

Civics
Student Background Questionnaire

2010
Grade 8

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1

DIRECTIONS

In the next two sections, you will be asked questions about yourself and your education. The choices for some questions will be written across the page as shown. Fill in the oval for the best answer.

Example 1

	Never or hardly ever	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost every day
1. How often do you watch movies on TV?	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D


You should have filled in the oval below the answer that best tells how often you watch movies on TV.

The choices for some questions will be written down the page as shown. Now read Example 2 and indicate your answer.

Example 2

2. Which event would you prefer to attend?
<input type="radio"/> A basketball game
<input type="radio"/> B car show
<input type="radio"/> C concert
<input type="radio"/> D play

Make your answer mark clear and dark in the oval. If you make a mistake or want to change your answer, be sure to completely erase any unwanted marks.

Do not go past the  sign at the end of each section until you are told to do so.

If you finish before time is called, go back and check your work on that section only. Use your time carefully. Do as much as you can in each section.



SECTION 3

Section 3

In this section, please tell us about yourself and your family. The section has 14 questions. Mark your answers in your booklet. Fill in only **one** oval for each question except where instructed otherwise.

1. Are you Hispanic or Latino? Fill in **one** or more ovals.

VB331330

- Ⓐ No, I am not Hispanic or Latino.
- Ⓑ Yes, I am Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano.
- Ⓒ Yes, I am Puerto Rican or Puerto Rican American.
- Ⓓ Yes, I am Cuban or Cuban American.
- Ⓔ Yes, I am from some other Hispanic or Latino background.

2. Which of the following best describes you? Fill in **one or more** ovals.

VB331331

- Ⓐ White
- Ⓑ Black or African American
- Ⓒ Asian
- Ⓓ American Indian or Alaska Native
- Ⓔ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Section 3

3. Does your family get a newspaper at least four times a week?

VB331333

- Ⓐ Yes
- Ⓑ No
- Ⓒ I don't know.

4. Does your family get any magazines regularly?

VB331334

- Ⓐ Yes
- Ⓑ No
- Ⓒ I don't know.

5. About how many books are there in your home?

VB331335

- Ⓐ Few (0-10)
- Ⓑ Enough to fill one shelf (11-25)
- Ⓒ Enough to fill one bookcase (26-100)
- Ⓓ Enough to fill several bookcases (more than 100)

6. Is there a computer at home that you use?

VB331336

- Ⓐ Yes
- Ⓑ No

7. Is there an encyclopedia in your home? It could be a set of books, or it could be on the computer.

VB331337

- Ⓐ Yes
- Ⓑ No
- Ⓒ I don't know.

8. About how many pages a day do you have to read in school and for homework?

TB001101

- Ⓐ 5 or fewer
- Ⓑ 6-10
- Ⓒ 11-15
- Ⓓ 16-20
- Ⓔ More than 20

9. How often do you talk about things you have studied in school with someone in your family?

VB331339

- Ⓐ Never or hardly ever
- Ⓑ Once every few weeks
- Ⓒ About once a week
- Ⓓ Two or three times a week
- Ⓔ Every day

10. How many days were you absent from school in the last month?

VB331447

- Ⓐ None
- Ⓑ 1 or 2 days
- Ⓒ 3 or 4 days
- Ⓓ 5 to 10 days
- Ⓔ More than 10 days

13. How often do people in your home talk to each other in a language other than English?

VB331451

- Ⓐ Never
- Ⓑ Once in a while
- Ⓒ About half of the time
- Ⓓ All or most of the time

11. How far in school did your mother go?

VB330870

- Ⓐ She did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ She graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ She had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ She graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.

14. Write the ZIP code of your home address in the boxes.

VE102537

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12. How far in school did your father go?

VB330871

- Ⓐ He did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ He graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ He had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ He graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.



This section has 12 questions. Mark your answers in your booklet. Fill in only **one** oval for each question except where instructed otherwise.

