

## Before You Read

# Should Naturalized Citizens Be President?

## Connect to the Essays

Most people believe that they can become whatever they want to be. Do you believe this? Why or why not?

**Partner Talk** With a partner, discuss what it means to be an American. What rights does an American citizen have?

## Build Background

Many Americans believe that anyone can become president of the United States. But this is *not* true. The law says that only someone born in this country can become president.

- People born in the United States are natural-born citizens.
- Naturalized citizens are people who move here from other countries and gain the same rights as those who were born here.
- The basic laws of the United States are written in the Constitution, including the law that limits the office of the president to natural-born citizens.

## Vocabulary

**violates** (vī'ə lāts') *v.* treats without proper respect or breaks a law or regulation (p. 538). *Preventing people from voting violates their rights as citizens of the United States.*

**ensure** (en shoor') *v.* to guarantee or make certain (p. 538). *Careful consideration of the pros and cons will help to ensure a wise decision.*

**requirement** (ri kwīr' mənt) *n.* something that is necessary; a demand or a condition (p. 539). *A presidential candidate must meet many requirements.*

**assurance** (ə shoor' əns) *n.* a guarantee or certainty (p. 539). *In order to become citizens, immigrants must make an assurance of loyalty to this country.*

**crucial** (krōō' shəl) *adj.* extremely important (p. 539). *Today's debate is crucial to the candidate's chance of winning the election.*

## Meet the Authors



### John Yinger

John Yinger is a professor at Syracuse University in New York. He has written several books on the effect of economic issues on racial and ethnic minorities. Yinger has served on the President's Council of Economic Advisers.



### Matthew Spalding

Matthew Spalding is an expert on American political history, the Constitution, and religious liberty. A writer and editor, he also runs the Heritage Foundation's B. Kenneth Simon Center for American Studies.

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**Author Search** For more about John Yinger and Matthew Spalding, go to [glencoe.com](http://glencoe.com) and enter QuickPass code GL29763u4.

## Set Purposes for Reading

### **BQ** BIG Question

As you read, ask yourself, which writer's argument more strongly influences the way I think about the issue?

### **Literary Element** Argument

An **argument** is the reason or reasons a writer gives for his or her opinion. A writer may use different types of persuasive appeals to convince readers to agree with his or her opinion. A **logical appeal** uses evidence—facts, examples, and statistics—to persuade readers. An **emotional appeal** uses information or ideas to influence readers' feelings, or emotions. An **ethical appeal** addresses readers' views of right and wrong.

Understanding the kinds of appeals a writer uses will help you determine how well a writer supports his or her argument. As you read, ask yourself, what does each writer want me to believe? What appeals do they make? Do they support their claims with evidence?

### **Reading Skill** Recognize Bias

**Bias** is favoritism toward or against something. When you **recognize bias** in a text, you are aware that the writer's opinion is influenced by his or her experiences or background. In other words, the writer favors an opinion based on personal preferences.

Bias influences the way in which a writer presents information. Recognizing bias will help you decide how strong a writer's argument is and whether you should agree with his or her opinion.

To recognize bias, pay attention to whether a writer

- treats both sides of the issue fairly
- has personal experience that may affect his or her opinions
- assumes ideas to be true without providing supporting evidence

As you read, look for bias in each writer's argument. Keep track of each argument by using a graphic organizer like the one below.

Main Idea:

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Writer's Personal Experience:

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Claim:

Supporting Evidence:

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Claim:

Supporting Evidence:

### Learning Objectives

For pages 536–541

In studying this text, you will focus on the following objectives:

**Literary Study:** Analyzing argument.

**Reading:** Recognizing bias.

### TRY IT

**Recognize Bias** People often believe that their favorite sports team is the best team. Do they believe this because their team plays the game better than other teams? Think about the personal experiences that might make a person favor a sports team. Explain why you, or someone you know, is the loyal fan of a certain team. Decide whether the reasons are based on facts, such as the team's win/loss record, or other reasons that may be based on personal preferences.

