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Tutor Assisted Vocabulary Support: Easing the Vocabulary Load  
for Burundian Refugees Studying for  
the U.S. Citizenship Test

Eleanor A. Clark

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

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## ABSTRACT

### Tutor Assisted Vocabulary Support: Easing the Vocabulary Load for Burundian Refugees Studying for the U.S. Citizenship Test

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Master of Arts

The focus of this thesis was to develop vocabulary materials to supplement those already in use for emergent literate Burundian refugees preparing for the U.S. Citizenship Test. These learners study in conjunction with the International Rescue Committee in Salt Lake City, Utah, and with volunteer tutors who help them study. The flashcards and supporting activities were designed to better enable tutors to teach learners highly-dense vocabulary items, as well as to provide vocabulary scaffolding support for both learners and tutors and to increase depth of vocabulary knowledge with the target vocabulary. The U.S. Citizenship Test Vocabulary Flashcards and Vocabulary Support booklet were the products of a frequency-based vocabulary analysis to provide content-focused vocabulary instruction. This thesis details the steps and rationale of the process used to create these materials.

Keywords: Vocabulary, ESL, Emergent Literate Learners, Flashcards, Frequency, Refugees

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Literacy and English proficiency are skills much sought after by many groups in today's modern world. One such group is refugees from various nations around the globe. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated that at the beginning of 2012 over 10 million refugees of concern and an additional 4.8 million refugees were registered in camps. These figures, which portray only a portion of the population of concern, are estimated at close to 37 million people (UNCHR Global Appeal, 2013). This population includes refugees, internally displaced persons, people living in refugee-like situations, asylum seekers, stateless persons, and others. Each year, the Congress of the United States agrees on a limited number of refugees to accept for resettlement in the United States. These are people who are unable to be repatriated to their own countries or to a host refugee camp country. And while the topic of immigration in the United States remains controversial, these large groups of refugees who have resettled in metropolitan and other areas need support to gain basic English and literacy skills to succeed in their communities and not be a burden on U.S. society. In 2012, the number of refugees who were resettled in the United States was 53,053 (UNHCR Global Resettlement Statistical Report, 2012). The International Rescue Committee (IRC), an internationally funded and run operation, works with this population of concern and has an office in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The International Rescue Committee (IRC) works with the refugees in Utah to enable a smooth transition to life in the United States and to help them live and work independently of their organization. One aspect of this transition is to help them become naturalized citizens. The refugees have an approximately five-year window to become self-sufficient and gain enough

English proficiency to pass the United States Citizenship Test. If they fail to pass it within five years, they will remain permanent residents and not have the opportunity to become U.S. citizens (IRC interview, September 10, 2010). This would leave them with minimal rights and standing in their new life and country and can lead to further discrimination. For example, their rights to vote or work would be severely limited if they were not U.S. citizens. They also might not be able to request that family members, like children or parents, still in refugee camps to be able to resettle with them in the United States.

Adult refugees need some intense English training to pass the U.S. citizenship test, in addition to help with housing, clothing, job skills training, and education for their children. The particular group of refugees that the IRC in Utah is currently focusing on comes from Burundi, a nation that has been through several decades of conflict, partly connected with the ethnic conflict of the Rwandan Genocide in 1994 (IRC Website). While Burundi is currently experiencing a greater level of stability, and some refugees and displaced persons are able to return, there is still a significant population of Burundian refugees being relocated to Utah. Many of them are also mostly illiterate or have low-literacy levels and come from mostly agrarian backgrounds. Their English instruction needs to take this into account. As they are also currently working to become financially independent, which is part of the refugee resettlement process, the time they spend receiving instruction is flexible to their work schedule.

Refugees from low-level literacy or emergent literacy backgrounds have several unique needs that differ from many other ESL learners who come to the United States to study English. Many refugees have been living in refugee camps for decades, and some may even have been born in refugee and resettlement camps and have little or no experience with standard education systems. The schooling they have received will have been minimal and varies depending on how

long they spent in a camp or which camp they were in. There is also little to no information about specific refugee camps and which demographics have received education (Jackson, 2000). Many of the refugees will also have little or no literacy in their native language, which can make it more difficult for them to learn how to read and write; for example, how to hold a pen or a pencil, how the words on a page can mean something, how to read from left to right in English, how to understand a book or newspaper, etc. are all literacy challenges that refugees face. And the refugees may come from varying language backgrounds, with some knowledge of Kirundi and French, the official languages of Burundi. The refugees also span several age groups, and sometimes refugees choose to study English as a family, or as a couple, compounding the various factors that make English language learning challenging for an emergent literate learner. The adults particularly have to deal with varying work schedules at jobs where they most likely work long hours doing menial labor. This leaves them with little time for homework, nor extra time to study the necessary information and vocabulary to take the U.S. Citizenship test. The information and vocabulary from the citizenship test is also largely academic and contains content information about history and systems of government the refugees are unfamiliar with, so that not only will they have new vocabulary and grammar information to learn but also new conceptual knowledge. These concepts are often complicated and require additional information and background.

People taking the U.S. Citizenship test go through an interview process that tests English, literacy, and knowledge about U.S. history, civics, and government. The initial stages of the interview obtain information by reviewing the N-400 form such as the person's home address, phone number, date of birth, marital status, social security number, etc. (USCIS Naturalization Interview video). This serves a dual purpose; as it not only double checks the information but it

also ascertains some English proficiency information for the interviewer as all portions of the citizenship test are conducted in English. Next the interviewer asks information about tax payments, affiliation with terrorist and other organizations, previous criminal records or violations, prostitution, gambling, etc. to see what kind of citizen the interviewee would be. In addition, the interviewee is asked whether they will support the Constitution and the laws of the United States (USCIS Naturalization Interview video). After they show their willingness to comply and to give up their home country's citizenship for U.S. citizenship, the interviewer proceeds to the listening, speaking, reading, writing, and civics portions of the test (IRC interview, September 10, 2010; USCIS Naturalization Interview video).

People applying for citizenship have access to information and practice from a Learn About Civics booklet made by USCIS (USCIS). There are also additional aids online from the USCIS website and other websites like EL/Civics Online, among others that offer modules and study helps. These resources are targeted for completely literate and computer literate populations and are not easily navigable by someone who is an emergent literate learner. The website EL/Civics online might be a better match for a teacher planning to teach a group or classroom of students, but its courses also require computer access and computer literacy skills, which many refugees from Burundi lack. Even the materials and lesson helps on the USCIS website do not provide sufficient scaffolding for emergent literate learners to learn the content on the website. The vocabulary is also largely academic and contains many new concepts. It is also lexically dense, meaning that there are many types of new content words the student has to learn without there being sufficient repetition through the text. The amount of information the learner needs to review and be familiar with is much greater than what is required of them to pass the test, which also adds to the stress of learning. Another issue is that most supplemental material

other than materials generated by individual institutions like the IRC is generally found online. Websites like the U.S. Citizenship Podcast contain translations of the 100 questions in some languages and practice quizzes for students to use. Again, though, these all require relatively high levels of literacy and computer access.

The actual test is fairly simple in structure, but if the learner is unfamiliar with the information chosen by the interviewing officer, it is possible they may fail. An applicant also might receive an officer who chooses to be less lenient, who will ask more difficult questions, or who might also be a less sympathetic listener (A. Springer, personal communication, November 2, 2013). The first of three sections of the test comes from the civics bank of questions. The applicant is asked 10 questions from a possible 100 options. The questions are answered orally, and the applicant must answer six correctly. Once the applicant has answered six correctly, the officer does not ask any more questions from that section. The applicant may ask the officer to repeat the question. The officer will also tell the applicant if they passed or failed that portion of the test at the end of each section of the test. The second part of the test is the English reading section. The applicant is asked to read a selected English sentence correctly. The third section is to write an English sentence correctly. The officer dictates the sentences and the applicant has to write them correctly. The applicant has three chances to write the sentences correctly. The officer also immediately tells the applicant the results. After a successful test, the oath ceremony where the applicant takes/gives the oath of allegiance is scheduled or takes place immediately. (2010; USCIS Naturalization Interview video). USCIS does not release sample reading and writing sentences for students to practice. This means that it is difficult for the students to know specifically what and how to study for this portion of this test. The sentences might contain words they know really well or words they have no familiarity with. Sentences also vary in

length and complexity, and the sentences dictated or selected for reading are chosen at the discretion of the interviewer. USCIS does, however, release possible vocabulary words that might be on the reading and writing portions of the test. However, they are not frequency based, and some of the words are only mentioned once throughout the 100 questions civics study booklet. (USCIS Study Materials). There is then a definite need to provide support for this target population's need for vocabulary instruction.

Burundian and other refugees at the IRC currently attend citizenship classes where they begin to learn basic literacy skills. During these classes, volunteer tutors assist them in that learning process. From my observations of one of their classes, the learners have some literacy skills from the time they have already spent studying with the tutors at the IRC. Many of these tutors though are untrained and do not have experience with any form of language instruction. As the IRC does not have a structured format to help assist tutors and learners to study the content needed for the citizenship test, I was asked to develop a vocabulary tool to help in the learning process.

My vocabulary tool is therefore designed to create scaffolding for the Burundian refugees to decrease the vocabulary load placed on them while studying for and taking the citizenship test. It is intended for use with the volunteer tutors and without dependence on computers and computer literacy. It is not intended to replace the materials already provided at the IRC and through the USCIS website, but rather to supplement them and to provide a better framework for tutors to focus on helping learners understand the difficult concepts required to pass the U.S. Citizenship test. The purpose of this vocabulary tool is not intended to teach the learners literacy skills. Before they start to focus on preparing for the citizenship test, they will have already had some literacy instruction from the IRC. The purpose of this vocabulary tool is also to provide explicit

instruction in meaning for target vocabulary words and phrases found frequently in the citizenship test preparation materials and to provide activities to build some depth of word knowledge, such as spelling, pronunciation, and most importantly meaning, through repetition and handwriting. This will ease the burden placed on both learners and tutors working with the refugee emergent literate population.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

All learners need vocabulary to access knowledge found through reading. This gets more complex as the learner has lower English proficiency. The refugee learners, who are often emergent literate readers often do not have the 95-98% vocabulary knowledge that research has shown they need for effective comprehension (Carver, 1994; Nation, 2001). They therefore need careful vocabulary frontloading, the pre-learning of unknown vocabulary in a task (Gardner, 2013) and scaffolding, instruction through strategies to activate background knowledge (Cummins, Mirza, & Stille, 2012), to help them reach a critical mass of vocabulary knowledge. While the vocabulary tool designed might not be able to fully meet that critical mass of vocabulary knowledge, it is working towards it by providing activities in conjunction with flashcards to frontload vocabulary and to provide scaffolding through the development of language learning strategies; it also enables students to access meaning through the L1 as Cummins suggests.

