



# Citizenship Foundation Skills and Knowledge Clusters



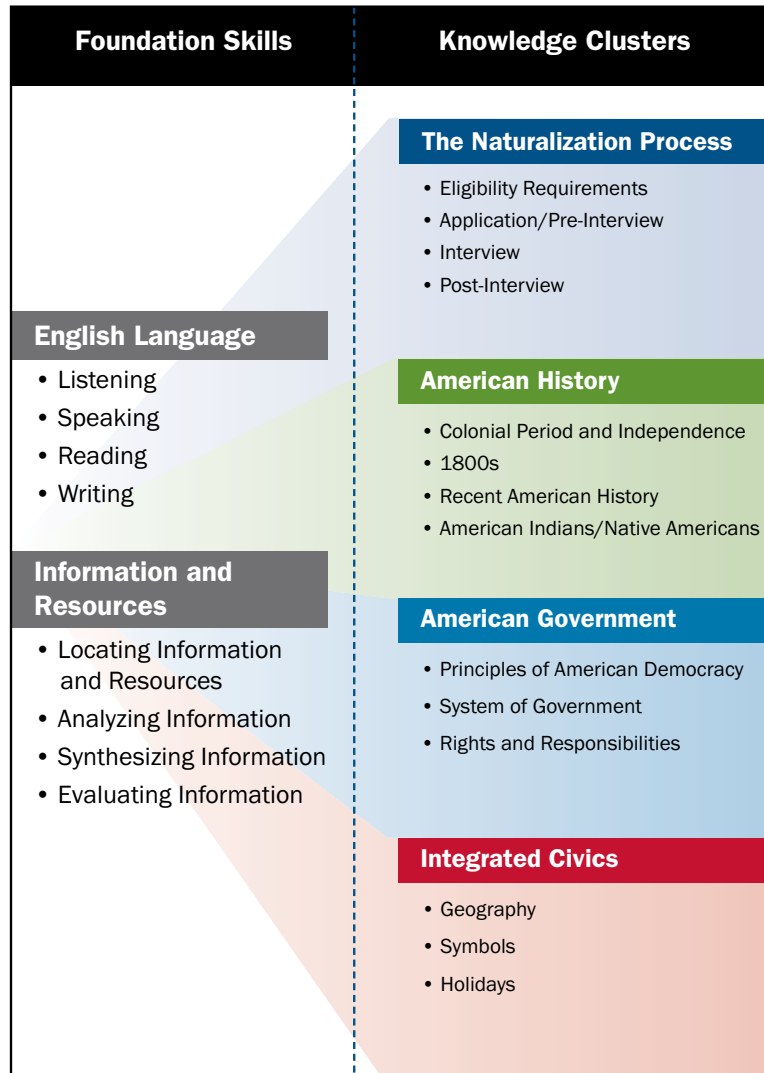
U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services



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## OVERVIEW CHART



## CITIZENSHIP FOUNDATION SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE CLUSTERS

Citizenship foundation skills and knowledge clusters help link what students learn on their own or in the adult education classroom with the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful during the naturalization interview and test.

Foundation skills are those overarching skills that facilitate the learning of other content areas. In this case, those skills are speaking, reading, and writing English along with locating and using information



needed for the naturalization test.

Citizenship knowledge clusters are the specific content areas that applicants need to increase their chances of success during the naturalization interview and test.

These knowledge clusters provide

teachers with a context for instruction and a framework for organizing citizenship curriculum.

The Office of Citizenship, within U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), provides these skills and clusters to serve as a general framework for adult education program administrators and teachers, as well as for organizations interested in starting their own citizenship programs. Visit



[www.uscis.gov/citizenship](http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship) to view other citizenship resources, including information about the naturalization process and test.

For adult education administrators and organizations starting new citizenship programs, the citizenship foundation skills and knowledge clusters may be used to develop or enhance a comprehensive citizenship program. For teachers, the citizenship foundation skills and knowledge clusters may be used to develop curricula, lesson plans, instructional approaches, and other classroom materials. They may also be used to help teachers identify training opportunities to ensure they possess the skills and knowledge necessary to be effective in the citizenship classroom.

