

POWER CIVICS® TOOLKIT



CONTENTS

- **POWER CIVICS - HISTORICAL CONTEXT & OVERVIEW**
- **POWER CIVICS - TEACHING OBJECTIVES**
- **TEACHING POWER CIVICS - A VIDEO TUTORIAL**
(available online at: thecitizenscampaign.org)
- ***CITIZEN POWER, A CITIZEN LEADERSHIP MANUAL***
- Power Civics Text
- **10 FIVE MINUTE VIDEO CLASSES** with downloadable notes
(available online at: thecitizenscampaign.org)
- **THE “NO-BLAME” PROBLEM SOLVING PROJECT GUIDE**
- **HELP DESK – EXPERT SUPPORT, ADVICE & RESOURCES**
for problem solving project and class instruction
- **EVALUATION MATERIALS**
- **RECOMMENDED OPTIONAL READINGS**
- **OPTIONAL, STUDENT-RUN COMMUNITY POWER CIVICS FORUM:**
GOALS & ORGANIZING GUIDE

WELCOME



Welcome to the Power Civics© Toolkit!

Thank you for your interest in teaching students how to become “citizen leaders” who are aware that they have new powers that go beyond voting and protesting, where they can play a powerful new role as “public citizens” in a 21st century democracy.

This Toolkit includes the materials you need to become effective teachers of Power Civics. You are also invited to go online to thecitizenscampaign.org for Power Civics updates and new additions to our offerings.

We hope you find this Toolkit useful as you empower your students with the leadership skills they need to make their futures better. Yes – they face serious problems, but they now have the power to offer serious solutions.

Welcome aboard!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
■ POWER CIVICS - HISTORICAL CONTEXT & OVERVIEW	4
■ POWER CIVICS – TEACHING OBJECTIVES	6
■ TEACHING POWER CIVICS - A VIDEO TUTORIAL (available online at thecitizenscampaign.org)	9
■ <i>CITIZEN POWER, A CITIZEN LEADERSHIP MANUAL,</i> Introducing the Art of No-Blame Problem Solving (Published by Rutgers University Press)	10
■ 10 FIVE MINUTE VIDEO CLASSES with downloadable notes (available online at thecitizenscampaign.org)	11
■ THE PROJECT GUIDE for No-Blame Problem Solving	12
■ HELP DESK – Expert Support, Advice & Resources for problem solving projects and general class instruction	25
■ EVALUATION MATERIALS	26
■ RECOMMENDED OPTIONAL READINGS	31
■ OPTIONAL, STUDENT-RUN COMMUNITY POWER CIVICS FORUM: Goals & Organizing Guide	32

POWER CIVICS®

Historical Context & Overview

Historically, our participatory roles as citizens have been limited to voting and protesting. But the 21st century brings with it two new engines of change. The first is an expansion in citizens' rights to participate in government decision making and problem solving and the second is the advances in technology that give regular citizens the power to find successful solutions to public issues. Once understood, these advances can revolutionize how we think about our roles as citizens and introduce the new role of citizen problem solver, a leadership role that takes us beyond being just spectator or supplicant. This is a role that your students can step into immediately upon completion of **Power Civics**® training, and continue learning how to work with others to solve problems and exercise their new-found leadership skills.

Power Civics® was developed by experienced practitioners in local government in partnership with professors who are experts in the emerging discipline of “beyond the ballot” civic engagement. In as little as ten class hours, it provides students with the tools to become active and informed participants in government problem solving and decision making.

THE GOALS OF POWER CIVICS ARE TO:

- A.** Improve students' collaborative problem solving skills
 - skills that are valuable in all walks of life and especially with respect to solving public issues in their own communities;

and
- B.** Enable students to engage effectively in local government decision making, and by doing so at this most accessible level, learn the skills and tactics needed to effectively engage at the state and national level as well.

More specifically, *Power Civics* teaches students:

- How to use technology to find proven solutions in communities similar to their own and to employ media literacy in this search for successful solutions
- How to access information about their communities' current government policy details
- How to adapt cost effective, evidence based solutions for use in their hometowns
- How to use a No-Blame strategy that keeps the focus on their solution
- How to use citizens' legal rights to research, present, and advance solutions before local government decision making bodies
- How to maintain a respectful, ongoing pursuit of progress toward the adoption of solutions
- How to take leadership positions in public service without having to run for public office

We encourage all professionals teaching *Power Civics* to bring their own knowledge and creativity to the design of the syllabus and the use of the Toolkit materials.

And we are always looking for your feedback. As different professors teach *Power Civics*, we want to be able to put their experiences and insights to work as we further shape and refine this powerful approach to civic engagement.