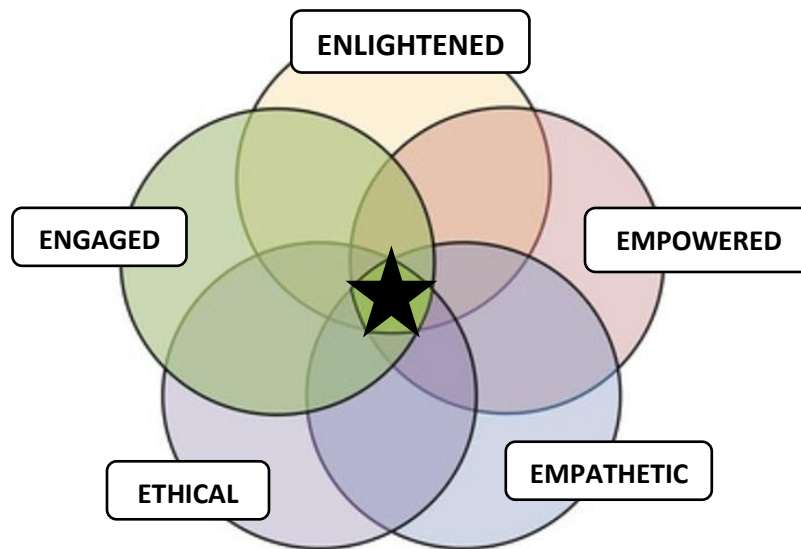




## The Essential Citizenship Competencies

Many outcomes and issues require students to think contextually, critically, and creatively. The Essential Citizenship Competencies (ECCs) support this thinking. There are 5 ECCs, each with its own knowledge, skills, and disposition.

**Used together, the ECC's guide students to a deep, justice-oriented understanding of a question, topic, or issue.**



### I/WE

- ✓ **investigate** the history & contexts of issues.
- ✓ **examine** power – its sources, forms, and implications.
- ✓ **seek**, understand, & reason fairly from multiple points of view.
- ✓ **evaluate** rights and responsibilities.
- ✓ **take action** that targets root causes.

### Why are the ECCs at the heart of Citizenship Education?

When faced with a new question, issue, or situation,  
our minds like to make sense of things rapidly!

**Here's the problem:** If we trust the answer that comes quickly and first, we may be convinced of it because we've always believed it, or because it's in our selfish interest to believe it. *If everyone does this, we end up with misunderstanding and conflict!*

**Here's the solution:** if we use the ECCs, we can understand the question, issue, or situation more deeply, and enter into an "ethical space" of respectful problem-solving.

## ECC Questions to Guide Thinking

### ENLIGHTENED

***Citizens assume issues have histories and contexts and seek to understand both.***

- What are the Who? What? When? Where? Why? of this situation / dilemma / issue?
- What led to this?
- What are the most important things we need to know to understand this situation?
- How can we find out?

### EMPOWERED

***Citizens assume power matters and investigate the sources, forms, levels, and impacts of power in a given context.***

- Who has power in this situation? How do you know?
- Who doesn't have power in this situation? How do you know?
- What kind(s) of power are involved here, and how does one get or lose it?
- What are the implications of the power distribution for those involved and affected?

### EMPATHETIC

***Citizens assume there are multiple points of view and seek to understand and reason fairmindedly from each of them.***

- Who are the individuals, groups, institutions, & environments involved in or affected?
- How does each one experience and view this situation, problem, or issue? Why?
- What is most precious to each one? Why?

### ETHICAL

***Citizens assume people have rights and responsibilities in every context and examine which are upheld and which are breached.***

- What rights do people have? Why?
- Are these rights protected or threatened? How? With what consequences?
- What responsibilities do people have? Why?
- Are these responsibilities being met or ignored? How? With what consequences?

### ENGAGED

***Citizens assume they have agency and influence. They take individual and collective actions which target root causes of inequities.***

- What are the root sources and causes of this problem?
- What needs to change? Why?
- What strategies will best support this change?
- How will we evaluate the impact of the actions we take to address the issue?