

# Win a trip to Washington!

Pick from 25 fun civics activities — each one you do is another chance to win the grand prize.

Open to K-8 students who want to learn about and improve their communities. The deadline is September 2, but enter often to qualify for weekly drawings. Prizes include \$50 gift cards to Phoenix Books and tickets to see the Vermont Lake Monsters!



ENTER TO WIN AT: [goodcitizenvt.com](http://goodcitizenvt.com)



2023 grand prize winner, Cecilia Neffinger, and her mom, Mary, with U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders in Washington, D.C.



POWERED BY

**SEVEN DAYS**

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PARTNERS





Complete one or more of these activities to be eligible for prizes. Submit your evidence as you go at [goodcitizenvt.com](http://goodcitizenvt.com). Last chance to submit: 9/2/24.

### 1. Design a New "I Voted" Sticker

After voters go to the polls on Election Day, they receive an "I Voted" sticker. This is a way of promoting participation in our democracy. Design a new, 2-inch circular sticker using the words "I Voted," that everyone will want to wear! A panel of judges will choose one to be reproduced by the Secretary of State's Office and distributed at the polls in the winner's town on Election Day in November.

### 2. Borrow Something From the Library\*

Visit your local library. Borrow something from the collection — a book, a movie, a museum pass, a cake pan, gardening tools, etc. Tell us what you borrowed and why. Be sure to return it on time!

### 3. Visit a Memorial\*

Public memorials commemorate people and events a community wants everyone to remember. Visit a memorial near where you live and find out who it honors and why. Tell us which one you picked and why it was placed there.

### 4. Read a Comic Book

The Center for Cartoon Studies in White River Junction produced *Freedom and Unity: A Graphic Guide to Civics and Democracy in Vermont* with help from Vermont Humanities and the Secretary of State's Office. It's an overview of the various ways local government works. Get a copy from the Secretary of State's Office or find it online at [cartoonstudies.org/css-studio/cartooningprojects/freedomand-unity](http://cartoonstudies.org/css-studio/cartooningprojects/freedomand-unity). Tell us what you learned.

### 5. Go Jump in a Lake — or a Public Pool\*

Take a dip in a public pool or in a pond or lake at a Vermont State Park. Find out who pays for it to operate and takes care of it. Who makes sure it's safe to swim there? Is there anything you can do to help? Tell us what you learned. Can be repeated at different locations.

### 6. Support a Business\*

Pick a locally owned business in your community that you and your family buy from regularly and fill out a comment card or leave a positive review online to show your support. Share your comments with us. Can be repeated at different locations.

### 7. Visit the Fire Department

Contact your local fire department and ask if you can drop by to talk with a firefighter or rescue squad member. Ask them why they joined the fire department or rescue squad, how long they've been doing this work, what kind of training they receive, and how you can help them keep your community or family safe. Tell us what you learned. If you have it, share a photo of your visit.

### 8. Search for a Deed

Go to your city or town hall and find the deed for a property that's meaningful to you. How old is it? How many people have owned it? Take a photo of the deed and tell us which property you chose and what you learned. If you go as a group, call ahead.

### 9. Attend an Event\*

There are lots of community events during the summer: festivals, parades, concerts, talks, games, fireworks shows. Go to a gathering near the area where you live. Tell us about your experience. Lake Monsters games and Vermont Green FC matches count!

### 10. Write a Thank-You Note\*

Think about someone in your community who helps you out without asking anything in return — this could be a snowplow driver, a mail carrier, a janitor, a librarian, an election worker, a business owner who sponsored a community event you attended. Write that person or group a thank-you note letting them know that you appreciate them. Give them the note, and share a copy with us.

### 11. Connect With Your Neighbors\*

Go to [frontporchforum.com](http://frontporchforum.com) and join your neighborhood's Front Porch Forum — or, if you're under 14, have an adult in your household subscribe — and contribute a post about something you've learned through the Good Citizen Challenge. Be sure to write "Good Citizen Challenge" in your post. You can repeat this activity, posting about other activities you've completed. For every Good Citizen-related post you write, you'll be entered in a raffle to win a \$250 gift certificate to a local store of your choice.

