



## Civic Associations | Lesson Plan

What is the role and impact of civic associations in promoting civic engagement and influencing change within the United States?

---

Students will learn about the critical role of civic associations in America, including how these groups influence public policy and engage in community service, shaping the nation's political and social landscape.

### Learning Objectives:

- Understand the significance of civic associations in early American history and their role in promoting various causes.
- Analyze the means through which Americans can influence their communities, support those in need, and make their political views known.
- Identify the role of lobbyists and the impact of lobbying on political decisions and lawmakers.
- Explore the major causes around which Americans rallied in the 19th and 20th centuries, including the abolition of slavery, women's suffrage, and civil rights.
- Discuss the reasons behind the decline in civic participation and the influence of civic associations in the late 20th and early 21st centuries.
- Recognize the contributions of notable individuals and organizations in advancing civic and social causes.

### Key Vocabulary:

- **Civic Associations:** Organizations formed to advocate for various social, political, or community causes.
- **Interest Groups:** Groups that influence government policy and decision-making to reflect their members' interests.
- **Lobbyist:** A person who engages in lobbying or the act of attempting to influence decisions made by government officials.
- **Political Groups:** Organized groups that participate in political activities to influence government policy and elections.

**Educational Standards:** CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.L.5, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.R.4, CCRA.R.6, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4

**Academic Subject Areas:** Political Science, American Values, Freedom

### What You'll Need

- Video: *Street Smarts: Civic Associations* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Street Smarts: Civic Associations* (Click [Here](#))



Scan to watch episode:

## Lesson Plan (45 minutes)

### Warm Up: (15 minutes)

1. Begin the lesson by introducing a specific and relatable community issue, such as reducing crime, addressing homelessness, caring for the poor, supporting small businesses, addressing mental health, etc. Who is better equipped to address it, a civic association or the government?
2. Guide a discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of civic associations versus government action in addressing the issue. Ask students to consider community engagement, responsiveness, funding, sustainability, efficiency, etc.
3. Split the class into two groups, one defending civic associations' role in addressing the issue and the other advocating for government intervention. This activity encourages critical thinking and understanding of civic responsibility.
4. Give each student a copy of the *Street Smarts: Civic Associations* worksheet and display it on a screen.

### Watch and Complete: (20 minutes)

1. Watch the video as a class, filling in the answers on the worksheet as each question is addressed in the video.
2. Pause the video after the presentation of each key question and concept. Encourage students to share their answers to check for accuracy.

### Wrap-Up: (10 minutes)

1. After the video, allow students to ask questions or express their opinions about what they learned about civic associations.
2. Collect the completed worksheet as a formative assessment or participation credit.

## Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15 minutes)

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.