rights through a five-item scale focusing on their rights and opportunities. Figure 6.7 shows U.S. ninth-graders' attitudes on the five items that compose the positive attitudes toward immigrants' rights scale.

Approximately 90 percent of U.S. ninth-graders agreed that immigrants' children should have the same opportunities for education that other children in the country have. Slightly fewer students, but still close to 80 percent, agreed that immigrants should have the same rights as everyone else. These rights include allowing immigrants to keep their own customs, lifestyle, and language. In addition, most U.S. ninth-graders (82 percent) agreed that immigrants should have the opportunity to vote in elections after living in the country for several years.

Figure 6.7.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about immigrants' rights: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table 6.4 compares attitudes toward immigrants' rights between males and females, among racial/ethnic groups, between U.S.- and foreign-born students, and among students from households of different socioeconomic levels. Overall, the average score for the United States was higher than the international mean on this scale.

U.S. ninth-graders who were born outside the United States were more likely to have positive attitudes toward immigrants' rights than were U.S.-born ninth-graders. In addition, Hispanic, Asian, and multiracial students in the United States were more likely than their white peers to report positive attitudes toward immigrants' rights. Black ninth-grade students' attitudes toward immigrants' rights did not differ from the attitudes of any other racial/ethnic groups. Female ninth-grade students also demonstrated stronger positive attitudes toward immigrants' rights than did their male counterparts. There were no differences among students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, as indicated by the number of books in the home.

Table 6.4—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the positive attitudes toward immigrants' rights scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	10.3
Sex		
Male	48.4	10.0
Female	51.6	10.7
Race/ethnicity		
White	64.4	10.1
Black	12.2	10.4
Hispanic	13.3	11.0
Asian	4.0	11.1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.4	11.0
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.7	10.3
Foreign-born	10.3	10.9
Number of books in the home		
0–10	8.0	10.1
11–50	21.2	10.5
51–100	22.5	10.2
101–200	20.0	10.3
More than 200	28.3	10.4

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

NOTE: The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean is significantly higher than the international mean. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Summary

This chapter addressed questions of students' trust in government-related institutions, their perceptions of the ability of citizens to influence governmental decisions, and their support for the rights of immigrants and women. A majority of ninth-grade students reported that they trust local and national government institutions in the United States. Female ninth-graders were more likely to report that they trust government-related institutions than were their male counterparts. Nine out of 10 students supported women's political rights and believed that women should run for public office and have the same rights as men. A greater proportion of female ninth-graders reported support for women's rights than did males. Hispanic, Asian, and multiracial ninth-graders reported having more positive attitudes toward immigrants' rights than did their white peers. A majority of students also supported the rights of immigrants to educate their children and vote.

CHAPTER 7

CURRENT AND EXPECTED ACTIVITIES RELATED TO POLITICS

Key Points

Teachers and parents are involved in discussing political issues with ninth-grade U.S. students, but discussions of U.S. politics are more likely to occur than discussions of international politics.

Male ninth-grade students are more likely than their female counterparts to report discussing international politics with people their own age.

Among the various media, television is the primary source for ninth-grade students to obtain information about politics.

Students who use newspapers as a source of political information are more likely to read about domestic politics than international politics.

There is no difference by sex or country of birth in ninth-grade U.S. students' sources of media exposure to political news.

Female ninth-grade students are more likely than males to expect to be politically active as adults.

A central goal of civic education is to prepare students to participate in the political process of their country. Research has provided evidence that when civic education is offered in the context of systematic study, students acquire knowledge, abilities, and attitudes that may lead to later adult community participation (Wade and Saxe, 1996). Past research also indicates that students who participate in community and political activities, or in extracurricular activities related to civic issues while in high school, are more likely than nonparticipating peers to be community and political activists as adults (Damico, Damico, and Conway, 1998).

This chapter examines U.S. ninth-graders' current activities related to politics, as well as their expected political actions as adults. It examines students' involvement in discussions of national and international politics, followed by their use of various media to obtain information about civic and political issues. The chapter concludes by looking at the activities that ninth-grade U.S. students expect to engage in as adults.

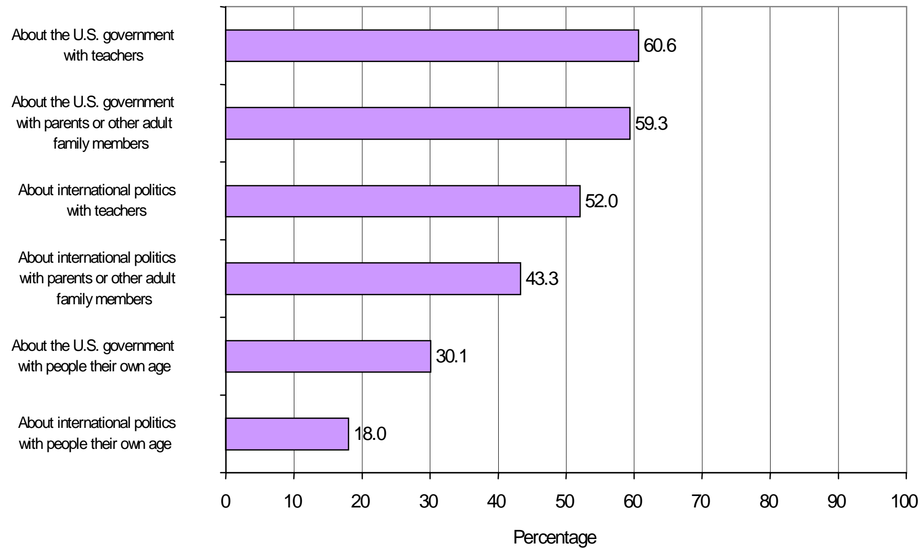
Participation in discussions of national and international politics

Past research has shown that political discussions are factors that can influence future civic responsibility. In particular, political discussions in the home tend to lead to an increased likelihood that adolescents will be informed about and accept civic responsibilities (Szymanski, 1991). Additionally there is some indication that students who discuss political issues at home anticipate being politically active adults and that discussion in the home and adolescent expectations of political activity predict later adult participation (Miller and Kimmel, 1997). There is also some evidence that frequent discussion of current events in school enhances students' civic knowledge (Niemi and Junn, 1998).

Figure 7.1 begins to examine this issue by presenting results on U.S. ninth-grade students' reports of involvement in political discussions.

Overall, students were more likely to discuss national and international politics with teachers or adult family members than with people their own age. About 60 percent of U.S. students reported that they sometimes or often participated in discussions of what is happening in the United States government with teachers, parents, or other adult family members. Furthermore, 52 percent of students also reported frequent levels of discussions about international politics with teachers, and 43 percent reported frequent discussions about international politics with parents or adult family members. Finally, less than one-third of all students reported participating sometimes or often in discussions of domestic or international politics with people their own age. Overall, these results indicate that ninth-grade students are involved in discussing U.S. political issues with teachers and parents. However, although students were equally likely to discuss domestic politics with their teachers and their parents or other adult family members, they were less likely to discuss international politics at home with parents or adult family members than at school with teachers.

Figure 7.1.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often have discussions about national or international politics: 1999

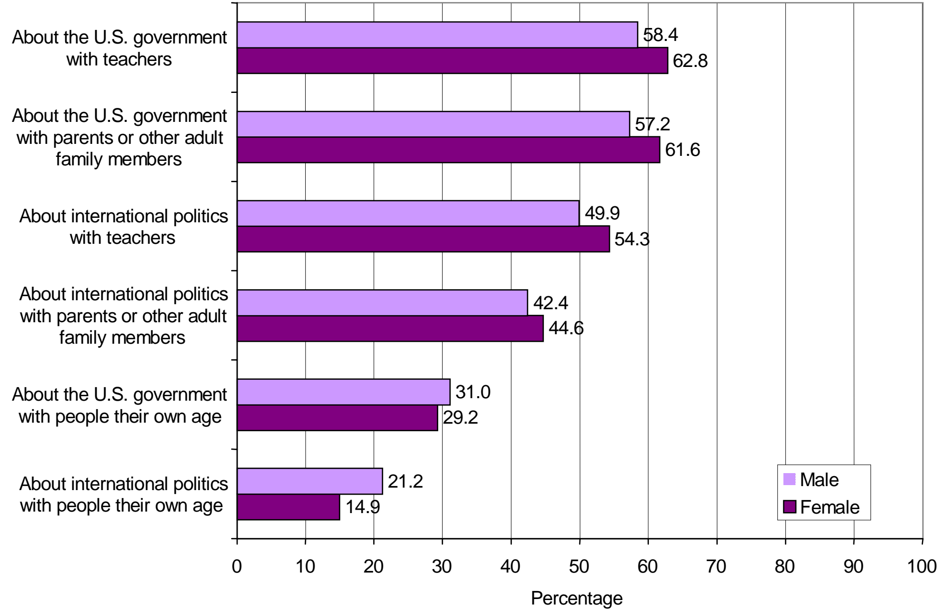


SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

To what extent did frequency of discussions of political issues among U.S. ninth-graders differ by sex and country of birth? These questions are answered in figures 7.2 and 7.3.

