

While your parents, teachers, and mentors can provide you with the knowledge and tools to become "good citizens," it is interesting to hear perspectives from others. In October 1957, a teacher at a suburban Chicago school assigned a class project. The students were to ask well-known people their views on citizenship. The question was asked, "What was most important when you were younger in helping you become a good citizen?"

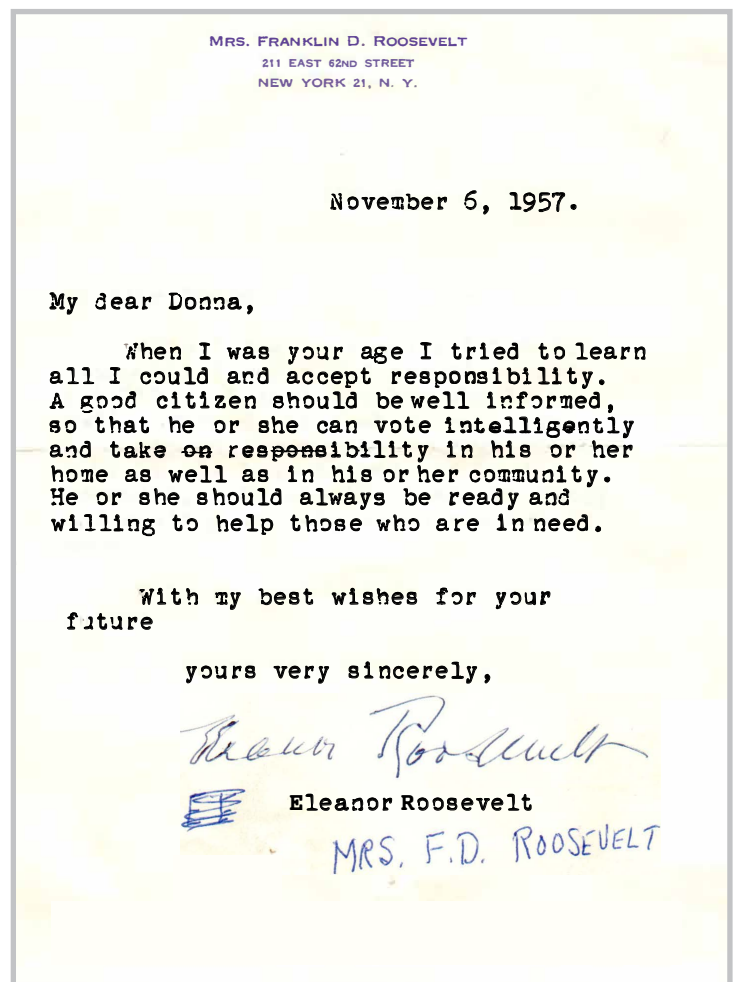
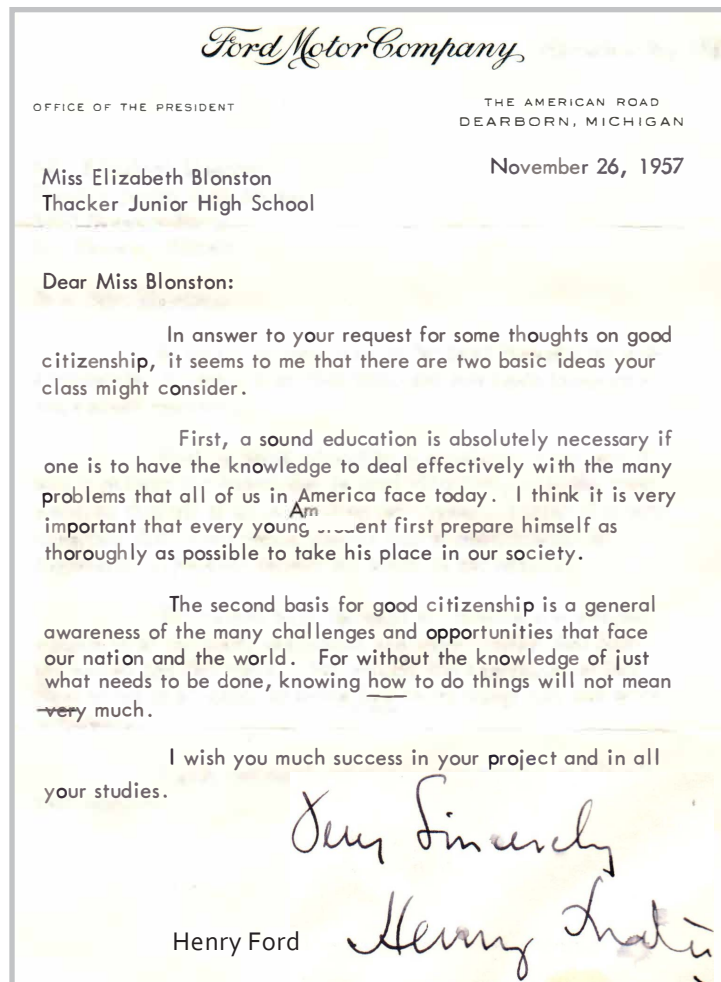
The class sent over 200 letters and received more than 100 in return. The students would read, compare, and compile the thoughts of these respected citizens. Participants included government leaders, entertainers, athletes, journalists, clergy, business and labor leaders, and educators. Many letters included thoughtful ideas and suggestions for being a "good" citizen. A sampling of four letters from Henry Ford II, Eleanor Roosevelt, H.W. Hoover, Jr., and Warren Giles are included.