# SHOULD Naturalized Citizens BE President?

The Constitution says that only 'natural-born' citizens can be President. Should we change that?

**YES** My son, Jonah, came to the U.S. from Vietnam as a 4-month-old baby. When his second-grade class studied the presidency, he was told that he cannot run for President when he grows up, even if he wants to. According to the Constitution, only a "natural-born Citizen" can be President.

More than 12.8 million naturalized citizens, including 250,000 foreign-born adoptees like Jonah, are second-class citizens who cannot hold the highest office in the land.

The natural-born-citizen clause violates a central principle of American democracy: All citizens should have equal rights. When written, the Constitution embraced this principle but failed to protect the rights of women and of racial and ethnic minorities. The 14th, 15th, and 19th Amendments have been added to protect these groups. The next step is to remove the natural-born-citizen clause.

The Founding Fathers<sup>1</sup> included the . . . clause so no foreign prince could buy his way into the presidency. This concern is no longer relevant.<sup>2</sup> Some people say we still need this clause to ensure that the President is loyal to the country, but naturalized citizens are a very loyal group.

Moreover, the Constitution allows any natural-born citizen, loyal or not, to run for President and relies on voting rights and the judgment of the American people to keep disloyal people from being elected. These protections would work just as well if we let naturalized citizens run for President, too.

—JOHN YINGER, SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

1 The *Founding Fathers* are the leaders who wrote the U.S. Constitution after the colonies won independence from Great Britain.

2 *Relevant* means "having a connection to something."

## Vocabulary

**violates** (vī'ə lāts') v. treats without proper respect or breaks a law or regulation

**ensure** (en shoor') v. to guarantee or make certain

**Recognize Bias** How might Yinger's personal experience affect how he feels about this issue?

**Argument** Yinger lists other instances in which the Constitution was changed to protect a group of people. Which type of appeal does he use?

**NO** America has always been open to foreign-born immigrants becoming full and equal citizens—with one exception: Only a “natural-born Citizen” can become President. This **requirement** strikes a reasonable balance between our society’s openness and the ongoing requirements of national security.

One of the legal conditions for becoming an American citizen is to be “attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States.” New citizens also must take an oath to renounce “all allegiance and fidelity”<sup>3</sup> to other nations. But in the case of the presidency we need even more **assurance** of that allegiance than an oath.

The presidency is unique: One person makes **crucial** decisions, many having to do with foreign policy and national security. With a single executive, there are no checks to override the possibility of foreign influence, or mitigate<sup>4</sup> any lingering favoritism for one’s native homeland.

Unlike any other position or office, the attachment of the President must be absolute.<sup>5</sup> This comes most often from being born in—and educated and formed by—this country.

In general, constitutional amendments should be pursued only after careful consideration, when it is necessary to address a great national issue and when there is broad-based support among the American people. That is not the case here.

—MATTHEW SPALDING, THE HERITAGE FOUNDATION

3 To **take an oath** is to swear or promise to do something. To become a citizen, an immigrant must promise to give up (**renounce**) loyalty (**allegiance** and **fidelity**) to any other nation.

4 To make something less important is to **mitigate** it. Spalding is saying that there is danger in having a foreign-born president who may be too connected to his or her native land.

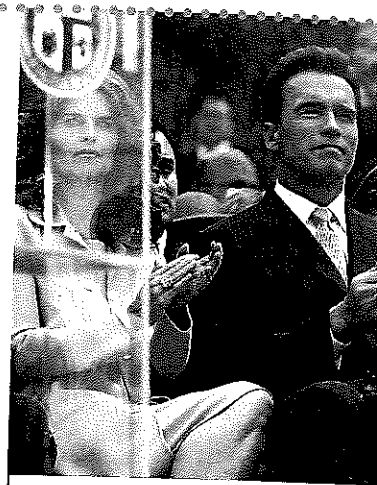
5 The writer is saying that the dedication (**attachment**) of the president must be complete and definite (**absolute**).

