

## Democratic Values and Beliefs Sort

**Grade Level:** 4-5

**Lesson Creator:** Laura Oliynik, White Rock School, Jefferson Township, NJ

**Objective:** Students will be able to sort examples of people exercising their rights into specific democratic values and beliefs categories.

### **New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Social Studies (2020):**

- 6.1.5.Civic.DP.1: Using evidence, explain how the core civic virtues and democratic principles impact the decisions made at the local, state, and national government (e.g., fairness, equality, common good).
- 6.1.5.CivicsPR.1: Compare procedures for making decisions in a variety of settings including classroom, school, government, and /or society.
- 6.1.5.CivicsHR.1: Describe how fundamental rights guaranteed by the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights contribute to the improvement of American democracy (i.e., freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of petition, the right to vote, and the right to due process).

### **Common Core Standards:**

SL.4.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on *grade 4 topics and texts*, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

### **Procedure:**

1. Begin with class discussion and the question, "What are we free to do here in America?"
2. Define our government as a democracy, or a democratic republic and discuss how we are guaranteed certain rights or freedoms as listed in the Constitution.
3. Briefly discuss the rights of equal justice, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of the press (define press as the news & newspapers).
4. Break students into groups of 2 or 3 and give them one sheet with the 4 categories and a bag with the 12 example cards.
5. Groups will read each card together, and then decide which category it fits into. They may find that some cards could fit into more than one category.

6. If a group finishes early, ask them to brainstorm any other examples that could fit into any of the four categories!
7. Once all groups are finished sorting, meet back together as a group and discuss answers to the sort.

**Materials:**

- One sorting sheet and one bag of cards for each group (2-3 students per group)
- Ticket Out form (for use as assessment)

**Assessment:**

- Evaluate student group participation in sorting activity, discussion participation
- Students may also fill out a “My Ticket Out” sheet before leaving class

Below, you will find four different values and beliefs that citizens in a DEMOCRACY share.

Remember, a **democratic republic** is the type of government where the people share power, vote for people to represent them in government, and have equal rights!

Take the cards that are in front of you and SORT them into one of the four categories below....  
In other words, what value or belief does each card go with?

## THE RIGHT TO EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER THE LAW



## FREEDOM OF SPEECH



## FREEDOM OF RELIGION



## FREEDOM OF THE PRESS



<p>1. An article on the front page of the newspaper is written about President Obama’s new healthcare plan.</p>	<p>2. A woman is accused of robbing 30 banks in the county. She is sent to court determine whether she is guilty or not, even though she has robbed banks in the past.</p>	<p>3. A teenager gets pulled over by a police officer and gets a ticket. The back of the ticket says that he can pay the fine for the ticket, or he can go to court to argue his case before a judge.</p>
<p>4. Many witnesses see a man steal an elderly woman’s purse. He is sent to court for the jury to decide if he is guilty or not.</p>	<p>5. A man stands outside a building, preaching his religious beliefs loudly to people passing by.</p>	<p>6. The opinion section of the newspaper has four different letters from people who live in town about fixing up the roads in town.</p>
<p>7. A child with a Jewish father and a Christian mother shares beliefs between the faiths, and celebrates both Hanukkah and Christmas.</p>	<p>8. A political cartoon in a newspaper that makes fun of the governor’s recent actions.</p>	<p>9. Developers have plans to build an Islamic center (or Mosque) in a historic neighborhood.</p>
<p>10. In 1963, people gathered in Washington, D.C. for equal rights for African Americans. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave his “I Have a Dream” speech.</p>	<p>11. Any citizens of a town are allowed to go to Town Council meetings, stand up, and talk to the Town Council Members about their opinions.</p>	<p>12. More than 1,000 people protest the decision to build a housing development where a large park and forest are in town.</p>

Admit One

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MY TICKET OUT OF CLASS**

The Bill of Rights in the United States Constitution lists democratic rights that all Americans must have. **Why do you think these rights need to be written down in an official government document? What if they weren't written down?**

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Admit One