## FOUNDATION SKILL 1

# Knowledge and Understanding of the English Language

English language is integral to all skills and knowledge needed for the naturalization interview. Building the necessary vocabulary is a good place to begin regardless of a student's language level. The vocabulary required for the listening and speaking test includes basic conversation words, general commands, and language found on the *Application for Naturalization, Form N-400*.



The English language foundation skill focuses on four areas:

### ENGLISH LANGUAGE

- Listening
- Speaking
- Reading
- Writing

### USCIS RESOURCES FOR FOUNDATION SKILL 1: A, B, C, D, E, H & N

Please see pages 8 and 9 for a list of these resources

### LISTENING:

1. Understand and act on basic commands
2. Understand and respond to clarification commands
3. Understand questions about everyday life and events
4. Understand oral questions asked on the *Application for Naturalization, Form N-400*, and other relevant USCIS forms
5. Understand oral questions asked about supporting documentation
6. Understand oral questions from the civics test

### SPEAKING:

1. Engage in basic conversations in English
2. Construct clarifying questions
3. Answer questions about everyday life and events using short responses
4. Make statements about personal information
5. Provide complete answers and statements to the *Application for Naturalization, Form N-400* questions
6. Respond to requests for clarification
7. Provide complete answers to civics questions
8. Use simple strategies to check for understanding

### READING:

1. Read and understand all relevant USCIS forms including the *Application for Naturalization, Form N-400*
2. Read civics items and answers
3. Read vocabulary and sentences on the reading test
4. Read directional and security signs at USCIS offices

### WRITING:

1. Write to complete all relevant USCIS forms
2. Write dictated sentences on the writing test
3. Sign and print name. (Print and keep a copy of completed USCIS forms)

## FOUNDATION SKILL 2

### Information and Resources

In order to complete the naturalization process successfully, applicants must be able to locate information and resources to determine their eligibility for naturalization, find the appropriate application forms, prepare for the naturalization interview and test, and travel to USCIS offices. Teachers need to ensure that their students understand the naturalization process and the significance of U.S. citizenship. This foundation skill includes:



#### INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- Locating Information and Resources
- Analyzing Information
- Synthesizing Information
- Evaluating Information

#### USCIS RESOURCES FOR FOUNDATION SKILL 2:

A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, M & N

Please see pages 8 and 9 for a list of these resources

#### LOCATING INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

1. Using the USCIS website ([www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov))
2. Using other USCIS materials (forms, study materials, etc.)

#### ANALYZING INFORMATION:

1. Determining what information is needed
2. Collecting appropriate information
3. Turning information into useful knowledge

#### SYNTHESIZING INFORMATION:

1. Applying understanding and knowledge of past events to current situations
2. Identifying cause and effect relationships
3. Knowing how to problem solve

#### EVALUATING INFORMATION:

1. Determining the quality and reliability of information
2. Determining how much information is needed

**Note:** This skill helps prepare students for the naturalization interview; however, it is not required in order to pass the naturalization test or to become a naturalized citizen of the United States.

## KNOWLEDGE CLUSTER 1

### The Naturalization Process



Naturalization is the legal process through which an eligible permanent resident can become a citizen of the United States.

This knowledge cluster contains information that naturalization applicants need to know to navigate the naturalization process successfully—from understanding eligibility requirements to attending the naturalization ceremony. The knowledge areas identified within this cluster include:



#### THE NATURALIZATION PROCESS

- Eligibility Requirements
- Application/Pre-Interview
- Interview
- Post-Interview

#### USCIS RESOURCES FOR KNOWLEDGE CLUSTER 1: A, B, C, D, E, F, G, J, M & N

Please see pages 8 and 9 for a list of these resources

#### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Age requirements
2. Permanent residency requirements
3. Continuous residency requirements
4. Physical presence requirements
5. Time in state or USCIS district requirements
6. Good moral character requirements
7. Attachment to the Constitution
8. English language requirements
9. Knowledge of U.S. history and government (civics) requirements

