

# BEING AN AMERICAN QUOTE BANK

Use these statements to begin your thinking about American civic values. Which values are referred to in each of the quotes? How are these values reflected in American history or American life today?

1. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.  
–*Declaration of Independence*
2. . . . that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.  
–*Declaration of Independence*
3. We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty for ourselves and our posterity do hereby ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.  
–*The Preamble to the Constitution*
4. The House of Representatives shall be composed of members chosen every second year by the people of the several states. . .  
–*Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution*
5. He [the President] shall have power, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to make treaties, . . .  
–*Article II, Section 2 of the Constitution*
6. The Constitution. . . shall be the supreme law of the land. –*Article VI, Section 1 of the Constitution*
7. Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.  
–*First Amendment*
8. The rights of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause. –*Fourth Amendment*
9. The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people. –*Tenth Amendment*
10. The consciousness of having discharged that duty which we owe to our country is superior to all other considerations. –George Washington
11. Government should be formed to secure and to enlarge the exercise of the natural rights of its members; and every government, which has not this in view, as its principle object, is not a government of a legitimate kind. –James Wilson
12. Liberty must at all hazards be supported. We have a right to it, derived from our Maker. But if we had not, our fathers have earned and bought it for us, at the expense of their ease, their estates, their pleasure, and their blood. –John Adams
13. Without freedom of thought there can be no such thing as wisdom; and no such thing as public liberty without freedom of speech. –Benjamin Franklin
14. In republics, the great danger is, that the majority may not sufficiently respect the rights of the minority. –James Madison
15. The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty and the destiny of the republican model of government are justly considered, perhaps as deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people. –George Washington
16. If men were angels, no government would be necessary. –James Madison
17. Every member of society is in duty bound to contribute to the safety & good of the whole.  
–George Mason
18. No free government, or the blessings of liberty, can be preserved to any people, but by a firm adherence to justice, moderation, temperance, frugality, and virtue, and by frequent recurrence to fundamental principles. –George Mason