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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Title</th>
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</tbody>
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<table>
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<th>School</th>
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</thead>
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A Note From the Authors

Welcome to Civics Today: Citizenship, Economics & You. The content of this course focuses on the economic, legal, and political systems in our nation. During this course, you will be acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to become a responsible citizen and consumer in an interdependent world.

We have written this text with several goals in mind. First, we want you to practice the North Carolina Correlations to the Social Studies Skills Competency Goals. These goals help you learn, make decisions, and develop into a knowledgeable and capable citizen.

Next, we want you to master the North Carolina Competency Goals Civics and Economics. These competency goals and objectives outline the information you should learn and be able to work with as you take the course.

As a preview, you may want to read over the competency goals with your parents or caregivers. Many of the phrases and terms may not be familiar at first, but together with your family you can outline some steps you can take to achieve proficiency. You may also plan to review these competency goals from time to time to help the things you learn fall into place.

The importance of the knowledge and skills you gain this year extends well beyond your classroom. We study civics and economics not only to learn about the processes by which our country operates, but also to become better citizens. Studying civics and economics enables us to understand the importance of patriotism, to function in a free-enterprise economy, and to appreciate the basic values of our nation. We hope that this textbook will help you succeed as a student and as an informed citizen.
Table of Contents

A Note From the Authors .............................................................. NC5
Scavenger Hunt ........................................................................ NC21
Understanding the Big Ideas ..................................................... NC22
How Does Civics Today: Citizenship, Economics, & You Help Me Succeed? ......................................................... NC24
Correlations to the Social Studies Skills Competency Goals .................... NC26
North Carolina Competency Goals, Civics and Economics Grade 10 .......... NC30
Focus on North Carolina Data Bank ............................................. NC38

UNIT 1  Foundations of American Citizenship .................. 2

Chapter 1  The American People ........................................... 4
  Section 1  The Diversity of Americans ...................................... 6
  Section 2  Who Are America’s Citizens? ................................. 14
  Section 3  Government and the People ................................... 20

Chapter 2  Roots of American Democracy .......................... 30
  Section 1  Our English Heritage ............................................. 32
  Section 2  The English Colonies .............................................. 38
  Section 3  Colonial Society ..................................................... 44
  Section 4  Birth of a Democratic Nation ................................. 50
  *The Declaration of Independence ....................................... 60

Chapter 3  The Constitution ...................................................... 64
  Section 1  The Nation’s First Governments ............................ 66
  Section 2  The Road to the Constitution ................................. 71
  Section 3  The Structure of Our Constitution ........................ 79
  Section 4  Principles Underlying the Constitution .................. 85
  *The Constitution of the United States ................................. 94
# Table of Contents

## Chapter 4  The Bill of Rights

- **Section 1** The First Amendment ...................................... 120
- **Section 2** The Bill of Rights ........................................ 126
- **Section 3** Extending the Bill of Rights ............................. 133
- **Section 4** The Civil Rights Struggle ............................... 139

## Chapter 5  Citizenship and Government in a Democracy

- **Section 1** Duties and Responsibilities ............................ 150
- **Section 2** Citizens and the Community ............................ 156

## UNIT 2  The National Government

## Chapter 6  The Legislative Branch

- **Section 1** How Congress Is Organized ........................... 176
- **Section 2** Powers of Congress ..................................... 184
- **Section 3** Representing the People ............................... 190
- **Section 4** How a Bill Becomes a Law ............................. 197

## Chapter 7  The Executive Branch

- **Section 1** The President and Vice President ..................... 208
- **Section 2** The President’s Job .................................... 214
- **Section 3** Making Foreign Policy ................................. 219
- **Section 4** Presidential Advisers and Executive Agencies ...... 224

## Chapter 8  The Judicial Branch

- **Section 1** The Federal Courts ...................................... 238
- **Section 2** How Federal Courts Are Organized .................. 243
- **Section 3** The Supreme Court ..................................... 248
- **Section 4** The Supreme Court at Work ......................... 254

## UNIT 3  Political Parties and Interest Groups

## Chapter 9  Political Parties and Politics

- **Section 1** Development of Political Parties ..................... 272
- **Section 2** Role of Political Parties Today ....................... 278