According to Bigelow and Schwarz (2010), emergent literate learners benefit from instructional approaches that utilize the learner's native language. Folsie (2004) also emphasizes that access to a glossary in a student's L1 allows them to confirm the correct meaning of many words. A glossary or mini bilingual dictionary within a vocabulary tool would therefore be helpful for both tutors and learners alike, even if the tutor does not have knowledge about the learner's L1. And as volunteer tutors are not often well versed in all the languages of the refugees that the IRC helps, they must often instruct only in English; however, a glossary would enable them to better instruct learners who can confirm the L1 meaning with the L2. Folsie also indicates that students have a much higher retention of vocabulary knowledge when they have

received some L1 translation support through the means of a gloss or dictionary. This also helps learners because not only are there language barriers, but instruction time is limited, and while incidental vocabulary learning does occur as refugees adapt to their lives here, explicit vocabulary instruction with L1 support is necessary to accelerate their English learning. Schmitt (2000) points out that focused attention directly on the knowledge to be learned gives the greatest chance for it to be acquired. This means that as tutors and learners alike focus on meaning, this vocabulary learning will be greater than relying on incidental vocabulary learning, which is less likely to occur with academic vocabulary. And that attention to meaning and explicit instruction for vocabulary learning is necessary as well (Laufer & Hulstijn, 2001).

Another aspect of explicit vocabulary instruction that Schmitt (2000) points out is that “the more one manipulates, thinks about, and uses mental information, the more likely it is that one will retain that information” (p. 121). Nation (1990) also suggests that an important part of explicit vocabulary instruction is to ensure clarity by teaching words with the highest frequency of meaning. Thus it is important to make sure to focus on specific meaning within a context, and the highest frequency of meaning. Schmitt as well as Nation also focus on the various aspects of depth of vocabulary knowledge such as being able to recognize words, to understand their meaning, to be able to spell them correctly, and to use them in a correct context (Nation 2003; Schmitt, 2000). Gardner (2013) further discusses breadth (number) and depth (quality) of vocabulary knowledge, both of which are necessary for emergent literate learners. Emergent literate learners, without a background in many of the concepts found in the citizenship test information, need explicit instruction of meaning as an important first step in acquiring basic word knowledge such as being able to recognize the word, knowing how to spell it, and understanding its basic meaning.

In addition, explicit vocabulary instruction emphasizes meaning first, a point which was also echoed at the Intermountain TESOL conference by both Blackmer and Box (2013) who work closely with refugees in the Salt Lake area. Blackmer is the associate director of the English Skills Learning Center, which provides English instruction to refugees. Box is an ESL educator in the Granite School District. Both of them have extensive experience working with the immigrant and refugee populations in the Salt Lake area. Both stressed teaching meaning first, and then providing substantial aural and then handwriting practice with target vocabulary. These fit into categories that Sökmen (1997) suggested as some important ways to best facilitate explicit language learning. Some of those ways are to (1) build a large sight vocabulary, (2) provide several encounters with a word, (3) help connect the meaning of the word to the learner in some way, (4) use a variety of techniques with vocabulary instruction, and (5) promote independent learning strategies. Nation (2003) also added to and complemented these categories with aspects such as (6) quickly giving meaning, if needed through an L1 translation, (7) giving example sentences with the word in context, (8) relating the past teaching to present knowledge acquisition, (9) using oral and written instruction, (10) getting the learner to repeat the pronunciation of the words, (11) telling the learners to pay attention to high frequency meanings, (12) and interpreting dictionary entries. Focusing on several aspects such as those mentioned, better ensures the retention and acquisition of the vocabulary words and phrases.

In addition, this vocabulary tool development was influenced by Wood (2000) who created instructional readers using frequency based vocabulary selection to form the basis of targeted vocabulary instruction. Her purpose was primarily to provide scaffolding to acquire academic vocabulary in a specific context. The main focus for this vocabulary tool is to provide scaffolding for the highly dense content specific words found in the “Learn About the United

States” booklet. As Cummins (2000) expressed with the threshold hypothesis, for the learners to be successful at expressing and understanding new and difficult concepts, they must be able to attain a critical mass of English language knowledge. The vocabulary tool is a way to bridge the gap between the English language that learners already have to the more difficult concepts in U.S. history and government so that they will be able to sufficiently to answer the questions during the test.

For this reason, I decided to use flashcards as a means to explicitly study and learn vocabulary. Flashcards are a good vehicle to focus on simplified definitions of more complex vocabulary items, and as Gardner (2013) points out, they are a good way to help learners relate the forms of words with their meanings. He also states, they have “been a staple in vocabulary learning since the first half of the nineteenth century” (p. 121). Flashcards are also widely accepted as an effective and simple way to frequently study and review vocabulary word lists (Folse, 2004). They are easily accessible and do not require complex construction. Once the learners have studied the words on the flashcards with tutors, they can also review them independently for repeated review of the vocabulary items. This strategy also allows learners to be more autonomous and motivated, which will lead them to be more successful with their language learning (Nguyen & Gu, 2013).

When using an online platform for creating flashcards, there are often other capabilities such as audio input and game activity additions to the flashcards. For a full listing of the functionalities for Quizlet, an online flashcard platform, see pages 18 and 19. Part of depth of vocabulary knowledge is being able to understand and repeat the correct pronunciation of the vocabulary item (Folse, 2004; Schmitt, 2000), and the audio input functionality can help with that for tutors and for higher proficiency learners who have access to computers. Another benefit

to having the flashcards on an online platform such as Quizlet is that they are free and open to the public; not only the target learners can benefit from them, but a wider, more general audience can as well. Flashcards provide easy access to recognizing and learning vocabulary and are a good platform for explicit vocabulary instruction and independent vocabulary learning practices (Gardner, 2013). For a further discussion of how the principles discussed in this section were implemented in the design of the vocabulary tool, see Table 2 on page 21.

## CHAPTER THREE

### CREATION OF A TUTOR ASSISTED VOCABULARY LEARNING TOOL

The following steps were used to find the target vocabulary to be used in flashcards, to focus on explicit instruction of vocabulary meaning, and to develop the “Vocabulary Support” booklet, which describes activities to use in conjunction with the flashcards.

#### *Phase 1: Vocabulary Collection and Organization*

The first step to ascertain the target vocabulary was to transfer the text from the “Learn About the United States” booklet into a text format document. The booklet is stored as a PDF online, so it needed to be copied in a text format so as to analyze the vocabulary using Nation’s Range program (Nation, 2007). Nation’s Range program was used because of its extensive use and reliability. The Range program also allows lists to be sorted by both range, “the number of different texts and registers that a word or phrase appears in” (Gardner, 2013), and frequency, how often words appear in a text; it also divides the lists into the West’s (1953) General Service List (GSL), Coxhead’s (2000) Academic Word List (AWL), and content words not found on those lists. This allowed for easy sorting into the most frequent content words found in the U.S. civics document. The PDF document and text document were compared to make sure that all the text from the booklet was included for assessment.

The text was then divided into five sections. The reason for the division into five sections was to enable the future organization of target vocabulary into more manageable unit sections. The USCIS document was already broken into three sections of questions, but the first section was long enough that it was worthwhile to divide those questions into smaller sections. This would also allow for a range comparison to see if vocabulary words were repeated throughout the whole text and across the sections. The sections were divided as shown in Table 1.

*Table 1: Text Divisions into Sections*

Section 1	Learn About the United States A: Principles of American Democracy (questions 1-12)
Section 2	Learn About the United States B: Systems of Government (questions 13-47)
Section 3	Learn About the United States C: Rights and Responsibilities (questions 48-57)
Section 4	Civics: A: Colonial Period and Independence (58-70); B: 1800s (71-79); C: Recent American History and Other Important Historical Information (78-87)
Section 5	Integrated Civics: A: Geography (88-95); B: Symbols (96-98); C: Holidays (99-100)

After the text was analyzed using Nation's Range program, the results were copied to an Excel spreadsheet and sorted to obtain the most frequently used vocabulary. As the purpose of this vocabulary tool is not to teach basic function words, all function words were removed from the list using Nation's function word list found in the Range program. This eliminated a large amount of non-content specific words and allowed the most frequent content words to be selected. Some of the words in the remaining list were not necessarily content words, like "began" and "only," but they had high enough frequency and were left in the list. This was mainly because the learners could still benefit from some high frequency, non-content related words because of their English proficiency level. To create a manageable number of flashcards, only the top 100 most frequent words were then selected (see Appendix A). The list was then sorted to reflect the 20 most frequent words for each of the five sections to select a smaller pool to focus on for each section. Due to repetition across the five sections, this resulted in a list of 70 high frequency individual words. These words then became the target words to develop for flashcards, along with 30 high frequency phrases (discussed in phase 2). The range data was also analyzed, and while there was some repetition across the sections, there was not a sufficient amount to justify organizing the vocabulary according to range rather than frequency.

### *Phase 2: Creating Flashcards*

Once the list of target vocabulary was obtained, meanings specific to these target words could be used to develop flashcards, as flashcards are an effective and “popular learning strategy” (Folse, 2004, p. 45). They can also be modified for all levels of language learners, and are not restricted to highly literate learners. The vocabulary tool needed to be tutor-assisted, so the learners will be able to practice using the flashcards with the tutors, and not just on their own. Gardner (2013) also describes that teachers should encourage students to utilize tools such as flashcards as part of direct or explicit vocabulary instruction. Flashcards would also be a language learning strategy for learning vocabulary, and as Folse points out from other studies, “that good language learners not only have more strategies at their command, but also use them more widely and consistently” (2004). Flashcards would then be a way to add to other strategies for learning English that the students may already have.

The website [www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com) was chosen to make the flashcards because of its ease of use and free access to anyone. While the learners often do not have access to computers, having the flashcards in an online stored site allows for easier access for tutors and other people at the IRC. They are also then publically available to anyone who needs or wants to access them online. Having them online also means that the IRC will always have access to them, and this makes them a more worthwhile tool that can be used independently of having to continually consult with the author. It would also make it easier to edit and change flashcards, instead of manipulating a Word document, for example. If learners and tutors did have access to computers more regularly, they could use the flashcards and activities online without having to sign up for an account since Quizlet does not require one to sign up for an account to use flashcard sets. Quizlet also has several built-in features for learning, reviewing, and practicing the target

vocabulary, which made it a good candidate for varied and repeated practice with the target vocabulary words for those who have computer access.

Definitions for the vocabulary words came from the Longman (Longman, 2013) and Cambridge Learner's (Cambridge, 2013) Dictionaries Online. The majority of meanings were adapted from the Longman Learner's Dictionary Online, but when a simple enough meaning was not found in it, the Cambridge Learner's Dictionary Online was used. When words with specialized meanings (for example, "house" as in used with "House of Representatives") was defined, the meaning closest to the meaning from the governmental context of the "Learn About the United States" booklet was used and indicated by the phrase "special meaning." As there were also several words that had more significant meaning as multiple word phrases for the U.S. civics context, the kfNgram program (Fletcher, 2007) was used to analyze the text to find the most frequent multiple word phrases. A list of the 30 most frequently found phrases (see Appendix B) were selected and incorporated into the words to be used for the flashcards. This process of target vocabulary selection and meaning definition resulted in 70 high frequency words and 30 high frequency multiple word phrases being selected for the total 100 high frequency flashcards. As there was some range repetition across sections, the vocabulary words that were found across each section were indicated on the flashcard with an asterisk.

The Quizlet interface allows for multiple ways to show the flashcards with target words and meanings. They can be studied online or in a printed, tangible format as well. Online, the flashcards resemble paper cards (see Figure 1), or can also be viewed in list or glossary format (see Figure 2).

