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*Flag Made from Hay Bales*

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Williamson County, Texas



# *Introduction to the* CURRICULUM

How do elections work? What does the President do all day? Who decides where stop signs go? What is Labor Day? This curriculum will answer these questions and many more. *Uncle Sam and You* guides your child on an engaging tour of American government. He or she will learn about elected leaders and everyday citizens, all of whom have an important role to fill in making our country work.

## ***Uncle Sam and You Curriculum Package***

The basic curriculum package for *Uncle Sam and You* includes:

- ★ *Uncle Sam and You, Part 1* — This book has seventy-five lessons, designed to be completed in one semester.
- ★ *Uncle Sam and You, Part 2* — This book has another seventy-five lessons, designed to be completed in one semester.
- ★ *The Citizen's Handbook* — This book is a collection of original letters, poems, songs, stories, and other writings related to civics.
- ★ *Uncle Sam and You Answer Key* — This book has all of the answers needed for the assignments included at the end of the lessons, the activities in the *Student Workbook*, and the questions and quizzes in the *Lesson Review*.

## **Additional Products**

To make this curriculum a rich experience and to make it usable with children from grade five through grade eight, we offer three additional products:

*Uncle Sam and You Student Workbook* — This book has puzzles and other handwork activities which review information learned in the daily lessons. These are designed for younger students and for students whose learning style fits these kinds of activities.

*Uncle Sam and You Lesson Review* — This book has daily questions, literature review questions, and weekly quizzes, designed for older students. We expect that students will use

either the *Student Workbook* or the *Lesson Review*, but your student can complete both if you prefer.

***Uncle Sam and You Literature Package*** — This is a selection of eight literature titles that complement the lessons in *Uncle Sam and You*. These books can be purchased from Notgrass Company as a package or individually. You can also obtain them from another source such as the library, a bookstore, or an online source. You can use any unabridged edition of these books.

- ★ *Lincoln: A Photobiography* by Russell Freedman (Units 5-6)
- ★ *A Letter to Mrs. Roosevelt* by C. Coco De Young (Units 10-11)
- ★ *Brightly of the Grand Canyon* by Marguerite Henry (Units 12-14)
- ★ *Basher Five-Two* by Scott O’Grady (Units 16-17)
- ★ *Misty of Chincoteague* by Marguerite Henry (Units 18-19)
- ★ *The Long Winter* by Laura Ingalls Wilder (Units 22-24)
- ★ *The Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane* by Russell Freedman (Units 25-26)
- ★ *Lost on a Mountain in Maine* by Donn Fendler (Units 29-30)

## Notes for Parents on the Literature Selections

We carefully selected literature for *Uncle Sam and You* that is upbuilding and won’t assault your faith or sense of decency. We intentionally excluded many titles that did not meet our criteria. Some of the ones we included have a few words or references that we want to tell you about before your child reads them. We want to let you know in case you want to do some editing or choose to read a book aloud to the student and skip over inappropriate words. We have listed here only the books in the literature list that have minor content issues.

*Lincoln: A Photobiography* by Russell Freedman — “As president he had been denounced, ridiculed, and damned by a legion of critics” (page 30).

*Brightly of the Grand Canyon* by Marguerite Henry — A few uses of dang/danged (pages 72, 88, 100, 124) and jackass (pages 112, 150, 180). A passage on page 119 describes the majesty of the canyon as “a thing to worship alone.” The ending of the story suggests that the spirit of Brightly is still roaming the canyon.

*Basher Five-Two* by Captain Scott O’Grady — Captain O’Grady discusses an article he read about “The Will to Survive.” It told of two people lost in difficult circumstances. One had the will to survive and did for several days; the other gave up quickly and committed suicide. He shows how the latter was definitely the wrong course. O’Grady is a Roman Catholic and makes several references to the practice of his faith, which includes praying to saints and carrying a special medal (pages 52, 58, 72, 83, and 126-127). He also mentions that he and his friends “partied hard” while stationed in South Korea (page 85).

*Lost on a Mountain in Maine* by Donn Fendler — As he tells his story, Donn uses the word “Christmas” as an exclamation of surprise several times.

## How to Use *Uncle Sam and You, Part 1 and Part 2*

These two volumes are the core of the curriculum. They give you and your child all of the information you need in order to use *Uncle Sam and You* on a daily basis.

These two volumes contain fifteen units each for a total of thirty units. Your child can study *Part 1* during one half of the school year and *Part 2* during the other half. Each unit has four lessons. At the back of each book are fifteen lessons on America’s patriotic holidays. If you want your child to do five lessons per week, the holiday lessons can be used as a fifth lesson; or they can be used on a family night so that Dad can join in.

At the beginning of each unit, an introductory page gives a list of the lessons in that unit and a list of the additional books the student will need while studying that unit. Following the introductory page are the daily lessons. Students can read these on their own, or you can read the lessons aloud. The lessons are richly illustrated. The student’s learning experience will be greatly enhanced if he or she is encouraged to examine the illustrations closely. They have been carefully selected to be an integral part of the learning experience.