## Chapter 10  Voting and Elections

- **Section 1** Who Can Vote? ......................................... 292
- **Section 2** Election Campaigns ..................................... 300
- **Section 3** Paying for Election Campaigns ..................... 305

## Chapter 11  Influencing Government

- **Section 1** Forming Public Opinion ............................... 318
- **Section 2** The Mass Media ......................................... 326
- **Section 3** Interest Groups .......................................... 332

## UNIT 4  The Tarheel State

## Chapter 12  Roots of Government in North Carolina

- **Section 1** First in Freedom ......................................... 350
- **Section 2** The Constitution of North Carolina .................. 354
- **Section 3** Rights of Citizens ....................................... 359
- **Section 4** The Civil Rights Movement ......................... 364
# Table of Contents

**Chapter 13  North Carolina State Government** .......................... 374  
   **Section 1**  The Legislative Branch .................................................. 376  
   **Section 2**  The Executive Branch .................................................... 383  
   **Section 3**  The Judicial Branch ....................................................... 388  

**Chapter 14  Local Government and Finances** ............................ 400  
   **Section 1**  Municipal Government in North Carolina ......................... 402  
   **Section 2**  County Government ....................................................... 406  
   **Section 3**  Government Finances .................................................... 410  

**The Individual, the Law, and the Internet** .................................. 420  

**Chapter 15  Legal Rights and Responsibilities** .......................... 424  
   **Section 1**  Sources of Our Laws .................................................... 426  
   **Section 2**  Types of Laws ............................................................. 430  
   **Section 3**  The American Legal System ......................................... 435  

**Chapter 16  Civil and Criminal Law** ............................................ 446  
   **Section 1**  Civil Cases ................................................................. 448  
   **Section 2**  Criminal Cases ............................................................ 452  
   **Section 3**  Young People and the Courts ....................................... 460  

**Chapter 17  Citizenship and the Internet** .................................... 468  
   **Section 1**  Civic Participation ...................................................... 470  
   **Section 2**  Challenges for Democracy ............................................. 474  
   **Section 3**  Regulating the Internet ................................................. 480  

**The Economy and the Individual** .............................................. 492  

**Chapter 18  What Is Economics?** .................................................. 496  
   **Section 1**  How Economic Systems Work ....................................... 498  
   **Section 2**  Making Economic Decisions ......................................... 503  

**Chapter 19  The American Economy** .......................................... 514  
   **Section 1**  Economic Resources .................................................... 516  
   **Section 2**  Economic Activity ....................................................... 520  
   **Section 3**  Capitalism and Free Enterprise .................................... 527  

**Chapter 20  Personal Finance and Economics** ............................ 536  
   **Section 1**  Managing Your Money ................................................. 538  
   **Section 2**  Planning and Budgeting ............................................... 544  
   **Section 3**  Saving and Investing ................................................... 552  
   **Section 4**  Achieving Your Financial Goals .................................... 559  

**Chapter 21  Demand and Supply** .................................................. 566  
   **Section 1**  Demand ................................................................. 568  
   **Section 2**  Factors Affecting Supply ............................................. 573  
   **Section 3**  Supply and the Supply Curve ....................................... 580  
   **Section 4**  Demand and Supply at Work ........................................ 587
### Table of Contents

#### Chapter 22 Business and Labor
- Section 1 Types of Businesses ........................................ 600
- Section 2 The American Labor Force .................................. 608
- Section 3 Businesses in Our Economy .................................. 615

#### Chapter 23 Government and the Economy
- Section 1 The Role of Government ...................................... 630
- Section 2 Measuring the Economy ....................................... 637
- Section 3 Government, the Economy, and You ......................... 646

#### Chapter 24 Money and Banking
- Section 1 What Is Money? ................................................ 656
- Section 2 The Federal Reserve System .................................. 660
- Section 3 How Banks Operate ........................................... 666

#### Chapter 25 Government Finances
- Section 1 The Federal Government ...................................... 676
- Section 2 State and Local Governments .................................. 681
- Section 3 Managing the Economy ......................................... 687

#### Chapter 26 Comparing Economic Systems
- Section 1 International Trade ............................................. 706
- Section 2 Economic Systems .............................................. 715
- Section 3 Economies in Transition ........................................ 721

#### Chapter 27 An Interdependent World
- Section 1 Global Developments .......................................... 734
- Section 2 The United Nations ............................................... 739
- Section 3 Human Rights .................................................... 743