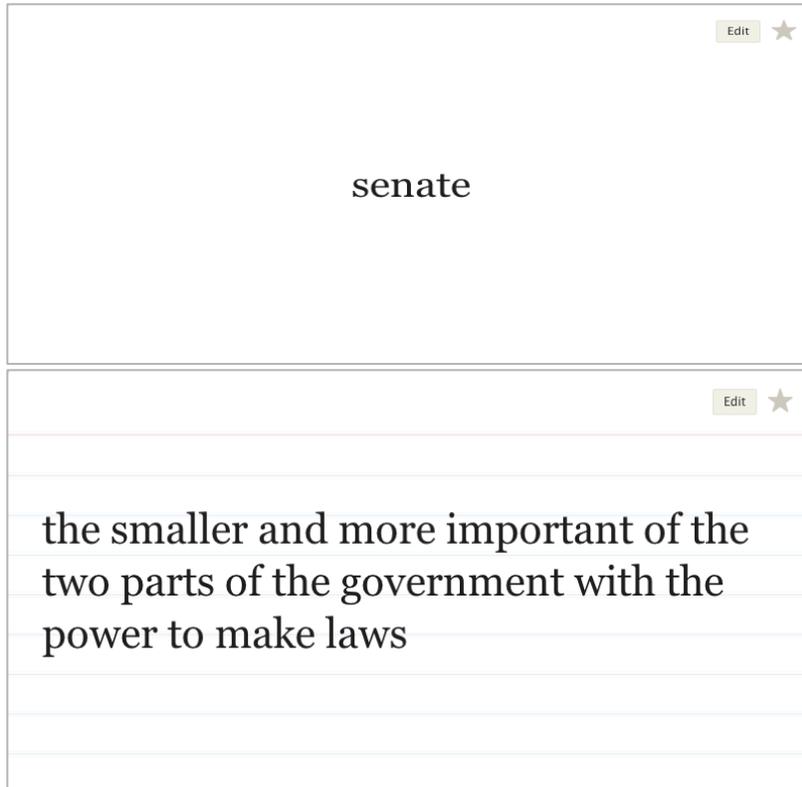


Figure 1. Flashcards in card form

Terms <small>not English?</small>	Definitions <small>not English?</small>
*state(s)	one of the areas with limited law-making powers that together make up a country controlled by a central government such as the US and Australia
*united	joined or closely connected by feelings, aims etc
*war	when there is fighting between two or more countries or between opposing groups within a country, involving large numbers of soldiers and weapons
*The Constitution	the highest law of the government of the US, often unofficially called the Constitution
*government	the group of people who govern a country or state
*people	the people who belong to a particular country, race, or area

Figure 2. Flashcards in list or glossary form

The flashcards can also easily be printed out in PDF format in a variety of sizes. This increases the flexibility of possible activities to be done with the flashcards as well, and because

they can easily be made into small paper flashcards, this makes them ideal for emergent literate learners to use without the aid of a computer. The flashcards can be printed and assembled by both the tutor and the learner as a class activity or by anyone who wishes to use the flashcards.

As learners become more confident with their computer literacy skills, Quizlet also has several online learning and review activities. All flashcards are also enabled with an audio recording of the word, so the learners can listen to the word being pronounced. The activities are as follows:

- “Speller”: an activity in which the learner can listen to an audio recording and then type the word. The definition of the word is right next to the box where the learner types the word.
- “Learn”: an activity where learners can choose to read the definition or to hear it pronounced and then type the correct word in the box.
- “Test”: an activity which can be formatted in several ways to include multiple choice, matching, true/false, and written answers. This could be used by a tutor, or set up by the student themselves if they wanted to test their knowledge.
- “Scatter”: a game where the learner has to drag the definition to its matching word to make all the words disappear. This can also be modified to a non-computer matching game.
- “Space Race”: a game where the definition moves across the screen and the learner must type the word that matches the definition. This game would most likely be too advanced for emergent literate learners.

The flashcards are available to the public, and can be found with the following URL: <http://quizlet.com/12553035/us-citizenship-test-vocabulary-flash-cards/>. They can also be found by searching for the list using the phrase “US Citizenship Test Vocabulary.”

### *Phase 3: Developing a Vocabulary Support Booklet*

While the vocabulary flashcards are primarily a tool to help the tutor better explicitly teach content vocabulary to the learner, the Vocabulary Support booklet was created to provide structure and activity ideas. This allows volunteers to more effectively explain difficult and complex information and U.S. history and government specific vocabulary words. The booklet contains an introduction, which includes an explanation of what a flashcard is. This is followed by the five main sections of the booklet seen in Table 1 above.

Each section begins with a box containing the 20 most frequently found words and phrases for that section. Underneath each box of target vocabulary words, activity suggestions are given. The activity suggestions utilize both offline and online ideas and come from teaching experience, classroom instruction, suggested vocabulary activities from vocabulary experts such as Gardner and Folse, and online resource ideas. The suggested activities are repeated with each new section, along with an additional activity to review the vocabulary from the previous section, as well as some new suggested activities. This resulted in 15 total activities and gives untrained tutors helpful ideas to teach and review vocabulary.

The five sections are then followed by an English to Kirundi dictionary of the target vocabulary words (see Appendix C). Alex Ngendakuriyo, a native Kirundi speaker, provided the translations. Not all the target vocabulary words have Kirundi translations as there are not always corresponding words for some of the concepts expressed. The English to Kirundi dictionary eases the vocabulary burden on the learner, provides scaffolding, and helps with acquiring the

meaning of vocabulary words in English. The English-Kirundi translations were also used to create a set of English-Kirundi flashcards for the target vocabulary.

The final section of the Vocabulary Support booklet consists of handwriting practice worksheets. The sentences were engineered and adapted by me from sample 100 questions with answers to the USCIS Citizenship Test found online, and also some examples provided by the IRC. They were designed to include target vocabulary words while still being short and fairly simple grammatically. The high frequency words were bolded in the sentences as well. The worksheets are meant to be inserted into plastic file folder sheets to allow students to practice writing by tracing over them using a dry erase marker, or some other erasable type of pen. This will lower the cost of having to reprint the pages. The whole booklet was designed to decrease printing costs.

In sum, Table 2 below outlines which linguistics principles for vocabulary learning and acquisition were implemented in the creation of the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet.

*Table 2: Linguistic Principles Implemented in the Creation of the Vocabulary Tool*

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Implementation</b>
Clarity & Frequency	Implemented with high frequency vocabulary words and phrases with content specific meaning to ensure clearest meaning possible
Depth	Implemented with a variety of activities that focus on improving spelling, pronunciation, and then the meaning of the word
Explicit instruction	Implemented by ensuring that the vocabulary tool is tutor assisted and that tutors explicitly explain meaning
High frequency meaning	Implemented by using high frequency, specific meanings
Independent learning strategies	Implemented with the vocabulary tool being based on flashcards, a well-known independent vocabulary learning strategy.
Meaning first, then aural & handwriting practice	Implemented with activities initially focused on meaning, and then aural and handwriting practice as part of the vocabulary support booklet suggested activities and handwriting section.
Meaning in context	Implemented to a limited degree with activities that require the students to search for the vocabulary in the USCIS Civics booklet
Meanings specific & “modified” to fit purpose - simplification	Implemented by focusing on content specific vocabulary with attention paid to words and phrases with special meanings. Also used simple dictionary definitions
Personal connection with meaning	Implemented with the use of a gloss, but as some of the concepts found in the vocabulary words and phrases might be foreign concepts even with a Kirundi definition, tutor assistance is paramount
Several encounters with a word or phrase	Implemented by using activities to review vocabulary words and phrases from other sections before starting to focus on new vocabulary.
High frequency sight vocabulary	Not implemented, assumed to be known.
Translation support	Implemented with the use of the gloss and the English-Kirundi flashcard set, as well as an activity in the vocabulary support booklet
Use of a gloss	Implemented with the use of the English to Kirundi dictionary section in the vocabulary support booklet dictionary
Variety of techniques	Implemented to a limited extent as the tool focuses primarily on flashcards. However, there are several activities and the supplementary material in the vocabulary support booklet that provide some variety of techniques (e.g., the handwriting pages)

## CHAPTER FOUR

### FINAL PRODUCT AND ASSESSMENT

#### *Final Product Description*

The final product was two-fold. One part was a simple 8 x 11 inch Vocabulary Support booklet of 97 pages, including a copy of the two sets of flashcards. The document contains instructions on how to use it, target vocabulary words, activity descriptions, an English to Kirundi dictionary, and a copy of both sets of flashcards. The other important parts of the tool were the 100 vocabulary flashcards designed in the free online flashcard program Quizlet. (See Appendix E). The flashcards are available publicly at no cost and require no account to view and use them. The set of flashcards also allows for the flexibility of adding more flashcards in the future if necessary. The booklet and flashcards are designed to be simple and to aid tutors in helping emergent literate learners acquire the vocabulary necessary for passing the U.S. Citizenship test. The booklet and flashcards were presented to the Citizenship Education Coordinator at the IRC for feedback and to see if the vocabulary tool would meet the need previously articulated by them.

#### *Reactions from the IRC*

The Vocabulary Support booklet and flashcards were presented to the IRC Citizenship Education Coordinator, Anna Springer, who is in charge of materials development, tutor training, and refugee instruction. She was pleased with the result. I met with her on several different occasions at the IRC office building in Salt Lake City, UT, over the course of development to discuss development of the vocabulary tool with her. She expressed appreciation that the booklet was a simple black-and-white Word document to facilitate easy printing and low cost and that it used a font that resembled printed handwriting. She believes that this will be very helpful for

students' vocabulary learning and practice as they prepare to take the citizenship test. She expressed that this will fill the large gap in materials for vocabulary instruction for learners preparing for the citizenship test, particularly emergent literate readers. The simplicity of design was also mentioned positively. The Education Coordinator also expressed how the repetition of activities from section to section would be helpful for emergent literate learners as they benefit from consistency with activities. She also felt that this would allow the tutors to focus more on helping the learners acquire the vocabulary, rather than introducing only completely new activities with each new section, a process which is often very time-consuming and confusing for emergent literate learners.

As the learners spend significant time working with tutors both in their citizenship classes and in home visits, the Education Coordinator looks forward to providing more structured support for the IRC's tutors. Tutors often lack language teaching training, and often rely on self-made materials. The Coordinator feels that the simplicity of the flashcards and booklet will not only help the tutors more effectively help the learners but will also allow learners to continue studying the vocabulary on their own without the aid of a tutor.

The Education Coordinator appreciated the flexibility that the vocabulary flashcards and support booklet provide being paper-based. The proposed activities in the support booklet allow for learners to practice without the aid of online resources. There are, however, additional and varied online practice activities to supplement the booklet if students have computer literacy skills and access to the Internet, all built into using [www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com) for the flashcard portion of the vocabulary tool. She found it helpful that access to the flashcards online was not limited to anyone in any way and that the website was simple enough for emergent learners to navigate without too much trouble. Another aspect of the booklet that she expressed positive feedback

about was the handwriting practice pages. She felt that the basic sentences provided both simple contexts for the learners to practice the vocabulary and handwriting practice necessary for emergent literate learners. She also noted how the handwriting practice sentences were similar to sentences that learners would need to write for the U.S. citizenship test, thus providing useful practice for the learners.

Another aspect the Education Coordinator responded to positively was the English to Kirundi dictionary in the Vocabulary Support booklet. She not only felt that this would be helpful for both the tutors and the learners from a language perspective, but she explained how this could foster positive relationships between learners and tutors. She has observed that it helps the learners when they can share aspects of their language and culture with their tutors, and the dictionary would help them both to feel excited about learning the vocabulary.

