

# KidCitizen Teacher's Guide

## Children in Action

From recycling materials during World War II to wearing masks during the COVID-19 pandemic, children have helped meet community goals during times of need. In this inquiry, children explore how voluntarism and civic action of children has been important to their community in the past and present.

### Essential Question

How have children helped their community in times of need?

### TPS Connections

*Children in Action* uses multiple representations of primary sources to help students more deeply investigate the experiences and perspectives of children throughout history. In this interactive episode, students draw upon their observations and reflections to explore how children have contributed to recycling efforts in the past and present.

### Curricular Connections

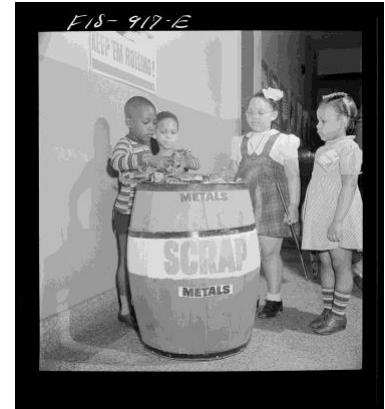
#### NCSS Standards

- II. Time, Continuity, and Change
- X. Civic Ideals and Practices

#### C3 Framework

D2.Civ.2.K-2. Explain how all people, not just official leaders, play important roles in a community

D2.Civ.6.K-2. Describe how communities work to accomplish common tasks, establish responsibilities, and fulfill roles of authority.



*Metal scrap collection*  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/owi2001003205>

D3.1.K-2. Gather relevant information from one or two sources while using the origin and structure to guide the selection

D4.7.K-2. Identify ways to take action to help address local, regional, and global problems.

## Background

The notion of civic engagement by children depends on there being something called “childhood” and that required a surprisingly long time to develop into its current form.

Before the sorts of photographs in this episode could be taken, several developments had to take place. First, childhood had to be marked off from adulthood, a time of life protected from the demands of work and responsibility. That process, beginning among wealthier families early in the nineteenth century, required generations to unfold for poorer and working families. A family had to be relatively secure and prosperous to forego the work and wages a child could provide. Since most Americans lived on farms until 1920, children of both genders were expected to help in any way they could, from feeding the chickens to helping in the kitchen to working in the fields.

When people moved to town and cities, as they increasingly did, children might work in the home if the family was involved in a trade ranging from shoemaking to tailoring. Over time, home and the workplace became separated from one another, however, and children might be sent to factories or other workplaces. This process actually accelerated across the nineteenth century as industries grew.

Much of the crusade against child labor grew as a result. Reformers argued that childhood was a precious time of learning and exploration that should be separate from the demands of adulthood. Laws gradually emerged at the state level protecting children, but there was no federal law until 1938.

By that time, a second requirement for the civic engagement by children had emerged: compulsory education. As with child labor, that requirement grew slowly, state by state. It began in Massachusetts in 1852 and ended in Mississippi in 1918. By the time the photographs in this episode were taken, children could expect to be in schools. Schools allowed governments and teachers to organize children as they could not have been organized otherwise.

At the same time as these two fundamental changes—defining children and defining school as the proper place for children—unfolded, so did the place of the United States in the world. It is no accident that the photographs in the episode focus on wartime, for it was then that the federal government required not only the materials the children contributed but the all-inclusive spirit of loyalty their contributions helped foster.

At the same time, other kinds of organizations worked to engage young people in civic work. The purposes of the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, founded in 1910 and 1912, respectively, incorporated citizenship as foundations of their identity. The quasi-military appearance of uniforms and ranks helped in that work, as did the character-building activities such as camping and hiking. Scouts could only advance by making contributions to their communities, fostering an ideal of civic engagement.

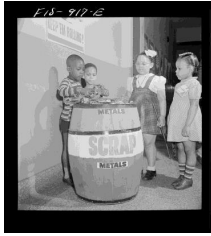
Religious organizations, too, fostered this ideal of “giving back.” All faiths have fostered activities for their young members that forge bonds with the places they live.

Many tributaries, in other words, flow into the civic engagement we see in these photographs, ranging from fundamental changes in the very definition of childhood, to the decline of child labor and the rise of compulsory education, to the emergence of organizations built on the very idea of citizenship for young people.

### **Bibliography**

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- Jordan, B. R. (2016). *Modern manhood and the Boy Scouts of America: Citizenship, Race, and the Environment, 1910-1930*. North Carolina.
- Mintz, S. (2006). *Huck's raft: A history of American childhood*. Harvard University Press.

## Primary Sources with Citation



Collins, M., photographer. (1942). *Washington, D.C. Metal scrap collection at a Negro grammar school.* [Image] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/owi2001003205/PP/>.