### The Free Enterprise System

#### The United States and the World

#### Appendix
- What Is an Appendix and How Do I Use One? ...................... 755
- Skills Handbook ............................................................. 756
- Flag Etiquette ................................................................. 767
- Historical Documents ...................................................... 768
- Data Bank ......................................................................... 784
- Supreme Court Case Summaries .......................................... 792
- United States Facts .......................................................... 798
- United States Presidents ................................................... 800
- National Geographic Reference Atlas ................................... 806
- Glossary/Glosario ............................................................ 814
- Index .................................................................................. 850
- Acknowledgments ................................................................ 869
# Table of Contents

## Chapter 1
“Our National Fabric” ........................................... 12

## Chapter 2
“The Horse America Throwing His Master” ...................... 52

## Chapter 3
“So… Where Do I Draw The Line?” .......................... 86

## Chapter 4
“Hall Of American Heroes” ....................................... 140

## Chapter 5
“The Most Powerful Force” ..................................... 158

## Chapter 6
“Pork” ............................................................ 195

## Chapter 7
“Poseidon” .......................................................... 220

## Chapter 8
“Do you ever” ........................................................ 252

## Chapter 9
“Campaign Finance Reform” ..................................... 282

## Chapter 10
“Sacrifice?” .......................................................... 298

## Chapter 11
“Special Interests” .................................................. 335

## Chapter 12
“Tall Ships Sail to North Carolina” ............................. 361

## Chapter 13
“American Idle” ..................................................... 378

## Chapter 14
“Meanwhile Down in the Talent Pool” .......................... 418

## Chapter 15
“U.S. Constitution” ................................................ 437

## Chapter 16
“A Stupid Idea” ........................................................ 449

## Chapter 17
“Spam Forever” ...................................................... 481

## Chapter 18
“New Interest” ......................................................... 505

## Chapter 19
“Act Immediately” ...................................................... 528

## Chapter 20
“High Cost of Gasoline” .......................................... 546

## Chapter 21
“Supply and Demand” ............................................. 588

## Chapter 22
“We’re Leaving” ...................................................... 609

## Chapter 23
“Wages” ............................................................... 639

## Chapter 24
“Interest Rates” ....................................................... 663

## Chapter 25
“Social Security/Medicare” ....................................... 689

## Chapter 26
“Trade Deficit” ......................................................... 710

## Chapter 27
“Information Superhighway” ..................................... 747

### Teens in Action
Chris Garrett ......................................................... 17
Amelia Pennewell .................................................... 48
Kushal Kadakia ....................................................... 82
Jackie Fernandez ..................................................... 130
Geneva Johnson ....................................................... 152
Sarah Seufer ........................................................... 193
Shauna Fleming ....................................................... 216
Clayton G. Lillard ..................................................... 246
Emily Nguyen .......................................................... 281
Michael Sessions .................................................... 302
Alix Olian ............................................................... 323
Sam Hay ............................................................... 362
Prateek Peres-da-Silva ........................................... 384
FEATURES

Bita Emrani ................................................. 403
Jeremy Verbit .............................................. 432
Sarah Carr .................................................. 462
Keegan Flynn .............................................. 482
Jessica Painter ............................................ 507
Erika Fields ............................................... 523
Jon Russell ............................................... 561
Daniel Lawrence ....................................... 570
Brittany Clifford ....................................... 617
Erika Herman ............................................ 648
Andres Mendoza ....................................... 668
Katie Anderton ......................................... 691
Jacorey Patterson ..................................... 724
Kevin McGregor ....................................... 740

REPORTS

A Nation of Givers ................................. 168
The White House ................................. 234
The Machinery of Democracy .......... 314
North Carolina’s Education Revolution . 398
New Laws on Immigration .............. 444
Oil and Gas Consumption in the U.S. . 596
The Federal Deficit ............................. 696
New Technology for the Developing World ........ 730
American Biography

