

MIGUEL'S NATURALIZATION INTERVIEW

ILLUSTRATED BY DANIEL PATRICK LYNCH



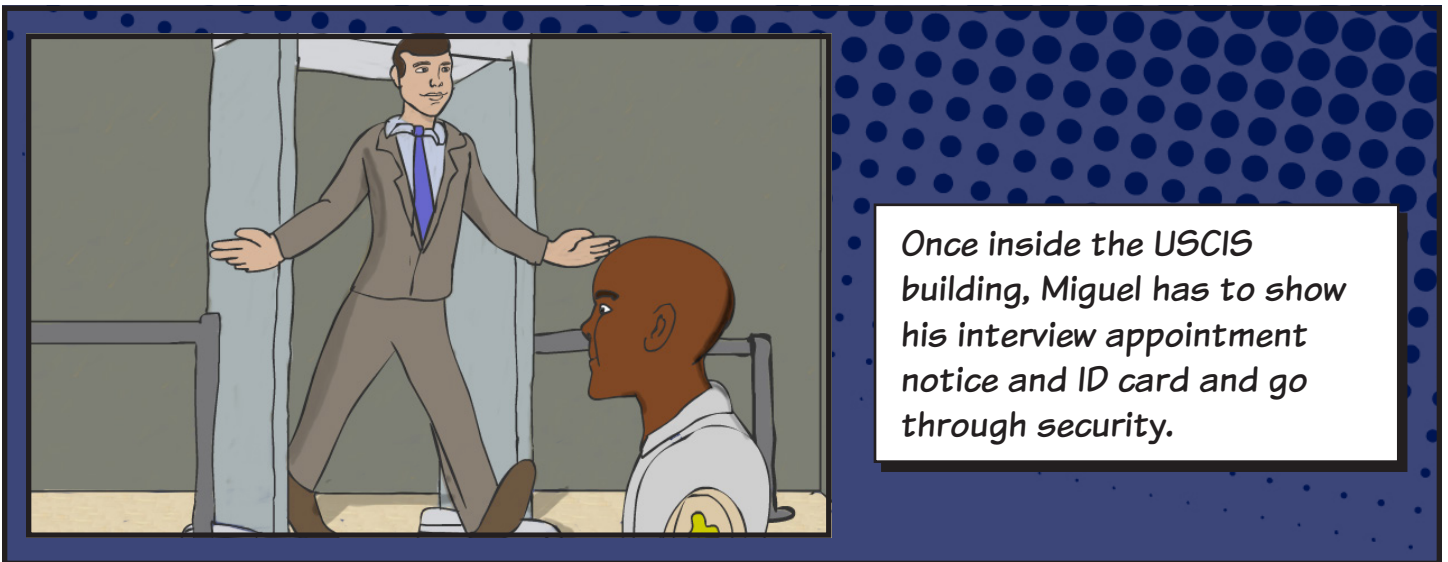
