Direct Teach

Reading Focus

❷ What are the values that form the basis of the U.S. government and the American way of life?

American Values

Explain What does the ideal of equality mean for Americans today? *All people are equal under the law. The rights of each person are equal to those of every other person.*

Draw Conclusions How do laws and justice help preserve Americans' equality? *Possible answer: Enforcing laws protects Americans' rights and makes sure that no one can act as if his or her own life and liberties are more important than those of other people.*

Develop What are some more rights that help preserve Americans' freedom? How? *Answers will vary, but students should suggest basic rights and explain how they contribute to Americans' liberty.*

Info to Know

The Fight for Equality Throughout history, governments have limited the rights of some of their citizens. For example, Jim Crow laws made African Americans second-class citizens by limiting their rights. At other times in history, governments have seen citizenship in more democratic terms. This was one result of the 1789 French Revolution, which eliminated the privileged classes in France. After the Revolution, all people addressed one another simply as "citizen." This title reflected their belief in the freedom and equality of all people.

Answers

(photo) *All people today have equal access to public transportation and can sit wherever they choose, regardless of their race or color.*

Reading Check *Possible answer: It trains you to be a good citizen.*

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY
values: ideas that people hold dear and try to live by

You need training in order to become a good athlete or a good musician. Likewise, you need training in order to become a good citizen. What kind of training? First, you must understand the purpose of government. Next, you need to know how the government works, on the national, state, and local levels. You must also understand how the U.S. economic system works and how government and economy interact. Then you are ready to explore ways to fulfill your role as a citizen.

Some people complain about the government. Other people get involved—in large or small ways—so they can make their government better. Right now, governments across the United States and in your community are making decisions that will affect how much money you might earn, the roads you travel on, the cost of your doctors' visits, and the protections you have under the law.

READING CHECK **Supporting a Point of View**
Why is studying civics important?

American Values

The United States has been an inspiration to other nations because of its basic **values**: equality, liberty, and justice for all people. These values are the foundation of many of your important rights and freedoms. In fact, new nations often look to the United States, its values, and its system of government as a model in creating their own governments.

As American citizens, we are all guaranteed the same rights and freedoms, which are protected by the U.S. Constitution and our laws. These laws, our system of government, and the American way of life are based on the ideals of equality, liberty, and justice.

Equality

The Declaration of Independence states, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights . . ." What does this mean? It means

Equality of Access

Rosa Parks (1913–2005), the woman in the photo, sparked the modern civil rights movement when she refused to give up her seat on a segregated bus in Montgomery, Alabama. Today laws provide equal access in all areas of society for all Americans.

How do people today benefit from equal access to transportation?

Differentiating Instruction

At Level

English-Language Learners

Illustrate American Values

Materials: Poster board, markers, scissors, magazines and newspapers

1. Organize students into small groups. Have each group divide a piece of poster board into sections labeled *Equality, Liberty,* and *Justice.*
2. In each section, students should make a collage of pictures and drawings that illustrate examples of the appropriate value.
3. Ask students to write a brief caption under each picture or drawing explaining how it relates to the value. (For example, under *Liberty* students might write, *People freely practicing their religion.*)
4. Have each group present its poster to the class and explain the examples that illustrate each value. **IS Interpersonal, Visual/Spatial**

Alternative Assessment Handbook: Rubric 8: Collages