Look around your class. What do you see? People! Almost everyone in the world lives with others. This is called living in a society. The word civics describes the rights and responsibilities of people who live in a society. These people are called its citizens. In fact, the word citizen means “someone who lives in a city.”

What does it mean to be a good citizen? In the United States, we usually think that voting is the most important civic responsibility. People don’t have to vote, but responsible citizens vote to help make decisions and voice their opinions.

People have to be 18 to vote in the United States, so you might wonder what you can do to be a responsible citizen now. You can do community service! Community service means donating your time and energy to help your community.

Responsible citizens learn what problems people face and how these problems might be solved. They learn how different people think and feel. They even learn that working hard feels good because it makes a difference in others’ lives. Then they volunteer their time to help in any way they can.

Being a good citizen doesn’t just include volunteering to help people, though. It also includes volunteering to help endangered animals and to reduce pollution. There are many things people of all ages can do to help the Earth. They can work to protect animals’ habitat, or their homes. They can also start recycling programs.

The first thing to do is to think about what interests you. You should also ask a parent or other adult who will be volunteering with you what they might like to do. You might want to donate your time working for the environment, animals, or older people. Talk to your teacher about ways to volunteer in your community, too. There are lots of ways you can make a difference in the world!
Get Involved in Your Community

Write all these words in the right places to complete this puzzle, which tells some ways you can be a good citizen. You can reread the article before you begin, but don’t look back at it while you are working. After you’ve completed the puzzle, read it to someone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>age</th>
<th>citizen</th>
<th>community</th>
<th>difference</th>
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<td>help</td>
<td>pollution</td>
<td>time</td>
<td>volunteer</td>
<td>voting</td>
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What does it mean to be a good ___________________________ in your ___________________________? If you are 18 years of ___________________________ or older, you can show you are a responsible citizen by ___________________________.

Even though kids can’t vote, they can still ___________________________ others.

One way to be a good citizen is to be a ___________________________, donating your ___________________________ to help others. Kids your age can help animals by volunteering to protect animals’ ___________________________. Kids also help by recycling things to reduce ___________________________. When you volunteer to make something in your community better, you can make a ___________________________ in the world!
Get Involved in Your Community

Write keywords or phrases that will help you remember what you learned.