### 12. Organize Support

Gather donations for a local nonprofit or nonpartisan charity of your choice by encouraging friends, neighbors or family members to contribute. Expand your impact by using Front Porch Forum or social media to promote your fundraiser. Tell us which charity you chose and why and how much you raised. Everyone who completes this activity will

be entered in a raffle to win an additional \$500 toward their cause.

### 13. Pick Up Trash\*

Spend at least 15 minutes picking up litter in a public park or playground. Send a photo of the stuff you picked up and threw away. Don't forget to wear gloves — and never pick up needles. If you find one, tell an adult.

### 14. Play or Sing "America the Beautiful"

The words to "America the Beautiful" were written by Katharine Lee Bates; the melody that we sing today is by Samuel A. Ward. Record yourself singing or playing it on your instrument and send us the recording. We'll use the best entries in a video of completed activities!

### 15. Visit a Historical Site or Museum\*

Visit one of the area's many historical sites or museums. This could be a local museum of any kind, a historical site or the Vermont History Museum in Montpelier; Fort Ticonderoga in New York counts, as well. So does the Vermont Statehouse! Tell us: What was your favorite part of your visit? Who works there and maintains it? You can often check out free museum passes at your local library.

### 16. Find Your Polling Place

You won't be able to register to vote until you're 18, but if you could vote, where would you go to cast your ballot? Find out where your polling place would be — by asking your town clerk, librarian or a registered voter who shares your address — and tell us.

### 17. Work Together With Someone From a Different Background\*

Find someone who comes from a different background or perspective. For example, this could be someone from a rival school, someone whose family looks different from yours, someone who practices another religion or supports an opposing political party. Do something positive for your community together. Share a photo of you with this person and describe your differences. Tell us about your joint activity.

### 18. Watch a Candidate Forum or Debate\*

There will be lots of opportunities to hear from candidates for office in 2024. Watch the presidential debate scheduled for June 27 or a local candidate forum or debate before or after Vermont's August 13 primary election.

### 19. Show What Vermont's Motto Means to You

Vermont's state motto is "Freedom and Unity." Create a piece of art explaining what that means to you. It could be a drawing, collage, song, poem, sculpture, video, mural — whatever you like! Share it with us.

### 20. Read the News\*

Read an issue of your local community newspaper, in print or online. If your town doesn't have its own news source, read at least five articles from a statewide news outlet such as *Seven Days* or *VT Digger.org*. Tell us the most interesting things you learned. This activity can be repeated.

### 21. Watch or Listen to the Local News\*

Watch the local news on a TV station like WCAX Channel 3, or the latest episode of "Vermont This Week" on Vermont Public, or listen to a local news show or podcast such as the 802 News Podcast with Mark Johnson. Younger participants can also listen to an episode of "But Why: A Podcast for Curious Kids." Tell us which station and program you chose and what you learned. This activity can be repeated with different newscasts and podcasts.

### 22. Find the "Masthead"\*

In a newspaper, the section that describes who works for the paper, who owns it and where it is printed is called the "masthead." Online, you can usually find that information on web pages called "about us" or "our team" or "contact us." If you're reading a newspaper, listening to the radio, or watching something on TV or online, figure out who made it and where they are based. Share a photo of this information as proof. This activity can be repeated with different news outlets.

### 23. Talk to a Journalist\*

Interview a reporter from your local newspaper, radio or TV station, or online news service. Why did they become a journalist? What are their favorite stories to cover? How do they decide what makes the news? You can do this in person, in a virtual meeting or by email. Tell us what you learned and share a photo if you have one.

### 24. Take a Quiz: Is This Real?

Powerful advances in artificial intelligence are making it difficult to trust that what we see is real. Test your powers of observation by taking one of two tests: Which Face Is Real at [whichfaceisreal.com](http://whichfaceisreal.com) or Spot the Troll at [spotthetroll.org](http://spotthetroll.org). Tell us how well you did.

### 25. Take Control of Your Tech Use

Digital devices such as tablets and smartphones are designed to distract you and keep you looking at them. You can improve your ability to focus on what matters to you by taking control of your tech use. Do at least one of the suggested activities on the Take Control checklist from the Center for Humane Technology, at [humanetech.com/take-control](http://humanetech.com/take-control) and tell us about your experience.

\*These activities can be completed and submitted more than once for additional entries in the prize drawing.