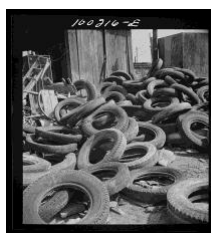
Lee, R., photographer. (1942). *San Juan Bautista, California. Schoolchildren assembled to march in parade with the scrap metal they have collected for war.* [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017818127/>.



Collins, M., photographer. (1942). *Washington, D.C. Weighing collected scrap paper at a Negro grammar school.* [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017829435/>.



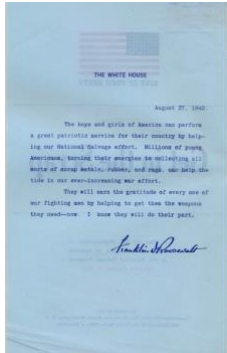
Collins, M., photographer. (1942). *Washington, D.C. Salvage drive, Victory Program. Miscellaneous metal scrap in warehouse of District wholesale junk company. Man in background is "cleaning" metal objects.* [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017825362/>.



Collins, M., photographer. (1942). *Washington, D.C. Scrap salvage campaign, Victory Program. Old tires in yard of wholesale junk company.* [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017825513/>.



Harris & Ewing, photographer. (1935). *Franklin Delano Roosevelt.* [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2016883595/>.



United States War Production Board. (1942). *Get in the scrap: A plan for the organization of school children of America in the national salvage program.*

<http://digitalcollections.smu.edu/cdm/ref/collection/hgp/id/524>



United States Office of War Information, Liberman, H., photographer. (1942). *Manpower, junior size. "Neither rain nor snow...nor gloom of night...stays these couriers from the completion of their appointed rounds." Junior commandos of Roanoke, Virginia, these two young girls are making their weekly rounds of all available scrap in their neighborhood, despite unfavorable weather.*

[Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017694034/>.



United States Office of War Information. (Between 1940 and 1946). *C-54A Skymaster transport aircraft used by the U.S. Army Air Forces during World War II.* [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017695673/>.



Collins, M., photographer. (1942). *Untitled photo, possibly related to: Washington, D.C. Scrap salvage campaign, Victory Program. This boy keeps stacks of paper, metal and rags in his cellar, ready for a junk dealer to pick up.* [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017825509/>.



Siegel, A. S., photographer. (1943). *Detroit, Michigan. Army trucks on a haulaway.* [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017849310/>.



United States Office of War Information, Sarra, V., photographer. (1942). *Manpower, junior size. What's a home without its sidewalk scrap pile? Junior commandos of Roanoke, Virginia see to it that each home has given enough scrap to make the scrap collectors monthly visit worthwhile. When the truck appears, every youngster in the neighborhood pitches in to help load it.* [Photograph] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2017694073/>.



United States Office of War Information, Sarra, V., photographer. (1942). *Manpower, junior size. It takes a good right arm to collect all the household scrap that's needed for the nation's armaments, and these Roanoke, Virginia youngsters have just what it takes. Note the badge on the boy's collar; it reads "Lieutenant: Junior Commando Salvage Drive".* [Image] Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/oem2002004996/PP/>.

## Suggestions for Teachers

### Lesson Plans and Resource Guides

Students can learn about important actions of children during World War II and consider how they themselves can help during in the present day through recycling and conservation efforts.

*Children on the Home Front* <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/world-war-ii/resources/children-home-front>

*The National WWII Museum- Get in the Scrap*  
<http://www.getinthescrap.org/home/>

*We are All in This Together* <https://www.nps.gov/frst/learn/education/we-are-all-in-this-together.htm>



During WWII, posters were used to unite children and families to help on the home-front by scrapping (recycling). Review these posters and use them to inspire students to create their own posters that could empower others in their community to make a positive impact, like students in the past played a positive role on the Home Front during WWII.

*World War II Poster Collection*

<https://dc.library.northwestern.edu/collections/faf4f60e-78e0-4fbf-96ce-4ca8b4df597a>

*United We Will Win: WWII Posters that Mobilized a Nation*

<http://www.fortmissoulamuseum.org/WWII/index.php>

Students may analyze letters written to presidents in the past and write their own letter to the President in support of an issue they feel is important.

*Writing to the President: Interpreting Data*

<https://docsteach.org/activities/teacher/writing-to-the-president>

*"Just Between You and Me": Children's Letters to Presidents*

<https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2004/spring/childrens-letters.html>

## **Related Articles with Teaching Suggestions**

Buchanan, L. B., Kemmerer, C., Kaluzny, J., & Hill, R. (2018). War, polio, and family hardships: Examining life stateside during World War II through the historical novel *Blue*. *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, 30(4), 17-23.

Chessin, D., Moore, V. J., & Theobald, B. (2011). Exploring civic practices and service learning through school-wide recycling. *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, 24(2), 23-27.