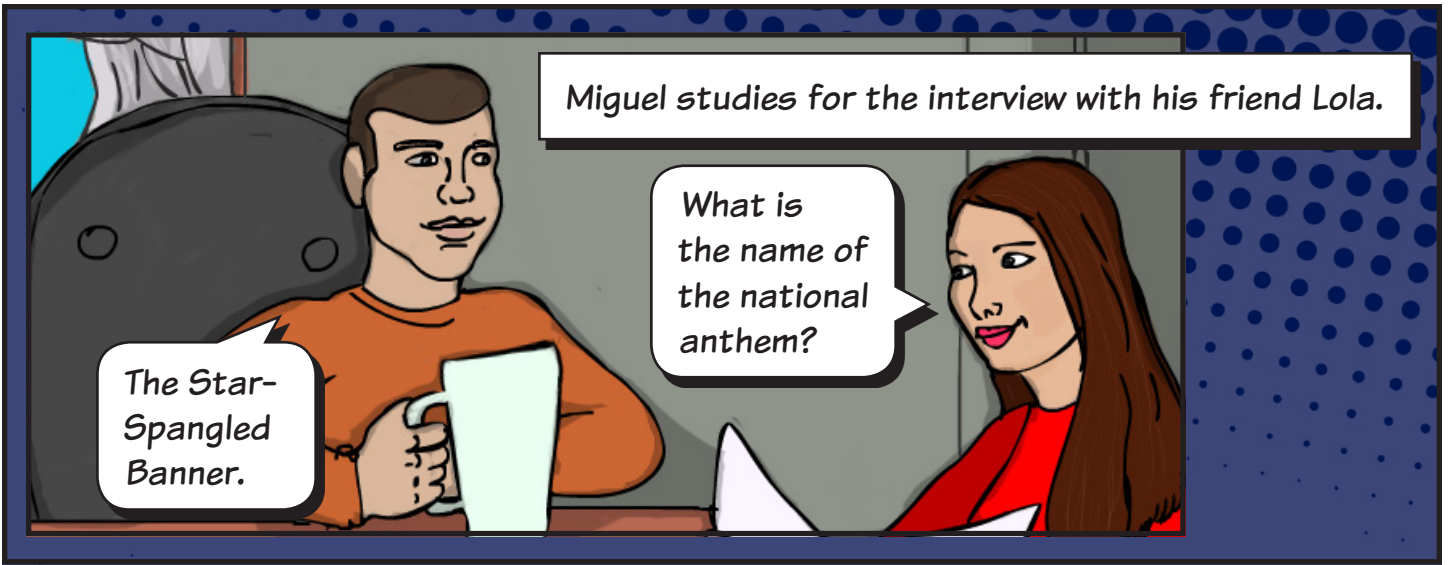
CATHOLIC LEGAL IMMIGRATION NETWORK, INC.



