

TOPIC 01. INTRODUCTION TO CIVICS

Meaning of Civics

Civics is the study of rights, duties and responsibilities of citizens.

The term Civics is derived from the Latin word Civicus, which means relating to citizens.

Generally, Civics deals with the study of organization, structure and governance in society, people's way of life as well as their individual and civic rights.

Main things studied in Civics

- I. **Governance and Government.** Governance means the manner in which a country is governed. It looks at the ways in which decisions, processes and activities are determined and implemented. By Government refers to the instrument used to govern a country. the study of Civics enables students to understand these aspects and become responsible Citizen
- II. **International relations.** Countries in the world do not exist in isolation. There are social, economic and political relationships among the countries in the world. Studying Civics helps students to understand the relationship among the countries in the world.
- III. **Civic engagement.** This involves participating in activities intended to improve the quality of life in one's community by addressing issues of public concern. Studying Civics enables a students to understand their rights and responsibilities in a society
- IV. **Human rights.** In Civics, human rights refer to basic and fundamental values and freedom that a person has because he or she is a human being. The knowledge of rights enables students to be aware of their rights so as to demand and protect them.
- V. **Moral and family values.** The development of a society and a nation at large depends on strong morals and values at individual and family levels. Civics, therefore, introduces students to the discussion of social morals, family values and life skills. Knowledge and skills under this theme enable students to manage conflicts and address violence, crimes, gender discrimination and child abuse.
- VI. **Cultural issues.** The cultural aspects of Civics include language, beliefs, customs, traditions, morals and values. The study of Civics introduces students to different cultural practices found in the country. Therefore, the knowledge acquired from Civics enables students to become aware of their culture and that of others, to enhance respect and peace in the society.

- VII. **Economic issues.** Civics promotes awareness and participation of citizens in production, consumption and distribution of resources and hence prepares students to become better participants in economic activities for their personal and national development.

Relationships between civics and other subjects :

- I. **Civics is related to History** through learning about various national festivals which reflect past events in our country and the world. Through these national festivals people learn important lessons which elaborate on the past, present and predict the future.
- II. **Civics is related with Information and Communication Technology (ICT)** through learning issues of globalization that help people to develop awareness on contribution, challenges and adverse impacts of ICT in the world.
- III. **Civics is related to Language.** People can exercise freedom of expression and association through language. In some countries like Tanzania, language is one of the national symbols
- IV. **Civics is related to Geography** which addresses issues of environmental conservation and sustainability of natural resources. In this view, Civics promotes citizens' commitment in protecting geographical boundaries and public resources through patriotism attitudes acquired from Civics.
- V. **Civics is related to science subjects.** Civics underscores the needs of citizens to develop life skills necessary for social adjustment. Through Civics, people learn reproductive health education, for example **Biology** subject may act as an important tool for encouraging citizens to avoid risky behavior such as smoking, alcoholism and unhealthy relationships which could otherwise lead to Sexually Transmitted Infection (STIs) and unwanted pregnancies.

In this view, Civics enables students to understand these aspects and become healthy and good citizens.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING CIVICS

1. To understand human rights e.g. rights to life associated with worship.
2. To understand the duties and responsibilities of citizens.
3. To understand the environment in which we live.
4. To promote peace and security in our society.
5. To understand and uphold our culture
6. To establish good relationships and respect.

7. To understand road safety for example causes of road accidents and measures to be taken in preventing road accidents.

EXERCISE

1. As a form one student in your school, give the definition of the following terms that your teacher taught you
 - A. Civics
 - B. Human rights
2. Mention five cultural aspects that you have been taught by your teacher in Civics subject
3. I think you have studied Civics very well, no doubt about it. Identify seven field where the knowledge and skills obtained from studying Civics can be applied
4. Is Civics subject related to other subjects? Give five evidence on your answer
5. Suppose you have attended the debate in your school and the motion states that “Civics subject is more important than Biology subject”. Being in proposer side, defend the motion with five points