CARDINAL COMPASS - CIVICS NO. 4 - HANDS-ON LEARNING - WITH CARL THE CARDINAL

Our Local Government with Carl

VOL. 4

The Neighbors Who Run Our Town and County. Who takes care of the places we all share?



Cover illustration: a main street with a library, the town hall, and a fire station.

Read together | **Do together** | **Grown-up with you**



Meet Carl - Mayor Carl

Carl the Cardinal is your guide. For this book, Carl sits at the council table with his neighbors. A town map and a jar of coins sit on the table. Carl is learning who takes care of the places everyone shares. His green neckerchief and gold compass medallion stay on. Color your own Carl on the last page.

How to use this book

Read pages 2 and 3 together first. Then try the activities in order: a model budget, a visit to a shared place, and a thank-you map. Keep your record sheet and notebook pages with your civics notebook.

You will need: 10 tokens or coins (paper tokens, play coins, or real coins counted with a grown-up); three index cards; a writing tool and crayons; paper; an unbreakable container; and an extra thank-you card or paper. Envelope and postage only if mailing.

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What is local government?

What you already know: In Book 3, you learned that voters choose representatives to make decisions for everyone. This book looks closer to home. Some of those representatives work right in your own town and county.

Local government: the government of a town, city, or county, close to home.

City: a place with its own local government. Fredericksburg is an independent city, which means it is not part of any county.

County: a local government area established by the state. Spotsylvania County is governed by a Board of Supervisors. Each leader on the board is called a supervisor.

Mayor: an elected leader of a city. In Fredericksburg the mayor leads the city council.

Council: a group of elected neighbors who meet, listen, and vote on city decisions.

City manager: a trained worker hired by the council to run the city's day-to-day work.

Tax: a payment required by law that pays for shared things like roads, libraries, and fire trucks. A tax is not a donation, because the law requires it.

Budget: a plan for how money will be spent.

Fredericksburg has used its council-manager form of government since 1912. The elected council sets policy and adopts the budget. The city manager and staff manage the daily work within their authority.

Spotsylvania County's leaders are called supervisors. Together they are the Board of Supervisors. Jobs vary by locality. The examples in this book describe Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania.

Three levels, one country: your city or county (closest to home), your state (Virginia), and the United States (the whole country). The U.S. Constitution is the country's highest law. Virginia's constitution, Virginia laws, and local charters also set what local government may do.