Miguel came to the U.S. seven years ago from Colombia. He lives with his uncle and works at a hotel. He aspires to get a degree in business management and start his own catering business one day.

Miguel applied for citizenship several months ago and has already had an appointment for fingerprints and biometrics. Today he receives an appointment notice for his naturalization interview, four weeks away.





Miguel is directed to the waiting room for naturalization interviews, where he checks in at the front desk.

Please have a seat and wait for your name to be called.



The waiting room is crowded. Every few minutes, a door opens and an officer calls someone's name for an interview. After what seems like a long time, Miguel hears his name called.



Hello, I'm Officer Jones. Please come with me.

Hi, I'm Miguel.

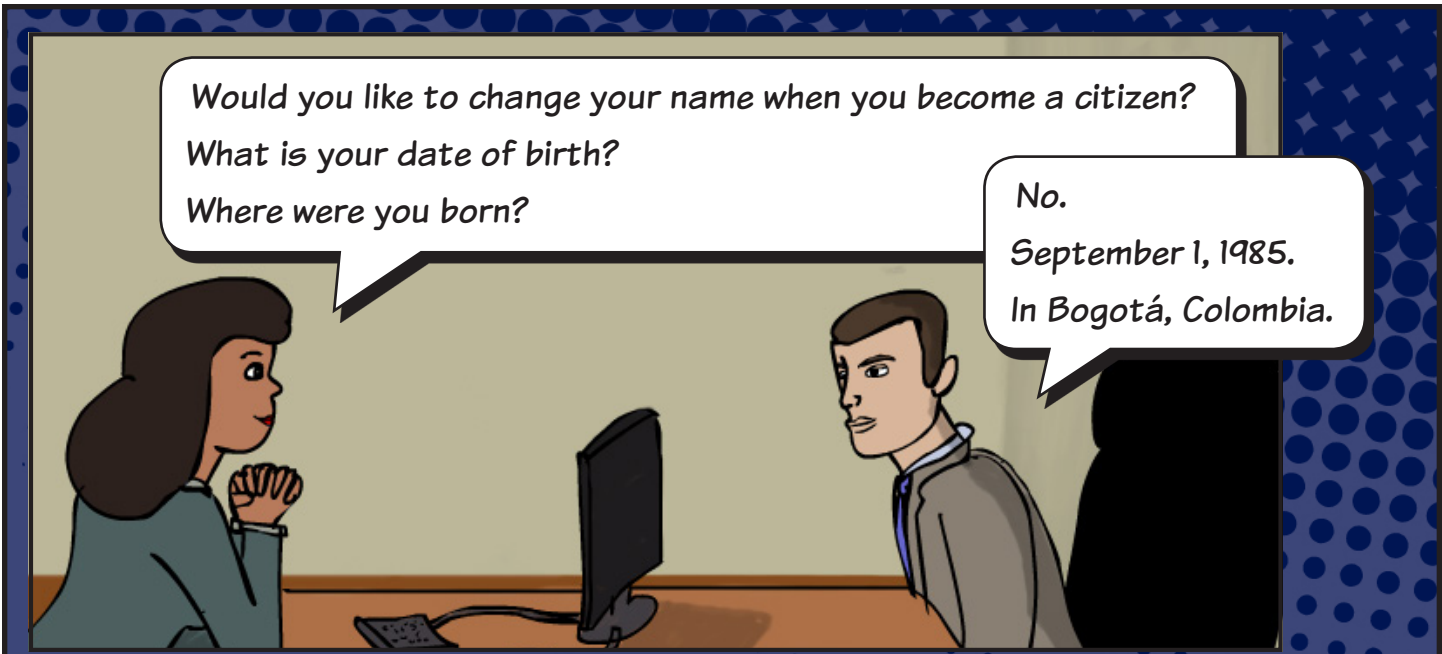




While they are getting settled, the officer makes "small talk" with Miguel, asking him about the weather outside and if he had any trouble finding the building. Then she gives him an oath to tell the truth.