At the end of each lesson is a list of several activities. Students are not necessarily expected to complete all of these activities. You may choose which activities you wish to assign. Subjects of the activities vary from day to day, but they include:

- ★ Thinking Biblically assignments
- ★ Creative writing assignments
- ★ Vocabulary assignments
- ★ Short research assignments to look something up or ask a family member
- ★ Assignments to draw a picture or take a photograph
- ★ Reading assignments from *The Citizen’s Handbook* or a literature title
- ★ Assignments in the *Student Workbook* or the *Lesson Review*

## How to Use the American Holidays Lessons

An important part of civics is celebrating holidays with family, friends, and communities. Since families who homeschool can schedule their school year in many different ways, we designed *Uncle Sam and You* so that you can choose when to study the various holidays. If you start the curriculum in January, you don’t want to study Thanksgiving in April! We arranged the holidays in chronological order from Independence Day to Inauguration Day in *Part 1* and from Martin Luther King Day to Father’s Day in *Part 2*. Each holiday lesson has a corresponding family activity. These are found in the section after the holiday lessons.

## How to Use *The Citizen's Handbook* and Literature

At the end of many of the daily lessons, the student will be given a reading assignment. Some of the assignments are taken from *The Citizen's Handbook* and others are taken from the literature we recommend to go along with the course. Your child will know exactly what to read each day.

## How to Use the *Student Workbook*

Students using the *Student Workbook* will complete Activity 1 after reading Lesson 1 and so on after each lesson. (There are no *Student Workbook* activities for the holiday lessons.)

## How to Use the *Lesson Review*

Students using the *Lesson Review* will complete the questions for Lesson 1 after reading Lesson 1 and so on after each lesson. (There are no *Lesson Review* questions for the holiday lessons.) After finishing a book in the literature package, the student will answer questions on the book. At the end of each unit, the student will take a quiz.

## Using a Three-Ring Binder Notebook for End-of-Lesson Activities

We recommend that each student have a three-ring binder notebook to use only for *Uncle Sam and You*. He or she will keep in this notebook the writing and art projects completed as part of the end-of-lesson activities.

## Enjoying the Weekly Family Activities

A family activity is suggested at the end of each holiday lesson. Projects include art, crafts, recipes, games, and parties. The instructions for the family activities are found in the back of *Uncle Sam and You, Part 1* and *Part 2*. We recommend reading the instructions and gathering the supplies early each week. Then you can complete the activity the day you do the holiday lesson or on another day that is convenient for your family. Your supervision is required for your child's safety. See the box below.

### Parental Supervision Required

The family activities are designed for parental involvement. Please review the activity and discuss with your child what he or she may do alone and what he or she needs your supervision to do. The family activities in this book include the use of sharp objects, the oven and stove, and a few Internet research suggestions. Notgrass Company cannot accept responsibility for the safety of your child in completing these activities. You are responsible for your child's safety.

**Please Note: Be careful. Some children may be allergic to recipe ingredients or craft supplies.**

Our family has long enjoyed a family night once each week. You could do the family activity on a family night so that more family members could take part in the fun and learning. Like all components of *Uncle Sam and You*, the family activities are optional. We offer them as extra learning experiences. You, the parent, are the best one to decide if you are able to schedule time to complete them.

## **How Much Time Does It Take to Complete Each Lesson?**

Depending on how many activities you assign, most students will need forty-five minutes to an hour and a half to complete one lesson. More time will be needed on the day you do the family activity. This curriculum has one hundred and fifty lessons and is designed to be completed in one school year. Since a typical school year has about one hundred and eighty days, the student completes one lesson on most school days. However, some families may choose to spread the curriculum out over a longer period of time.

## **What Supplies Will My Student Need?**

Students will need blank paper, notebook paper, a pencil, colored pencils, and a three-ring binder, plus the materials needed to complete the family activities. These materials are listed on the individual family activity instruction pages. You may also choose to use a camera for Picture This assignments at the end of certain lessons.

## **What Ages Can Use This Curriculum?**

The curriculum is designed for students in grades five through eight. With parental help and supervision, younger children can participate in many activities and can benefit from hearing the lessons read aloud.

## **How Many Activities Should My Student Complete?**

Parents know best what their children are capable of accomplishing. *Uncle Sam and You* is designed to be flexible. A variety of activities is included in each lesson. A parent may require an eighth grader who is academically gifted to read the daily lessons and complete every assignment at the end of each lesson independently. On the other hand, a parent with an academically-challenged fifth grader may decide to read aloud each lesson in *Uncle Sam and You* and the selections in *The Citizen's Handbook*, and help the student be successful with the other assignments. The variety of assignments is intended to make it easy for you to create a positive, rich, engaging learning experience for your student. You should not feel pressured to complete every activity suggestion.