Finally, we discussed how the booklet has wider application for all the refugee populations that they work with at the IRC. Because the English to Kirundi dictionary acts as supplementary material in the booklet and is not necessarily integrated into the meaning-based flashcards or every activity in the section lessons, it would be easy to use the booklet and flashcards for any population the IRC instructs. We also discussed how tutors could also create a bilingual set of flashcards like the English-Kirundi set of flashcards that are already created. On the whole, the Citizenship Education Coordinator, was very positive about the use and benefit of the flashcards and Vocabulary Support booklet, and would like to implement them soon.

### *Feedback from the Tutors*

After I had met with Anna Springer, the Citizenship Education Coordinator, she arranged two meetings with some of the IRC's volunteer tutors. The purpose of these visits was to meet

with the tutors and explain the vocabulary tool and how the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet could be used in their tutoring instruction with their students. Over the course of the two visits, I met with a total of 10 tutors. Anna Springer explained that of those 10 tutors, only 2-3 have received any form of ESL teaching training, and what training they had received was informal. She said that the tutors had volunteered because they were interested in tutoring refugees, and helping in their community. She said that half of those who attended the training had also had a little experience with in-home tutoring visits, which are often one-on-one tutoring sessions, but that they had had little or no familiarity with teaching English before that (A. Springer, personal communication, 2 December, 2013). The tutors' ages spanned a wide range, and there was no specific profession represented by them. One tutor was a computer expert, another a medical student; one was a community college professor with experience at larger universities, and another was someone interested in pursuing a degree in teaching English to speakers of other languages. The other tutors did not disclose their occupations.

Some of the tutors gave some verbal feedback at the training meetings where I explained the vocabulary flashcards and vocabulary support booklet. I then sent them a link to a questionnaire asking about their experience using and experimenting with the vocabulary flashcards and support booklet. About half the tutors responded to the electronic questionnaire I sent to them (see Appendix D). Their direct responses are organized by bullet point according to the order of questions in the survey. Sometimes respondents only replied with a yes, and I have chosen not to include those in the following seven question breakdown, but will generally refer to them as positive support in favor of the vocabulary tool. I was also able to observe that people have been using the flashcards for studying on the Quizlet website. Due to the privacy settings

on Quizlet, I was unable to contact the users for feedback as well, but a wider audience than just the IRC tutors is using them.

*1. Are the flashcard meanings simple enough for helping a tutor explain the vocabulary concepts?*

- I think they are helpful for the tutor to use, but very helpful for the students.
- They are too complex for the students to use on their own. I think pictures might be more helpful.
- Yes [they would be helpful]. I am not sure what type of speaker the cards are aimed for, but it would seem that person would need to have a good grasp of the English language for these to be effective.
- Yes, I think that providing visual would be helpful too.

*2. Are the instructions on how to use the flashcards clear enough to let a tutor and/or student understand their purpose? If you answered no, please explain what could be made clearer, or phrased in a more helpful way.*

- They are ok, my concern is that since not many of our students have computer knowledge, the only ones that can take advantage of these cards online will be the advanced students, which are few.
- Yes, and also lends to flexibility in case the student approaches it from a different angle than the instructor. They are amenable.

*3. Are the suggested activity ideas helpful? Why or why not?*

- Most of them are. Again, I think some of the activities that use definitions would be too complex for the students.
- The writing activities are great and very practical for test preparation. The word recognition is helpful in going through the questions. The language dictionary is helpful too.
- Yes, they combine speaking, reading and writing. Doing all three are critical to success on the citizenship test as well as understanding the English language.
- They are kind of advanced for our students. Sometimes it is hard for them to understand our directions in class, so patience is necessary as well as slow progress.

*4. Are there any activity ideas that you think the vocabulary support booklet could benefit from? Please explain any ideas you suggest.*

- An activity that ties the vocabulary words back into the hundred questions would be helpful.
- Matching pictures to words or somehow incorporating pictures into the booklet.
- Visuals
- Perhaps a matching exercise to warm up – left hand pic [sic] to right hand word, or simple English left citizenship term equivalent right [sic], merely drawing a line to

connect them. To me a warm-up like this would build initial confidence for the session. Sometimes starting out by writing out an answer can take them back. This might already exist in the curricula.

5. *What is the most helpful feature of the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet? If you feel that multiple features are helpful, please also list them.*

- The reading and writing activities are great, especially the handwriting pages.
- The language dictionary is great, it gives the tutors some place to start.
- English/Kirundi dictionary. I would expand this section to include more words.
- The fact that you provided physical copies [of the flashcards] as well is great. I imagine that my students will utilize the physical cards first.
- Pictures – they need no translating

6. *What suggestions do you have for improving the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet?*

- I would suggest possibly using pictures instead of or in addition to the definitions.
- I think this is great for someone with a good grasp of the English language. However, if they are struggling to put sentences together or only understand certain words, they would get frustrated with the flashcards and not use them.
- The dictionary is awesome. The handwriting practice is great too. I would just include basic learning pieces, like teaching them how to trace vowels, consonants and numbers.
- More of them, that's all.
- 

7. *Would you recommend fellow tutors and volunteers to use the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet? Why or why not?*

- Absolutely. There are some great activities and it is a very helpful tool for tutors to use in explaining the questions to the clients and helping them understand the meaning of the questions.
- Yes, but I would only use the flashcards if they had a good grasp of the English language. If they did not, I would probably only use the English to Kirundi dictionary.
- I would recommend them to use the dictionary, the handwriting practice and the flashcards for the intermediate students.
- Yes absolutely. Having a common ground-base for material brings members of the class the ability to relate, which I have seen happen more between English learners at different levels, with each other.

Each of the respondents indicated that they felt that the flashcards would be helpful, but several felt that they would not be easy for the target learners to use. There were also a few comments that suggested that perhaps the tutor had not used or examined all portions of the

vocabulary tool, as some of their suggestions were already incorporated into the tool. Overall, the responses were positive.

Due to several suggestions about level appropriateness, I decided to make some modifications to the vocabulary tool to reflect that it was primarily a tool for tutors to use as a guide to instruct their students and less of an independent learning tool to only be used by the student. The instructions for the vocabulary support booklet were also amended to reflect how tutor-assisted the vocabulary tool is intended to be. More activities were also added, with activities for reviewing the previous sections of vocabulary.

The overall structure and content of the flashcards and vocabulary tool were viewed positively, and tutors felt comfortable recommending the vocabulary tool to other tutors. However, one thing that repeatedly came up was the mention of using some form of pictures and visuals. While I had addressed my decision not to use pictures in the trainings, I did incorporate some activities where the tutors could choose to use some pictures from the USCIS website, but as many of the content words on the flashcards are concepts that pictures do not necessarily exist for, this activity is limited in its scope.

In sum, the tutors responded positively and felt that this vocabulary tool would be greatly beneficial to them and their students. The modifications made from their suggestions will also greatly improve the vocabulary tool for their better use. The changes, particularly those made in the instructions to the tutors, make it clearer how the flashcards and support booklet were designed to help them as tutors and to act as a bridging tool between tutor and learner.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSION

The focus of developing the vocabulary flashcards and vocabulary support booklet for the IRC was to provide a bridging tool between tutor and learner and to ease the vocabulary learning burden for the students. The flashcards and vocabulary support booklet were not intended to be the only ways of studying for the U.S. Citizenship test, but rather supplements to the instruction that the IRC already provides.

The flashcards and vocabulary support booklet have already begun to be used by the IRC and its tutors. Their response has been positive, and with their feedback, some adjustments were made to better facilitate learning.

The U.S. Citizenship Test vocabulary flashcards and vocabulary support booklet add valuable vocabulary learning activities and content for the targeted learners. However, they are not suitable for learners to start with until they have had some preliminary literacy instruction. As the IRC provides that in part, these tools would best be used after that instruction. One way to further enrich this instruction would be to utilize the function based word list extracted from the “Learn About the United States” USCIS booklet to provide similar scaffolding and vocabulary instruction to emergent literacy learners. The handwriting practice sentence section could also be expanded to include more sentences using the phrases and vocabulary words from the flashcards.

A limitation is that even though the vocabulary tools designed for this project were received positively by the IRC and its volunteer tutors, these vocabulary tools still contain very content specific vocabulary. These are not vocabulary words that can be quickly acquired, and while the simplicity of the design will help facilitate vocabulary learning, it

will still take students time to learn the vocabulary in each section well. The learners should use the tools primarily in conjunction with tutors or someone with more than emergent literacy skills until they are more comfortable understanding and using these vocabulary words and phrases.

In conclusion, the vocabulary support booklet and flashcards serve to ease the vocabulary burden on emergent literate refugees learning at the IRC. The vocabulary tool was not intended to teach immediate literacy skills, but it can be a valuable tool for helping students who are ready to begin learning the intense content vocabulary of the US Citizenship Test.

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## APPENDIX A: List of 100 most frequent words

<b>Vocabulary Word</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	<b>F4</b>	<b>F5</b>
<b>States</b>	5	230	36	101	26	40	29
<b>United</b>	5	154	25	67	23	19	20
<b>War</b>	5	112	4	97	5	5	1
<b>Constitution</b>	5	112	1	26	9	38	38
<b>Government</b>	5	101	1	23	7	36	35
<b>People</b>	5	92	6	20	9	19	38
<b>State</b>	5	73	5	12	3	52	1
<b>Rights</b>	4	67	0	24	8	1	34
<b>Congress</b>	5	66	6	12	6	32	10
<b>American</b>	5	53	9	30	2	4	8
<b>Federal</b>	4	47	4	3	13	27	0
<b>New</b>	4	46	16	23	1	6	0
<b>Representatives</b>	5	45	3	3	2	31	6
<b>Law</b>	5	41	1	1	5	21	12
<b>Bill</b>	3	40	0	0	1	30	9
<b>Citizens</b>	5	36	2	2	22	4	6
<b>Vote</b>	5	35	2	3	22	7	1
<b>House</b>	5	33	1	1	1	29	1
<b>Branch</b>	2	33	0	0	0	31	2
<b>Amendment</b>	4	31	0	5	7	3	16
<b>Senate</b>	3	30	0	0	2	27	1
<b>Supreme</b>	4	29	0	2	1	24	2
<b>Declaration</b>	3	29	5	14	0	0	10
<b>Americans</b>	5	28	3	16	4	3	2
<b>Important</b>	5	28	2	12	7	1	6
<b>World</b>	4	28	4	22	1	1	0
<b>Name</b>	5	23	6	7	1	8	1
<b>Flag</b>	3	23	14	1	8	0	0
<b>Country</b>	5	22	2	11	4	2	3
<b>Right</b>	3	21	0	5	7	0	9
<b>British</b>	4	20	3	15	0	1	1
<b>Great</b>	3	20	4	11	0	0	5
<b>Army</b>	2	20	0	19	0	1	0
<b>Made</b>	5	19	2	4	5	6	2
<b>History</b>	5	18	3	8	1	5	1
<b>Political</b>	4	18	0	4	4	9	1
<b>Office</b>	3	18	0	3	3	12	0
<b>Number</b>	3	17	3	0	1	13	0
<b>Union</b>	3	17	1	15	0	0	1
<b>North</b>	2	17	4	13	0	0	0
<b>Fought</b>	1	17	0	17	0	0	0