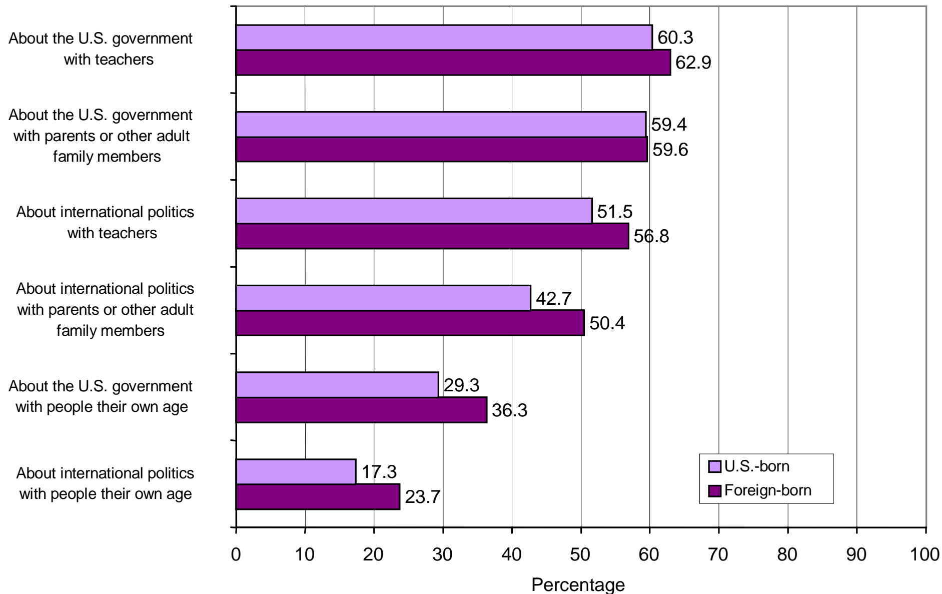
As indicated in figure 7.2, the frequency of responses of male and female students were very close on all six items. In fact, there were no differences on frequency of discussions of political issues with either teachers or adult family members among U.S. ninth-grade students by sex. However, male students were more likely than their female counterparts to discuss international political issues with people their own age. Foreign-born students were no more likely than their U.S.-born counterparts to be involved in discussions of political issues with teachers, family members, or people their own age, as indicated in figure 7.3.

Figure 7.2.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often have discussions about national or international politics, by sex: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Figure 7.3.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often have discussions about national or international politics, by country of birth: 1999



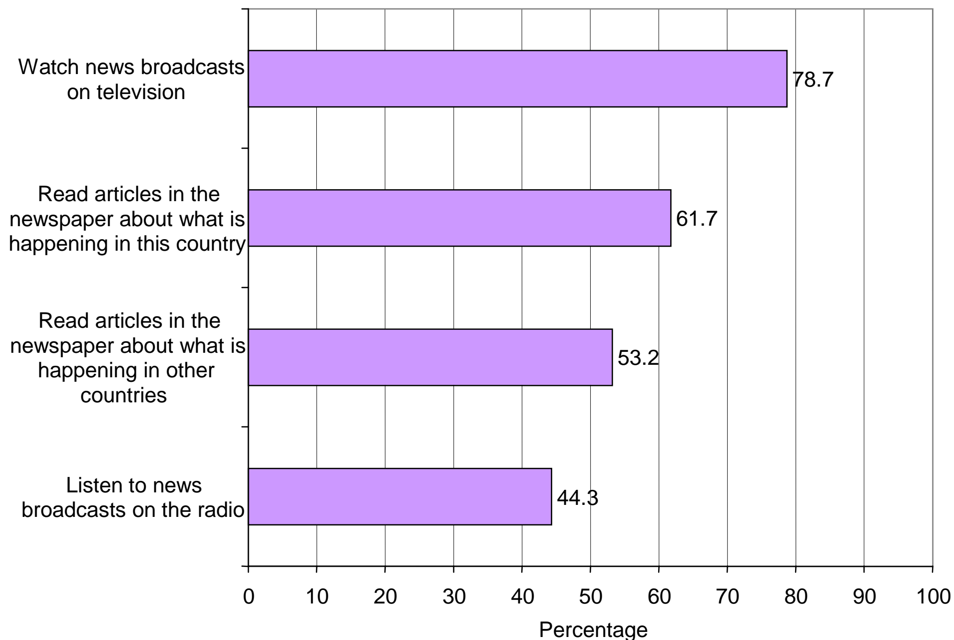
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Media exposure to current civic issues

The means through which students and young adolescents obtain information about civic issues and politics has implications for the development of their political attitudes and perceptions about the political behavior of adults. In particular, research highlights the importance of recognizing the influence of the mass media, especially television, in shaping students' political roles and civic understanding (Ehman, 1980; Hepburn, 1998). In this age of information overload, television and other media have become either more important than or equally as important as schools in creating political knowledge and awareness.

Figure 7.4 presents data on ninth-grade U.S. students' reports of exposure to politics through the media. Overall, the results indicate that television is the primary media source that ninth-grade U.S. students relied on to obtain information about politics. Close to 80 percent of students reported that they sometimes or often watched news broadcasts on television. This percentage is higher than the percentage of students who reported reading about domestic or international news in newspapers or listening to news broadcast on the radio. More than half of all students also reported that they sometimes or often read articles in newspapers about what is happening in the United States as well as in other countries. However, more students used newspapers to read about domestic issues rather than about international issues. Students relied on the radio less than on any other media source to obtain information about political issues.

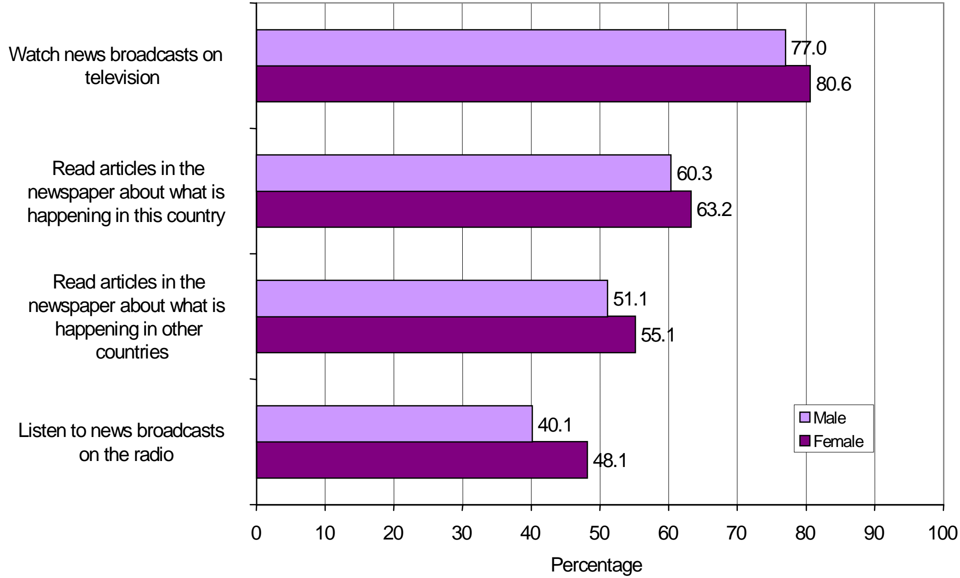
Figure 7.4.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often obtain news from the newspaper, television, or radio: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

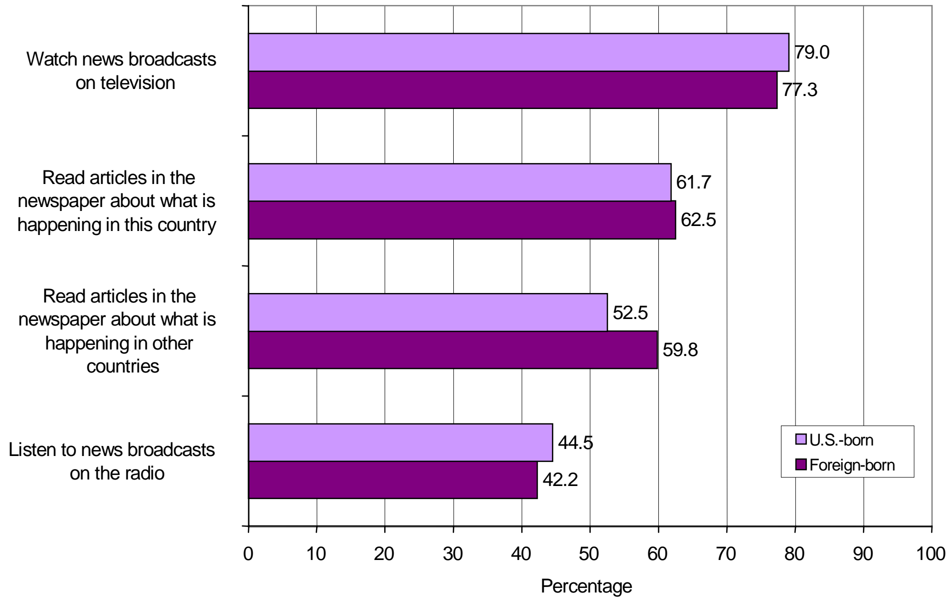
Figures 7.5 and 7.6 present data examining the extent to which ninth-grade U.S. students' reports of exposure to politics through the media differed by sex and country of birth.

Figure 7.5.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often obtain news from the newspaper, television, or radio, by sex: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Figure 7.6.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often obtain news from the newspaper, television, or radio, by country of birth: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Female and male students and U.S.-born and foreign-born students all reported television as their primary source of political news and radio as their least likely source, and with similar levels of frequency. Although there appear to be differences between males and females and between U.S.-born and foreign-born students, none of these differences is statistically significant with the exception of the last item in figure 7.5. More female ninth-graders than males listen to news broadcasts on the radio.

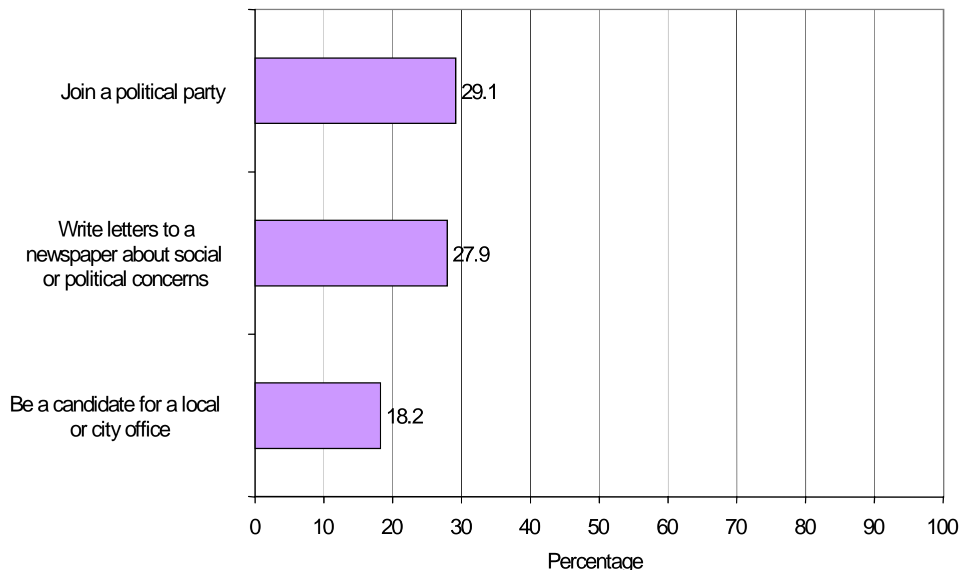
Expected participatory political actions

Overall, U.S. parents and teachers were actively involved in discussing politics, especially domestic political issues, with ninth-grade U.S. students. Active political discussions during formative years are thought to be a good foundation for later political activity. In this section, we examine the expected participatory political actions of students as adults.

