

ALTERNATIVE CITIZENSHIP TEST

1. What does a “lobbyist” do?
2. Explain the significance of one of the following Supreme Court cases:
 - a. *Brown v. Board of Education*
 - b. *Roe v. Wade*
 - c. *Bush v. Gore*
 - d. *Citizens United v. FEC*
3. Identify one of the following:
 - a. Trail of Tears
 - b. My Lai
 - c. Japanese Internment
 - d. Abu Ghraib
4. Name at least one important labor leader of the 20th Century.
5. What were the “Stonewall Riots”?
6. Who was Cesar Chavez?
7. Who was Joseph McCarthy?
8. When speaking of the relationship between government and business, what is meant by “the revolving door”? Name someone who has gone through it recently.
9. Why are political or other scandals frequently given names that end in “-gate”?
10. Name three major media conglomerates.
11. Identify at least one of the following:
 - a. Roger Ailes
 - b. The Koch Brothers
 - c. George Soros
12. What is a “Superfund site”?
13. What do Pete Seeger, Bob Dylan, and Woody Guthrie have in common?
14. Identify at least one of the following:
 - a. Elizabeth Cady Stanton
 - b. Gloria Steinem
 - c. Phyllis Schlafly
 - d. Ellen de Generes
15. What was the “Dust Bowl”?
16. What is “the Fed”?
17. Name one of the “Robber Barons.”
18. Explain the significance of one of the following:
 - a. The Homestead Massacre
 - b. The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire
 - c. Love Canal
 - d. Three Mile Island
19. Who is Grover Norquist? Jack Abramoff? Bernie Madoff?
20. What is the NRA?
21. Identify one of the following:
 - a. Hurricane Katrina
 - b. Deepwater Horizon
 - c. Exxon Valdesse
22. How many times is the word “God” mentioned in the Constitution?
23. In political discourse, what is “framing”? Give a recent example.
24. Identify one of the following:
 - a. Karl Rove
 - b. Frank Luntz
 - c. George Lakoff
 - d. Lee Atwater
25. What was the “Southern Strategy”?
26. What is “gerrymandering”?
27. What is the NSA?

So how did you do? If you could answer 2/3 of these without doing some Googling, congratulate yourself!

You could probably come up with some suitable questions yourself, and I encourage you to do so. Send yours to skip.mendler@gmail.com, and I may include them on the CITIZENS CREATIVE website or in a future edition of this pamphlet.

(I'd be particularly interested to see what folks more conservative than I am would include.)

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It's not often you'll hear me approving of news out of Arizona. The state that gave us Evan Meacham and Sheriff Joe Arpaio is not one I usually think of as a birthplace for interesting ideas. But they've recently introduced a new requirement: to graduate from high school, all students must pass a civics test similar to the one given those seeking naturalized citizenship.

At first glance, I like the concept very much. Americans' general ignorance of the way their system works is legendary, and anything that encourages greater civic awareness is a good thing in my book.

The body of knowledge involved - 100 questions on the basic structure of the federal government, some highlights of American history, and a smattering of geographical facts - is neither extensive nor particularly controversial. (You can obtain study materials, including a complete list of questions and answers, via this website: www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learners/study-test.)

That's fine as far as it goes. But I think it overlooks a few things that are important for anyone entering into responsible adulthood, not to mention citizenship, here in 21st Century America to know and understand.

I believe that folks should be aware of how things *really* work in government - as opposed to how they are ostensibly *designed* to work. They should also be familiar with some of those inconvenient little tidbits from history that may not show us in our best light, but have had a drastic impact on the way we are today.

So, within you will find some of the many questions that might be included in an "Alternative Citizenship Test"...

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