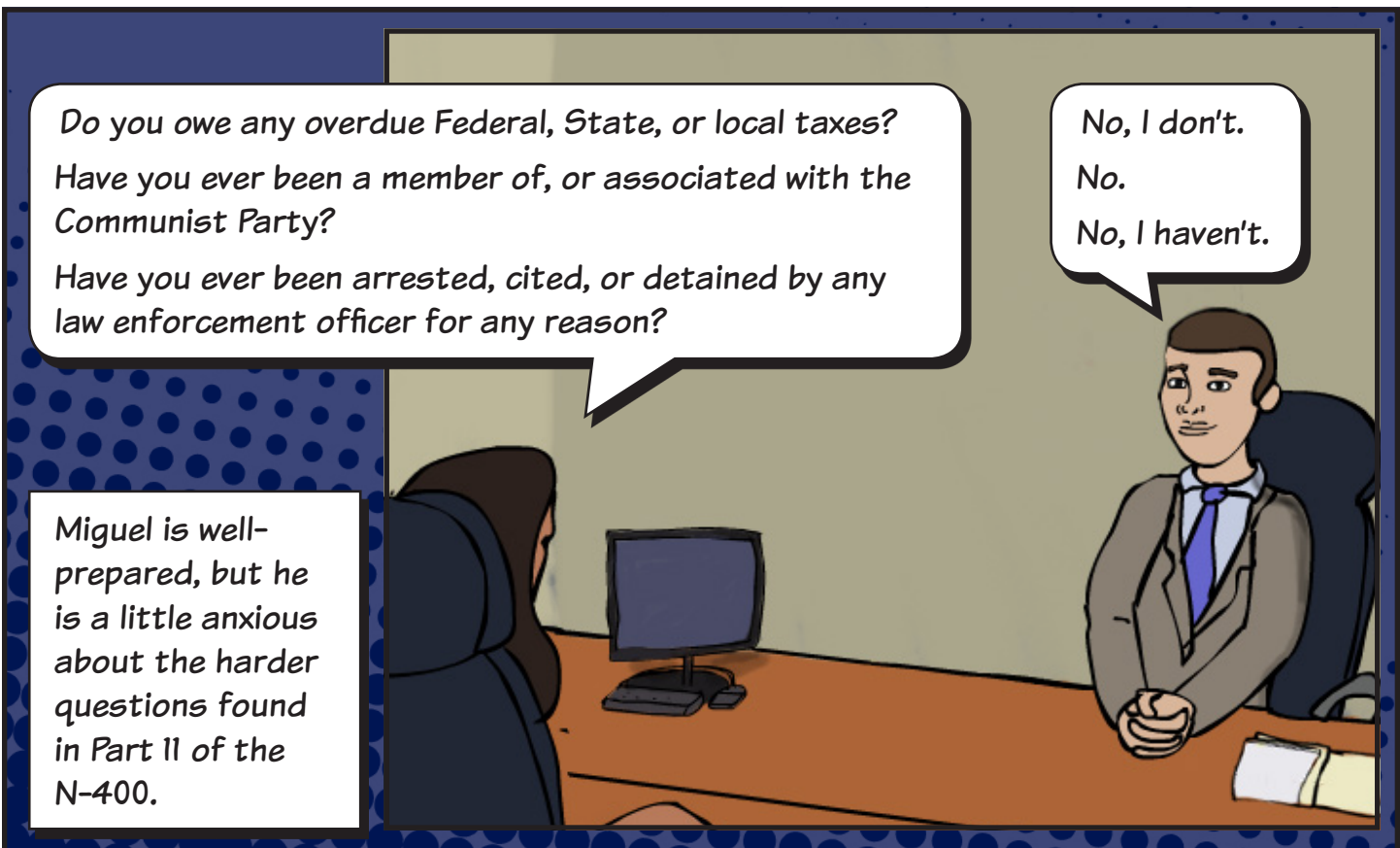


The officer begins asking Miguel questions about his citizenship application.



The officer continues going through the citizenship application, asking Miguel questions such as:

- What is your current address?
- Where do you work?
- Do you have any children?



Miguel is well-prepared, but he is a little anxious about the harder questions found in Part II of the N-400.

The officer asks Miguel about the Oath of Allegiance.

Are you willing to take the full Oath of Allegiance to the United States?

Yes.

Now I need you to sign your photographs. And I need you to sign your N-400 here, and here.

