

HEROES & VILLAINS

Answer Key



Defining Civic Virtue (p. v)

1. Answers will vary. Some students may say that when they encounter the term “civic virtue,” they assume it refers to religious morality, or some sort of general morality. Others may be more specific, saying that it refers to personal conduct that affects society in a positive way.
2. Answers will vary. Encourage open and thoughtful discussion of responses.
3. Sample responses: Because human beings are imperfect, no one person should have too much power—hence, separation of powers. Because no one group should have too much power—limited government.

Clarifying Civic Virtue (p. x)

1. Students’ responses should expand on their previous answers and incorporate historical and philosophical context, perhaps including Aristotle and indicating that it may include, but does not require, religious belief. Some students should also note that it involves a balance between extremes, action rather than just ideals, regular habits, and must be related to just purposes.
2. If student response did change, response should be a reasoned explanation of what points in the reading contributed to this change. If the student response did not change, response should provide a reasoned explanation for why, based on the text, it did not.
3. Student responses should have expanded beyond their first response and make a direct

connection between the U.S. constitution and a constitutional republic, as well as to the ideas about human nature and the constitutional republic as addressed in the reading.

Identifying and Defining Civic Virtue (p. xi)

Student responses will vary; accept answers that make a reasonable connection among the civic virtue, the person or character, and the justification based on the definition.

Benjamin Franklin and Civic Virtue - Questions to Consider (p. xix)

1. Franklin understood virtue to be habits or traits that would reflect good conduct (“rectitude of conduct”) and bring a person closer to moral perfection. He refined his understanding as he concluded that moral perfection was not possible, but that the ambition and attempt toward it made him a better and a happier person.
2. Franklin ordered the virtues because he thought that working on all of them at the same time would be distracting and that focusing on one at a time would be a more effective way to work on them. He put them in an order so that virtues he acquired earlier might help him to develop others that were later on his list.
3. “Contrary Habits” or “Inclination” led him to keep slipping into habits that were not virtuous.
4. Given how frequently Franklin refers “habit” as a part of his attempt to become more “morally

perfect,” and the system he devised in order to increase his practice of virtues, he appears to have agreed with Aristotle that virtue was, indeed, a habit.

5. Franklin intended to master one virtue at a time, focusing on each one for a week and marking in his book the number of times he failed at that virtue. His goal was to keep each week clear of marks indicating when he had failed.
6. Franklin has difficulty living as virtuously as was his goal. He had difficulty keeping his weekly lines “marked clear of spots.” He did, however, see his faults diminish.

Moral perfection: Student responses will vary, but should be reasonable and related to the student’s overall beliefs and understandings. Challenge students to identify the bases of their motivations to act virtuously.

7. Franklin’s words are based on assumptions that right and wrong are universal and absolute, even while moral perfection may not be humanly impossible.
8. Franklin did not accomplish his initial goal of moral perfection because he never did rid himself of the faults he sought to eliminate because he found himself “so much fuller of Faults” than he had imagined.
9. He did eventually begin to see his faults diminish, and he did become a happier person than he would have been if he had not made the attempt, and he believes he was made better for having tried.
10. Student responses will vary, but should be based on the text.
11. Similarities students may find are:
 - Contribution – Industry.
 - Integrity – Sincerity.
 - Justice – Justice.
 - Perseverance – Industry.
 - Respect – Chastity.

- Responsibility – Resolution. Responsibility – Frugality. Responsibility – Temperance.
- Self-Governance – Silence. Self-Governance – Order. Self-Governance – Moderation.

Students may find several differences, including that some of Franklin’s virtues may not seem to correlate to those in the “Identifying and Defining Civic Virtue” list. Students may also identify differences in the definition of virtues that may otherwise seem similar.

12. Accept reasoned student responses.

Tanks in the Square (p. 3)

1. Students may be somewhat familiar with this scene, including the fact that it is often referred to as “Tank Man” and that it took place in China. Some may know the decade or year it took place. Some may also know something about the political context and its place in history. Use responses to inform instruction.
2. Student responses will vary. Use responses to inform instruction throughout the rest of the activity. Provide answers, to students’ additional questions, or provide a means for them to research them in class.
3. Accept reasoned responses that are based on what can be observed in the photograph. Students should spot the man standing in front of the tank.
4. Students should identify the man standing in front of the tank on the left side of the photo. In the context of the size of the Square, and the size and number of the tanks, he appears quite small—and could almost be missed by someone not looking closely.

Students may say that he is making a statement about his determination in his protest, about his lack of fear of the tanks and troops, or of his willingness to sacrifice for what he is demanding.

13. Students may answer that injustice may come from humans' tendency toward greed, selfishness, power, or other vices. They may respond that humans' desire for justice may come from a human sense of fairness, the worth of the individual, caring, community, or other virtuous ends.
14. Responses will vary. Encourage responses that are personal and specific, and in which students can engage immediately or very soon.

