

## Reading Resource Library Civic Literacy Instructor Resource Guide

The [Reading Resource Library](#) is a tool created for educators to share with learners and is filled with topically relevant, educational, and captivating books for readers of all ages and levels.

- The books are sorted into sixteen topics that can be explored with learners and their families.
- Books in all collections span different reading levels, including books for children and families to read together.
- Each text set shares book summaries and additional information, such as book trailers and links to reviews.
- Each topic has a general Resource Guide to support engagement with the texts.

Consider using these texts from the Reading Resource Library to support themes and ideas about civic literacy:

Book Title	Author	Collection and Topic
<a href="#">Dear Martin</a>	Nic Stone	<a href="#">Collection One: Civil Rights</a>
<a href="#">The Hate U Give</a>	Angie Thomas	<a href="#">Collection One: Civil Rights</a>
<a href="#">Walking With the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement</a>	John Lewis	<a href="#">Collection One: Civil Rights</a>
<a href="#">Just Mercy</a>	Bryan Stevenson	<a href="#">Collection One: Activism</a>
<a href="#">Putting Peace First: 7 Commitments to Change the World</a>	Eric David Dawson	<a href="#">Collection One: Activism</a>
<a href="#">Turning 15 on the Road to Freedom: My Story of the 1965 Selma Voting Rights March</a>	Lynda Blackmon Lowery	<a href="#">Collection One: Civil Rights</a>
<a href="#">I Am Malala</a>	Malala Yousafzai	<a href="#">Collection One: Inspirational Stories</a>
<a href="#">Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You</a>	Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi	<a href="#">Collection Three: Diverse America</a>

## Overall Planning Suggestions

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- Consider desired learner outcomes, key vocabulary terms, incorporating relevant material based on learner's interest, and any differentiation and modifications needs.
- Materials were developed to allow for instructor customization based on their program's standards and learning objectives. Instructors should modify and format lessons, activities, and assessments (formative and summative) based on the needs of their learners and desired outcomes.
- Consider learners' content knowledge and pre-assess or consider a knowledge inventory before exploring this topic.
- Review resources for working with adult learners:
  - [Adult Learning Theory](#)
  - [Adult Learner Strategies](#)
  - [Authentic Audiences & Purposes](#)
  - [Cultural & Life Experiences Connections](#)
  - [Learner Variability](#)
- To plan a more detailed lesson or unit, view our [Reading Resource Library Instructor Planning Materials](#).

## What is Civic Literacy?

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Civic Literacy means gaining skills and knowledge to participate and make change within a community. It encourages citizens to stay informed and understand how to exercise their rights and obligations. Civic literacy skills empower adult learners to share their thoughts and voice in many aspects of community, state, and federal government when it comes to rights and freedoms.

## Authentic Application

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As you begin to work with learners, be mindful of barriers they may face in their own civic literacy. Explore the term with them and support them in making connections to their own lives. You may want to have a whole group discussion– consider a think-pair-share, or gallery walk activity. Consider these questions and develop additional questions based on your learner needs:

- What does civic literacy mean to you?
- What does it mean to be an informed citizen?

- How do we engage in civics in our community? What does that mean?
- What concerns you about engaging in your community or in government? What excites you?
- Share what you feel are the top barriers in your own development of civic literacy. (You may want to prompt topics, such as, engaging in community events, attending a school committee meeting, registering to vote, attending a school event for their child)

After this discussion and as you plan your activities, consider how you can provide authentic applications using your learners newly gained knowledge. Be sure to engage your learners in customizing their own learning path with civic literacy.

- Do they know how to register to vote?
- Do they want to know how to navigate a community or government website to learn about upcoming events?
- Do they want to learn how to speak at a community or government event, such as a city hall meeting or school committee meeting – to either share a concern or to give praise?
- Do they need to role play speaking and listening with their child's school or their local city hall?
- Do they understand the basic framework of our government (State Legislature vs. U.S. Congress, two houses of Congress, three branches of government, etc.)