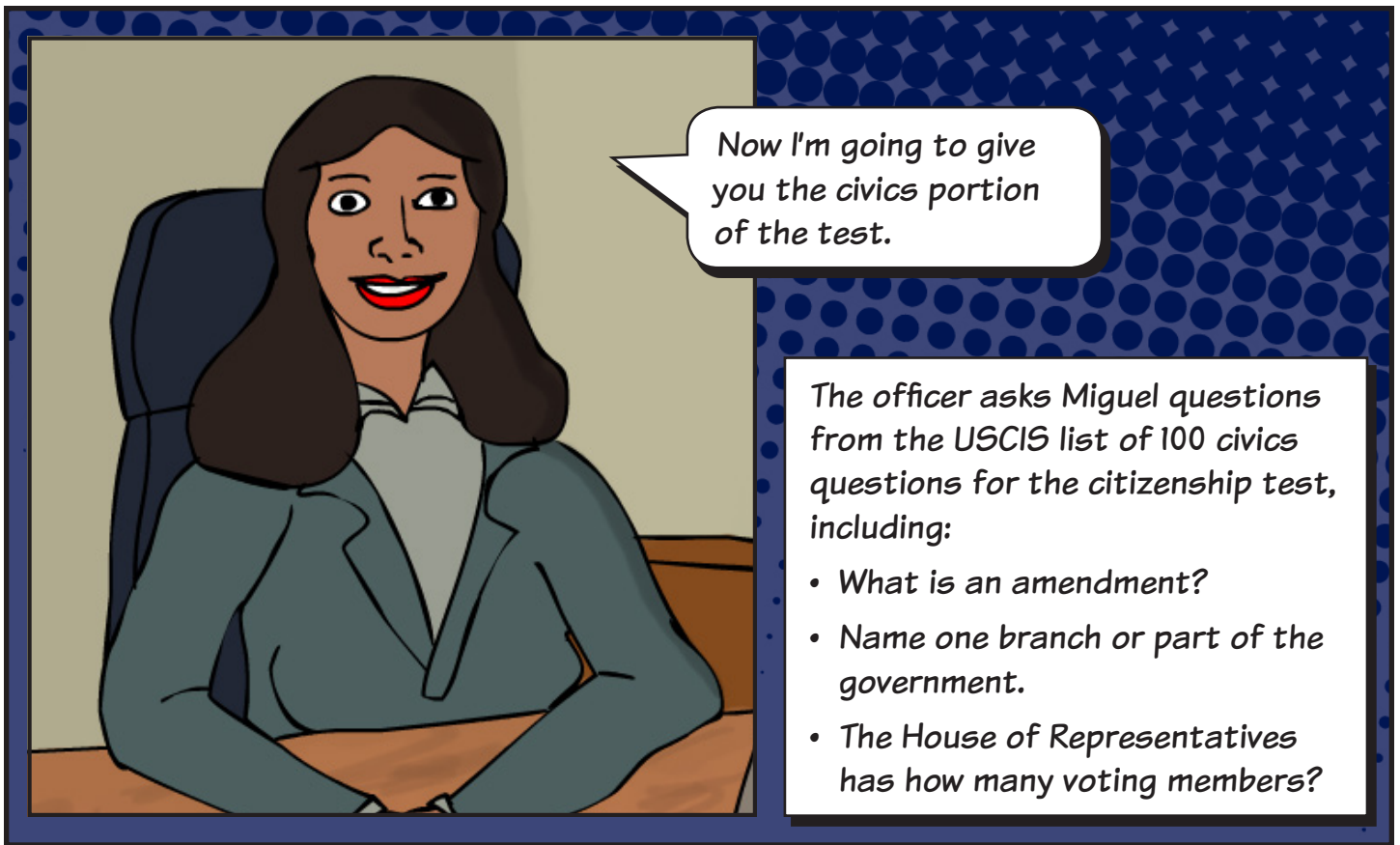
Now the officer gives Miguel the citizenship test.

Please read the sentence on line one to me.

Where is the White House?

Now please write: "The White House is in Washington, DC."