Roger Taney and Injustice: Discussion Guide (p. 63)

1. Congress had crafted several attempts to settle the building controversy surrounding the spread of slavery, including the Compromise of 1850 and the Kansas-Nebraska Act. The Kansas Nebraska Act had resulted in "Bleeding Kansas"—violent confrontations between pro-and anti-slavery forces—many of whom were not Kansas citizens. Southern leaders were threatening secession, and many people believed war between the states was imminent.
2. At various times in his life, Taney was a slaveholder who freed his slaves, a legislator who supported the rights of blacks, and a defender of abolitionists. When he joined the Democratic Party and served as Andrew Jackson's Attorney General, he supported the power of states to make their own laws regarding slavery, and asserted that individuals of the African race were not considered to be citizens. Regarding the reasons for Taney's change over time, accept reasoned responses. Students may suggest that political motivations were responsible.
3. Taney supported the South's power to keep blacks in an inferior position. He foolishly believed that he could settle the highly contentious political question from the Supreme Court, and he let political opinions cloud his judicial decision-making.

4. Accept reasoned responses in which the student refers to passages from the narrative itself. Students may suggest that Dred Scott's attorney would make the following points:

- Scott lived for several years in the free state of Illinois and in the free Wisconsin Territory.
- Missouri's judicial standard was "once free, always free."

Sanford's attorney might make the following points

- The black race, whether slave or free, had been in an inferior position through much of American history.
 - The family of Emerson's widow would lose uncompensated property if Scott were freed.
 - Slaves were not citizens and therefore had no political voice, and no right to sue in federal court.
5. He hoped the Court's decision would settle the slavery question once and for all, and avert a civil war. But, by taking the question out of the democratic deliberation of the people and their representatives in Congress and the states, the decision actually led to great emotion and further enflamed tensions that would lead to Civil War.
 6. The decision did not support a healthy constitutional republic because it allowed one race of people to violate the rights of another race. Civic virtue was not supported by a decision that set a precedent of injustice in a Supreme Court decision. The most important elements of Chief Justice Taney's opinion in the Dred Scott case were his statements that
 - a. African Americans, whether slave or free, were not citizens at the time of the Founding and never could be citizens.
 - b. The Founders thought that blacks were an inferior class, with no rights that the white

man was bound to respect. Therefore, they had no right to sue in federal court.

- c. The Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional, Congress had no power to regulate slavery in the territories, and therefore slavery could become legal in every state.
 - d. Dred Scott was still a slave.
7. The Dred Scott decision made civil war even more likely because it worsened sectional differences between the north and the south and eliminated the possibility of further political compromise.
 8. Unlike Taney, Lincoln stood for a Union of natural rights for all humans and did not believe that the country could survive indefinitely “half slave, half free.” He argued that the Declaration of Independence “set up a standard maxim for free society” of self-governing individuals and advanced the natural rights of the individual. If the Court gained the final say on political decisions, Lincoln thought “the people will have ceased to be their own rulers.” Lincoln supported the natural rights of liberty and equality for all humans in the name of justice. He joined the Republican Party which was created to oppose the Kansas-Nebraska Act and then the Dred Scott decision.
 9. Through historical research in painstaking detail, Justice Curtis’s opinion countered Taney’s reasoning by pointing out that, at the time of the Founding, African Americans were citizens and even voted in several states. Also, he repudiated the idea that the Missouri Compromise was unconstitutional, because he showed more than a dozen instances in which Congress had legislated with respect to slavery before the Missouri Compromise. The power of Congress to do so was settled practice prior to 1820; for the Court to invalidate that power in 1857 was a violation of the principle that law should be settled and stable.

Roger Taney—Excerpts from Majority and Dissenting Opinions: Discussion Guide (p. 66)

Accept reasoned responses supported by the documents.

Frederick Douglass and Responsibility: Discussion Guide (p. 75)

1. Historically, enslaved were prevented from learning to read because literacy was the domain of free people, and because of a concern that if slaves were exposed to the ideas of philosophy and politics, they could revolt.
2. When Douglass was eight years old, his master’s wife began to teach him the alphabet and basic reading skills.
3. Douglass found time to spend with peers who helped him by showing him how to read in exchange for his bread. He also challenged boys to writing contests, and when the other boys wrote letters he didn’t know, even though he lost, it was his way of learning more letters.
4. Students may reason that Douglass’s actions were virtuous because they were done in the pursuit of justice. Others may say that breaking the law is never virtuous. Some may note that the law he was breaking was unjust, thus making his act virtuous. Some may also refer to the statement “Virtue require a just end,” from the **What is Virtue?** handout in the Virtue Teaching Tool chapter.
5. Responses will vary; accept reasoned responses that address his key points.
6. Accept reasoned answers that are based on the texts.
7. Accept reasoned answers that address Shaw’s quotation.
8. Student responses may vary, but should include references to other texts that they have studied, and to an appropriate understanding of the Constitution and republic.