### Vocabulary

**requirement** (ri kwīr'mənt) *n.* something that is necessary; a demand or a condition

**assurance** (ə shoor'əns) *n.* a guarantee or certainty

**crucial** (krōō'shəl) *adj.* extremely important



Arnold Schwarzenegger is a native of Austria. He became a U.S. citizen in 1983 and was elected governor of California in 2003. He cannot run for President unless the Constitution is changed.

**Argument** What emotional appeal is Spalding presenting?

### BC BIG Question

In Spalding’s opinion, how might being born in a different country influence a person?

## After You Read

### Respond and Think Critically

1. Why can't Yinger's son run for president when he grows up? [Recall]
2. In what way has the Constitution been changed since it was written? Explain. [Identify]
3. What are the main arguments for and against allowing naturalized citizens to become president? [Summarize]
4. Yinger says that more than 12.8 million naturalized citizens cannot be president. Why does he include this fact? Explain. [Analyze]
5. Why do you think one of the legal conditions for becoming an American citizen is to be "attached," or dedicated, to the Constitution? Explain. [Infer]
6. **BQ** **BIG Question** Which argument do you think is more persuasive? Explain. [Evaluate]

### TIP

#### Inferring

Remember that when you infer, you use clues in the text and your own knowledge to figure out what a writer does not explain directly.

- Recall what you know about the importance of obeying rules and laws.
- Consider what Spalding says about the "possibility of foreign influence."

#### FOLDABLES Study Organizer

Keep track of your ideas about the **BIG Question** in your unit Foldable.

## Examine Media

### Political Advertisements

Since the mid-1800s, Americans have made items such as ribbons, plates, and buttons to show their support for presidential candidates. Wearing political buttons was once very popular. In the past, presidential buttons had the same function as do political T-shirts and bumper stickers today: they argue that voters should support a certain candidate, and they advertise what that candidate stands for.

**On Your Own** Read the buttons and answer the questions on a separate sheet of paper.



1. What message were the makers of the Lyndon B. Johnson (LBJ) button trying to send to voters? What are some appealing elements of the button?
2. What audience does the John F. Kennedy button attempt to convince? How is the small amount of space on the button used?

## Literary Element Argument

### Test Skills Practice

1. Why did Yinger and Spalding write these essays?
  - A to explain how to change the Constitution
  - B to inform naturalized American citizens of citizens' rights
  - C to entertain people with stories of American history
  - D to persuade people to agree with their ideas about citizens' rights

### Review: Style

As you learned on page 265, **style** is a writer's choice and arrangement of words and sentences. Style can help reveal a writer's attitude toward his or her topic or audience.

To identify style, pay attention to words or terms that the writer repeats. For example, Spalding repeats the term *national security* twice. The repetition of the term adds to Spalding's serious style and shows that he believes the topic is of great importance.

2. Yinger uses the word *loyal* twice in one sentence. What does the repetition of this word suggest about the writer's attitude toward the topic? Explain.

### Reading Skill Recognize Bias

3. How would you describe Yinger's attitude toward naturalized citizens becoming president? In what way might his background affect his attitude toward the topic? Use examples from his essay to support your answer.

## Vocabulary Practice

Respond to these questions.

1. Which most likely **violates** the city's litter laws—throwing an empty bottle into the street or throwing it into a garbage can?
2. Who could better **ensure** that a car will run well—an insurance salesperson or an auto mechanic?
3. Which would be a **requirement** for a driver's license—knowing how to park a car or needing a ride to school?
4. When would Greta have **assurance** that she passed the test—when she has completed the test or when her teacher has graded it?
5. What is **crucial** for a band to play well at a concert—well-trained musicians or a noisy audience?

## Academic Vocabulary

John Yinger wants foreign-born citizens to have **access** to all the rights contained in the Constitution. In the preceding sentence, *access* means "the ability to obtain." Think about a right or benefit that you have as a member of a family, a team, or some other group. What did you do to gain access to that right or benefit?



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