

The Journey From Undocumented To U.S. Citizen

Resources

- [The Journey From Undocumented To U.S. Citizen](#)
- [The Journey From Undocumented To U.S. Citizen \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#)

Identities & Themes

- Identity affirmation
- Bias, prejudice, and stereotypes
- Latino/a/e/x and/or Hispanic
- Immigration/Migration

Summary of Resource

In this video, Ana Gabriela Velasquez shares her story about why her family came to the U.S. when she was a child and why she wanted to become a U.S. citizen.

Condition for Belonging: Agency

Anti-Bias Education Tenets

- Empathy & Understanding
- Healthy Complex Identities
- Respect Across Differences

Social-Emotional Learning Competencies

- Social Awareness
- Relationship Skills

Before You Teach

Vocabulary

Undocumented - referring to a person who does not have appropriate legal documents or record in written documentation that is recognized by the state.

Note: You may need to reinforce appropriate language that treats people with dignity and stress the importance of using the term “undocumented” instead of “illegal” when referring to immigration status.

naturalization - the process to become a U.S. citizen for people not born into citizenship.

Before teaching this lesson, take some time to familiarize yourself with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services website, particularly the steps to citizenship. This will help you be able to give the correct information when answering student questions during the lesson. See

<https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learn-about-citizenship/citizenship-and-naturalization> and <https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learn-about-citizenship>.

Teacher Reflection Questions

- If you grew up in the U.S., what were you taught about immigrants and refugees in this country and in your community?
- How familiar are you with the process of naturalization/citizenship in the U.S.? What questions do you want to answer before discussing the topic with students?
- What are your beliefs and biases regarding immigrants, refugees, and our system of immigration? (Who gets to come here? Who gets to live and work here? Who gets to become a U.S. citizen?) How might this impact your conversations with students on the topic?

Materials Needed for Lesson

- [The Journey From Undocumented To U.S. Citizen \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#)
- Ability to project a slideshow and video
- Journal or notebook
- Access to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services webpage on Naturalization: <https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learn-about-citizenship>

Process of Implementing

- Project [The Journey From Undocumented To U.S. Citizen \(Lesson Slideshow\)](#)
- Introduce the lesson and vocabulary.
- Show the video.
- After showing the video, give students time to complete a written reflection to at least one of the journal prompts.
- Lead students through the discussion questions. Answer student questions
- Complete the Follow-Up Activity if time allows.

Journal Prompts

- What surprised you about the Naturalization ceremony shown in the video?
- If you were to interview Ana (from the video) or another new U.S. citizen, what would you want to ask? What are you curious about?

Discussion Questions

*Essential questions are in bold.

- Why did Ana's parents decide to come to the United States?

- **What about the Naturalization Ceremony stood out to you or surprised you from watching the video? What questions do you have?**
- **Why did Ana want to become a U.S. citizen? What does it mean to her to become a U.S. citizen?**
- **At the beginning of the video, Ana said, “I have a lot of emotions going on right now.” What do you think some of those emotions were? Why do you think she may have felt those emotions?**
- Ana said she identifies herself as Guatemalan, Salvadorian, and American. Why do you think it's important to her to identify as all three?

Follow Up Activity

3-2-1: Give students time to explore the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services webpage on Naturalization Ceremonies to learn more about the process Ana (from the video) went through: <https://www.uscis.gov/citizenship/learn-about-citizenship>. Ask students to identify three new things they learn, two things they found surprising or think their peers will find surprising, and one question they still have about the process. Take time to help students find answers to their questions. To take the conversation further, you could ask the following discussion questions:

- What might be some barriers with the current citizenship process?
- Why do you think some people would choose not to go through the citizenship process?