Thomas Jefferson ...................... 53
James Madison .......................... 76
Martin Luther King, Jr. ................. 141
Marian Wright Edelman .................. 159
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen ....................... 194
Condoleezza Rice ........................ 221
Sandra Day O’Connor ...................... 250
Carrie Chapman Catt .................... 295
Ethel Percy Andrus ......................... 322
Charlotte Hawkins Brown ................. 366
Samuel Ashe .............................. 392
Jerry Yang ................................ 483
John H. Johnson .......................... 500
David Hernandez .......................... 529
Maria Otero ................................ 554
Dick Burke ................................ 591
César Estrada Chávez ....................... 611
Elaine Chao ................................ 634

Is the Patriot Act an infringement of privacy? ...................... 125
Does a public library have the right to censor Internet information? .... 189
Does the media have a political bias? ...................... 189
Is Free Trade Good for North Carolina’s Economy? .................. 382
Can schools punish students for undesirable blog speech? ........... 464
Should Congress raise the minimum wage? ...................... 614
Does outsourcing jobs to other countries hurt America? ........... 636
Should the United States Open ANWR for oil drilling? ............ 714

Financial Literacy

Cash or Credit? ...................... 138
Federal Revenues and Expenditures 155
What Is a Lemon Law? .................... 183
Shopping on the Internet .................. 338
College Costs: Planning Ahead ............ 416
Protecting Yourself Against Identity Theft ..................... 479
Simple and Compound Interest ............ 510
Education and Earning Power ............. 526
Making a Budget ...................... 550
Writing a Résumé: Dos and Don’ts .... 579
The Job Interview ..................... 607
How Much Does It Cost? ................ 645
Life of a Check ...................... 670
How Do You Calculate Unit Prices? .... 686
Help Wanted: Tomorrow’s Job Market .......... 720
Reading Social Studies

Unit 1  Making Connections          2
Unit 2  Finding the Main Idea       172
Unit 3  Summarizing Information     268
Unit 4  Distinguishing Fact from Opinion    346
Unit 5  Identifying Cause and Effect  422
Unit 6  Comparing and Contrasting   494
Unit 7  Making Inferences           626
Unit 8  Monitoring and Classifying   702

Analyzing Primary Sources

Active Citizenship                  166
The Federal Branch                  264
Extending the Right to Vote         342
The Struggle for Rights            372
Sources of American Law             490
Economic Concepts                   622
Government and the Economy          698
Comparing Constitutions             752

Historical Documents

The Magna Carta                     768
The Mayflower Compact               769
The Federalist, No. 10              769
Washington’s Farewell Address       770
The Star-Spangled Banner            770
The Monroe Doctrine                 771
Memorial of the Cherokee Nation     771
The Seneca Falls Declaration        772
The Emancipation Proclamation       773
The Gettysburg Address              774
I Will Fight No more                775
The Pledge of Allegiance            775
The American’s Creed                776
The Fourteen Points                 776
Brown v. Board of Education         777
John F. Kennedy’s Inaugural Address 778
I Have a Dream                      779
Constitution of North Carolina      780
Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence  782
The Halifax Resolves                783

Skills Handbook

Interpreting Political Cartoons     757
Predicting                         758
Analyzing Library and Research Resources  759
Interpreting a Chart               760
Making Comparisons                 761
Analyzing Primary Sources          762
Recognizing Bias                   763
Interpreting a Circle Graph        764
Sequencing Events                  765
Categorizing and Analyzing Information  766
Choices All Societies Face ................. 501
Cost-Benefit Analysis ....................... 508
Measuring GDP ................................. 518
Circular Flow of Economic Activity ........ 522
Methods of Payment .......................... 548
The Savings Rate, 1952–2006 ................. 555
Types of Savings Accounts .................. 556
Analyzing Advertising .......................... 560
The Law of Demand ............................ 571
A Change in Demand ........................... 575
Change in Demand for Substitutes .......... 576
The Law of Supply ............................... 582
Shifts in the Supply Curve .................... 584
The Price Adjustment Process ................ 589
Forms of Business Organization ............. 601
Corporate Chain of Command ................ 604
Labor Union Trends ............................ 612
Federal Regulatory Agencies .................. 632
Model of the Business Cycle ................. 638
U.S. Business Activity Since 1880 ............ 640
Unemployment and the Business Cycle ... 642
Features of U.S. Currency .................... 658
The Federal Reserve System .................. 662
Monetary Policy and Interest Rates .......... 664
The Federal Budget, FY 2007 .................. 679
State and Local Governments .................. 683