As you look ahead to your school year or evaluate midway, consider how you might make your child's education less complicated and educationally richer by using *Uncle Sam and You* as a large part of his or her learning for this year. *Uncle Sam and You* is much more than civics and government. You can use *Uncle Sam and You* as part of your literature, writing, vocabulary, art, handwriting practice, and Bible learning. For example, you do not necessarily need a separate language arts curriculum. You may find that eliminating busy work in an entirely separate subject and allowing that subject to be incorporated into this study makes for a less stressful, more engaging, more memorable school year!

If you have more than one child in grades five through eight, you may enjoy reading the lessons aloud as a group. Afterward, you can give each child different assignments, depending on his or her age and skill level. If you have carefully observed your child and prayed about the direction to take, then you can look back at the end of the school year and know you have accomplished the goal of completing *Uncle Sam and You*.

## **Some Reminders So You Will Not Feel Overwhelmed**

Remember that God gave you your children and your daily responsibilities. A homeschooling mother who has one child can complete more *Uncle Sam and You* activities than a homeschooling mother who has seven children and an elderly grandparent living in her home. God will use the efforts of both of these mothers. God does not expect you to do more than you can do. Be kind to yourself. He knows exactly what you and your children need this year. Remember that out of all the parents in the world to whom He could have given your children, He chose you. He is the one who put your family together. He knows what He is doing. Trust in His choice. God created you. He created your children. Relax and remember that this is the day that the Lord has made. Rejoice and be glad in it!

We are here to help you. If you have more questions or simply need some encouragement, send us an email ([help@notgrass.com](mailto:help@notgrass.com)) or give us a call (1-800-211-8793).



## Appreciation

*Uncle Sam and You* has been a family project. We have enjoyed working on it together. We appreciate our daughter Mary Evelyn for writing the holiday lessons and the family activities, and for her beautiful cover designs. We are thankful to our daughter Bethany for her excellent work editing *The Citizen's Handbook*, for choosing the literature, and for the lesson activities. We appreciate our son John for writing the *Student Workbook*, for all of his work in finalizing the project and getting the computer documents to the printer, and for his good example of Christian political involvement. We think they all did an excellent job.

We appreciate our proofreaders. If you find any typos, please blame us and not them. As Harry Truman said, "The buck stops here." Our chief proofreader was our longtime friend, homeschooling mother Dena Russell. Helping her were our longtime friend Olive Wagar, who has graduated her three homeschooled children, and our beloved son-in-law Nate McCurdy (ask him sometime at a homeschool conference why we call him that).

We appreciate each of the families who encourage us in our writing of homeschool curriculum. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to do what we love to do.

You could say that God used politics to bring us together. We met in the political science department at Middle Tennessee State University just a few months before Ray graduated. We were interested in politics even when we were children. Both of us campaigned for our favorite candidates when we were in high school, and both of us served as officers of (the same) political party's campus organization when we were in college. You'll have to guess which one.

We were both blessed by good history and government teachers in high school and in college. These teachers had a great influence on us and still do today. We would like to thank them by name:

- ★ The late Dr. Alvin Rose, Charlene's history teacher at Cheatham County High School, Ashland City, Tennessee
- ★ Wayne Darrow, Charlene's government teacher at CCHS
- ★ The late James M. Dressler, Charlene's political science and history professor at Cumberland College (now Cumberland University)
- ★ Curry Peacock, Charlene's professor, advisor, and Christian mentor at Middle Tennessee State University
- ★ Jerry Locke, Ray's history teacher at Central High School, Columbia, Tennessee
- ★ The late Dr. Bart McCash, one of Ray's history professors at Middle Tennessee State University

- ★ The late Dr. Ernest Hooper, one of Ray's history professors at Middle Tennessee State University
- ★ Dr. Robert Ireland, Ray's professor of Constitutional history in graduate school at the University of Kentucky

Ray began reading about politics, history, and government for fun while still in high school. He still does. In college, Ray had a weekly column in the campus newspaper, in which he wrote about political and social issues in the news at the time.

Charlene received many exciting opportunities while still a teenager. As a high school junior, she was part of a 4-H Congress that met in the Tennessee State Capitol. She also attended a mock United Nations at Middle Tennessee State University with students from many high schools. There the students pretended to be members of the U.N. She went to Cumberland College in Lebanon, Tennessee, for her first two years of college. One of the members of its Board of Directors was Congressman Joe L. Evins, who served in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1947 to 1977. Charlene was given the opportunity to serve as an intern in his office on Capitol Hill for one month.

We believe that an understanding of our government is important for every American citizen. We believe that Americans should understand both our history and the way government is organized today. We believe that our Founding Fathers provided a strong base for our country and that our country would do well to remember our dependence on God, the many benefits of freedom and limited government, and our responsibility to be good stewards of the blessings that come from living in our great country. We believe that we should honor what God teaches in His Word about respecting our government officials. We are grateful that our true King is the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible,  
the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen

1 Timothy 1:17

Ray and Charlene Notgrass