

Effectiveness of Civic Education for Elementary and Secondary School Students

Research on the Center for Civic Education's We the People: Civics That Empowers All Students (CEAS).

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About CERL

The Civic Education Research Lab (CERL) at Georgetown University is dedicated to investigating the effectiveness of civic teaching and learning for elementary, secondary, and university students. Founded by Dr. Diana Owen, a Georgetown political science professor, CERL is situated at the nexus of academia and public policy. The CERL team conducts research on civic education programs and practices, civic engagement, and political communication in the digital age.

About the Center for Civic Education

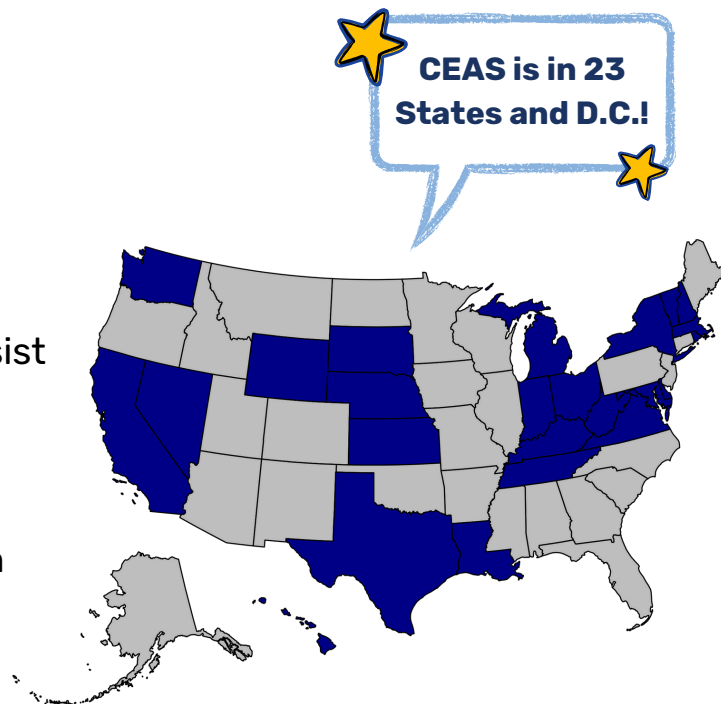
The Center for Civic Education (civiced.org) has led K-12 civic education nationwide since its founding in 1965. The Center provides professional development, curricular materials, instructional resources, toolkits, and support for civic educators on a broad scale. To learn more: <https://www.civiced.org/>.



CERL
Civic Education Research Lab

CEAS Project Description

This research evaluates the impact of CEAS, a program of the Center for Civic Education on teacher and student outcomes. CEAS provides teachers of all elementary and middle school students with professional development to assist them in implementing the We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution curriculum intervention in their classrooms. The Civic Education Research Lab (CERL) at Georgetown University conducted the program evaluation.



CEAS Project Objectives

- 🏛️ Emphasize civic education in the formative years
- 📚 Provide professional development to participating CEAS teachers
- 🎯 Improve student achievement in civic knowledge, dispositions, and skills
- 📖 Increase student literacy achievement



Research Questions - Students

1. Does the We the People curriculum intervention significantly improve students' civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions?
2. Does We the People impact students' general literacy?

Research Questions - Teachers

1. To what extent do teachers gain content knowledge of civics and government from the CEAS PD program?
2. How and to what extent do teachers incorporate pedagogical approaches from the CEAS PD program into their classrooms?
3. Does the CEAS program improve teachers' instructional pedagogies for civics?

BREAKING NEWS

An overwhelming majority of students share they WANT to learn civics!