Expected participatory political action was measured by a three-item scale. The three items making up the scale are presented in figure 7.7 along with the percentage of students who reported that they probably or certainly expected to engage in each of these activities as an adult.

It can be seen from these results that fewer than one-third of all ninth-grade U.S. students reported that they probably or certainly expect to engage in any of the three political activities as adults. Among these three activities, students reported that they anticipate being more likely to join a political party or write letters to a newspaper about social or political concerns than to be a candidate for a local or city office.

Figure 7.7.—Percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they probably or certainly expect to participate in various political activities as adults: 1999



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Of greater interest, however, is the issue of whether there are differences among various subgroups of students in terms of expected political participation. This issue is addressed by the results presented in table 7.1. The U.S. mean on the political activity scale was significantly higher than the international mean.

The results in table 7.1 show that female ninth-grade students are more likely than their male counterparts to expect to be politically active as adults. This finding illustrates the change in gender role expectations that has taken place in the United States over the past three decades in general, as more female candidates are being observed and supported in the U.S. political process. These results indicate that the current process of political socialization leads female ninth-grade students to expect to have greater political participation as adults than their ninth-grade male counterparts.

In contrast, the results indicate no differences in expected political participation by race or country of birth. This suggests that at least in ninth-grade, minority students and those born abroad were no less likely than white and U.S.-born students to expect to play a part in the political system of the United States.

Table 7.1.—Ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the expected participation in political activities scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	100.0	10.5
Sex		
Male	48.6	10.3
Female	51.4	10.6
Race/ethnicity		
White	65.1	10.5
Black	11.7	10.5
Hispanic	13.2	10.3
Asian	4.1	10.5
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	3.3	10.5
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	89.7	10.5
Foreign-born	10.3	10.5
Number of books in the home		
0–10	7.9	9.9
11–50	20.7	10.2
51–100	22.1	10.5
101–200	20.1	10.5
More than 200	29.2	10.8

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.
NOTE: The international mean for this scale is 10.0. The U.S. mean is significantly higher than the international mean. Percentages may not add to 100 because of rounding.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Finally, an examination of the relationship between socioeconomic status, measured as the number of books in the home, and expected political participation indicates that students in households containing 100 or fewer books were less likely to report expecting to participate in political life as adults than students in households containing more than 200 books. This finding is consistent with past research documenting a positive relationship between socioeconomic status and political participation (Brady, Verba, and Scholzman, 1995).

Summary

This last chapter of the report examined U.S. ninth-graders' current activities related to politics as well as their expected political actions as adults. Ninth-grade U.S. students were involved in discussing political issues with teachers and parents, but discussions of U.S. politics were more likely to occur than discussions of international politics. Overall, the results indicated that television was the primary media source that ninth-grade U.S. students relied on to obtain information about politics. Although over 50 percent of students reported using newspapers as a source of political information, they were more likely to read about domestic politics than to read about international politics. Female ninth-grade students were more likely than their male counterparts to expect to be politically active as adults. Students in households containing 100 or fewer books were less likely to report that they expect to participate in political life as adults than students in households containing more than 200 books. The results indicate no differences in expected political participation by race and country of birth.

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APPENDIX A

CIVED FRAMING QUESTIONS

The following 18 framing questions formed the central part of Phase 1 of CivEd. Countries were asked to answer these questions to help define the universe of domains considered relevant to the study.

1. *What are young people expected or likely to have learned by age 14 or 15 from study of the nation's history or literature (or the arts) as a guide to understanding their country, their government, and the rights and obligations of citizenship?*

What are the texts, role models, historical events, and ideas that are widely believed to be an important orienting force for all citizens to know about—for example, constitutional principles; national liberators; decisive wars, revolutions, or uprisings; national traumas or periods of oppression. Who are the heroes and role models thought to be worthy of national pride, and how are they presented to students?

2. *What are young people expected or likely to have acquired as a sense of national identity or national loyalty by age 14 or 15?*

To what degree is loyalty or sense of belonging to the nation, to its various communities, and to its traditions and institutions thought to be important to develop among young people? What attitudes are students expected to develop toward the institutions of government, authorities, and office holders? How much and what kinds of criticism of or skepticism about monarchs or national leaders are thought to be appropriate? What, if any, symbols (such as the national flag) are thought particularly important for students to respect?

3. *What are 14- or 15-year-olds expected or likely to have learned about relations between their country and other countries?*

Which countries or groups of countries do they learn about as past, present, or future threats, and what is the nature of these threats? Which countries are allies? What are young people likely to learn about the nature and appropriateness of the role their country has played and continues to play in global and regional spheres of influence? What supranational structures or international organizations are thought to be important enough to have a place in the young person's awareness or loyalty? How important is it in this country to speak of young people acquiring "a global perspective," or an "international outlook," and how are those terms interpreted?

4. *What are young people expected or likely to have learned by age 14 or 15 about the role of the military and the police as guardians of the nation's security?*

Is military service mandatory (for both genders)? Is it viewed as a normal and important part of preparation for adulthood and citizenship? Under what conditions is the young person expected or likely to learn to be compliant and not to question these authorities (trusting in fair treatment), as opposed to learning ways to deal with perceived misuse of power by the military or police? Are there likely to be differences in the ways in which individuals of different social classes or ethnic groups view these authorities?

5. *What are young people expected or likely to have learned by age 14 or 15 about those belonging to "minority groups" or other groups which see themselves as disadvantaged or disenfranchised (as defined by ethnicity, race, immigrant status, or other characteristics) in relation to the rights and obligations of citizenship?*

What groups, if any, are viewed as most subject to discrimination? What can be said about the social identities advocated for young people from minority groups, on a continuum ranging from assimilation to pluralism? How are instances of past discrimination or oppression to be dealt with? Are attitudes and behaviors of respect and tolerance toward some or all of these groups encouraged explicitly or implicitly, and how?

6. *What are young people in their role as citizens expected or likely to have acquired with regard to the understanding of religion or the acquisition of religious-based values by age 14 or 15?*

What is expected of young people from families who do not share the dominant religions(s) or moral beliefs? Is the treatment of religious minorities or nonbelievers an issue in citizenship education?

7. *What are young people expected or likely to have learned concerning the use of a particular official language or languages within the nation by age 14 or 15?*

Are young people expected to respect the use of languages other than the national language(s)? What are they expected to learn about whether and when individuals should be able to use other languages in public settings (including schools and businesses) and in private settings such as the home?

8. *What are young people by age 14 or 15 expected or likely to have learned about whether the rights and obligations of citizenship differ (in law or in fact) according to gender?*

Are young people taught that men and women have different rights and responsibilities of citizenship? If differences exist between men and women in the society in actual levels of political participation or if there are very few women in positions of national leadership, are these matters discussed as problems or issues with young people, or are they largely ignored?

9. *What are young people of age 14 or 15 expected or likely to have learned about the rights of the family relative to the State?*

To what extent is the young person to be taught that the rights of the family supersede those of the State and to what extent is he/she taught that they are subordinate?

10. *To what extent are young people expected or likely to have learned by 14 or 15 that economic principles (such as free market principles vs. state intervention and control over the provision of goods and services) are connected with government or political issues?*

Are young people to be taught that it is the State's responsibility to give protection from such threats as unemployment, illness, homelessness, or hunger,

or are they to be taught that these are private matters, which are not the responsibility of the State? If youth unemployment is high, is this dealt with as a political issue in school?

11. If "democracy" is a central concept, what does it mean within the national context and what are young people expected or likely to learn about it by age 14 or 15?

Is the concept presented primarily in an idealized form? Is the practice of the democratic values included every day in the school or community (e.g., the right to appeal decisions thought to be unjust, or to participate in decision making in schools or classrooms)? With what alternatives (e.g., totalitarianism, authoritarianism) is this conception of democracy contrasted? Are young people expected or likely to learn mainly about one particular conception of democracy (e.g., about representative democracy with its emphasis on leaders chosen through contested elections; or about more participatory or direct forms of democracy; or about substantive views of democracy in which economic and social equality are argued to be of great importance)?

12. If "human rights" are a central concept, how are they defined and what do they mean, and what are young people expected to have learned about them by age 14 or 15?

Are they defined primarily in a national context (with references to rights guaranteed by the State) or an international context (with reference to documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights)? Are distinctions made between civil/political rights and social/economic/cultural rights? Is there attention to children's rights?

13. What are young people expected or likely to have learned about law and the rule of law, the constitution (written or unwritten), the courts, the national/regional legislature, elections, and other institutions of government by 14 or 15?

What sort of understanding of these matters are young people expected to achieve—one that is largely limited to the memorization of facts about the structure and processes of government or one that is analytical in addressing questions of how well these structures and processes operate? Are issues such as the relations between different parts of the government, including separation of powers, important? What civic responsibilities are stressed—for example, obeying the law, paying taxes?

14. What sorts of political communication and active political participation are encouraged or likely for those aged 14 or 15 and what sorts are discouraged or unlikely?

Are there certain topics or opinions that students are discouraged from discussing in their classes? To what extent are young people expected to know about and participate in election campaigns and political parties? Are they encouraged, allowed, or not allowed to discuss in school the disagreements that exist between candidates or parties? Are they expected to learn to compare positions on political issues? How are they to be prepared to vote in an informed way when they are of an age to do so? Are young people expected or likely to believe that

the government is responsive to citizens' expressions of political views and to feel confident or efficacious about their ability to make their opinions heard?

15. What are young people of 14 or 15 expected or likely to know and believe about dissent or protest as a way of changing government policy?