<b>Vocabulary Word</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	<b>F4</b>	<b>F5</b>
<b>Wrote</b>	5	16	2	5	1	1	7
<b>Began</b>	3	16	1	14	1	0	0
<b>Serve</b>	2	16	0	0	4	12	0
<b>Only</b>	5	15	2	2	4	5	2
<b>Nation</b>	4	15	2	10	2	0	1
<b>Wanted</b>	4	15	1	6	0	4	4
<b>John</b>	4	15	1	4	0	8	2
<b>Make</b>	4	15	0	2	1	5	7
<b>Elected</b>	4	15	0	4	1	9	1
<b>Voting</b>	3	15	0	3	8	4	0
<b>Today</b>	4	14	1	6	4	3	0
<b>Now</b>	4	14	1	3	1	9	0
<b>York</b>	3	14	6	6	0	2	0
<b>Amendments</b>	3	14	0	1	2	0	11
<b>River</b>	2	14	12	2	0	0	0
<b>Colonists</b>	2	14	0	11	0	0	3
<b>Slaves</b>	1	14	0	14	0	0	0
<b>Established</b>	4	13	3	4	0	5	1
<b>Territory</b>	3	13	3	4	0	6	0
<b>Major</b>	3	13	3	6	0	4	0
<b>Free</b>	3	13	1	8	0	0	4
<b>Democracy</b>	3	13	1	0	3	0	9
<b>Gave</b>	4	12	2	4	5	1	0
<b>Same</b>	4	12	0	3	2	5	2
<b>Ended</b>	3	12	0	10	0	1	1
<b>End</b>	2	12	0	11	1	0	0
<b>Confederate</b>	1	12	0	12	0	0	0
<b>Cabinet</b>	1	12	0	0	0	12	0
<b>Original</b>	5	11	4	4	1	1	1
<b>Secretary</b>	3	11	0	1	1	9	0
<b>Framers</b>	3	11	0	1	0	3	7
<b>Died</b>	2	11	0	7	0	4	0
<b>Ratified</b>	4	10	0	2	1	2	5
<b>Created</b>	4	10	0	5	1	3	1
<b>Elections</b>	3	10	2	0	5	3	0
<b>France</b>	3	10	1	8	0	0	1
<b>Roosevelt</b>	3	10	0	6	1	3	0
<b>Military</b>	3	10	0	5	2	3	0
<b>Lincoln</b>	3	10	0	7	1	2	0
<b>Statue</b>	2	10	9	0	0	1	0
<b>Virginia</b>	2	10	2	8	0	0	0
<b>Service</b>	2	10	0	1	9	0	0
<b>Convention</b>	2	10	0	6	0	0	4
<b>Holidays</b>	1	10	10	0	0	0	0

<b>Vocabulary Word</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>F1</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	<b>F4</b>	<b>F5</b>
<b>Republican</b>	1	10	0	0	0	9	0
<b>Allegiance</b>	1	10	0	0	10	0	0
<b>Principles</b>	4	9	1	3	2	0	3
<b>Came</b>	4	9	1	5	0	1	2
<b>Time</b>	3	9	1	5	3	0	0
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	3	9	1	6	0	2	0
<b>George</b>	3	9	1	3	0	5	0
<b>Economy</b>	3	9	1	3	0	0	5
<b>Representative</b>	3	9	0	0	1	5	3
<b>Men</b>	3	9	0	2	5	0	2
<b>Founding</b>	3	9	0	2	0	2	5
<b>Different</b>	3	9	0	4	0	3	2
<b>Slavery</b>	2	9	0	8	1	0	0
<b>Residents</b>	2	9	0	0	1	8	0
<b>Known</b>	2	9	0	5	0	4	0
<b>Committee</b>	2	9	0	2	0	7	0
<b>Branches</b>	2	9	0	0	0	8	1
<b>Stripes</b>	1	9	9	0	0	0	0

## APPENDIX B: List of 40 Most Frequent Phrases

<b>Section</b>	<b>Phrase</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Number of Words</b>
<b>F1 – Section 1</b>	The Constitution	34	2
	The United States	20	3
	The Bill of Rights	9	4
	The First Amendment	8	3
	The Declaration of Independence	7	4
<b>F2 – Section 2</b>	The president	55	2
	The Constitution	31	2
	The United States	19	3
	The Supreme Court	17	3
	Vice president	17	2
	The Executive Branch	10	3
	The Federal government	10	3
	The Judicial Branch	10	3
<b>F3 – Section 3</b>	The United States	19	3
	The Constitution	9	2
	U.S. Citizens	7	2
	Selective service	6	2
	Income tax	4	2
	Federal Elections	3	2
	Federal income tax	3	3
	The Pledge of Allegiance	3	4
	Required by the law	3	4
<b>F4 – Section 4</b>	The United States	65	3
	World war	19	2
	The Constitution	18	2
	The Civil War	14	3
	World War II	12	3
	Civil rights	11	2
	The Declaration of Independence	10	4
	Southern states	10	2
	The British	10	2
	American Indian	8	2
	The Union	8	2
	World War I	6	3
	The Emancipation Proclamation	5	3

<b>Section</b>	<b>Phrase</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Number of Words</b>
<b>F5 – Section 5</b>	The United States	25	3
	The flag	10	2
	The Statue of Liberty	7	4
	New York	7	2
	The Declaration of Independence	5	4
	The Atlantic Ocean	5	3
	The Mississippi River	5	3
	The Pacific Ocean	5	3
	Independence Day	4	2
	New York Harbor	3	3
	The Gadsen Purchase	3	3
	The Missouri River	3	3

## APPENDIX C: Alphabetized English to Kirundi dictionary

<b>English</b>	<b>Kirundi</b>
Allegiance	Icizere
Amendment(s)	Ihindurwa
Amendments	Ihindura ry'amategeko
American(s)	Abanyamerika
Army	Ingabo
Began	Vyitangiye
Branch	Igisata
Branches	Ibisata
British	Ababirigi
Came	Yaje
Citizens	Abanyagihugu
Colonists	Abakoroni
Committee	Komite
Congress	Ubushikiranjanji
Constitution	Amategeko nshingiro
Convention	Amasezerano
Country	Igihugu
Created	Vyahimbwe/vyatangiwe
Declaration	Kumenyesha
Democracy	Demokrasi
Died	Yapfyuye
Different	Bitandukanye
Economy	Ubutunzi
Elected	Vyatowe/uwatowe
Elections	Amatora
End	Iherezo/impera
Ended	Vyaheze
Established	Ivyasohowe
Federal	Federare
Flag	Ibendera
Fought	Ibitekerezo
Founding	Gushaka amafaranga
Framers	Guteranya
France	Ubufaransa
Free	Kuri gusa/kubohorwa
Gave	Vyatanzwe
Government	Leta
Great	Neza
History	Amateka

<b>English</b>	<b>Kirundi</b>
Holidays	Iminsi mikuru
House	Inzu/ingoro
Important	Ibyingenzi
John	Yohani
Known	Bizwi
Law	Itegeko
Made	Byakozwe
Major	Ivingenzi
Make	Vyakorewe
Men	Abagabo
Military	Ingabo
Name	Izina
Nation	Igihugu
New	Bishasha
North	Umajaruguru
Now	Ubu
Number	Ibiharuro
Office	Ibiro
Only	Gusa/vyonyine
Original	Bitarakoreshwa
People	Abantu
Political	Politike
Principles	Ivyibanze
Ratified	Icemezo
Representative(s)	Abaserukira abanyagihugu
Republican	Abanyepubulika
Residents	Abanyagihugu
Right	Uburenganzira
Rights	Uburenganzira
River	Uruzi
Same	Ibihuje/ibisa
Serve	Gufasha
Service	Ubufasha
Slavery	Ubugurano
Slaves	Umucakara
State(s)	Intara
Statue	Ikiranga ntego
Supreme	Ubucyamanza bukuru
Time	Igihe
Today	Uyumunsi
Tribes	Ubgoko

<b>English</b>	<b>Kirundi</b>
Union	Ubumwe
United	Ubumwe
Vote	Itora/gutora
Voting	Amatora
Wanted	Ibikenewe
War	Intambara
World	Isi
Wrote	Vyanditswe

## APPENDIX D: Questionnaire for IRC volunteers

**VOCABULARY SUPPORT FOR THE CITIZENSHIP TEST**

This is a questionnaire about the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet designed to assist tutors who help refugees study for the U.S. Citizenship test. The set of flashcards and accompanying activity ideas, including the handwriting practice are designed to supplement instruction and provide necessary practice for students to understand more vocabulary. The flashcards and vocabulary support document are initially for use with a tutor, but can be extended for use without a tutor as the student feels more confident with the vocabulary. Further practice with the flashcards can also be found online. All vocabulary words were chosen based on frequency in the USCIS study booklet, and are not meant to be a comprehensive list of all vocabulary words in the study booklet. Please let me know if you have any further questions about the use and purpose of the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet. You can email me at [eleanoranneclark@gmail.com](mailto:eleanoranneclark@gmail.com).

1. Are the flashcard meanings simple enough for helping a tutor explain the vocabulary concepts?
2. Are the instructions on how to use the flashcards clear enough to let a tutor and/or student understand their purpose? If you answered no, please explain what could be made clearer, or phrased in a more helpful way.
3. Are the suggested activity ideas helpful? Why or why not?
4. Are there any activity ideas that you think the vocabulary support booklet could benefit from? Please explain any ideas you suggest.
5. What is the most helpful feature of the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet? If you feel that multiple features are helpful, please also list them.
6. What suggestions do you have for improving the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet?
7. Would you recommend fellow tutors and volunteers to use the flashcards and vocabulary support booklet? Why or why not?

APPENDIX E: Vocabulary Support Booklet with flashcards

# **Vocabulary Support**

## **Studying for the U.S. Citizenship Test**

**A guide for tutors**

**Eleanor Clark**

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## Introduction

This booklet is designed to help you as a tutor to teach vocabulary for the U.S. Citizenship test to Burundian refugees. The words and phrases found in the sections are the words most often used in the “Learn About the United States Quick Civics Lessons” booklet. Each section will have some ideas on how to teach the words by using flashcards and by practicing writing sentences. In the back of this booklet, there is also a list of some of the words with their Kirundi meaning. While this booklet contains a set of English-Kirundi flashcards, the vocabulary words can be used by any group of people and are intended for a wide audience.

The flashcards and the activities in this booklet can be adapted to the level of the learners you work with, and more advanced learners can use this booklet by themselves, or as a tool to review what you have studied together. The flashcards and activities found in this booklet are not meant to be the only ways to teach and learn vocabulary. They can be divided up and used in smaller or larger sections depending on the level of your students. The flashcards also only include the highest frequency words found in the “Learn About the United States Quick Civics Lessons” booklet and are to be used primarily with those learners who already have some basic literacy skills.