### **Vocabulary – Key Terms to Explore**

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To help learners better understand and explore civic literacy, pre-teach a few key vocabulary words. There are several key words to explore. This is a short list to choose from:

- Ballot
- Civics
- Citizen
- Government
- Voting
- Green Card
- Diverse
- Equal
- Judge
- Amendment(s)

Vocabulary activities could include:

- **Frayer Models:** Have learners write the vocabulary term in the middle of four boxes. Then, ask them to write the definition, the word in a sentence, synonyms and antonyms, and a visual representation of the word in one of the boxes. (Each box will be its own category).
- **Semantic Mapping:** Ask learners to create a semantic map showing the relationship between the words (after you have taught them the definitions and given them some context). Semantic maps can be created online or by hand in personal notebooks. They are a great way for learners to visualize and engage in conceptual thinking!
- **Vocabulary Notebooks:** Ask learners to keep a notebook, or section in their writing notebook to structure, organize, and make note of important vocabulary. By doing so, this helps build learners' memory and comprehension skills. Words can be entered by categories, unit topics, pairs, or ways of their choosing to best support their learning and vocabulary acquisition.
- **Concept Cubes:** Ask learners to create a six-sided cube that they can roll like a dice. Each side of the cube will have a different vocabulary activity for learners to do that will engage them in the use and acquisition of their words. Activities may include: draw a picture of your favorite vocabulary word, use the vocabulary word in a sentence, put your vocabulary words into categories, or write a story using all of your vocabulary words.

## **Integrating Civic Literacy into Your Classroom**

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Create content-based lessons and activities to help learners acquire content knowledge (civic literacy) while improving reading and literacy skills. Content-based instruction enhances students' learning by allowing learners to explore relevant content and make connections to their own lives. Consider the following lessons and activities:

- **First Amendment Rights:** This lesson from LINCS will help learners understand the First Amendment, their own First Amendment rights, and how history has played a huge part in decisions and outcomes based on these rights.
- **Flint Water Crisis:** This lesson from LINCS will help learners think about environmental impacts as related to civic duties and rights.
- **Community Involvement as Social Change:** This lesson from LINCS will help learners think about strategies and actions for social change, as well as graph perspectives of others over time in relation to various topics.

- [\*\*Raising Public Awareness of Basic Adult Education\*\*](#): This lesson from LINCS will help learners think about problems that impact them and how to communicate with government officials to make their voices heard.
- [\*\*Sharing Our Expertise With Local Schools\*\*](#): This lesson from LINCS will help learners think about problems children have in schools and ways to communicate with schools to make them better.
- [\*\*Civic Engagement and How Can Students Get Involved?\*\*](#): This lesson from PBS will take learners through the process of becoming a civic leader and the implications for the political process. It could be modified for an adult and family literacy learning opportunity.

## Resources for Educators

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- [\*\*Teaching Skills That Matter: Civic Education in Action\*\*](#): This video will give educators ideas for best practices to use with learners as they explore civic literacy and education.
- [\*\*The Civic Literacy Curriculum\*\*](#): This curriculum from ASU will provide educators with multiple lessons and units that can be adapted for different learning levels.
- [\*\*New England Literacy Resource Center\*\*](#): This website provides educators with webinars, sourcebooks, and other resources about the topic of civic literacy in adult education.
- [\*\*Civics Education for Adult English Language Learners\*\*](#): This digest provides an overview on civic education and shares activities and approaches for integrating civic literacy with language learning.
- [\*\*Code for America\*\*](#): This site is dedicated to helping people get involved in change by using technology.
- [\*\*Learn About Civics and the Citizenship Toolkit\*\*](#): This site offers a free civics toolkit and other resources “to help organizations start or build a citizenship education program for immigrants.”
- [\*\*Citizenship Resource Center\*\*](#): This site provides a collection of resources to support a variety of users (immigrants, educators, and organizations).
- [\*\*iCivics\*\*](#): This site provides K-12 civic literacy lessons and opportunities for family engagement including a remote learning toolkit.