Are they expected to learn that conflict between groups about issues is normal, exceptional, or deviant? Are students allowed to express dissent openly in the classroom? More broadly, what kinds of dissent or criticism of the government are to be encouraged and what kinds are to go ignored or suppressed? For example, what is taught about participation in political protests of different types?

16. What are young people of 14 or 15 expected or likely to believe about the mass media as sources of information about politics and government?

Is more emphasis put on the media as reliable and to be trusted, or are the media more likely to be thought of as biased or unreliable? To which media sources are students encouraged to pay attention, and to which are they likely to attend? What are young people expected or likely to learn about freedom of expression and the conditions (if any) under which it can be restricted, and who can invoke such censorship?

17. What are young people of 14 or 15 expected or likely to know and believe about the source and nature of specific local problems, especially those existing in their own communities?

Is there special concern about environmental problems, problems relating to poverty, or problems of violence and disregard for laws (for example)? Does the school provide for or encourage the involvement of students in community action or service to ameliorate such problems in their local community? Are young people likely to be optimistic or pessimistic about their ability to contribute to solving these problems? Are they encouraged to think about these problems in a broader context (e.g., the global nature of environmental problems or the national economic structure as it relates to poverty), or is that level of analysis ignored or discouraged?

18. What are young people of 14 or 15 expected or likely to have learned about the role and influence of extragovernmental groups in governmental and political processes?

For example, what is to be learned about the role of organized interest groups? To what extent are young people expected or likely to believe that elites in the nation (e.g., people of great wealth or high levels of education) possess or deserve special influence or power? Are business organizations, professional organizations, or trade unions thought to possess or deserve special influence or power? What other nongovernmental organizations are young people likely to believe to be important or powerful? Are there social groups that are widely recognized as lacking in power or as disenfranchised?

APPENDIX B

THE CIVED STUDENT INSTRUMENT

To ensure that the student instrument conformed as closely as possible to the framework specifications, the development of items was guided by the IEA International Steering Committee (ISC), a committee of civic education teachers, teacher educators, and leading scholars in the field.

Because no pools of available items existed that seemed to yield the number or kind of items needed, items were developed by working across the framework matrix (figure 1.1). Beginning in 1996, cognitive items were developed (Types 1 and 2), followed by concepts items (Type 3), attitudes and actions (Types 4 and 5), and classroom climate and student background variables. All members of the ISC along with the National Research Coordinators (NRC) from about half the participating countries were involved either in writing items or in reviewing them in small groups. All items were reviewed for relevance, developmental appropriateness, and fairness.

Approximately 140 Type 1 and Type 2 items (content and skills) were developed. All items were suitable for administration in countries that are democracies or striving to become democracies. The Type 1/Domain 1 (Democracy) items cover the principles of democracy, democratic institutions (e.g., functions of elections), and citizenship, not the details of political arrangements in any one country. The Type 1/Domain 2 (National identity and international relations) and 3 (Social cohesion and diversity) items likewise deal with internationally relevant or generalized issues, not with particular country matters. Some of the items of Type 2 (skills items) ask students to distinguish between fact and opinion. Others are based on a short article from a mock newspaper, political leaflet, or political cartoon.

Eighty Type 1 and 2 items were prepiloted in 1997 across 20 countries, and their performance was analyzed. On the basis of their psychometric properties, 62 of them were retained and 6 new items were developed. These 68 items were sorted into two forms and, along with Type 3 through 5 items, were piloted in 25 countries between April and October 1998. From the 68 Type 1 and 2 items piloted, 38 were retained for the final assessment on the basis of their psychometric properties (i.e., difficulty, discrimination index, and differential item functioning). The final instrument includes a total of 38 cognitive items, 25 Type 1 content items, and 13 Type 2 skills items. The final test reliabilities for the 38-item scale and the two subscales are above .85 in all participating countries.

Overall, the test items are well spread across the content subdomain of Democracy and democratic institutions, and they include some items in the domains of National identity and international issues and Social cohesion and diversity. The item ratios (written to piloted to accepted) are similar to student assessments conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Pilot results for the survey items were examined in a way similar to assessment items, with the goal of eliminating poorly performing items. All of these items take the form of Likert scale items and are to be used as multiple indicators of latent constructs for scale construction. Item deletion at the pilot stage was based on the reliability of the scales constructed from these items, using a Cronbach's alpha level of below .70 as a criterion for deletion. The final instrument includes 52 Type 3

items, 70 Type 4 items, and 24 Type 5 items. Items assessing student background, school experience, and organizational membership were also included.

APPENDIX C

OVERVIEW OF CIVED METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This appendix provides information about the methods and procedures used in CivEd. A forthcoming CivEd Technical Report to be released by NCES will contain more extensive information about these procedures.

Sampling and data collection

The CivEd school sample was drawn for the United States in October 1998, following international requirements as given in the *IEA Civic Education Study School Sampling Manual.* The U.S. sample was a three-stage, stratified, clustered sample similar to the ones used for TIMSS, TIMSS-Repeat, and other national school samples. The first stage included defining geographic primary sampling units (PSUs), which are typically groups of contiguous counties, but sometimes a single county; classifying the PSUs into strata defined by region and community type; then selecting PSUs with probability proportional to size. In the second stage, both public and private schools were selected within each PSU that was selected at the first stage. The third stage involved randomly selecting intact classrooms within the selected schools. A small number of students selected for participation were excluded because of limited English proficiency or severe disability.

Because of the likelihood that some originally sampled schools would refuse to participate in CivEd, replacement schools for noncooperating sampled schools were identified, assigning the two schools immediately following the sampled school on the frame. The sorting by implicit stratification variables, and the subsequent ordering of the school sampling frame by size, ensured that any sampled school's replacements had similar characteristics. There were several constraints on the assignment of substitutes. A sampled school was not allowed to substitute for another, and a given school could not be assigned to substitute for more than one sampled school. Furthermore, substitutes were required to be in the same PSU as the sampled school. Finally, private schools had to be of the same school type, and public schools had to be in the same minority enrollment category. Under these rules, it was possible to identify at least one substitute for most sampled schools. CivEd participation rates were computed first using only the originally sampled schools. The final participation rate was computed using both originally sampled and replacement schools. The overall school and student participation rates for the United States are presented in table C.1 below.

Table C.1.— CivEd school, student, and overall participation rates (weighted) for the United States: 1999

	Participation rate before replacement	Participation rate after replacement	Total number that participated
School	65%	83%	124
Student	---	93%	2,811
Overall	61%	77%	---

SOURCE: Torney-Purta, J., Lehman, R., Oswald, H., and Schulz, W. (2001). *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries: Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen.* Amsterdam: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

Students with disabilities (SD) and limited English proficiency (LEP) students

No particular testing accommodations were provided to facilitate inclusion of students with disabilities and limited English proficiency (LEP) students in CivEd. As a result, decisions regarding exclusions were made by someone at the school who was knowledgeable about the students. The following guidelines were provided to the school coordinator to help determine which students should be excluded from CivEd:

1. **Student is functionally disabled.** These are students who are permanently physically disabled in such a way that they cannot perform in the testing situation. Functionally disabled students who can respond should be included in the testing. Any sampled student who is temporarily disabled such that she or he cannot participate in the assessment will be considered absent from the assessment.

2. **Student is educable mentally retarded.** These are students who are considered in the professional opinion of the school principal or other qualified staff members to be educable mentally retarded or who have been psychologically tested as such. These include students who are emotionally or mentally unable to follow even the general instructions of the test. Students should not be excluded solely because of a poor academic performance or normal disciplinary problems.

3. **Nonnative language speakers.** These are students who are actually unable to read or speak the language of the test and would be unable to overcome the language barrier in the test situation. Typically, a student who has received less than one year of instruction in the language of the test should be excluded; all others should be included.

Overall, 0.5 percent of sampled students were excluded from CivEd for reasons related to disabilities and limited English proficiency.

Item response theory (IRT) scaling

Item response theory (IRT) methods were used to estimate average scale scores in CivEd for the nation as a whole and for various subgroups of interest. IRT models the probability of answering a question correctly as a mathematical function of proficiency or skill. The main purpose of IRT analysis is to provide a common scale on which performance (or some other trait) can be compared across groups, such as those defined by sex, race/ethnicity, or place of birth.

IRT models assume that an examinee's performance on each item reflects characteristics of the item and characteristics of the examinee. Although an infinite variety of models is possible, those most commonly used characterize items by the level of proficiency that they require and the precision with which item performance reflects proficiency along that trait. Examinees are characterized by their proficiency. An examinee's performance on a particular item reflects item difficulty, his or her proficiency, and the effects of other forces that are not correlated across items or individuals.

All models assume that all items on a scale measure a common ability or proficiency (e.g., civic knowledge) and that the probability of a correct response on an item is uncorrelated with the probability of a correct response on another item, an assumption known as conditional independence. Items are measured in terms of their difficulty as well as their ability to discriminate among examinees of varying ability and the probability that examinees with low ability will obtain a correct response through guessing.

CivEd used two types of IRT models to estimate scale scores: the one-parameter Rasch model for the three civic achievement scales, and the Generalized Partial Credit model (GPC) for the attitudinal scales. The one-parameter Rasch model specifies the probability of a correct response as a logistic distribution in which items vary only in terms of their difficulty. This model is used on items that are scored correct or incorrect. The GPC model was developed for situations where item responses are contained in two or more ordered categories (such as "agree" and "strongly agree"). Items are conceptualized as a series of ordered steps where examinees receive partial credit for successfully completing a step (i.e., for answering "strongly agree" rather than "agree"). The GPC is formulated based on the assumption that each probability of choosing the kth category over the $(k-1)^{th}$ category is governed by the dichotomous (i.e., Rasch) response model.

Weighting and variance estimation

A complex sample design was used to select the students who were assessed. The properties of a sample selected through a complex design could be very different from those of a simple random sample, in which every student in the target population has an equal chance of selection and in which the observations from different sampled students can be considered to be statistically independent of one another. Therefore, the properties of the sample for the complex data collection design were taken into account during the analysis of the CivEd data. Standard errors calculated as though the data had been collected from a simple random sample would generally underestimate sampling errors.

One way that the properties of the sample design were addressed was by using sampling weights to account for the fact that the probabilities of selection were not identical for all students. All population and subpopulation characteristics based on the CivEd data used sampling weights in their estimation.