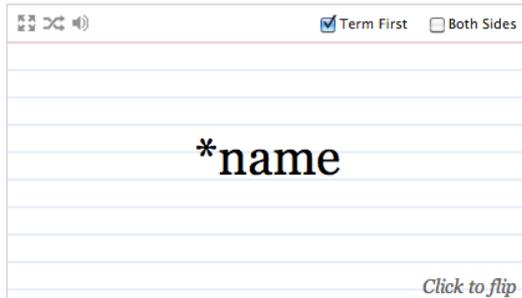
The flashcards for this booklet were made using Quizlet.com, and you can find them online with this link: <http://quizlet.com/12553035/us-citizenship-test-vocabulary-flash-cards/> and <http://quizlet.com/31599392/english-kirundi-us-citizenship-test-vocabulary-flash-cards/>. You can also go to [www.quizlet.com](http://www.quizlet.com) and type in the words “U.S. Citizenship Test Vocabulary” to find the set of civics vocabulary words or the words “English-Kirundi U.S. Citizenship Test Vocabulary” to find the English-Kirundi vocabulary words. You do not need to have an account to use the flashcards online. All the flashcards can also be found at the end of this booklet, and you can cut them out and make them into paper flashcards for teaching; learners can also review them on their own as they get more comfortable with the vocabulary.

As you teach your learners about flashcards, the following section might be helpful in explaining what a flashcard is and how to use it.

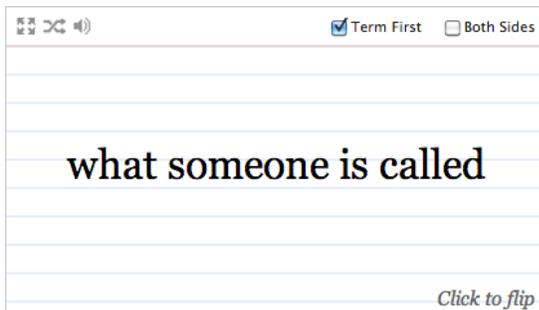
## What is a flashcard?

A flashcard is a piece of paper with two sides.

On one side you can see a word.



And the other side has the definition, or meaning of the word.



In addition to the activities found in this booklet, Quizlet provides many activities to practice online. For those learners that have access to a computer, or who have basic computer literacy skills, this could be a good option for extra practice.

## How can Quizlet help you learn?

There are many different ways to practice and review the words on the flashcards with Quizlet. This is a free program, and you do not need an account to use the flashcards or to do the activities online.

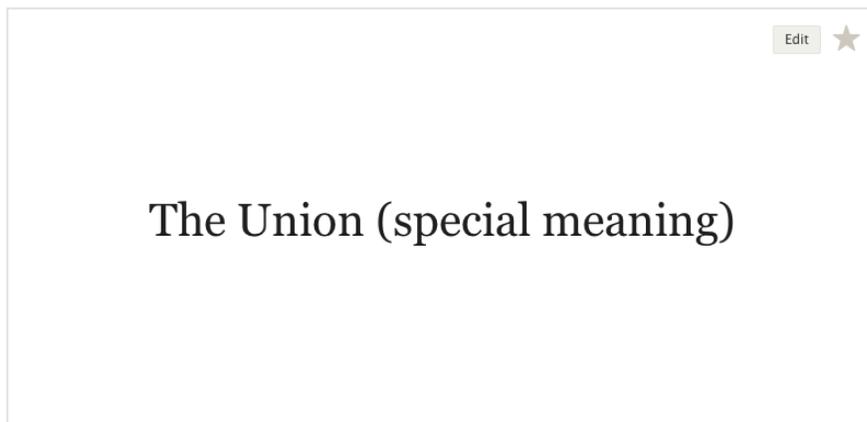
- You can listen to the word being pronounced and then type it. If you want to practice your handwriting, you do not need to type it on the computer.
- You can take a test to see if you understand the words.
- You can play games like matching the meaning with the word.
- You can also review the flashcards online.

## What other activities can you do with the flashcards?

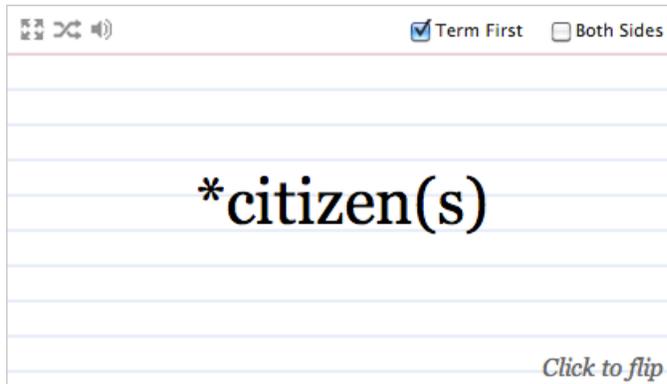
There are many different activities you can do with these flashcards. Each of the sections in this booklet will give you some activity ideas to help you teach these vocabulary words better. There will also be an activity to review the vocabulary from the previous section. You can create your own activities that you find help you teach and use the vocabulary words better, either as a tutor or as a learner. Each unit can also be taught in any order you may choose, but they do follow the order of the questions set out in the 100 questions U.S. civics study booklet.

### Other important information:

Some words have special meanings when they are used with United States history and government. Sometimes you will see a flashcard with "special meaning" written next to the word. This means that this word is sometimes used differently. They will look like this:



Sometimes a word is used for counting just one thing (singular), and sometimes a word shows that there are more than one (plural). You might want to explain to the learner that in English, we often add an “s” to the end of the word. When a word is used a lot both as a singular word and as a plural word, the flash card will show the word like this:



This means that when you want to talk about one “citizen” you use the word without the “s.” And when you want to talk about more than one “citizen,” you use the word with an “s” on the end – “citizens.”

Flashcards that have words marked with an asterisk (\*) are words that are found frequently in every section.

## Section 1: Learn about the United States Part 1

All the vocabulary words in this section are from Part A: Principles of American Democracy questions 1-12 in the “Learn About the United States” USCIS booklet.

The following words are the 20 most frequent words and phrases in this section.

state(s)	holiday	The Declaration of
united	American	Independence
the United States	statue	war
The Constitution	stripes	federal
new	people	the First Amendment
flag	congress	original
river	the Bill of Rights	representative(s)

**Activities:** Use the following activities with your learners, adapting the level of difficulty to the English level of your student. While each section contains 20 words, you can choose to break the section down into even smaller sections depending on the level of your students. For example, you might choose to only focus on five words at a time instead of all 20.

1. Use the flashcards to better explain the meanings of these words. You can also use the English to Kirundi dictionary at the back of this booklet to find the meanings of the words. Then have the student write the Kirundi word under the English word. [This activity, for both emergent and more advanced learners, is best done with a tutor to help explain meaning].
2. Help the students practice saying the words on this list aloud with a friend, a tutor, or by themselves. You can use the flashcard to focus on just one word at a time to decrease the pressure of focusing on too many words at once. [You can also use the “speller” study tool on Quizlet to hear the pronunciation of the word if the student wants to review the vocabulary words online.]

3. Take one or more words, and make a sentence with that word. Then have the student also make a sentence. This is a good practice activity for taking the citizenship test. You could also help the learner to make a set of their own flashcards using the sentences you create together.
4. Play a matching game with the flashcards. You can use flashcards that are not stuck together. Take the word and match it with its meaning. You could also explain a meaning and have the student pick out the word that matches the meaning. This can help decrease the pressure of having to read the whole meaning and understanding. If a student feels more confident, they can match the words with their meanings on the “scatter” game on Quizlet.
5. Use the English-Kirundi flashcards to match them with the words and definitions from the other set of flashcards. As a trust-building activity, have the student teach you the pronunciation of the Kirundi word, and then practice the pronunciation of the English word.

## Section 2: Learn about the United States Part 2

All the vocabulary words in this section are from Part B: Systems of Government questions 13-47 in the “Learn About the United States” USCIS booklet.

The following words are the 20 most frequent words and phrases in this section.

right(s)	the Supreme Court	British
government	the Executive Branch	union
world	the Federal	began
army	government	slaves
country	the Judicial Branch	north
colonists	vice president	important
the president	fought	

**Activities:** Use the following activities with your learners, adapting the level of difficulty to the English level of your student. While each section contains 20 words, you can choose to break the section down into even smaller sections depending on the level of your students. For example, you might choose to only focus on five words at a time instead of all 20.

1. This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous section. Pull out 10 vocabulary flashcards from the previous section and have the student tell you what the meaning of the word is. Review the meanings of any words they student might struggle to explain.
2. Use the flashcards to better explain the meanings of these words. You can also use the English to Kirundi dictionary at the back of this booklet to find the meanings of the words. Then have the student write the Kirundi word under the English word. [This activity, for both emergent and more advanced learners, is best done with a tutor to help explain meaning].
3. Help the students practice saying the words on this list aloud with a friend, a tutor, or by themselves. You can use the flashcard to focus on just one word at a time to decrease the pressure of focusing on too many words at once. [You can also use the “speller” study tool on Quizlet to hear the pronunciation of the word if the student wants to review the vocabulary words online.]

4. Take one or more words, and make a sentence with that word. Then have the student also make a sentence. This is a good practice activity for taking the citizenship test. You could also help the learner to make a set of their own flashcards using the sentences you create together.
5. Play a matching game with the flashcards. You can use flashcards that are not stuck together. Take the word and match it with its meaning. You could also explain a meaning and have the student pick out the word that matches the meaning. This can help decrease the pressure of having to read the whole meaning and understanding. If a student feels more confident, they can match the words with their meanings on the “scatter” game on Quizlet.
6. Use the English-Kirundi flashcards to match them with the words and definitions from the other set of flashcards. As a trust-building activity, have the student teach you the pronunciation of the Kirundi word, and then practice the pronunciation of the English word.
7. Practice writing the words in sentences by using the handwriting practice pages. This is a good practice activity for taking the citizenship test. You can also practice creating new sentences using the vocabulary words in this section and turning them into handwriting practice as well.

### Section 3: Learn about the United States Part 3

All the vocabulary words in this section are from Part C: Rights and Responsibilities questions 48-57 in the "Learn About the United States" USCIS booklet.

The following words are the 20 most frequent words and phrases in this section.

selective service	service	democracy
vote	voting	office
citizen(s)	amendment	time
allegiance	federal elections	military
the Pledge of	made	principles
Allegiance	gave	federal income tax
income tax	political	required by the law

**Activities:** Use the following activities with your learners, adapting the level of difficulty to the English level of your student. While each section contains 20 words, you can choose to break the section down into even smaller sections depending on the level of your students. For example, you might choose to only focus on five words at a time instead of all 20.

1. This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous sections. Choose 5 vocabulary words from each of the previous sections and have the students read the vocabulary word and its definition. Focus on helping them to clearly pronounce the word. This will help them with the reading portion of the U.S. citizenship test.
2. Use the flashcards to better explain the meanings of these words. You can also use the English to Kirundi dictionary at the back of this booklet to find the meanings of the words. Then have the student write the Kirundi word under the English word. [This activity, for both emergent and more advanced learners, is best done with a tutor to help explain meaning].