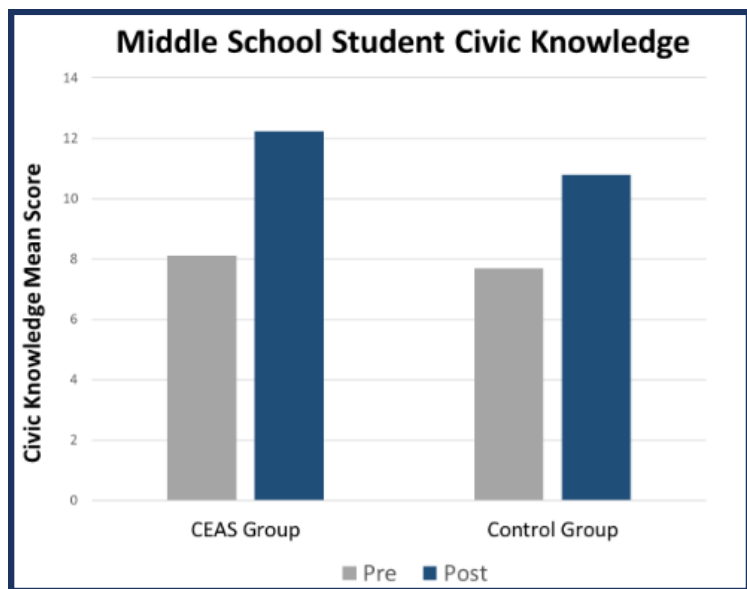
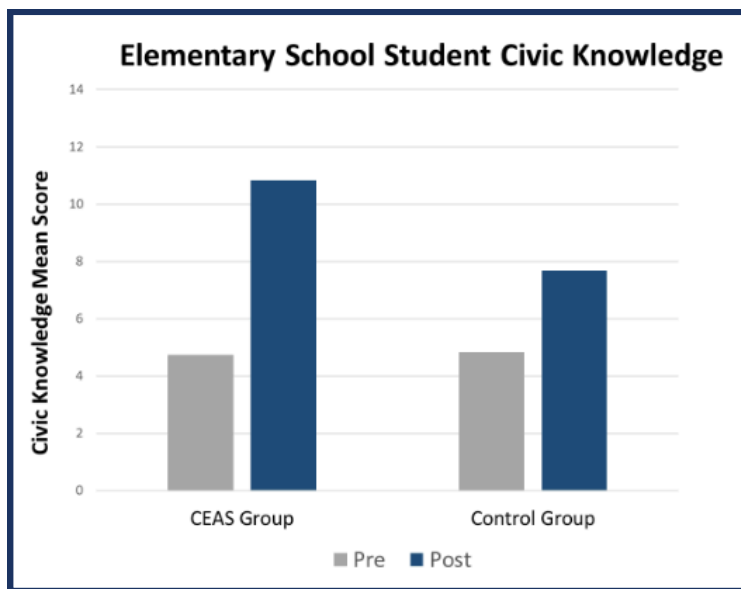
- ✓ **90% of Students Agree** It is important that they know how the American government works.
- 🏛️ **85% of Students Agree** It is important to understand American history and the events that shaped the United States.
- 🌍 **90% of Students Agree** It is important to learn about other races and cultures.