Imports and Exports, Selected Nations ...... 709
The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) 711
Comparing Economies: Russia, China, and the U.S. .......... 722
Social Statistics Comparison, Selected Regions .......... 725
Hourly Compensation Costs, Selected Nations .......... 736
Projected Water Use, 2025 .................... 736
Organization of the United Nations ............ 741
Population Living Under Various Types of Government .......... 746

Maps

United States Immigration, 2004 ............ 10
The English Colonies ......................... 40
Dominant Immigrant Groups in the Colonies ...................... 42
American Economy, c. 1750 .................. 45
Congressional Apportionment, Selected Years .......... 178
Federal Judicial Circuits ....................... 241
North Carolina Counties, 1775 ............... 351
Councils of Government ...................... 407
U.S. Regional Crime Rates in 2004 .......... 454
Right-to-Work States ......................... 610
The Federal Reserve System .................. 662
Imports and Exports, Selected Nations .......... 709
The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) .......... 711
Per Capita GDP, Selected Nations ............. 718
Social Statistics Comparison, Selected Regions .......... 725


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North Carolina Civics Today contains a wealth of information. The trick is to know where to look in the text to access all this information. If you complete this Scavenger Hunt exercise with your teacher or parents, you will see how the textbook is organized, and how to get the most out of your reading and study time. Let’s get started!

1. How many units and how many chapters are in the book?
2. What topic does Unit 4 cover?
3. Where can you quickly find a definition of the word communism?
4. What is the topic of the Real World Civics item on page 292?
5. What is the topic of “Analyzing Primary Sources” at the end of Unit 2?
6. What does the Web site call-out found on page 439 tell you to do?
7. How are the content vocabulary words microeconomics, scarcity, and trade-off in Chapter 18 called out?
8. Who is the topic of Teens in Action on page 152?
9. What does the Foldables™ exercise on page 655 ask you to do?
10. Where do you find graphic data about all of the United States, including the presidents?
The 30 BIG IDEAS will help you understand the information in North Carolina Civics Today: Citizenship, Economics & You. The big ideas—found in each chapter—are based on the national standards for Civic Education and Economic Education. They help you organize important ideas, recognize trends, and see connections and patterns in the information you will be reading.

As American citizens, we make a commitment to the nation and to the values and principles that are part of United States democracy.

Citizens possess certain rights. With citizenship, there are also certain responsibilities expected of all Americans.

People form governments to establish order, provide security, and accomplish common goals.

Political and economic institutions evolve to help individuals and groups accomplish their goals.

Political, social, religious, and economic changes influence the way Americans think and act.

Political principles and major events shape how people form governments.

A constitution reflects the values and goals of the society that creates it.

The Constitution of the United States establishes and protects fundamental rights and liberties.

For government to be effective, citizens must fulfill their civic duties and responsibilities.

Citizen participation is essential to the foundation and preservation of the U.S. political system.

The Constitution gives the legislative branch—Congress—the power to make laws.

The Constitution gives the executive branch the power to execute, or implement, the law.

Under our federal system, the executive, legislative, and judicial branches share the responsibility of governing the nation.

The judicial branch is charged with interpreting the law.

The right to vote is one of the fundamental rights of citizens in a democratic society.
A successful democracy is built on an informed electorate.

A democratic society requires the active participation of its citizens.

In a democratic society, various forces shape people’s ideas.

Under our federal system, power is shared between the national government and the state governments.

**Economics**

- Scarcity requires individuals and groups to make choices about using goods and services to satisfy their wants.
- Throughout history, civilizations have developed systems of laws to meet their needs.
- An economic system is the way a society organizes the production and consumption of goods and services.
- The basis of the market economy is voluntary exchange. In the American economy, the exchange usually involves money in return for a good or service.
- Free enterprise is the freedom of individuals and businesses to operate and compete with a minimum of government interference or regulation.
- You and everyone around you are consumers and, as such, play an important role in the economic system.
- We all make economic choices. Opportunity cost, scarcity, and supply and demand influence the decisions we make.
- Supply and demand in a market interact to determine how much of something is sold and bought, and what the price is.
- Market economies rest upon the fundamental principle of individual freedom for consumers, producers, and workers.
- The exchange of goods and services helps create economic interdependence between peoples in different places and different countries.
- Economic, social, and political changes create new traditions, values, and beliefs.