1. In which of the following grades did you learn about civics or government? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

VC467353

a. 5th grade

Yes

No

I don't know.

Ⓐ

(B)

©

VC467355

b. 6th grade

(A)

(B)

©

VC467356

c. 7th grade

Ⓐ

Ⓑ

©

VC467357

d. 8th grade

Ⓐ

Ⓑ

©

VE131733

2. How often do you study social studies in school?

VB594977

Ⓐ Never or hardly ever

Ⓑ Once or twice a month

☐ Once or twice a week

Ⓓ Almost every day

ID100216

3. During this school year, have you studied any of the following topics? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Yes	No	I don't know.	
a. The United States Constitution	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	ID100217
b. Congress	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	ID100218
c. The President and the cabinet	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	ID100219
d. How laws are made	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	ID100220
e. The court system	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	ID100221
f. Political parties, elections, and voting	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	ID100222
g. State and local government	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	ID100223
h. Other countries' governments	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	ID100224
i. International organizations (such as the United Nations)	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	ID100225

VE132250

4. Indicate how often you do each of the following when you study social studies or civics or government in school. Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost every day	
a. Read material from a textbook	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132269
b. Read extra material not in the regular textbook (e.g., newspapers, magazines, maps, charts, or cartoons)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132303
c. Discuss the material studied	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132307
d. Write short answers (a paragraph or less) to questions	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132309
e. Write a report	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132316
f. Work on a group project	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132322
g. Give a presentation to the class on the topic being studied	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132323
h. Watch movies or videos	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132324
i. Take a test or quiz	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132326
j. Go on field trips or have outside speakers	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132327
k. Use the books or computers in the library to do schoolwork	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132330
l. Write a letter to give your opinion or help solve a community problem	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132333
m. Discuss current events	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132335
n. Take part in debates or panel discussions	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132338
o. Take part in role-playing, mock trials, or dramas	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	VE132340

5. This year in school, how often have you been asked to write long answers to questions or assignments that involved social studies?

VB594978

- Ⓐ Never
- Ⓑ Once or twice this year
- Ⓒ Once or twice a month
- Ⓓ At least once a week

6. How often do you use computers at school for social studies?

VB594979

- Ⓐ Never or hardly ever
- Ⓑ Once every few weeks
- Ⓒ About once a week
- Ⓓ Two or three times a week
- Ⓔ Every day

7. When you study social studies, to what extent do you use computers to do research projects about social studies topics using a CD or the Internet? Include both class work and homework assignments.

VE112830

- Ⓐ Not at all
- Ⓑ Small extent
- Ⓒ Moderate extent
- Ⓓ Large extent

8. When you study social studies or civics or government, how often do you agree with the following statements? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

VC681400

	Never or hardly ever	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always	
a. I have a clear understanding of what my social studies or civics or government teacher is asking me to do.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC681401
b. The social studies or civics or government work is easy.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC681402
c. The social studies or civics or government work is difficult.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC681403
d. The social studies or civics or government work is interesting.	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	Ⓓ	VC681404

9. How much do you agree that social studies or civics or government is one of your favorite subjects?

VE132747

- Ⓐ Not at all
- Ⓑ A little
- Ⓒ A lot

12. How important was it to you to do well on this test?

VB595184

- Ⓐ Not very important
- Ⓑ Somewhat important
- Ⓒ Important
- Ⓓ Very important

10. How hard was this test compared to most other tests you have taken this year in school?

VB595182

- Ⓐ Easier than other tests
- Ⓑ About as hard as other tests
- Ⓒ Harder than other tests
- Ⓓ Much harder than other tests

11. How hard did you try on this test compared to how hard you tried on most other tests you have taken this year in school?

VC034559

- Ⓐ Not as hard as on other tests
- Ⓑ About as hard as on other tests
- Ⓒ Harder than on other tests
- Ⓓ Much harder than on other tests