Student Civic Knowledge

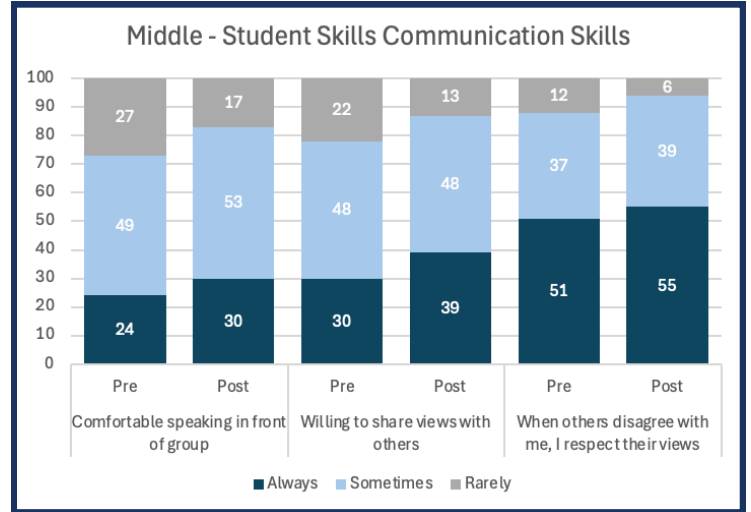
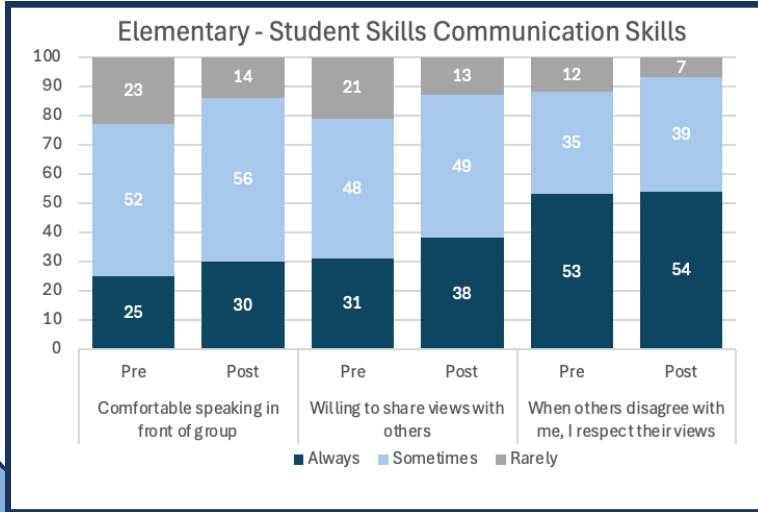
We the People students made statistically significant gains in content knowledge

Civic knowledge of *We the People* elementary school students increased by **129%** pre- to post-test.

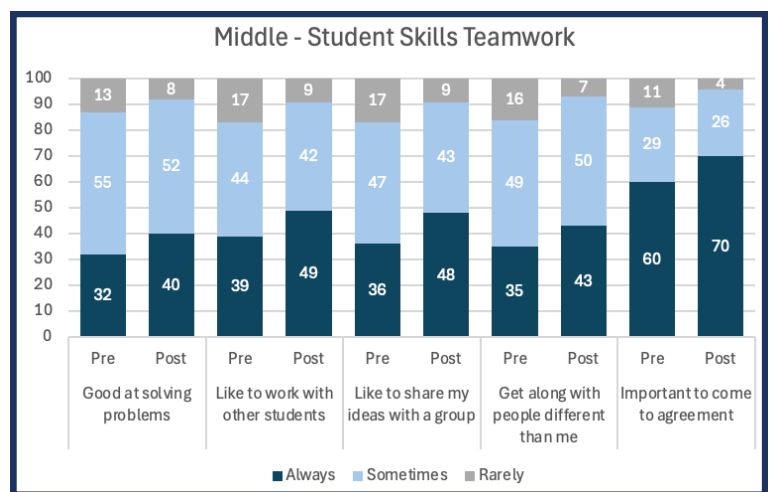
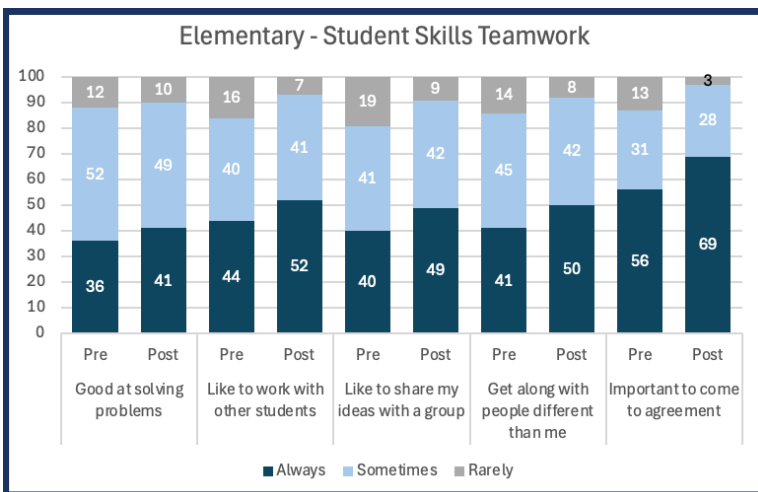
Civic knowledge of *We the People* middle school students increased by **51%** pre- to post-test.



