




Are you smarter than a new U.S. citizen?

What is the U.S. Citizenship Test?

-  Tests an applicant's ability to read, write, and speak English
-  Tests an applicant's knowledge of U.S. History and U.S. Government
-  Applicants have two attempts to pass the test.




The U.S. Citizenship Test is one of the final steps for Green Card holders to become naturalized U.S. citizens.

Composed of two main sections, the English test and the Civics test, perhaps the most well-known part of the naturalization process.

An USCIS officer asks you up to 10 questions from a list of 100 Civics questions in English during the interview.

You must orally answer 6 of the 10 questions correctly in order to pass the Civics (History and Government) test.

Origins of the Naturalization Civics Test

 Naturalization exams from the 19th and early 20th centuries are nearly impossible to locate and varied widely.




Prior to 1906, naturalization was under the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts. In 1906 the Federal Bureau of Naturalization began to oversee/standardize national naturalization proceedings.

Exams seem to have been random, with the degree of questioning depending on the applicants' answers. Judges asked the questions in open court and candidates responded orally.

In 1906, the Federal Bureau of Naturalization began to standardize the naturalization proceedings. In 2008, United States Citizenship and Immigration Services redesigned the English and civics test for greater fairness and to ensure all applicants had the same testing experience.

TEST Are you smarter than a new United States citizen?

 The following are examples of Civics questions about American history and the government you may be asked during the Citizenship test. Take this short sample test and see how well you do.

- Q1** What ocean is on the East Coast of the United States?
- Q2** Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?
- Q3** Who wrote the Declaration of Independence?

- Q4** Who lived in America before the Europeans arrived?
- Q5** What territory did the United States buy from France in 1803?
- Q6** Why does the flag have 13 stripes?

A1: Atlantic Ocean A2: Because of the state's population A3: Thomas Jefferson A4: American Indians/Native Americans A5: The Louisiana Territory A6: Represent the 13 colonies

Think it Through

- Do you think this test is fair in determining whether or not Green Card holders can become naturalized U.S. citizens? If yes, why is it fair? If no, what would you change about the test?
- Given your knowledge on U.S. history and civics do you believe that you would be able to pass the Citizenship Test? Explain.
- What other tests or criteria should the US government use in determining whether a person should become a US citizen?