The statistics presented in this report are estimates of group and subgroup performance based on a sample of students, rather than the values that could be calculated if every student in the nation answered every question on the instrument. It is therefore important to have measures of the degree of uncertainty of the estimates. Accordingly, in addition to providing estimates of percentages of students and their average scale score, this report provides information about the uncertainty of each statistic.

Because CivEd uses complex sampling procedures, conventional formulas for estimating sampling variablity that assume simple random sampling are inappropriate. For this reason, CivEd uses a Taylor series procedure to estimate standard errors. The Taylor series linearization method provides a reasonable measure of uncertainty for any information about students or schools. Results

using Taylor series are consistent with those using a jackknife replication procedure, with an advantage of the Taylor series procedures being that it is computationally more efficient.

Interpreting results from survey samples

Confidence intervals around means and percentages

Results from CivEd are based on a random sample of students. Because data on the entire population were not collected, the resulting estimates may differ somewhat from estimates that would have been obtained from the whole population using the same instruments, instructions, and procedures.

The CivEd sample was selected from a large number of possible samples of the same size that could have been selected using the same sample design. Estimates derived from the different samples would differ from one another. The difference between a sample estimate and the average of all possible samples is called the sampling deviation. The standard (or sampling) error of a survey estimate is a measure of the variation among the estimates from all possible samples and, thus, is a measure of the precision with which an estimate from a particular sample approximates the average result of all possible samples.

The estimated standard errors from two sample statistics can be used to estimate the precision of the difference between the two statistics and to avoid concluding that there is an actual difference when the difference in sample estimates may be due only to sampling error. The need to be aware of the precision of differences arises, for example, when comparing mean achievement scores between subgroups in CivEd, such as between racial/ethnic groups. The standard error, S_{A-B}, of the difference between sample estimate A and sample estimate B (when A and B do not overlap) is

$$S_{A-B} = \sqrt{S_A^2 + S_B^2}$$

where S_A and S_B are the standard error of sample estimates A and B, respectively. When the ratio (called a *t*-statistic) of the difference between the two sample statistics and the standard error of the difference as calculated above is less than 2, we cannot be sure that the difference is not due only to sampling error, and we should be cautious in concluding that there is a difference. In this report, for example, if the *t*-statistic is less than 1.96, we would not conclude that there is a difference.

To illustrate this further, consider the data on civic achievement by race/ethnicity from table 4.1 and the associated standard error table D.4.1. The estimated average civic achievement score on the total civic knowledge scale is 111.6 for whites and 92.7 for blacks. Is there enough evidence to safely conclude that this difference is not due only to sampling error and that the actual average civic achievement of black ninth-grade U.S. students is lower than that of their white counterparts? The standard errors for these two estimates are 1.24 and 1.73, respectively. Using the formula above, we calculate the standard error of the difference as 2.1. The ratio of the estimated difference of 18.9 to the standard error of the difference of 2.1 is 9. Using the table below, we can see that there is

less than a 5 percent chance that the 18.9 point difference is due only to sampling error. Therefore, we may safely conclude that the average civic achievement of blacks on the total civic knowledge scale is lower than that of whites.

Percent chance that a difference is due only to sampling error:

t-statistic	1.00	1.64	1.96	2.00	2.57
Percent chance (two-tailed)	32	10	5	4.5	1

The procedure above applies only if we are comparing one group of students to a second group (e.g., whites to blacks). However, most readers draw conclusions after making multiple comparisons within a table (e.g., whites to Hispanics, whites to Asians, blacks to Hispanics, etc.). In these circumstances, the chance that one of the many differences examined is a result only of sampling error increases as the number of comparisons also increases. The Bonferroni procedure can be used to ensure that the likelihood of any of the comparisons being a result only of sampling error stays less than 5 percent. The Bonferroni procedure reduces this risk for each comparison being made. If N comparisons are being made, then dividing 5 percent by N ensures that the risk of a difference being due only to sampling error is less than 5/N for each comparison. The table below provides critical values for the *t*-statistic for each comparison when it is a part of N comparisons.

Number of comparisons	1	2	3	4	5	10	20	40
Critical value (two-tailed)	1.96	2.24	2.39	2.50	2.58	2.81	3.02	3.23

For example, a reader might use table 4.1 to compare whites to blacks, Hispanics, and Asians, thus making three comparisons. After making three comparisons, the reader may want to draw the conclusion that blacks scored below whites on the total civic achievement scale. However, because the reader is now making three comparisons and not just one, the critical value of the *t*-statistic is 2.39 and not 1.96. Since 9 is still higher than 2.39, the conclusion is safe to make.

Effective degrees of freedom for the *t*-statistic

Because of the clustered nature of the CivEd sample, the effective degrees of freedom for *t*-tests when performing tests of significance is considerably less than the number of students entering into the comparison, and less than the number of primary sampling unit (PSU) pairs that go into the computation. The number of degrees of freedom for the variance equals the number of independent pieces of information used to generate the variance. In the case of data from CivEd, a good approximation of the pieces of information are the 40 jackknife replicate zones within which the variance components are estimated. (See the forthcoming CivEd Technical Report for more details). However, not all 40 replicate zones necessarily provide information when computing the variance. For example, if the replicates were formed by geographic area, and Asians are found in ten of these areas, then we would have at most only 9 degrees of freedom when computing estimates for this subpopulation.

To address this issue we examined the number of distinct replicate estimates for some of the smallest subpopulations reported (e.g., blacks, Asians, multiracial). This number ranged between 25 and 30. Because keeping track of the number of distinct replicate estimates for each subgroup for all reported results would involve too heavy a computational burden to be implemented in practice, it was decided to use 26 as the effective degrees of freedom for the *t*-statistic throughout the report. This decision will tend to produce slightly conservative estimates, which has been considered advisable, for situations in which more than 26 distinct replicate estimates enter into the variance computation.

Treatment of missing data

The analyses presented in this report are based on data that have not been imputed for missing responses. This was done so that the estimates would be consistent with those presented in the IEA International Release Report. In effect, this procedure is equivalent to substituting the sample mean for missing cases. As a result of this non-imputation, percentage distributions of various subgroups may differ across tables. Below, we provide the list of variables used in this report for which 5 percent or more of responses were missing.

Table C.2.—CivEd report variables with 5 percent or more missing data

Item	Label	Percent missing
BS3B10	Adult shows respect for government	5.00
BS4D4	Trust in the police	5.02
BSGAS14	Participated in a sports organization	5.11
BSGADU2	Father/stepfather/guardian lives at home all the time	5.17
BS3B13	Activities to protect the environment	5.80
BS4E9	Country should be proud about what it has achieved	5.90
BSGAS01	Participated in a student council	5.91
BSGAS13	Participated in an art, music, drama organization	6.00
BS3C3	Provide basic health care for everyone	6.07
BS3B8	Follows the political issues in the newspaper	6.09
BS4G1	Women should run for public office	6.55
BS3C8	Provide free basic education for all	6.61
BS4G4	Women should have the same rights as men	6.67
BS3C4	Adequate standard of living for old people	6.71
BSGAS10	Participated in Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts	6.74
BSGAS15	Participated in an organization sponsored by a religious group	6.80
BS3C9	Ensure equal political opportunities for men and women	6.80
BS3B11	Takes part in activities promoting human rights	6.91
BS3C11	Guarantee peace and order within the country	7.01
BS3C2	Keep prices under control	7.02
BS4H2	Children should have the same opportunity for education	7.17
BSGAS08	Participated in a group conducting voluntary activities	7.21
BSGAS09	Participated in a charity collecting money	7.34
BSGAS03	Participated in a group to prepare school newspaper	7.40
BSGAS04	Participated in an environmental organization	7.48
BS3C10	Control pollution of the environment	7.54
BS4E3	The flag of this country is important	7.74

Table C.2.—continued

Item	Label	Percent missing
BS4D3	Trust in the courts	7.86
BSGAS02	Participated in a youth organization	7.87
BSGAS12	Participated in a computer club	8.05
BSGAS05	Participated in a U.N. or UNESCO club	8.08
BSGAS07	Participated in a human rights organization	8.10
BSGAS06	Participated in a student exchange	8.14
BS3C1	Guarantee a job for everyone	8.34
BSGAS11	Participated in a cultural association	8.37
BS3B3	Adult joins a political party	8.39
BS4G11	Men and women should get equal pay	8.52
BS4G6	Women should stay out of politics	8.89
BS3C12	Promote honesty and morality	9.12
BS3C6	Adequate standard of living for the unemployed	9.42
BS4H1	Have opportunity to keep their own language	9.53
BS3B12	Engages in political discussions	9.85
BS3C5	Industries with support need to grow	10.46
BS4H4	Keep their own customs and lifestyle	10.64
BS4H5	Have the same rights that everyone else does	10.66
BS4E7	I have great love for this country	10.70
BS4J2	Positive changes happen when students work together	10.80
BS4G13	Men are better qualified to be political leaders	10.83
BS4D2	Trust in local council or government of your town	11.15
BS4J1	How the school is run makes school better	11.35
BS4E4	Be alert and stop threats from other countries	11.38
BS4G9	Jobs are scarce when men have more rights	11.40
BS5M1	Vote in national elections	11.46
BS4N3	Teachers respect our opinion	11.48
BS4N2	Encouraged to make up their own minds	11.68
BS4J3	Student group helps solve problems in school	11.93
BS4J5	Students acting together can have influence	12.67
BS4N1	Feel free to disagree openly with teachers	12.89
BS4H3	Have the opportunity to vote	12.90
BS4D1	Trust in the national government	12.95
BS4D8	Trust in political parties	13.14
BSNATP6	How much time spent on homework	13.38
BS4N5	Feel free to express opinions in class	13.51
BS3C7	Reduce differences in income and wealth	13.56
BSNATP7	How many pages do you read in school	13.63
BS4D11	Trust in Congress	13.79
BS4E1	Help to protect jobs in this country	13.84
BSNATP8	How many days absent from school	13.85
BSNATP9	How many times you changed schools	13.87
BSNATP10	How often you discuss things you studied	13.93
BSNATP11	How often you use a computer at home	13.98
BS4N8	Teachers present several sides of an issue	14.69
BS4E2	Keep other countries from trying to influence the U.S.	14.70
BS4E12	Should stop outsiders from influencing the U.S.	14.98
BS5M4	Letters about social/political concerns	15.51
BS4N7	Discuss political/social issues	15.77