We the People can enhance students' civic skills!



We the People students became more comfortable speaking in front of a group and engaging in productive communication with others.



We the People students showed statistically significant gains in their ability to work as a team.



Literacy Study - Students

We the People intentionally develops essential literacy skills in the curriculum through close reading and analysis of texts, use of evidence to develop and support arguments in writing, oral presentations, and discussions. Analysis of written work found that students whose teachers participated in CEAS attained ELA standards of comprehension, interpretation, evaluation, and analysis.

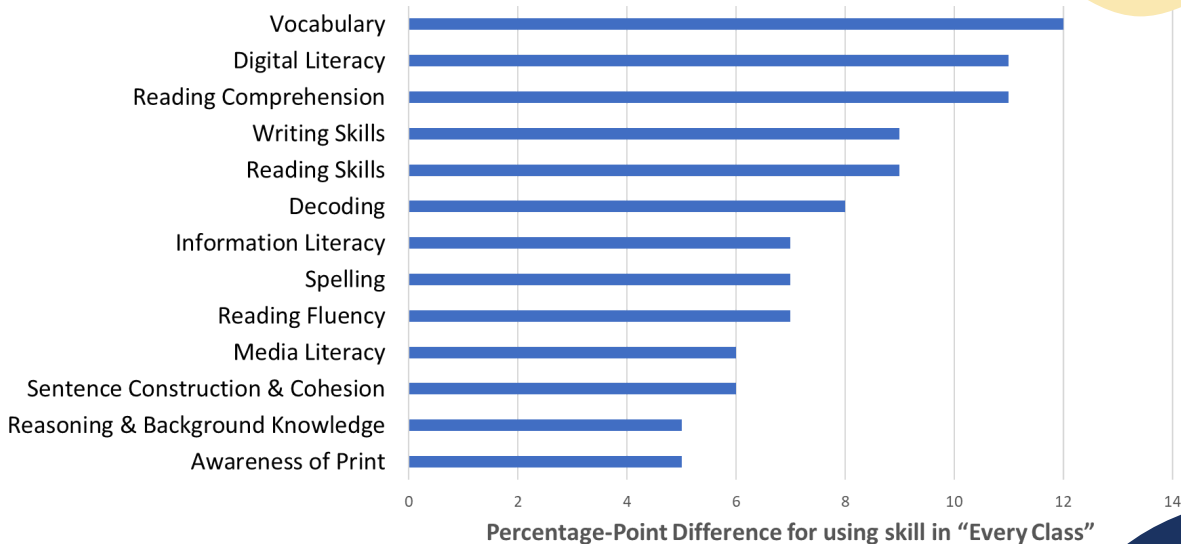
Literacy Study - Teachers

★ The CEAS teacher professional development emphasized effective strategies for integrating and enhancing literacy skills into the WTP curriculum. Teachers who attended the PD became more likely to integrate the following literacy-related skills (eg vocabulary) in their classroom instruction. ★