With the help of the letters received, the students created a "Code of Ethics for Young Adults." These ethics that help mold you into a good citizen include:

1. Accept advice and guidance from parents, family, and friends.
2. Get the most out of your education by respecting the teacher's relationship and meeting a student's responsibilities.

3. Evaluate your character, focusing on loyalty, honesty, truthfulness, and integrity; pick friends with these traits.
4. Know and obey all laws, having loyalty and respect towards the local, state, and federal governments.
5. Respect others and understand that everyone has their own experiences and beliefs.
6. There is no replacement for hard work, doing more than is expected, and meeting the obligations as a student, family member, or employee.
7. Become an active member of a team, organization, or school activity and give support to the best of your ability by showing allegiance and team spirit.
8. Be aware of public issues and stay informed on what is happening in the community, state, and country.

Whether it is the 1950s or the world today, the characteristics of good citizens have remained much the same. The most significant difference is social media's impact on society, affecting how people obtain information, share thoughts, and treat others. Although there is no absolute, complete definition of being a proud, respected, and active member of our society, those eight codes are an excellent place to start.



THE HOOVER COMPANY

GENERAL OFFICES AND MAIN FACTORY NORTH CANTON, OHIO

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

November 5, 1957

Miss Donna Cadwallader
Thacker Junior High School
1557 Thacker Street
Des Plaines, Illinois

Dear Miss Cadwallader:

I was certainly glad to read your letter of October 31 and to know that you are interested in encouraging good citizenship in your community. Our country faces many problems today which can best be solved by people who take their responsibilities as citizens seriously.

No doubt the lives of every adult have been influenced by the experiences and associations in his youth. I believe that we are all products mostly of our environment and attitudes, but I truthfully cannot say that my life was influenced by any one specific thing. I think generally the fine examples set by my parents and my teachers made me realize the importance of good citizenship and my responsibilities to my community and country.

May I congratulate you and your teachers on pursuing what I think is a very worth-while project.

Sincerely yours,



H. W. Hoover, Jr.
President



The NATIONAL LEAGUE OF
PROFESSIONAL BASEBALL CLUBS
CAREW TOWER
CINCINNATI 2, OHIO

November 5, 1957

Mr. Joe Figard
Group 84, Thacker Junior High

Dear Mr. Figard:

In your letter of October 15 you ask me what I think was most important when I was young in helping me to become a good citizen.

That is not an easy question to answer briefly but if I were to state concisely what I thought were the two most important characteristics or qualifications to becoming successful they would be loyalty and determination.

Loyalty embodies a great deal; if one is loyal to his employer he works hard and tries to produce the same as if the business were his own; one cannot be loyal without being honest.

Determination to do the best that is within you is an important factor. I consider determination one of the most important factors to becoming a successful athlete and I believe it applies in other businesses too.

If a person is loyal and determined he will be limited in the success he makes only to the extent of his inherent and God-given abilities. That is my opinion.

Sincerely yours,



Warren C. Giles-
President

WCG/akm

SHORT ANSWER EXERCISES

1. If you were requested to send a letter asking for insight on becoming a good citizen, whom would it be sent to and why?

2. Interview a family member, teacher, or friend, asking the question, "What was most important when you were younger in helping you become a good citizen?" Summarize or capture the response.

3. In your own words, what do you think makes a person a good citizen?.

4. Of the sampling of the four letters, which one can you appreciate or relate to most closely and why?