Table C.2.—continued

Item	Label	Percent missing
BS5M3	Join a political party	17.04
BSGEDUM	Highest level of mother's education	17.24
BS5M5	Be a candidate for a local/city office	17.52
BSGEDUF	Highest level of father's education	18.21

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

APPENDIX D

STANDARD ERRORS FOR TABLES

Table D.3.1.—Standard errors for percentage of U.S. schools with policies related to civic education in ninth grade, by policy: 1999

	Percentage
Require civic-related subject	7.09
Participate in program(s) related to civic education	7.12

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.3.2.—Standard errors for percentage of U.S. schools with a ninth grade participating in various civic education programs, by program: 1999

	Percentage
Service clubs	9.58
Conflict-resolution or peer-mediation program	9.72
Girls/Boys State, Junior Statesmen	9.32
Character or values education program	8.93
Stock market game	9.26
Mock trial competitions	7.00
Project Citizen or other service learning or community service program	9.33
Close Up, *Presidential Classroom*, or other program that takes students to Washington, D.C.	8.77
Program in which students work in state legislature	7.78
History Day	7.40
Debate team or program	3.94
Kids Voting USA or other mock election program	5.80
Junior Achievement	3.11
Model United Nations	1.84
We the People competition	0.62
Other civic education programs or service organizations	7.75

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.3.3.—Standard errors for U.S. principals' reports on the number of class periods per week that ninth-grade students are required to take in various civic-related subjects*: 1999

	Percentage
Less than one period	6.67
One to two periods	2.16
Three to four periods	6.98
Five to six periods	9.51

* Civic-related subjects include social studies, civics, citizenship, history, law, and economics.
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.3.4.—Standard errors for percentage of U.S. principals who agree or strongly agree with various statements about how civic education should be taught: 1999

	Percentage
Integrated into subjects related to human and social sciences	2.77
Integrated into all subjects taught at school	5.87
Taught as a specific subject	9.98
Extracurricular activity	7.07

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.3.5.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' reports on school activities related to civic education: 1999

	Percentage
Time spent studying social studies in school	
Never or hardly ever	1.62
Once or twice a month	0.75
Once or twice a week	1.44
Almost every day	2.44
Time spent weekly on social studies homework	
Not assigned	1.94
Does not do it	0.98
Less than 1 hour	1.41
1 to 2 hours	1.49
3 to 4 hours	0.78
5 hours or more	0.63
Time spent writing long social studies answers	
Never	0.79
Once or twice a year	0.86
Once or twice a month	1.33
At least once a week	1.71

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.3.6.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by school-level characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Total	—	1.54	1.56	0.95
Civic-related subject required				
Yes	5.21	1.48	1.40	1.31
No	5.21	1.90	1.82	1.57
School participation in programs related to civic education				
Yes	2.59	1.52	1.41	1.30
No	2.59	3.20	3.08	2.67
School type				
Public	2.11	1.45	1.39	1.17
Private	2.11	3.65	2.62	5.16
School size				
500 or fewer	4.10	2.44	2.38	1.87
501–1,000	5.06	2.38	2.28	2.29
1,001–1,500	4.84	2.75	2.46	2.68
1,501–2,000	5.71	2.62	2.36	2.21
More than 2,000	5.57	3.75	3.62	2.89
Percent of students eligible for free lunch				
1st quartile (0–13)	6.33	2.16	2.02	1.89
2nd quartile (14–25)	5.88	2.62	2.39	2.28
3rd quartile (26–48)	3.54	2.06	1.90	2.04
4th quartile (49–100)	4.16	2.76	2.58	2.50
Class size				
20 or fewer	4.98	1.87	1.66	1.96
21 to 25	5.93	2.41	2.27	2.04
26 to 29	5.13	1.76	1.60	1.53
More than 29	4.01	4.30	3.95	3.95

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.3.7.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by instructional practices: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Time spent studying social studies in school				
Never or hardly ever	1.62	1.48	1.50	1.59
Once or twice a month	0.74	2.64	2.52	2.43
Once or twice a week	1.45	1.82	1.69	1.98
Almost every day	2.44	1.33	1.23	1.14
Time spent each week on social studies homework				
Not assigned	1.95	1.87	1.74	1.89
Does not do it	0.98	2.13	2.06	2.31
Less than 1 hour	1.41	1.38	1.36	1.14
1 to 2 hours	1.49	1.73	1.55	1.62
3 to 4 hours	0.78	2.26	2.02	1.80
5 hours or more	0.64	2.32	2.14	2.07
Time spent writing long answers to social studies questions				
Never	0.80	1.90	1.83	1.88
Once or twice a year	0.85	1.76	1.78	1.40
Once or twice a month	1.34	1.42	1.33	1.22
At least once a week	1.71	1.09	1.02	1.10
Time spent each day on homework				
Not assigned	1.00	1.94	1.95	1.80
Does not do it	0.78	2.62	2.48	2.67
1/2 hour or less	1.30	1.65	1.52	1.69
1 hour	1.36	1.56	1.54	1.15
More than 1 hour	2.80	1.27	1.16	1.23

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.3.8.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the open classroom climate for discussion scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.09
Sex		
Male	1.57	0.10
Female	1.57	0.09
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.54	0.10
Black	1.98	0.13
Hispanic	1.79	0.14
Asian	0.89	0.16
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.51	0.40
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.95	0.09
Foreign-born	0.95	0.17
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.84	0.23
11–50	1.28	0.11
51–100	0.79	0.11
101–200	1.07	0.16
More than 200	1.46	0.12

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.1.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by background demographics: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Sex				
Male	1.50	1.30	1.22	1.16
Female	1.50	1.24	1.21	1.07
Race/ethnicity				
White	2.61	1.24	1.18	1.04
Black	1.98	1.73	1.54	2.04
Hispanic	1.89	1.58	1.42	1.60
Asian	0.85	3.77	3.46	3.24
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***	***	***
Multiracial	0.58	3.23	3.25	2.27
Country of birth				
U.S.-born	0.95	1.14	1.10	0.95
Foreign-born	0.95	1.73	1.53	1.84
Region				
Northeast	3.38	2.87	2.69	2.50
Southeast	2.99	2.62	2.53	2.31
Central	4.35	1.65	1.54	1.48
West	4.16	1.86	1.63	1.80
Frequency of changing schools in the past 2 years as a result of moving				
Never	1.21	1.15	1.09	1.06
Once	0.71	1.97	1.75	1.95
Twice or more	0.83	2.31	2.17	1.94

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.2.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by sex and race/ethnicity: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Male				
White	1.47	1.62	1.51	1.39
Black	0.93	1.97	1.81	2.19
Hispanic	1.06	1.85	1.67	1.90
Asian	***	***	***	***
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***	***	***
Multiracial	***	***	***	***
Female				
White	1.93	1.16	1.16	1.01
Black	1.18	1.89	1.67	2.41
Hispanic	0.99	1.70	1.55	1.76
Asian	***	***	***	***
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***	***	***
Multiracial	***	***	***	***

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.3.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by home literacy: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Number of books in the home				
0–10	0.88	1.25	1.12	1.37
11–50	1.17	0.93	0.87	1.05
51–100	0.77	1.33	1.21	1.41
101–200	1.04	1.53	1.49	1.23
More than 200	1.43	1.71	1.56	1.36
Receives a daily newspaper				
Yes	1.63	1.30	1.24	1.05
No	1.63	1.18	1.13	1.11
Parents' highest level of education				
Elementary or less	0.71	2.17	1.89	2.74
Some high school	0.79	1.78	1.69	2.06
Finished high school	1.53	1.22	1.21	1.25
Some vocational/technical education	0.73	2.40	2.24	2.35
Some college	1.31	1.32	1.23	1.25
Completed a bachelor's degree	2.24	1.71	1.71	1.12

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.4.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by expected years of further education and school absenteeism: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Expected years of further education				
0–2	0.49	2.36	2.03	2.89
3–4	1.03	1.03	0.94	1.22
5–6	1.12	1.29	1.23	1.30
7–8	1.27	1.09	1.05	0.99
9–10	0.92	1.50	1.59	1.03
More than 11	0.59	2.37	2.18	1.85
Number of days absent from school last month				
0	1.49	1.39	1.34	1.11
1–2	1.00	1.36	1.23	1.31
3–4	0.79	2.00	1.87	1.87
5–9	0.50	2.34	2.18	2.32
More than 10	0.54	3.38	2.87	4.30

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.5.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by family and home environment characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Number of parents in the home				
Two parents	1.27	1.16	1.12	0.96
One parent	1.18	1.43	1.33	1.39
No parents	0.32	2.77	2.31	3.76
Number of people in the home				
1 or 2	0.39	2.23	2.19	2.10
3	0.65	1.65	1.61	1.33
4	1.22	1.63	1.54	1.39
5	0.93	1.28	1.28	1.14
6	0.71	1.72	1.59	1.54
More than 6	0.69	1.44	1.22	1.71
Frequency of English spoken in the home				
Never	***	***	***	***
Sometimes	0.82	2.01	1.89	2.21
Always or almost always	0.88	1.18	1.12	0.99

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.6.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by frequency of participation in organized extracurricular activities: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Never or almost never	0.74	1.62	1.56	1.45
A few times each month	1.02	1.74	1.58	1.48
Several days a week	0.97	1.31	1.25	1.16
Almost every day	1.20	1.31	1.26	1.19

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.7.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students who reported ever participating in various organized extracurricular activities, by organization: 1999

	Percentage
Student council or student government	1.50
Youth organization affiliated with a political party or union	0.86
School newspaper	0.97
Environmental organization	1.16
United Nations or UNESCO Club	0.29
Student exchange or school partnership program	0.79
Human rights organization	0.62
Group conducting voluntary activities to help the community	1.36
Charity collecting money for a social cause	1.47
Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts	1.30
Cultural organization based on ethnicity	0.83
Computer club	1.10
Art, music, or drama organization	1.43
Sports organization or team	1.13
Organization sponsored by a religious group	1.55

