

Be a Global Citizen!

Everyone is a citizen of a country and other places on a map. There’s even digital citizenship online.

Each of those types of citizenship involves membership in a group, as well as rights that are protected and responsibilities that are expected. In school, for example, you receive an education (a right) and you must obey school rules (a responsibility).

There’s a bigger community you’re a part of, too, one you can be a citizen of no matter where you live. It’s our planet. We’re connected to people like never

before, from the global economy we’re all a part of, to the air we breathe, to the technology that makes anyone’s ideas just a click away. Through the United Nations, you have rights common to all people globally. You also have a responsibility to respect all people’s rights and challenge global injustice. National citizenship is vital, but our common bonds and challenges are bigger than any national borders. Embrace the world—be a global citizen!



Did You Know?

The United Nations is a group of more than 190 countries that work together to promote peace and create a better world.

What Does a Global Citizen Look Like?

The U.S. Fund for UNICEF defines a global citizen as:

Someone who understands interconnectedness, respects and values diversity, has the ability to challenge injustice, and takes action in personally meaningful ways



Write About It: In what ways do you already act as a global citizen? What else can you do to demonstrate your global citizenship? Record your answers on a separate sheet of paper.



Of the four lobes of your brain, the frontal lobe—located behind the forehead—is the largest. It is concerned with executing behavior, making it quite important when it comes to acting as a global citizen.

A Global Lobe

Read the following real example of an ordinary teenager acting as a global citizen. Then answer the questions about how his frontal lobe may have contributed to that behavior.

Alex, a member of his UNICEF High School Club, was nominated by the U.S. Fund for UNICEF to attend a global teen peacemakers summit. Meeting with youth from Iraq, Malaysia, India, and elsewhere, he listened about their efforts against injustice. After collaborating to solve common problems, the teen leaders put their new skills to the test. Alex's project was to provide his local peers with the opportunity to learn from the community improvement efforts in Ethiopia that he helped lead. Over several years, they could get involved in fundraising, learning about another culture, collecting supplies for schools, and hands-on volunteering. These teens became part of the movement of youth from all over the world joining as one and working to achieve a just peace.

For Discussion, Thought, and Debate

- What rights do you have as a global citizen? Are these rights equally protected everywhere? What can you do to defend rights in places where the government does not respect them?
- If there's no government that grants "global citizenship," is it an actual form of citizenship? What makes global citizenship valid or important in today's world?
- How can you be a good global citizen while also being a good citizen of your country?

Frontal Lobe Function	Possible use in global citizenship (record your answers on a separate sheet of paper)
Problem solving	1 What problems would Alex have to solve in order to fulfill his project?
Language	2 In what parts in this selection were Alex's language skills called upon?
Judgment	3 What reasoned decisions might Alex have to make in selecting the projects that will be most helpful to people in Ethiopia?
Social behavior	4 Explain two actions Alex likely took when he had to interact with his global peers.

Did You Know?

The Constitution establishes many rights for people in the United States. The United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights does the same for people everywhere in the world.

The U.S. Constitution:	The Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
People are equal before the law (14th Amendment)	People are equal before the law (Article 7)
People have the right to exercise their religion freely (1st Amendment)	People have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 18)

There are also rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that are not in the U.S. Constitution, such as:

- Freedom of movement and emigration/immigration
- Right of marriage and founding a family
- Right to a standard of living adequate for health and well-being