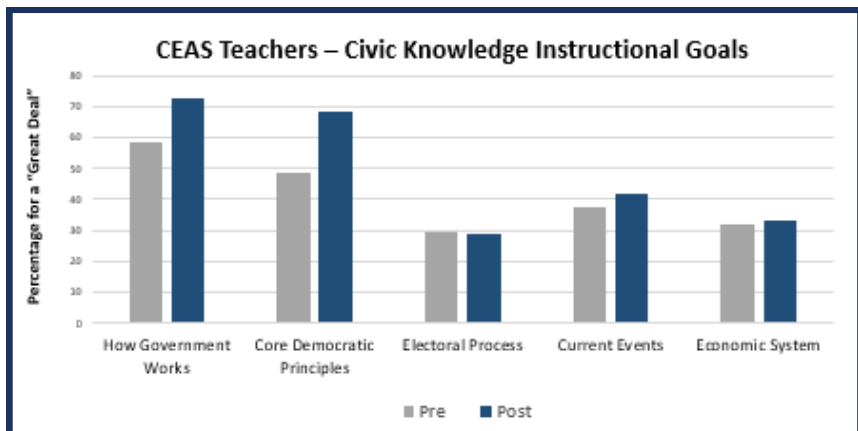
★ Teacher improvements were statistically significant for all indicators related to the instruction of literacy skills. ★

CEAS Teachers' Instruction in Literacy-Related Skills

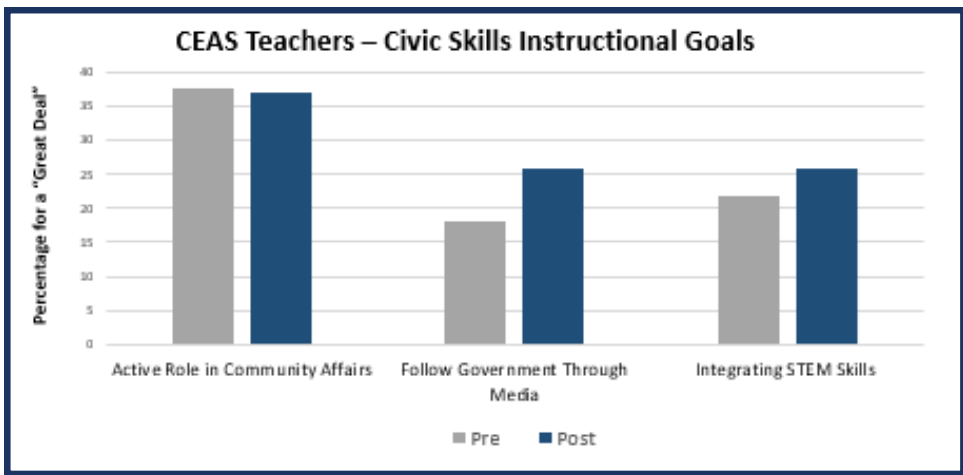
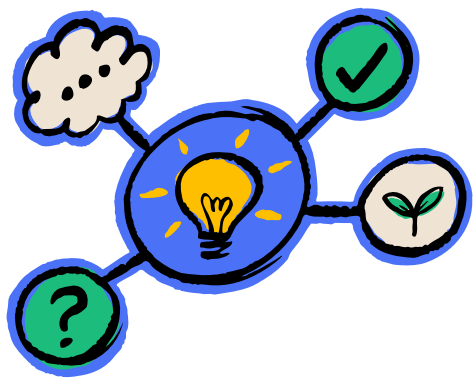


