

Step 5

Purpose of Step 5

It is always a good idea to think about or reflect upon what you have learned and experiences you have had on projects you have completed. This is one way to learn, to avoid mistakes in the future, and to improve your performance.

Reflection and Evaluation Guidelines

1. What rights of citizens of a democracy did you exercise when you were fulfilling the tasks of *Project Citizen*?
2. What responsibilities of citizens of a democracy did you exercise when you were fulfilling the tasks of *Project Citizen*?
3. What responsibilities of public officials in a democracy did you learn when you were fulfilling the tasks of *Project Citizen*?
4. Think about the policy that your class proposed. Which of the following purposes of government in a democracy would your proposed policy help to fulfill? Be prepared to explain your answers.

Purpose of government in a democracy:

- Protecting the rights of citizens to life, liberty, and property
- Promoting the common good
- Promoting justice or fairness
- Promoting equal opportunities for all people
- Providing safety and security
- Etc.

5. What have you learned about how your government is organized and what procedures it is supposed to us?

What agencies are responsible for:

- Making laws
- Carrying out or administering laws
- Enforcing laws
- Managing disputes over the application of laws
- Making sure citizens can see what their government is doing
- Making sure public officials use fair procedures when they are gathering information and making decisions

6. When you gathered information on the problem you selected, you may have asked for information from groups and organizations that were also interested in your problem. Make a list of groups or organizations you contacted and answer the following questions for each one.
- What is the purpose of the group or organization?
 - Does the group or organization try to influence public policy? If so, how do they do that?
 - Why would people want to join the group or organization? Can anyone join the group?
 - Do you think this group or organization helps make democracy work? Explain your answer.
7. The following is a list of some of the fundamental values and principles that democracy is supposed to promote and live by. Check any of these values and principles that were related to the public policy you suggested and the experiences you had in fulfilling the tasks of *Project Citizen*. Be prepared to explain your choices.

Values:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ➤ Protecting Individual Rights | ➤ Providing equality of opportunity |
| ➤ Protecting life including the quality of life | ➤ Respecting diversity |
| ➤ Protecting liberty or freedom | ➤ Seeking the truth |
| ➤ Promoting justice | ➤ Promoting the good of all people of the common good |

Principles:

- The people as the ultimate source of authority of government
- People working in government are the servants of the people, not their masters
- All people must obey the laws
- The powers of people in government are limited to protect the rights of the people
- The powers of government are separated among different branches
- Different branches of government can stop other branches from breaking the laws limiting their powers
- No people are deprived of their rights just because of their sex, religion, language, nationality, or being in the minority
- The courts can stop other branches of government from doing things that break the laws limiting their powers and/or unfairly deprive people of their rights.

8. The following is a list of attitudes and traits of character of citizens that are important in a democracy. Check any that were related to the experiences you had in fulfilling the tasks of *Project Citizen*. Be prepared to explain how they were involved and how they might be important to a democracy.

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|---|------------------------------|-------------------|
| ➤ Individual Responsibility | ➤ Honesty | ➤ Open mindedness |
| ➤ Self Discipline / Self-Governance | ➤ Critical mindedness | |
| ➤ Civility | ➤ Negotiation and Compromise | |
| ➤ Courage | ➤ Persistency | |
| ➤ Respect for the rights of other individuals | ➤ Civic mindedness | |
| ➤ Respect of Law | ➤ Compassion | |
| | ➤ Patriotism | |

9. The following is a list of skills that citizen should have to participate effectively in a democracy. Check any that you learned or improved skills while fulfilling the tasks of *Project Citizen*. Be prepared to explain how they were involved and how they might be important to democratic citizenship.

- Identify problems in the community
- Describing problems
- Explaining problems
- Evaluating positions on problems
- Taking a position on a problem
- the government to accept your position on a problem
- Defending your position on a problem
- Finding out what your government is doing about a problem
- Influencing

10. Your involvement in *Project Citizen* has been a class effort. Reflect upon the tasks your class fulfilled while developing your portfolio and in preparing and giving your presentation.

- What things did the class do well?
- What would we want to do differently, if we were to develop another portfolio on another public policy issue?

Conclusion:

It is important that you continue to develop the skills that help you influence the making of public policy. You will use these skills in the future. Remember that public policies often need to be revised. New problems require new public policies. Helping to develop public policies and taking positions on them are lifelong responsibilities of citizens in a self-governing society.

