

How American Schools Can Confront Communism Through Civics Education

Robust civics education is sorely lacking in American schools.



Just 19 percent of Americans under age 45 can pass a multiple-choice version of the citizenship test.

At the same time, American schools fail to properly educate students on the 20th-century atrocities committed by communist regimes. Just 46 percent of Americans have heard of Khmer Rouge's killing fields in Cambodia, and a mere 24 percent are aware of the Holodomor.

As a result, 28 percent of Gen Z holds a favorable opinion of the term "communism," and only 63 percent of Gen Z and Millennials believe the Declaration of Independence guarantees "freedom and equality" better than the Communist Manifesto.²

THE SOLUTION

The foundational principles of the American Republic and the ways in which they contrast with the history of communism must be required instruction in the classroom and students must be assessed on this knowledge before they graduate from high school.

Topics of instruction will include:

- All content assessed by the United States citizenship test
- The history of foreign communist movements and their resulting atrocities
- The evolution of domestic communist movements into broader cultural movements
- Tactics employed to spread communism, such as propaganda and censorship
- The increasing threat posed by communist movements to the United States



In order to receive a high school diploma, pupils must correctly answer at least 70 questions on an exam containing all 100 questions from the U.S. citizenship test and an additional 10 questions about the history and nature of communism.

WHY IT MATTERS

Republics depend on an educated citizenry to function properly. The critical lack of knowledge among American youth about our own country and the Constitution threatens our democratic institutions.

Furthermore, American classrooms have failed to cover some of the most significant ideological movements and human atrocities in world history, leaving American youth vulnerable to propaganda and prone to repeating the deadly mistakes of the past.

Students must be armed with the knowledge to protect their individual liberties from creeping collectivist threats.

After all, communism is adverse to all parts of our mission—liberty, transparency, and accountability.



THE BOTTOM LINE:

American youth must understand the foundational principles on which our country was built, and history classes must appropriately cover the major ideological movements that killed tens of millions over the last century. Only through the robust education of young citizens can we secure future liberty and prosperity.

SOURCES:

1. <https://citizensandscholars.org/resource/national-survey-finds-just-1-in-3-americans-would-pass-citizenship-test/>
2. <https://victimsofcommunism.org/annual-poll/2020-annual-poll/>