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.8.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by whether they reported participating in various organizations: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Student council or government				
Yes	1.50	1.40	1.33	1.31
No	1.50	1.20	1.12	1.08
School newspaper				
Yes	0.97	1.58	1.50	1.40
No	0.97	1.25	1.19	1.09
Environmental organization				
Yes	1.16	1.24	1.22	1.09
No	1.16	1.25	1.17	1.09
Group conducting voluntary activities to help the community				
Yes	1.36	1.35	1.29	1.07
No	1.36	1.14	1.07	1.08
Charity collecting money for a social cause				
Yes	1.47	1.22	1.21	1.05
No	1.47	1.32	1.21	1.15
Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts				
Yes	1.30	1.17	1.13	0.98
No	1.30	1.31	1.22	1.18
Art, music, or drama organization				
Yes	1.43	1.27	1.24	1.03
No	1.43	1.22	1.11	1.17
Sports organization or team				
Yes	1.13	1.12	1.07	0.95
No	1.13	1.90	1.79	1.65
Organization sponsored by a religious group				
Yes	1.55	1.27	1.26	0.95
No	1.55	1.24	1.13	1.15

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.9.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by frequency of time spent in various out-of-school activities: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Time spent after school talking or "hanging out" with friends				
Never or almost never	0.72	1.99	1.75	2.23
A few times each month	0.87	1.71	1.65	1.50
Several days a week	1.01	1.52	1.47	1.25
Almost every day	1.52	1.21	1.15	1.12
Time spent outside the home with friends in the evening				
Never or almost never	0.81	1.79	1.68	1.50
A few times each month	1.33	1.75	1.63	1.43
Several days a week	1.37	1.36	1.33	1.00
Almost every day	1.63	1.15	1.04	1.34
Time spent watching television or videos on school days				
No time	0.38	2.73	2.48	2.68
Less than 1 hour	1.41	1.77	1.66	1.49
1–2 hours	1.29	1.11	1.10	0.99
3–5 hours	1.23	1.26	1.21	1.06
More than 5 hours	1.04	1.35	1.16	1.54

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.4.10.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average civic achievement scores, by nonschool activities related to academics: 1999

	Percentage	Total civic knowledge	Civic content	Civic skills
Frequency of computer use at home for schoolwork				
No computer in the home	1.19	1.46	1.33	1.71
Never or hardly ever	1.23	1.31	1.18	1.55
Once or twice a month	1.09	1.48	1.28	1.53
Once or twice a week	1.37	1.44	1.47	1.00
Almost every day	1.62	1.67	1.55	1.48
Time spent on homework each day				
Not assigned	1.00	1.94	1.95	1.80
Does not do homework	0.78	2.62	2.48	2.67
1/2 hour or less	1.30	1.65	1.52	1.69
1 hour	1.36	1.56	1.54	1.15
More than 1 hour	2.80	1.27	1.16	1.23
Frequency of discussing things studied in school with someone at home				
Never or hardly ever	1.07	1.53	1.49	1.50
Once or twice a month	0.90	1.46	1.38	1.46
Once or twice a week	1.16	1.36	1.32	1.12
Almost every day	1.19	1.39	1.25	1.41

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.5.1.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the importance of conventional citizenship scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.06
Sex		
Male	1.49	0.09
Female	1.49	0.08
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.68	0.09
Black	2.02	0.13
Hispanic	1.82	0.12
Asian	0.85	0.21
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.58	0.24
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.94	0.06
Foreign-born	0.94	0.20
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.88	0.27
11–50	1.17	0.12
51–100	0.76	0.08
101–200	1.04	0.13
More than 200	1.43	0.14

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.5.2.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the importance of social movement-related citizenship scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.06
Sex		
Male	1.47	0.08
Female	1.47	0.07
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.68	0.07
Black	2.03	0.13
Hispanic	1.83	0.14
Asian	0.86	0.26
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.59	0.21
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.97	0.06
Foreign-born	0.97	0.15
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.89	0.18
11–50	1.18	0.12
51–100	0.76	0.11
101–200	1.06	0.11
More than 200	1.44	0.12

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.5.3.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the economy-related government responsibilities scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.04
Sex		
Male	1.48	0.06
Female	1.48	0.05
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.70	0.05
Black	2.02	0.10
Hispanic	1.85	0.13
Asian	0.85	0.21
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.58	0.21
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.95	0.05
Foreign-born	0.95	0.15
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.86	0.16
11–50	1.19	0.09
51–100	0.78	0.09
101–200	1.06	0.08
More than 200	1.42	0.07

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.5.4.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the society-related government responsibilities scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.05
Sex		
Male	1.47	0.07
Female	1.47	0.07
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.69	0.06
Black	2.02	0.09
Hispanic	1.84	0.11
Asian	0.85	0.18
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.59	0.22
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.94	0.05
Foreign-born	0.94	0.15
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.87	0.18
11–50	1.20	0.08
51–100	0.78	0.08
101–200	1.06	0.13
More than 200	1.44	0.09

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.6.1.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the trust in government-related institutions scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.07
Sex		
Male	1.47	0.09
Female	1.47	0.07
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.68	0.07
Black	2.02	0.11
Hispanic	1.81	0.19
Asian	0.85	0.15
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.59	0.25
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.91	0.06
Foreign-born	0.91	0.17
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.86	0.20
11–50	1.19	0.09
51–100	0.78	0.08
101–200	1.03	0.09
More than 200	1.44	0.11

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.6.2.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the positive attitudes toward one's country scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.06
Sex		
Male	1.50	0.09
Female	1.50	0.06
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.68	0.06
Black	2.00	0.14
Hispanic	1.85	0.19
Asian	0.86	0.24
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.58	0.27
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.92	0.06
Foreign-born	0.92	0.17
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.85	0.19
11–50	1.20	0.10
51–100	0.79	0.10
101–200	1.03	0.09
More than 200	1.44	0.11

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.6.3.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the support for women's political rights scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.09
Sex		
Male	1.48	0.11
Female	1.48	0.07
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.65	0.11
Black	2.01	0.15
Hispanic	1.82	0.15
Asian	0.86	0.24
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.59	0.21
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.91	0.09
Foreign-born	0.91	0.15
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.84	0.14
11–50	1.19	0.11
51–100	0.78	0.11
101–200	1.04	0.14
More than 200	1.44	0.11

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.6.4.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the positive attitudes toward immigrants' rights scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.06
Sex		
Male	1.48	0.11
Female	1.48	0.06
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.63	0.07
Black	2.01	0.15
Hispanic	1.89	0.17
Asian	0.88	0.29
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.57	0.26
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.89	0.06
Foreign-born	0.89	0.21
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.80	0.22
11–50	1.21	0.10
51–100	0.82	0.08
101–200	1.04	0.11
More than 200	1.46	0.12

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table D.7.1.—Standard errors for ninth-grade U.S. students' average score on the expected participation in political activities scale, by selected background characteristics: 1999

	Percentage	Average score
Total	—	0.05
Sex		
Male	1.61	0.07
Female	1.61	0.06
Race/ethnicity		
White	2.63	0.07
Black	2.01	0.10
Hispanic	1.80	0.10
Asian	0.93	0.14
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	***	***
American Indian/Alaska Native	***	***
Multiracial	0.53	0.20
Country of birth		
U.S.-born	0.97	0.05
Foreign-born	0.97	0.16
Number of books in the home		
0–10	0.88	0.20
11–50	1.27	0.08
51–100	0.82	0.07
101–200	1.10	0.09
More than 200	1.43	0.08

— Standard error not derived because it is based on a statistic estimated at 100 percent.

*** Sample size is insufficient to permit a reliable estimate.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

APPENDIX E

STANDARD ERRORS FOR FIGURES

Table E.2.2.—Standard errors for average total civic knowledge achievement of ninth-grade students, by nation: 1999

Nation	Average
Poland	1.7
Finland	0.7
Cyprus	0.5
Greece	0.8
Hong Kong (SAR)	1.1
United States	1.2
Italy	0.8
Slovak Republic	0.7
Norway	0.5
Czech Republic	0.8
Hungary	0.6
Australia	0.8
Slovenia	0.5
Denmark	0.5
Germany	0.5
Russian Federation	1.3
England	0.6
Sweden	0.8
Switzerland	0.8
Bulgaria	1.3
Portugal	0.7
Belgium (French)	0.9
Estonia	0.5
Lithuania	0.7
Romania	0.9
Latvia	0.9
Chile	0.7
Colombia	0.9

SOURCE: Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H., and Schulz, W., 2001. *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries: Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen.* Amsterdam: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

Table E.2.3.—Standard errors for average civic knowledge achievement of ninth-grade students, by subscale and nation: 1999

Civic content		Civic skills	
Nation	Average	Nation	Average
Poland	1.3	United States	1.0
Greece	0.7	Finland	0.6
Finland	0.7	Cyprus	0.5
Cyprus	0.5	Australia	0.8
Hong Kong (SAR)	1.0	Poland	1.7
Slovak Republic	0.7	Greece	0.7
Italy	0.8	Italy	0.7
Norway	0.5	England	0.7
Czech Republic	0.8	Hong Kong (SAR)	1.0
United States	1.1	Slovak Republic	0.7
Hungary	0.6	Norway	0.4
Slovenia	0.5	Czech Republic	0.8
Russian Federation	1.3	Sweden	0.7
Denmark	0.5	Switzerland	0.8
Australia	0.7	Hungary	0.7
Germany	0.5	Germany	0.5
Bulgaria	1.1	Denmark	0.5
Sweden	0.8	Slovenia	0.4
Portugal	0.7	Russian Federation	1.3
England	0.6	Belgium (French)	1.0
Switzerland	0.8	Bulgaria	1.3
Belgium (French)	0.9	Portugal	0.7
Estonia	0.5	Estonia	0.5
Lithuania	0.7	Lithuania	0.7
Romania	1.0	Latvia	0.8
Latvia	0.9	Romania	0.7
Chile	0.6	Chile	0.8
Colombia	0.8	Colombia	1.2

SOURCE: Torney-Purta, J., Lehmann, R., Oswald, H., and Schulz, W., 2001. *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries: Civic Knowledge and Engagement at Age Fourteen*. Amsterdam: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA).