#### APPLICATION/PRE-INTERVIEW:

1. Forms needed
2. Applicable fees
3. Fingerprint requirements
4. Notification of interview

#### INTERVIEW:

1. Logistics
2. Security
3. Asking for directions
4. Checking in
5. Waiting room
6. Swearing in
7. Application for Naturalization, Form N-400 review
8. Speaking test
9. Civics test
10. Reading test
11. Writing test

#### POST-INTERVIEW:

1. Post-interview instructions
2. Naturalization ceremony
3. Oath of Allegiance



## KNOWLEDGE CLUSTER 2

### American History



Immigration has been a vital part of American history since colonists first set foot on our shores more than 400 years ago. To help new immigrants feel part of this shared

experience, the civics test covers important milestones and events in American history. This knowledge cluster includes:

#### AMERICAN HISTORY

- Colonial Period and Independence
- 1800s
- Recent American History
- American Indians/Native Americans

#### USCIS RESOURCES FOR KNOWLEDGE CLUSTER 2: A, B, C, E, F, H, I, K, L & N

Please see pages 8 and 9 for a list of these resources

#### COLONIAL PERIOD AND INDEPENDENCE:

1. Colonists
2. Slavery
3. The Revolutionary War
4. Declaration of Independence
5. The 13 original states
6. The U.S. Constitution
7. The Constitutional Convention
8. The Federalist Papers
9. George Washington
10. Thomas Jefferson
11. Benjamin Franklin

#### 1800s:

1. Expansion/Louisiana Purchase
2. War of 1812
3. Mexican-American War
4. Civil War
5. Slavery
6. Abraham Lincoln
7. Emancipation Proclamation
8. Spanish-American War
9. Women's rights/Susan B. Anthony

#### RECENT AMERICAN HISTORY:

1. World War I
2. Woodrow Wilson
3. The Great Depression
4. World War II
5. Franklin D. Roosevelt
6. Dwight D. Eisenhower
7. Cold War
8. Korean War
9. Civil rights movement
10. Martin Luther King, Jr.
11. Vietnam War
12. (Persian) Gulf War
13. September 11, 2001/terrorism

#### AMERICAN INDIANS/NATIVE AMERICANS:

1. American Indians prior to European settlement
2. American Indian Tribes

## KNOWLEDGE CLUSTER 3

### American Government

Understanding our system of government and the principles of American democracy are important parts of the citizenship preparation process. Immigrants need to possess a basic knowledge and understanding of how our government works, and how they can participate as vested citizens. The American government knowledge cluster contains information that naturalization applicants need to know to become active participants in our democracy. This knowledge cluster includes:



#### AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

- Principles of American Democracy
- System of Government
- Rights and Responsibilities

**USCIS RESOURCES FOR KNOWLEDGE CLUSTER 3: A, B, C, D, E, F, H, I, K, L & N**  
Please see pages 8 and 9 for a list of these resources

#### PRINCIPLES OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY:

1. Declaration of Independence
2. U.S. Constitution
3. Bill of Rights
4. Economic system
5. Rule of law

#### SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT:

1. The three branches of government
2. Separation of power/checks and balances
3. President
4. Vice President
5. President's cabinet
6. Congress
7. U.S. Senators
8. U.S. Representatives
9. Speaker of the House
10. Laws
11. Supreme Court
12. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court
13. Political parties
14. Elections/voting
15. Federalism
16. State government
17. State governors
18. State capitals

#### RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Voting rights
2. Responsibilities of citizens
3. Rights of citizens
4. Pledge of Allegiance
5. Oath of Allegiance/naturalization
6. Participation in democracy
7. Federal income tax
8. Selective Service

## KNOWLEDGE CLUSTER 4

### Integrated Civics

Having a knowledge and understanding of U.S. geography, national symbols, and holidays helps immigrants feel connected to their new communities and adopted country. This knowledge cluster contains the following three content areas:

#### INTEGRATED CIVICS

- Geography
- Symbols
- Holidays

#### USCIS RESOURCES FOR KNOWLEDGE

##### CLUSTER 4: A, B, C, D, E, F, H, K & N

Please see pages 8 and 9 for a list of these resources



#### GEOGRAPHY:

1. Rivers
2. Oceans
3. Territories
4. Borders
5. Capital of the United States
6. Statue of Liberty (location)

#### SYMBOLS:

1. U.S. flag
2. National anthem/The Star-Spangled Banner

#### HOLIDAYS:

1. New Year's Day
2. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
3. Presidents' Day
4. Memorial Day
5. Independence Day
6. Labor Day
7. Columbus Day
8. Veterans Day
9. Thanksgiving
10. Christmas

## USCIS RESOURCES

**A**



### **The 100 Civics (History and Government) Questions and Answers for the Naturalization Test**

Official list of civics questions and answers for the naturalization test.

**B**



### **Learn About the United States: Quick Civics Lessons for the Naturalization Test (Form M-638)**

Study booklet containing short lessons based on each of the 100 civics questions and answers on the naturalization test.

**C**



### **Civics Flash Cards for the Naturalization Test (Form M-623)**

Easy-to-use downloadable flash cards containing each of the 100 civics questions and answers on the naturalization test.

**D**



### **Vocabulary Flash Cards for the Naturalization Test (Form M-715)**

Easy-to-use flash cards containing vocabulary words to help applicants study for the English reading and writing portions of the naturalization test.

**E**



### **Naturalization Test Brochure (Form M-685)**

Brochure outlining the components of the naturalization test and general path to U.S. citizenship.

**F**



### **Civics and Citizenship Multimedia Presentation (Form M-668)**

Video highlighting U.S. history, civics, and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and a brief presentation on the naturalization process and citizenship eligibility requirements.

**G**



### **A Guide to Naturalization (Form M-476)**

Comprehensive overview of the naturalization application and interview process.

**H**



### **EL/Civics Online**

Free web-based electronic training module for volunteers and adult educators.

**I**

### **The Citizen's Almanac (Form M-76)**

Publication highlighting prominent foreign-born Americans, presidential quotes on citizenship, patriotic songs and poems, and several of our essential founding documents.

**J**

### **Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants (Form M-618)**

Publication containing essential settlement information for new immigrants to the United States.

**K**

### **Supplemental Resource Links**

Links to appropriate curricula, lesson plans, and other citizenship preparation materials.

**L**

### **Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States (Form M-654)**

Pocket-size version of America's founding documents.

**M**

### **The USCIS Naturalization Interview and Test (Form M-770)**

Short video providing an overview of the naturalization process and test.

**N**

### **Lesson Plans and Activities for Citizenship Classes**

Detailed lesson plans and handouts for novice and experienced ESL instructors.

## **More Information**

### **Citizenship Resource Center**

[www.uscis.gov/citizenship](http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship)

Central location for citizenship information, test study materials, and other interactive learning activities for teachers, immigrant-serving organizations, and naturalization applicants.

### **Civics and Citizenship Toolkit**

[www.citizenshiptoolkit.gov](http://www.citizenshiptoolkit.gov)

Comprises immigration and civics publications, handbooks, guidance on product usage, and multimedia tools. Immigrant-serving organizations can request one free copy.

### **U.S. Government Printing Office Bookstore**

<http://bookstore.gpo.gov>

Locate and order citizenship publications available for purchase through the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office.

## About the Office of Citizenship



The USCIS Office of Citizenship, within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), is mandated by the Homeland Security Act of 2002 to promote instruction and training on citizenship rights and responsibilities, including the development of educational materials.

The mission of the Office of Citizenship is to provide federal leadership, tools, and resources to proactively foster immigrant integration. To facilitate this process, the Office of Citizenship engages and supports partners to welcome immigrants; promote English language learning and education on the rights and responsibilities of citizenship; and encourage U.S. citizenship. The work of the Office of Citizenship is focused on three specific areas:

- Providing immigrants with opportunities and tools to become vested citizens,
- Building community capacity to prepare immigrants for citizenship, and
- Promoting dialogue and collaboration on integration, and raising awareness of its importance to society.

To learn more about the USCIS Office of Citizenship and its educational products and initiatives, please visit [www.uscis.gov/citizenship](http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship).





U.S. Citizenship  
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