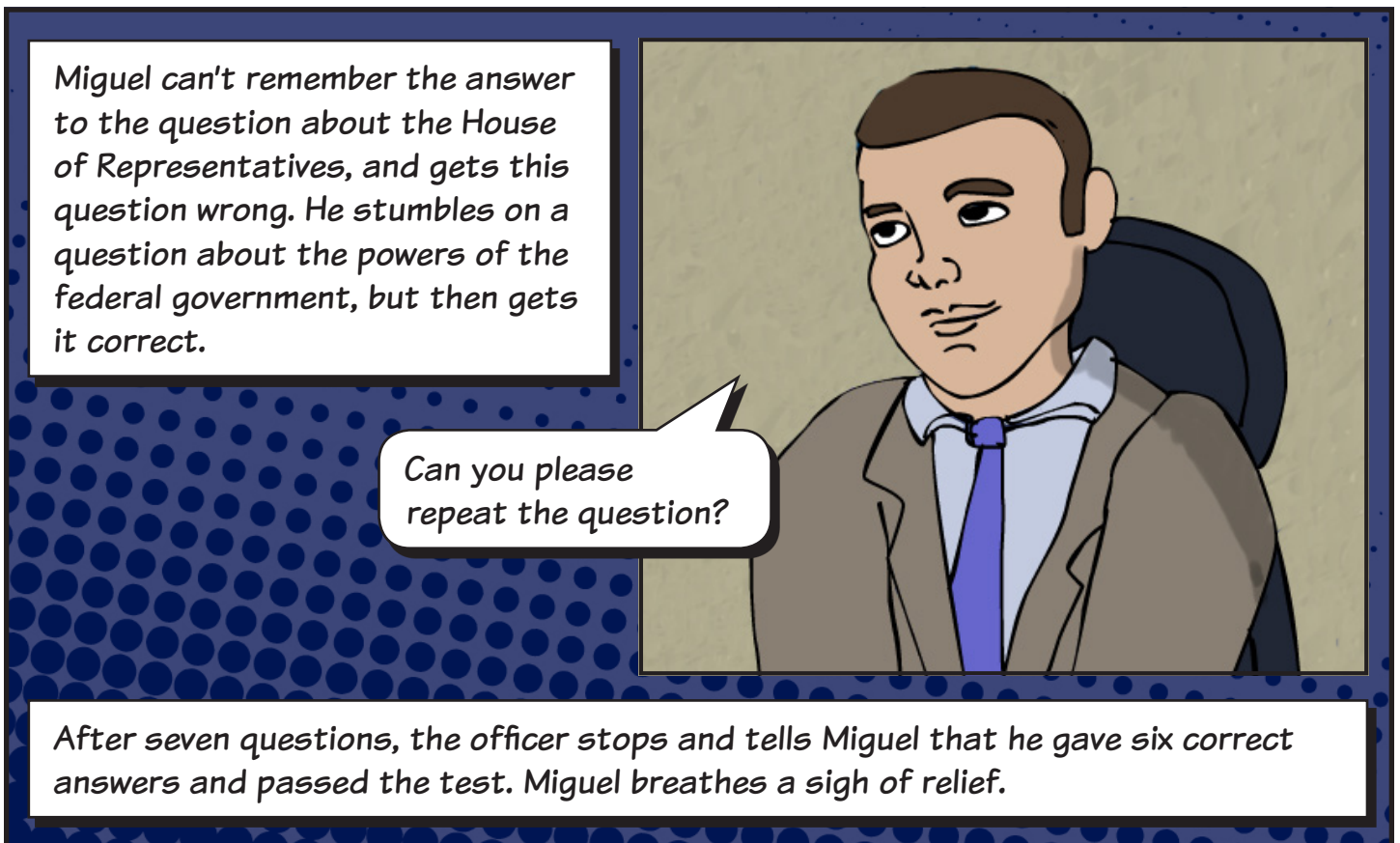
Miguel writes: The wite house is in Washington DC.



Now I'm going to give you the civics portion of the test.

The officer asks Miguel questions from the USCIS list of 100 civics questions for the citizenship test, including:

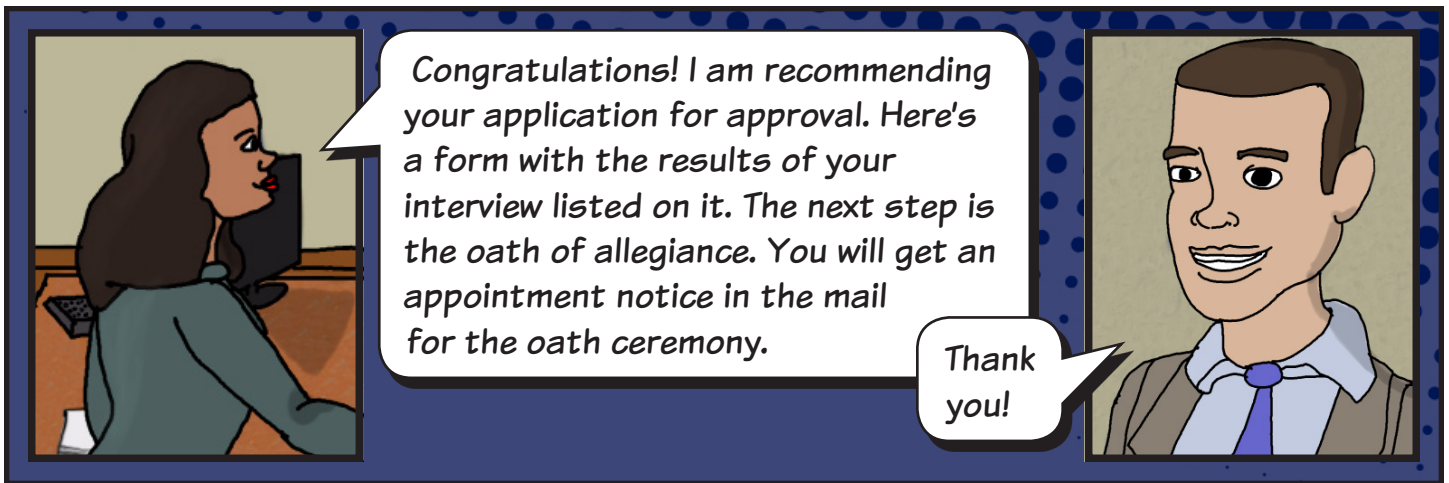
- What is an amendment?
- Name one branch or part of the government.
- The House of Representatives has how many voting members?



Miguel can't remember the answer to the question about the House of Representatives, and gets this question wrong. He stumbles on a question about the powers of the federal government, but then gets it correct.

Can you please repeat the question?

After seven questions, the officer stops and tells Miguel that he gave six correct answers and passed the test. Miguel breathes a sigh of relief.



WHAT ARE SOME TIPS FOR THE NATURALIZATION INTERVIEW?

- To prepare for the interview, review a copy of your completed citizenship application, Form N-400. Make sure you understand and can answer all the questions on the form.
- Study the list of 100 questions on U.S. history and civics, and practice reading and writing sentences related to history/civics, such as “Washington was the first president.” The 100 questions and the vocabulary lists for the test are found on the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) website at uscis.gov/citizenship.
- Be prepared for “small talk” with the USCIS officer conducting your interview. The officer may ask you about the weather outside, the traffic, or whether you had any trouble finding the building. Through small talk, the officer can tell how well you understand English. She is assessing your English speaking skills.
- Ask a friend to help you study.
- Take a citizenship class to help you prepare for the test and improve your English skills.
- Gather all your important documents in a file or envelope the night before the interview and place them next to your door so you won't forget them.
- Leave home extra early to be sure you are on time for the interview. Know the exact location in advance to avoid getting lost.
- Wear clothes that are clean, pressed, and appropriate for an important event.

- Look into the eyes of the USCIS officer when you speak.
- Answer only the questions asked of you. Answer the questions briefly, honestly, and directly.
- Sit up straight during the interview to show you are confident and to help you feel more self-assured.
- If you do not understand a question, ask the officer to repeat it slowly or in different words.
- At the end of the interview, make sure the officer gives you a form with the results in writing. The form is called the Notice of Examination Results (Form N-652).

WHAT IS ON THE CITIZENSHIP TEST?

Unless eligible for an exemption or waiver, citizenship applicants must demonstrate: 1) an ability to read, write, and speak basic English; and 2) a knowledge of U.S. history and civics. For the English speaking test, the applicant must be able to answer questions about his/her citizenship application (N-400) and follow instructions during the interview. The applicant will be given sentences to read and write in English and up to 10 questions about U.S. history and civics. To learn more about the citizenship test and to download a free study guide prepared by CLINIC, visit cliniclegal.org/citizenshiptest.

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

For more resources about citizenship, visit our Citizenship Toolkit at cliniclegal.org/citizenship.