Table E.3.1.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they studied various topics over the previous year: 1999

	Percentage
U.S. Constitution	1.70
How laws are made	1.67
Congress	1.86
Political parties, etc.	1.74
Court system	1.53
State and local government	1.85
President and the cabinet	1.80
Other countries' governments	1.88
International organizations	1.29

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.3.2.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree that they have learned various issues in school: 1999

	Percentage
To cooperate in groups of students	0.92
To understand people with different ideas	1.13
To protect the environment	1.16
To be concerned for events in other countries	1.04
To contribute to solving community problems	1.03
The importance of voting	1.41
To be a patriotic and loyal citizen	1.32

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.3.3.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting doing various activities when they study social studies: 1999

	Percentage
Read from textbook	1.13
Fill out worksheets	1.21
Watch television/videos	1.70
Write reports	1.66
Discuss current events	1.50
Memorize reading material	1.54
Discuss television/videos	1.58
Read extra material	1.61
Debate and discuss	2.02
Role play, mock trials, etc.	2.08
Receive visits from leaders	1.15
Write letters to give their opinion	1.19

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.3.4.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various statements apply sometimes or often to the climate in their classrooms: 1999

	Percentage
Students are encouraged to make up their own minds about issues	1.13
Teachers respect our opinions and encourage us to express them during class	1.36
Teachers present several sides of an issue when explaining it in class	1.14
Students feel free to express opinions in class even when their opinions are different from most of the other students	1.15
Students feel free to disagree openly with their teachers about political and social issues during class	1.33
Teachers encourage us to discuss political or social issues about which people have different opinions	1.56

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.1.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various citizen rights and freedoms are somewhat good or very good for democracy: 1999

	Percentage
Everyone has the right to express their opinions freely	0.71
Citizens have the right to elect political leaders freely	0.80
Many different organizations are available for people who wish to belong to them	1.14
Political parties have rules that support women to become political leaders	0.95
People peacefully protest against a law they believe to be unjust	1.29
Laws that women claim are unfair to them are changed	1.17

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.2.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various citizen rights and freedoms are somewhat good or very good for democracy, by sex: 1999

	Male	Female
Everyone has the right to express their opinions freely	1.03	0.86
Citizens have the right to elect political leaders freely	1.18	0.70
Many different organizations are available for people who wish to belong to them	1.24	1.42
Political parties have rules that support women to become political leaders	1.47	0.92
People peacefully protest against a law they believe to be unjust	1.47	1.49
Laws that women claim are unfair to them are changed	1.64	1.54

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.3.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various citizen rights and freedoms are somewhat good or very good for democracy, by country of birth: 1999

	U.S.-born	Foreign-born
Everyone has the right to express their opinions freely	0.69	2.84
Citizens have the right to elect political leaders freely	0.87	2.48
Many different organizations are available for people who wish to belong to them	1.13	2.96
Political parties have rules that support women to become political leaders	0.87	3.45
People peacefully protest against a law they believe to be unjust	1.29	3.05
Laws that women claim are unfair to them are changed	1.22	3.63

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.4.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various types of negative influence are somewhat bad or very bad for democracy: 1999

	Percentage
Wealthy business people have more influence on government than others	1.17
One company owns all the newspapers	0.98
All the television stations present the same opinion about politics	1.16
Political leaders in power give jobs in the government to members of their family	1.55
Courts and judges are influenced by politicians	1.32

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.5.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various types of negative influence are somewhat bad or very bad for democracy, by sex: 1999

	Male	Female
Wealthy business people have more influence on government than others	1.66	1.31
One company owns all the newspapers	1.42	1.35
Political leaders in power give jobs in the government to members of their family	1.56	2.08
All the television stations present the same opinion about politics	1.51	1.22
Courts and judges are influenced by politicians	1.27	1.96

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.6.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various types of negative influence are somewhat bad or very bad for democracy, by country of birth: 1999

	U.S.-born	Foreign-born
Wealthy business people have more influence on government than others	1.25	2.23
One company owns all the newspapers	1.09	2.46
Political leaders in power give jobs in the government to members of their family	1.60	2.95
All the television stations present the same opinion about politics	1.19	2.44
Courts and judges are influenced by politicians	1.37	4.12

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.7.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various civic behaviors are somewhat important or very important for good citizenship: 1999

	Percentage
To vote in every election	0.90
To show respect for government leaders	1.06
To know about the country's history	1.10
To follow political issues in the newspaper, on the radio, or on television	1.15
To engage in political discussion	1.05
To join a political party	1.42

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.8.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that participation in various social movement-related activities is somewhat important or very important for good citizenship: 1999

	Percentage
To participate in activities to help people in the community	0.83
To take part in activities promoting human rights	0.93
To take part in activities to protect the environment	0.81

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.9.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various economy-related actions probably or definitely should be the government's responsibility: 1999

	Percentage
Keeping prices under control	0.93
Providing industries with the support they need to grow	0.93
Guaranteeing a job for everyone who wants one	1.09
Reducing differences in income and wealth among people	1.02
Providing an adequate standard of living for the unemployed	1.23

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.5.10.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that various society-related actions probably or definitely should be the government's responsibility: 1999

	Percentage
Being sure there are equal political opportunities for men and women	0.71
Providing free basic education for all	0.66
Guaranteeing peace and order within the country	0.95
Providing basic health care for everyone	0.87
Providing an adequate standard of living for old people	0.85
Controlling pollution of the environment	0.70
Promoting honesty and moral behavior among people in the country	1.12

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.6.1.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they trust various institutions most of the time or always: 1999

	Percentage
The local council or government of your town or city	1.26
Courts	1.31
Congress	1.40
The police	1.75
The national government in Washington, D.C.	1.43
Political parties	1.40

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.6.2.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about the United States: 1999

	Percentage
The United States should be proud of what it has achieved	1.03
I have a great love for the United States	1.21
The flag of the United States is important to me	1.20

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.6.3.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about U.S. international relations: 1999

	Percentage
We should always be alert and stop threats from other countries to the United States' political independence	0.88
We should prevent other countries from trying to influence political decisions in the United States	0.96
To help protect jobs in the United States we should buy products made in the United States	1.42
We should stop outsiders from influencing the United States' traditions and culture	1.22

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.6.4.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about U.S. international relations, by sex: 1999

	Male	Female
We should always be alert and stop threats from other countries to the United States' political independence	1.15	1.05
We should prevent other countries from trying to influence political decisions in the United States	1.32	1.29
To help protect jobs in the United States we should buy products made in the United States	2.05	1.94
We should stop outsiders from influencing the United States' traditions and culture	1.92	1.65

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.6.5.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about U.S. international relations, by country of birth: 1999

	U.S.-born	Foreign-born
We should always be alert and stop threats from other countries to the United States' political independence	0.80	2.64
We should prevent other countries from trying to influence political decisions in the United States	0.94	3.42
To help protect jobs in the United States we should buy products made in the United States	1.55	3.65
We should stop outsiders from influencing the United States' traditions and culture	1.30	2.98

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.6.6.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about women's political rights: 1999

	Percentage
Women should run for public office and take part in the government just as men do	0.93
Women should have the same rights as men in every way	0.81
Men and women should get equal pay when they are in the same jobs	0.97
Men are better qualified to be political leaders than women	1.30
Women should stay out of politics	0.94

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.6.7.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they agree or strongly agree with various statements about immigrants' rights: 1999

	Percentage
Immigrants' children should have the same opportunities for education that other children in the country have	0.81
Immigrants should have all the same rights that everyone else in a country has	0.96
Immigrants should have the opportunity to keep their own customs and lifestyle	0.73
Immigrants who live in a country for several years should have the opportunity to vote in elections	0.98
Immigrants should have the opportunity to keep their own language	0.94

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.7.1.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often have discussions about national or international politics: 1999

	Percentage
About the U.S. government with teachers	1.66
About the U.S. government with parents or other adult family members	1.22
About international politics with teachers	1.69
About international politics with parents or other adult family members	1.17
About the U.S. government with people their own age	0.95
About international politics with people their own age	0.70

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.7.2.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often have discussions about national or international politics, by sex: 1999

	Male	Female
About the U.S. government with teachers	2.09	1.91
About the U.S. government with parents or other adult family members	1.74	1.35
About international politics with teachers	2.13	1.84
About international politics with parents or other adult family members	1.77	1.43
About the U.S. government with people their own age	1.66	1.26
About international politics with people their own age	0.95	0.95

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.7.3.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often have discussions about national or international politics, by country of birth: 1999

	U.S.-born	Foreign-born
About the U.S. government with teachers	1.67	3.52
About the U.S. government with parents or other adult family members	1.25	3.55
About international politics with teachers	1.68	4.50
About international politics with parents or other adult family members	1.22	4.73
About the U.S. government with people their own age	0.92	3.06
About international politics with people their own age	0.62	3.16

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.7.4.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often obtain news from the newspaper, television, or radio: 1999

	Percentage
Watch news broadcasts on television	1.07
Read articles in the newspaper about what is happening in this country	1.29
Read articles in the newspaper about what is happening in other countries	1.23
Listen to news broadcasts on the radio	1.59

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.7.5.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often obtain news from the newspaper, television, or radio, by sex: 1999

	Male	Female
Watch news broadcasts on television	1.23	1.45
Read articles in the newspaper about what is happening in this country	1.79	1.57
Read articles in the newspaper about what is happening in other countries	1.57	2.05
Listen to news broadcasts on the radio	1.68	1.88

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.7.6.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they sometimes or often obtain news from the newspaper, television, or radio, by country of birth: 1999

	U.S.-born	Foreign-born
Watch news broadcasts on television	1.20	1.83
Read articles in the newspaper about what is happening in this country	1.35	4.09
Read articles in the newspaper about what is happening in other countries	1.19	5.03
Listen to news broadcasts on the radio	1.66	3.24

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

Table E.7.7.—Standard errors for percentage of ninth-grade U.S. students reporting that they probably or certainly expect to participate in various political activities as adults: 1999

	Percentage
Join a political party	1.55
Write letters to a newspaper about social or political concerns	1.17
Be a candidate for a local or city office	1.02

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Civic Education Study (CivEd), 1999.

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