Teacher Instructional Goals

Civic content and skills teachers value

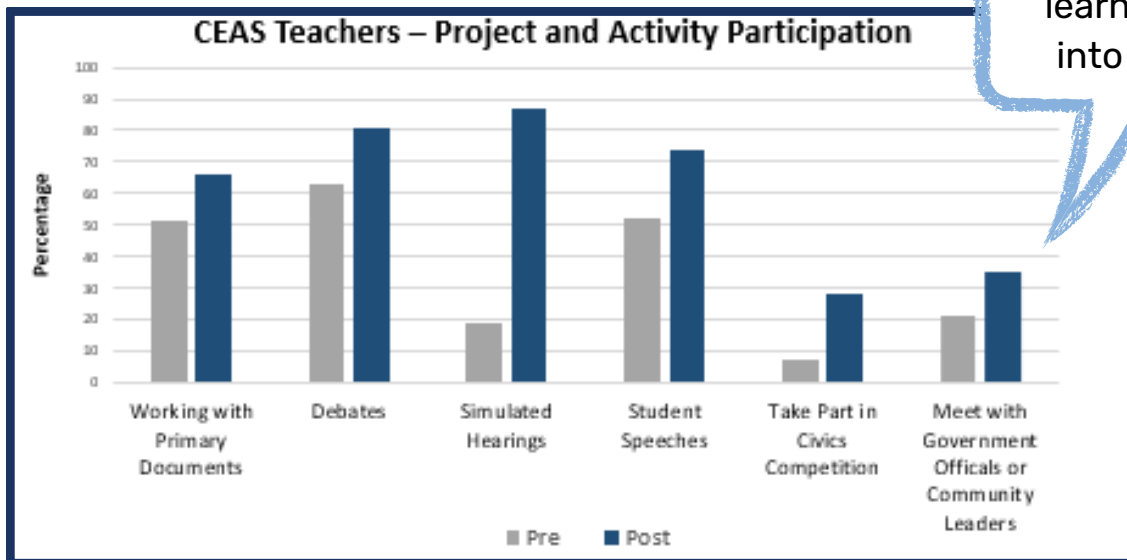


We the People teachers became more determined to integrate civic competencies into their classrooms.



Teacher Projects & Activities

How teachers approach teaching civics



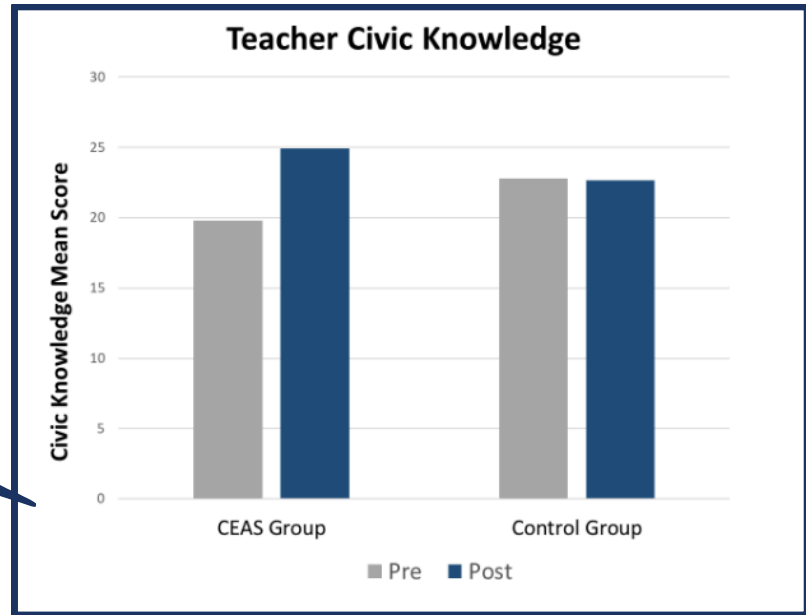
We the People teachers incorporated active learning and civic skills into their classrooms.




Teacher Civic Knowledge

We the People teachers made statistically significant gains in content knowledge

The civic knowledge of teachers who participated in the *We the People* professional development increased by **68%** from pre- to post-test.



CEAS Interim Report Year 1

 Coming soon!






Find CERL

 Visit the Civic Education Research Lab Website: <https://cerl.georgetown.edu/>

 To contact CERL: cerl@georgetown.edu

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-  LinkedIn – @Civic Education Research Lab
-  Instagram – @cerlgeorgetown
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