3. Help the students practice saying the words on this list aloud with a friend, a tutor, or by themselves. You can use the flashcard to focus on just one word at a time to decrease the pressure of focusing on too many words at once. [You can also use the “speller” study tool on Quizlet to hear the pronunciation of the word if the student wants to review the vocabulary words online.]
4. Take one or more words, and make a sentence with that word. Then have the student also make a sentence. This is a good practice activity for taking the citizenship test. You could also help the learner to make a set of their own flashcards using the sentences you create together.
5. Play a matching game with the flashcards. You can use flashcards that are not stuck together. Take the word and match it with its meaning. You could also explain a meaning and have the student pick out the word that matches the meaning. This can help decrease the pressure of having to read the whole meaning and understanding. If a student feels more confident, they can match the words with their meanings on the “scatter” game on Quizlet.
6. Use the English-Kirundi flashcards to match them with the words and definitions from the other set of flashcards. As a trust-building activity, have the student teach you the pronunciation of the Kirundi word, and then practice the pronunciation of the English word.
7. Practice writing the words in sentences by using the handwriting practice pages. This is a good practice activity for taking the citizenship test. You can also practice creating new sentences using the vocabulary words in this section and turning them into handwriting practice as well.
8. Choose some questions from the USCIS Civics booklet and read through them with the student. Together with the student, try to find the vocabulary words from the flashcards. Then review the meaning of each word and discuss the context of where it is found.
9. This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous section. Pull out 10 vocabulary flashcards from the previous section and have the student tell you what the meaning of the word is. Review the meanings of any words they student might struggle to explain.

## Section 4: Civics

All the vocabulary words in this section are from Parts A: Colonial Period and Independence questions 58-70; B: 1800s questions 71-79; and C: Recent American History and Other Important Historical Information questions 78-87 in the "Learn About the United States" USCIS booklet.

The following words are the 20 most frequent words and phrases in this section.

branch	southern states	law
bill	American Indian	number
House of Representatives	The Union	office
senate	The Emancipation	cabinet
The Civil War	Proclamation	political
World War II	World War I	elected
civil rights	supreme	

**Activities:** Use the following activities with your learners, adapting the level of difficulty to the English level of your student. While each section contains 20 words, you can choose to break the section down into even smaller sections depending on the level of your students. For example, you might choose to only focus on five words at a time instead of all 20.

1. This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous sections. Choose 10 vocabulary words total from the previous sections. Dictate sentences using those vocabulary words, and have the student write down the sentences you dictate. Review them for spelling and then read the sentences together. This will help for the writing dictation portion of the U.S. citizenship test.
2. Use the flashcards to better explain the meanings of these words. You can also use the English to Kirundi dictionary at the back of this booklet to find the meanings of the words. Then have the student write the Kirundi word under the English word. [This activity, for both emergent and more advanced learners, is best done with a tutor to help explain meaning.]

3. Help the students practice saying the words on this list aloud with a friend, a tutor, or by themselves. You can use the flashcard to focus on just one word at a time to decrease the pressure of focusing on too many words at once. [You can also use the “speller” study tool on Quizlet to hear the pronunciation of the word if the student wants to review the vocabulary words online.]
4. Take one or more words, and make a sentence with that word. Then have the student also make a sentence. This is a good practice activity for taking the citizenship test. You could also help the learner to make a set of their own flashcards using the sentences you create together.
5. Play a matching game with the flashcards. You can use flashcards that are not stuck together. Take the word and match it with its meaning. You could also explain a meaning and have the student pick out the word that matches the meaning. This can help decrease the pressure of having to read the whole meaning and understanding. If a student feels more confident, they can match the words with their meanings on the “scatter” game on Quizlet.
6. Use the English-Kirundi flashcards to match them with the words and definitions from the other set of flashcards. As a trust-building activity, have the student teach you the pronunciation of the Kirundi word, and then practice the pronunciation of the English word.
7. Practice writing the words in sentences by using the handwriting practice pages. This is a good practice activity for taking the citizenship test. You can also practice creating new sentences using the vocabulary words in this section and turning them into handwriting practice as well.
8. Have two or more students work together for this activity. Have a student choose a vocabulary word from this section and, without using the word, try to explain it to the other student(s) so they can guess what word it is. You could also reverse the activity and have the students give you the meaning once you give them the word.
9. Select some questions from the USCIS Civics booklet that have pictures. Then select some vocabulary flashcards from this section. Have the student describe the concepts, people, or event in the picture by trying to use the vocabulary flashcard words you have selected.

- 10.** This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous sections. Choose 10 vocabulary words total from the previous sections. Dictate sentences using those vocabulary words and have the student write down the sentences you dictate. Review them for spelling and then read the sentences together. This will help for the writing dictation portion of the U.S. citizenship test.
- 11.** Choose some questions from the USCIS Civics booklet and read through them with the student. Together with the student, try to find the vocabulary words from the flashcards. Then review the meaning of each word and discuss the context of where it is found.
- 12.** This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous section. Pull out 10 vocabulary flashcards from the previous section and have the student tell you what the meaning of the word is. Review the meanings of any words they student might struggle to explain.
- 13.** This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous sections. Choose 5 vocabulary words from each of the previous sections and have the students read the vocabulary word and its definition. Focus on helping them to clearly pronounce the word. This will help them with the reading portion of the U.S. citizenship test.

## Section 5: Integrated Civics

All the vocabulary words in this section are from Parts A: Geography questions 88-95; B: Symbols questions 96-98; and C: Holidays questions 99-100 in the "Learn About the United States" USCIS booklet.

The following words are the 20 most frequent words and phrases in this section.

the Statue of Liberty	the Missouri River	free
New York	make	history
the Atlantic Ocean	framers	convention
the Mississippi River	wrote	Founding Fathers
the Pacific Ocean	ratified	established
Independence Day	founding	
New York Harbor	economy	
	wanted	

**Activities:** Use the following activities with your learners, adapting the level of difficulty to the English level of your student. While each section contains 20 words, you can choose to break the section down into even smaller sections depending on the level of your students. For example, you might choose to only focus on five words at a time instead of all 20.

1. This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous section. Pull out 10 vocabulary flashcards from the previous section and have the student tell you what the meaning of each word is. Review the meanings of any words they student might struggle to explain.
2. Use the flashcards to better explain the meanings of these words. You can also use the English to Kirundi dictionary at the back of this booklet to find the meanings of the words. Then have the student write the Kirundi word under the English word. [This activity, for both emergent and more advanced learners, is best done with a tutor to help explain meaning.]

3. Help the student practice saying the words on this list aloud with a friend, a tutor, or by themselves. You can use the flashcard to focus on just one word at a time to decrease the pressure of focusing on too many words at once. [You can also use the “speller” study tool on Quizlet to hear the pronunciation of the word if the student wants to review the vocabulary words online.]
4. Take one or more words, and make a sentence with that word. Then have the student also make a sentence. This is a good practice activity for taking the citizenship test. You could also help the learner to make a set of their own flashcards using the sentences you create together.
5. Play a matching game with the flashcards. You can use flashcards that are not stuck together. Take the word and match it with its meaning. You could also explain a meaning and have the student pick out the word that matches the meaning. This can help decrease the pressure of having to read the whole meaning and understanding. If a student feels more confident, they can match the words with their meanings on the “scatter” game on Quizlet.
6. Use the English-Kirundi flashcards to match them with the words and definitions from the other set of flashcards. As a trust-building activity, have the student teach you the pronunciation of the Kirundi word, and then practice the pronunciation of the English word.
7. Practice writing the words in sentences by using the handwriting practice pages. This is a good practice activity for taking the citizenship test. You can also practice creating new sentences using the vocabulary words in this section and turning them into handwriting practice as well.
8. For this activity you will need to have a dictionary. Practice looking up the word in a dictionary. Talk about its meaning and its part of speech; also discuss how the student can use a dictionary. This is a more advanced activity, but it can help the student to develop confidence in finding out new words.
9. This activity will take a little more prior preparation for you as a tutor. Select some questions from this section of the USCIS Civics booklet. Then rewrite the questions but remove words found on the flashcards and replace them with a blank line. Have a box or area on the paper filled with all the words you removed. Have the students fill in the blanks from your selection of words.

- 10.** Have two or more students work together for this activity. Have a student choose a vocabulary word from this section and, without using the word, try to explain it to the other student(s) so they can guess what word it is. You could also reverse the activity and have the students give you the meaning once you give them the word.
- 11.** Select some questions from the USCIS Civics booklet that have pictures. Then select some vocabulary flashcards from this section. Have the student describe the concepts, people, or event in the picture by trying to use the vocabulary flashcard words you have selected.
- 12.** This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous sections. Choose 10 vocabulary words total from the previous sections. Dictate sentences using those vocabulary words and have the student write down the sentences you dictate. Review them for spelling and then read the sentences together. This will help for the writing dictation portion of the U.S. citizenship test.
- 13.** Choose some questions from the USCIS Civics booklet and read through them with the student. Together with the student, try to find the vocabulary words from the flashcards. Then review the meaning of each word, and discuss the context of where it is found.
- 14.** This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous section. Pull out 10 vocabulary flashcards from the previous section and have the student tell you what the meaning of each word is. Review the meanings of any words the student might struggle to explain.
- 15.** This activity is to review the vocabulary from the previous sections. Choose 5 vocabulary words from each of the previous sections and have the students read the vocabulary word and its definition. Focus on helping them to clearly pronounce the word. This will help them with the reading portion of the U.S. citizenship test.

## English – Kirundi Dictionary

This is a list of words from the 100 most-frequent vocabulary words flashcards with their Kirundi translation. Encourage your students to write the Kirundi word on their flashcards.

allegiance	icizere
amendment	ihindurwa
amendments	ihindura ry'amategeko
American	abanyamerika
army	ingabo
began	vyitangiye
branch	igisata
branches	ibisata
British	ababirigi
came	yaje
citizens	abanyagihugu
colonists	abakoroni
committee	komite
congress	ubushikiranganji
constitution	amategeko nshingiro
convention	amasezerano
country	igihugu
created	vyahimbwe/vyatangiwe
declaration	kumenyesha
democracy	demokrasi
died	yapfyuye
different	bitandukanye
economy	ubutunzi
elected	vyatowe/uwatowe
elections	amatora
end	iherezo/impera
ended	vyaheze
established	ivyasohowe
federal	federare
flag	ibendera
fought	ibitekerezo
founding	gushaka amafaranga
framers	guteranya
France	ubufaransa
free	kuri gusa/kubohorwa
gave	vyatanzwe
government	leta

great	neza
history	amateka
holidays	iminsi mikuru
house	inzu/ingoro
important	ibyingenzi
John	yohani
known	bizwi
law	itegeko
made	byakozwe
major	ivingenzi
make	vyakorewe
men	abagabo
military	ingabo
name	izina
nation	igihugu
new	bishasha
north	umajaruguru
now	ubu
number	ibiharuro
office	ibiro
only	gusa/vyonyine
original	bitarakoreshwa
people	abantu
political	politike
principles	ivyibanze
ratified	icemezo
representative	abaserukira abanyagihugu
republican	abanyepubulika
residents	abanyagihugu
right	uburenganzira
rights	uburenganzira
river	uruzi
same	ibihuje/ibisa
serve	gufasha
service	ubufasha
slavery	ubugurano
slaves	umucakara
state	intara
states	intara
statue	ikiranga ntogo
supreme	ubucyamanza bukuru
time	igihe
today	uyumunsi
tribes	ubgoko

union  
united  
vote  
voting  
wanted  
war  
world  
wrote

ubumwe  
ubumwe  
itora/gutora  
amatora  
ibikenewe  
intambara  
isi  
vyanditswe

## Handwriting Practice

You can cut the following pages out of the booklet and put them in plastic sleeves. Help your students practice writing sentences with an erasable pen. This means they can erase and practice the same sentence many times over if necessary. They can also trace over the already-typed sentences to practice their handwriting before writing the sentences on their own. There are some pages occasionally in between sentences that are lined for extra sentence writing practice. All the high frequency words from the flashcards are **bolded**. These sentences can also be used to review meanings of words and to practice for the English portion of the U.S. Citizenship Test.

