C.2.1 Define the term "citizen," and identify legal means of becoming a United States citizen.
SS.7.C.2.1 Benchmark Clarification 1: Students will define citizenship as stated in the Fourteenth Amendment.

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the state wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. – U.S. Constitution, Amendment XIV, Section 1 (1868)
SS.7.C.2.1 Benchmark Clarification 1: Students will define citizenship as stated in the Fourteenth Amendment.

The original draft of the U.S. Constitution adopted in 1789 did not include a definition of U.S. citizenship. However, the Constitution referenced citizenship several times without having a formal definition. It was not until the passing of the 14th Amendment in 1868 that a formal definition of U.S. citizenship was added to the Constitution.
The 14th Amendment, as shown above, defines citizenship as belonging to anyone who is born in the United States or is an **immigrant** who has completed the **naturalization** process. There are two methods by which someone can become a U.S. citizen by birth. If a person is born in the United States, in one of its territories, or on a U.S. military base, that person is a citizen through the **law of soil**. This method does not require the mother or father to be a U.S. citizen in order for the person to be granted citizenship. The other method of gaining citizenship is for one of a person’s birth parents to be a U.S. citizen. Under this condition, U.S. citizenship is passed to the child from the natural mother or father. This method of gaining citizenship is called the **law of blood**.

- **Birth**
  - Born on U.S. “law of soil”
  - at least 1 parent a U.S. citizen “law of blood”

- **Naturalization Process**
  1. 18 yrs. old
  2. Live in U.S. last 5 years
  3. Fill out application
  4. Read, speak, write English
  5. Know history (test)
  6. Good moral character
  7. Last → Oath of Allegiance
C.2.1 Vocab.

**14th Amendment** - an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that defines citizenship, grants citizenship to former slaves and defines voters as males at least 21 year of age

**Citizenship** - being a legal member of a state and/or country

**Due process of law** - a system of justice based on the principle in the Fifth Amendment that a person cannot be deprived of life, liberty, or property without appropriate legal procedures and protections

**Immigrant** - laws passed by government to protect natural rights a person who comes to a country to live permanently

**Law of blood** - the principle that a person's nationality at birth is the same as that of his or her biological mother

**Law of soil** - the principle that a person's nationality at birth is determined by the territory within which he or she was born

**Naturalization** - the process by which an immigrant becomes a citizen

**Natural rights** - the belief that individuals are born with basic rights that cannot be taken away by governments
If an **immigrant** wants to become a U.S. **citizen**, the immigrant must meet a set of conditions. The table below lists the basic conditions required for **naturalization**.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immigrants must:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>be at least 18 years old.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have been a <strong>resident</strong> of the United States for five years, without leaving for more than 30 months combined and for no more than 12 uninterrupted months throughout the five-year period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>file for a petition for naturalization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>take a test to show that they can read, write, and speak English, and demonstrate knowledge of American history and the U.S. Constitution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be able to prove that they are of good moral character.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have two U.S. citizens confirm that the applicant will be of good moral character.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SS.7.C.2.1 Benchmark Clarification 2: Students will define citizenship as stated in the Fourteenth Amendment.

Once all of the conditions above have been met, the applicant must take the “Oath of Allegiance.” The oath is the last step in the naturalization process and requires a person seeking citizenship to pledge their loyalty to the United States.
### SS.7.C.2.1 Benchmark Clarification 2

Students will define citizenship as stated in the Fourteenth Amendment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>citizen</td>
<td>a legal member of a state and/or country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good moral character</td>
<td>not participating in certain crimes or behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>immigrant</td>
<td>laws passed by government to protect natural rights a person who comes to a country to live permanently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>naturalization</td>
<td>the process by which an immigrant becomes a citizen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>resident</td>
<td>someone who lives in a place for a minimum period of time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Debates about **citizenship** and **naturalization** have impacted society, government, and the political process. Citizenship remains a frequently debated and sometimes controversial topic. At times, Americans have disagreed about who should be granted citizenship by naturalization and about how difficult the process should be to gain citizenship. Some people question how long an **immigrant** should be allowed to live in the U.S. without applying for citizenship. Political parties have incorporated these questions about naturalization into their **party platforms**, and **candidates’** views about naturalization influence how voters feel about naturalization and the importance of U.S. citizenship. As more immigrants naturalize and become involved in the political process they also influence the debate by casting their votes, running for elected office, being selected for public office, and suggesting legislation and government decisions.
**SS.7.C.2.1 Benchmark Clarification 3:** Students will evaluate the impact of the naturalization process on society, government, or the political process.

For example, the **Voting Rights Act of 1965** was changed in 1975 to require that election ballots be printed in all of the languages in a county where at least 5% of the citizens living in the county speak the same language. In other words, if 5% of the citizens living in Orange County, Florida speak Spanish, then all of the election ballots must be printed in both Spanish and English. This requirement makes it easier for naturalized citizens from Latin America and South America to vote. This is because every item on the ballot, including proposed constitutional amendments, is printed in Spanish. Since the Voting Rights Act was changed in 1975, more naturalized U.S. citizens from Latin America and South America vote in elections and candidates are more likely to include Spanish language commercials and posters in their campaigns showing that they are reaching out to these naturalized citizens. Florida elected its first U.S. Senator of Cuban descent in 2004 (Mel Martinez) and two brothers, Mario Diaz-Balart and Lincoln Diaz-Balart represented Florida in the U.S. House of Representatives for several years at the same time until Lincoln Diaz-Balart decided not to seek re-election in 2010. Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart was born in Florida (citizen by law of soil) while Congressman Lincoln Diaz-Balart was born in Cuba (naturalized citizen).
**SS.7.C.2.1 Benchmark Clarification 3**: Students will evaluate the impact of the naturalization process on society, government, or the political process.

- **candidate** - a person running for political office
- **citizenship** - being a legal member of a state and/or country
- **immigrant** - laws passed by government to protect natural rights a person who comes to a country to live permanently
- **naturalization** - the process by which an immigrant becomes a citizen
- **party platform** - a document stating the aims and goals of a political party
- **Voting Rights Act of 1965** - a federal law that banned race discrimination in voting practices by federal, state, and local governments