Jones, I., & Lake, V. E. (2018). Learning, service, and caring: An application in the first grade. *Social Studies and the Young Learner*, 30(4), 28-32.

## **Related Articles with Background Information for Teachers**

Beier, J. M. (2021). Exceptional childhood and COVID-19: Engaging children in a time of civil emergency. *Childhood*, 28(1), 154-169.

Braun, A. (2014, April 18). Turning bacon into bombs: The American fat salvage committee. *The Atlantic*.

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/04/reluctantly-turning-bacon-into-bombs-during-world-war-ii/360298/>

- Field, S. L. (1994). Scrap drives, stamp sales, and school spirit: Examples of elementary social studies during World War II. *Theory & Research in Social Education*, 22(4), 441-460.
- Field, S. L., & Burlbaw, L. M. (1995). A time for growth, a time for war, a time for leadership: 1937-1947. *Social Education*, 59, 408-408.
- Kirk, R. W. (1995). Getting in the scrap: The mobilization of American children in World War II. *Journal of popular culture*, 29(1), 223-233.
- Knopf, C. M. (2021). " Like His Dad": Epistolic Constructions of American Children in World War II. *Home Front Studies*, 1(1), 59-83.
- National WWII Museum. (2022, January 11). Salvage for victory: World War II and now. <https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/salvage-for-victory-world-war-ii>
- Rockoff, H. (2007). Keep on scrapping: The salvage drives of World War II. NBER Working Paper No. 13418. [www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w13418/w13418.pdf](http://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w13418/w13418.pdf)
- Waxman, O. B. (2016, November 15). The history of recycling in America is more complicated than you may think. *TIME*. <https://time.com/4568234/history-origins-recycling/>

## Additional Resources

### Children's Literature

- Ashburn, B. (2011). *I had a favorite dress*. Abrams Books.
- Belford, B. (2017). *Canned and crushed*. Sky Pony.
- Bergen, L. (2009). *Don't throw that away!* Little Simon.
- Child, L. (2009). *Charlie and Lola: We are extremely very good recyclers*. Dial Books.
- Cole, H. (2020). *One little bag: An amazing journey*. Scholastic Press.
- DK. (2015). *World War II: Visual encyclopedia*. DK Children.
- Ghigna, C. (2012). *Recycling is fun*. Picture Window Books.
- Green, J. (2005). *Why should I recycle*. B.E.S.
- Halls, K. M. (2021). *World War II history for kids: 500 facts!* Rockridge Press.
- Hood, S. (2016). *Ada's violin: The story of the recycled orchestra of Paraguay*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.
- Howard, K. (2021). *Grace and box*. Feiwel & Friends.
- Inches, A. (2009). *The adventures of an aluminum can: A story about recycling*. Little Simon.
- Inches, A. (2009). *The adventures of a plastic bottle: A story about recycling*. Little Simon.
- Maloof, T. (2014). *We recycle*. Teacher Created Materials.



- Marshall, L. E. (2016). *Rainbow weaver/Tejedora del Arcoiris*. Children's Book Press.
- Miller, E. (2015). *Recycling day*. Holiday House.
- National Geographic Kids. (2021). *Everything: World War II: Facts and photos from the front line to the home front!* Collins.
- Paul, M. (2015). *One plastic bag: Isatou Ceesay and the recycling women off the Gambia*. Millbrook Press.
- Rasmussen, R. K. (2021). *World War 2 Q&A: 175+ fascinating facts for kids*. Rockridge Press.
- Spires, A. (2013). *The most magnificent thing*. Kids Can Press.
- Spiro, R. (2018). *Made by Maxine*. Dial Books.
- Whitman, S. (2000). *Children of the World War II home front: Picture the American past*. Carolrhoda Books.

## Library of Congress

Students created names for their scrap metal collection teams, such as Tin-Can Colonels and Uncle Sam's Scrappers, and newspapers teamed up with the creators of the comic strip Little Orphan Annie to create a nationwide club for children called the Junior Commandos. Its members received instructions in the newspaper each week explaining what types of scrap needed collecting and how to turn it in. See examples:



*Evening star. [volume]* (Washington, D.C.), 02 Aug. 1942. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.  
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045462/1942-08-02/ed-1/seq-103/>



*The Wilmington morning star. [volume]* (Wilmington, N.C.), 31 Oct. 1943. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.  
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn78002169/1943-10-31/ed-1/seq-7/>

*Scrap for Victory Blog* <https://blogs.loc.gov/now-see-hear/2015/01/scrap-for-victory/>

## Author Credits

Berson, I. R., Berson, M. J., & Ayers, E. (2022). *Children in action —Teacher's guide*. Newburyport, MA: Bert Snow & Co. Retrieved from KidCitizen, a Congress, Civic Participation, and Primary Sources Project from the Library of Congress, <https://www.kidcitizen.net/>