1. The **United States** has  
**50 states.**

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# 2. The **United States**

fought **the Civil War.**

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**3. The Civil War** was to  
help **free** the **slaves**.

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**4. The Constitution is an  
important document.**

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# 5. The Constitution

protects the **rights** of

**Americans.**



**6. Congress is a branch  
of the government.**

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**7. The president of  
America is a part of  
the government.**



**8. Congress makes laws  
for the federal  
government.**



**9. The Bill of Rights are the  
first 10 Amendments to  
the Constitution.**

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10. **Amendments** are  
changes to **laws**.

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11. The **Senate** can  
make **federal laws.**

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**12. Citizens vote in the  
United States to elect  
a president.**



**13. Americans are  
citizens of the United  
States.**



# 14. Rights are important in the United States.

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15. To speak an opinion  
is a **right**. This is  
freedom of speech.



16. It is a **right** for

**Americans to vote.**

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17. A **democracy**

means that all **citizens**

can **vote.**



18. The colors of the

**American flag** are red,

white, and blue.



19. The stars on the **flag**  
stand for the 50 **states**.

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20. The **American flag**

has **13 stripes.**

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21. The 4<sup>th</sup> of July is a

**holiday** to celebrate

**American**

independence.



# 22. The **Founding**

Fathers wrote **the**

**Constitution.**

23. The Colonists **fought**  
against the **British**.

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24. The **War** of  
Independence is an  
**important** part of  
**American** history.

# 25. The Colonists

wanted a country **free**  
from **British** power.



\*American

relating to the United States of America or its people

\*American(s)

someone from the United States

\*citizen(s)

someone who lives in a particular town, country, or state

\*Congress

the group of people chosen or elected to make the laws in some countries

\*country

an area of land that is controlled by its own government, president, king etc

\*government

the group of people  
who govern a  
country or state

\*history

all the things that  
happened in the  
past

\*important

valuable, useful, or  
necessary, having a lot of  
power, influence, or  
effect

\*law

the whole system of  
rules that people in a  
particular country or  
area must obey

\*made

the past tense of "make" (to  
produce something, for  
example by putting the  
different parts of it together)

\*name

what someone  
is called

\*only

not anyone or  
anything else

\*original

existing or happening  
first, before other  
people or things

\*people

the people who  
belong to a particular  
country, race, or area

\*representative(s)

someone who has been  
chosen to speak, vote, or  
make decisions for  
someone else

\*state(s)

one of the areas with limited law-making powers that together make up a country controlled by a central government such as the United States and Australia

\*The  
Constitution

the highest law of the government of the United States, often unofficially called the Constitution

\*united

joined or closely connected by feelings, aims etc

\*vote

to show by marking a paper, raising your hand etc which person you want to elect or whether you support a particular plan

\*war

when there is fighting between two or more countries or between opposing groups within a country, involving large numbers of soldiers and weapons

\*wrote

the past tense of "write"  
- to produce a new  
book, article, poem etc.

allegiance

loyalty to a  
leader, country,  
belief etc.

amendment(s)

a small change,  
improvement, or  
addition that is made to  
a law or document

American  
Indian

someone who belongs to one  
of the groups of people that  
originally lived in North  
America before the Europeans  
arrived

army

the part of a country'  
military force that is  
trained to fight on land  
in a war

the Atlantic  
Ocean

the ocean between the east coast of North and South America and the west coast of Europe and Africa

began

the past tense of "begin" - to start doing something

bill

a written proposal for a new law, which is brought to a parliament so that it can be discussed

The Bill of Rights

a statement of the basic laws to protect the rights of a country's citizens to have justice and fairness

branch (special meaning)

a part of a government or other organization that deals with one particular part of its work

the British

people from  
Britain

Cabinet (special  
meaning)

the politicians with important  
positions in a government who  
meet to make decisions or  
advise the leader of the  
government

civil rights

the rights of each person in a  
society, including equality  
under the law and in  
employment and the right to  
vote

The Civil  
War

a war fought between the  
southern and northern  
states in the United States  
from 1861-1865

colonist(s)

someone who  
settles in a new  
colony

convention  
(special meaning)

a formal agreement,  
especially between  
countries, about particular  
rules or behavior

declaration

an important official  
statement about a particular  
situation or plan, or the act of  
making this statement

The Declaration  
of Independence

a document claiming  
freedom for the United  
States from political control  
by Britain on July 4, 1776

democracy

a system of government in  
which every citizen in the  
country can vote to elect  
its government officials

economy

the system by which a  
country's money and goods  
are produced and used, or a  
country considered in this  
way

elected

past tense of the verb  
"elect" - to choose  
someone for an official  
position by voting

The  
Emancipation  
Proclamation

an announcement made  
in the US by President  
Abraham Lincoln which  
ordered the end of slavery

established

past tense of "establish"  
- to start something that  
is intended to exist or  
continue for a long time

The Executive  
Branch

the part of the  
government that executes  
or enforces the law

federal

relating to the central  
government of a country such  
as the United States, rather  
than the government of one of  
its states

federal  
elections

the elections for president,  
members of Congress, and  
members of the House of  
Representatives

The Federal  
government

the government  
of the United  
States of America

federal income  
tax

a tax on workers' salaries  
or companies' profits that  
is paid to the U.S.  
government

The First  
Amendment

a part of the Constitution of the  
United States which gives US  
citizens the right of freedom of  
speech, freedom of the press,  
freedom of religion, the right of any  
group to meet together.

flag

a piece of cloth with a  
coloured pattern or picture  
on it that represents a  
country or organization

fought

the past tense of "fight" - to take part in a war or battle

founding

the establishment of an organization, business, school etc.

Founding Fathers

the group of men including George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and Benjamin Franklin who helped to start the US as a country and to establish its government

Framer(s)  
(special meaning)

the people who wrote and ratified the Bill of Rights

free

allowed to do or say whatever you want, or allowed to happen, without being controlled or restricted by anyone or anything

**gave**

past tense of "give" - to let someone have something as a present, or to provide something for someone

**great**

very large in amount or degree

**history**

past events

**holiday**

a time of rest from work, school etc

**House of Representatives**

a group of people who make the laws of a country

income tax

tax that you have  
to pay on your  
income

Independence  
Day

the day when the United  
States celebrates its  
independence from  
Britain

John

a common  
English name for  
a man

The Judicial  
Branch

the part of the  
government that  
interprets and applies  
the law

make

to produce  
something

**military**

the armed forces of a country (army, navy, air force)

**the Mississippi River**

one of the largest rivers in the United States

**the Missouri River**

the longest river in North America

**nation**

**a country**

**new**

recently made, built, invented, written, designed etc

New York

a state in the  
northeastern  
United States

New York  
Harbor

a large harbor at  
the mouth of the  
Hudson River

North (special  
meaning)

in the north or facing the north/the  
northeastern states of the United  
States, especially during the Civil  
War (1861 to 1865) when they  
fought against the South

now

at the  
present time

number

a word or sign that  
represents an  
amount or a quantity

office (special meaning)

an important job or position with power, especially in government

the Pacific Ocean

the world's largest ocean

The Pledge of Allegiance

a promise to be loyal to the United States

political

relating to the government, politics, and public affairs of a country

the president

the highest political position in some countries, usually the leader of the government

principles

a basic idea or rule  
which explains how  
something happens or  
works

ratified

past tense of "ratify" - to  
make a written  
agreement official by  
signing it

required by  
the law

the law demands  
that you have to  
do something

right(s)

something that you are  
morally, legally, or  
officially allowed to do  
or have

river

a natural and  
continuous flow of water  
in a long line across a  
country into the sea

**selective  
service**

the system in the US in which men aged 18-26 must put their names on an official list so that they can be called to join the army if there is a war

**senate**

the smaller and more important of the two parts of the government with the power to make laws

**serve**

to spend a period of time doing useful work or official duties for an organization, country, important person

**service**

the work that someone does for a person or organization, especially over a long period

**slave(s)**

someone who is owned by another person and works for them for no money

statue

an image of a person or animal that is made in solid material such as stone or metal and is usually large

the Statue of Liberty

a large statue of a woman holding a lighted torch above her head in New York City

stripe(s)

a line of colour, especially one of several lines of colour all close together

supreme

having the highest position of power, importance, or influence

The Supreme Court

the court of law that has the most authority in a state or country

territory

land that is owned or controlled by a particular country, ruler, or military force

time

time is what we measure in minutes, hours, days, etc

today

the day that is happening now

The Union  
(special meaning)

used in the past to talk about the United States, especially the northern states during the Civil War

The United  
States

A country in  
North America

vice  
president

the person who is a rank  
lower than the president  
of a country

voting

the process of to show  
your choice or opinion in  
an election or meeting

wanted

past tense of "want"  
- to have a desire for  
something

world

the planet we live on,  
and all the people, cities,  
and countries on it

World War I

the war from 1914 to  
1918 in which many  
countries fought

---

# World War II

the war from 1939 to  
1945 in which many  
countries fought

---

allegiance

icizere

amendment

ihindurwa

amendments

ihindura  
ry'amategeko

American

abanyamerika

army

ingabo

began

vyitangiye

branch

igisata

branches

ibisata

British

ababirigi

came

yaje

citizens

abanyagihugu

colonists

abakoroni

committee

komite

congress

ubushikiranganji

constitution

amategeko  
nshingiro

convention

amasezerano

country

igihugu

created

vyahimbwe/vyatangiwe

declaration

kumenyesha

democracy

demokrasi

died

yapfyuye

different

bitandukanye

economy

ubutunzi

elected

vyatowe/uwarowe

elections

amatora

end

iherezo/impera

ended

vyaheze

established

ivyasohowe

federal

federare

flag

ibendera

fought

ibitekerezo

founding

gushaka  
amafaranga

framers

guteranya

France

ubufaransa

free

kuri  
gusa/kubohorwa

gave

vyatanzwe

great

neza

history

amateka

holidays

iminsi  
mikuru

house

inzu/ingoro

important

ibyingenzi

John

yohani

known

bizwi

law

itegeko

made

byakozwe

major

ivingenzi

make

vyakorewe

men

abagabo

name

izina

nation

igihugu

new

bishasha

north

umajaruguru

now

unu

number

ibiharuro

office

ibiro

only

gusa/vyonyine

original

bitarakoreshwa

people

abantu

political

politike

principles

ivyibanze

ratified

icemezo

representative

abaserukira  
abanyagihugu

republican

abanyarepublika

residents

abanyagihugu

right

uburenganzira

rights

uburunganzira

river

uruzi

same

ibihuje/ibisa

serve

gufasha

service

ubufasha

slavery

ubugurano

slaves

umucakara

state

intara

states

intara

statue

ikiranga ntego

supreme

ubucyamanza  
bukuru

time

igihe

today

uyumunsi

tribes

ubgoko

union

ubumwe

united

ubumwe

vote

itora/gutora

voting

amatora

wanted

ibikenewe

war

intambara

---

world

isi

---

wrote

vyanditswe

---