



WHAT IS PATRIOTISM?

Objectives:

- What is patriotism?
- How can you be patriotic?
- How can you go the extra mile for your country?

Preparation:

Use the Patriotism worksheet to discuss the following questions:

- What is the definition of patriotism?
- Who can be a patriot?
- What acts would a patriot perform?

Activity:

Define Patriotism in your own words. Read the definition of patriotism out loud. Compare the definition to that of the dictionary.

Think about the different groups that you are proud to be a part of. You might be proud to be a student at your school. You might be proud to be on a team. You might be proud to be a member of your family. Are you also proud to be a citizen of the United States? If so, this is a display of patriotism. Loving and appreciating your country is a very patriotic attitude.

Not only is patriotism about feeling pride in your country, but it is also about taking that pride a step further and putting it into action. A patriotic person sees their status as an American citizen as a great honor that comes with responsibility. Therefore, patriotic people think about how their choices will reflect on their country. Think about it in the context of a family. Let's say that you tell a lie. Not only will this choice bring you shame but it will also make your family look bad. Patriotic people make choices to make their country look good.

Some displays of patriotism can be obvious, like flying the American flag. This is a symbol of freedom. Flying it sends the message that you are proud of this freedom. You can also take it a step further and say the pledge of allegiance or salute the flag. In order to properly salute the flag, you can either put your hand on your heart or raise your right hand to your forehead.

There are other ways to show patriotism that really make a statement. You can take advantage of your right to vote. Now, you cannot vote until you are eighteen, but that doesn't mean that you can't get involved before then. Find a candidate who you would like to see in office, whether it is the mayor, senator, or even the president, and get involved in their campaign. You could also get involved in a protest or demonstration if there is an issue in America that you would like to see resolved.

Additional Activity:

Interview a family member, friend or neighbor who has served or is serving in the military or public service. What qualities do they see in this person? Why did they choose to serve? How can they embody these qualities? Give a presentation on their findings.

Other lessons and resources are located at carrytheload.org/educate.