



BSA Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge

Information for Scouts & Their Families

We are looking forward to working with you on this merit badge. The information below will help you prepare for a productive class.

This is a four-hour class. Scouts should attend the entire session to complete the in-class work. We will meet in the Education Center at Colvin Run Mill Historic Site.

Scouts should bring:

- **water and a snack**
- **a pen or pencil**
- **any completed prework**
- **a blue card signed by the troop leader** **Note: Colvin Run Mill does NOT have blue cards.

Parents, to comply with BSA guidelines, this program requires that 2 adults be in attendance. Please consider attending with your Scout. You may learn more about your community and your presence helps the Scouts stay focused while the merit badge counselor teaches and works with Scouts individually.

Scouts, while not required, we recommend you use a *Citizenship in the Nation Merit Badge Worksheet* to organize your work for this class. Worksheets can be found at [Merit Badge Requirements and Worksheets \(boyscoutstrail.com\)](https://www.boyscoutstrail.com) or [Merit Badge Worksheets \(usscouts.org\)](https://usscouts.org).

Badge Requirements

Merit Badges are not designed to be done in one 4-hour session, so Scouts will need to complete some requirements outside of this class. Below is a list of requirements covered in and out of class.

Requirements that will be covered during the class:

1. What is the Constitution of the United States? What does the Constitution do? What principles does it reflect? Why is it important to have a constitution?
2. List the six purposes for creating the United States Constitution set forth in the Preamble to the Constitution. How do these purposes affect your family and community?
3. List the three branches of the United States government. Explain:
 - a. The function of each branch of government
 - b. Why it is important to divide powers among different branches
 - c. How each branch "checks" and "balances" the others
 - d. How citizens can be involved in each branch of government.
4. Discuss the importance of:
 - a. Declaration of Independence

- b. The Bill of Rights (the first 10 Amendments to the Constitution) and the 14th Amendment
- c. The traditional United States motto "E Pluribus Unum".

7a. Visit a place that is listed as a National Historic Landmark or that is on the National Register of Historic Places. Tell your counselor what you learned about the landmark or site and what you found interesting about it. *We will tour and discuss the Colvin Run Mill, which is a National Historic Landmark.*

Requirements that should be completed prior to the class. Bring this work to class so you can discuss it with the merit badge counselor during the session. Our comments on completing this prework are in italics. * If all pre-work is not done, Scouts may attend the class to complete the in-class work, and we will sign the completed requirements. Once the work is completed, Scouts can make an appointment to meet with Colvin Run Mill merit badge counselor staff to review completed work and sign their complete blue cards.

5. Watch the national evening news for five days in a row or read the main stories in a national media organization (e.g., a newspaper or news website) for five days in a row. Discuss the national issues that you learned about with your counselor. Choose one issue and explain how it affects you, your family, and community.

6. With your counselor's approval, choose a speech of national historical importance. Explain:

- a. Who the author was
- b. What the historical context was
- c. What difficulties the nation faced that the author wished to discuss
- d. What the author said
- e. Why the speech is important to the nation's history.

Choose a sentence or two from the speech that has significant meaning to you and tell your counselor why.

7. Do b or c or d (*You are only required to do one of these options*)

- a. Tour your state capitol building or the U.S. Capitol. Tell your counselor what you learned about the capitol, its function and history.
- b. Tour a federal facility. Explain to your counselor what you saw there and what you learned about its function in the local community and how it serves this nation.
- c. Choose a national monument that interests you. Using books, brochures, the internet (with your parent's permission), and other resources, find out more about the

monument. Tell your counselor what you learned and explain why the monument is important to this country's citizens.

8. Name your representatives in the United States Congress. Write a letter to your representative in Congress explaining your views on a national issue. Show your letter, along with any response you might receive, to your counselor.

If you have questions, contact Dawn Bova at (703-759-2771) or dawn.bova@fairfaxcounty.gov.