

# Global citizen



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The concept of what defines a global citizen varies, for people have their own opinions and say about how they see an ideal one as. Kwame Appiah wrote *Cosmopolitanism*, and in his opinion, a global citizen is seen as one who sees no division within themselves and “others”; that it is necessary to agree with one another to behave morally. The view of an ideal global citizen has been altered for centuries, and in every culture it is uniquely seen and educated differently.

Many Americans may agree when asked, “what is an ideal global citizen”, their responses would be, following the laws, paying taxes, helping out around the community, having a job or going to school and being of course patriotic. Though there is no correct answer, when thinking of an ideal global citizen, it must come to mind that it is yourself and how you play a role around the world... with over 6 billion people.

Earlier read, Madeline Albright's essay, she has brought the attention of American diplomats needing to know and understand foreign countries ties with religion and their government if we want easier and peaceful international affairs with them. She also presents how having religion and politics united as one may help the country prosper. In addition, Madeline's and Appiah's views on “global citizen” differ, with Madeline seeing a role played with having religion and government, and Appiah putting that aside, and just bringing together agreed morals with one another.

In my opinion, being an global citizen means being mindful that we all live on the same planet and that our actions can have an impact on people in other parts of the world. In addition, being an “ideal” global citizen is, one who is aware of the world outside the U. S and has a sense of their own role as a

world citizen, understand and perform basic morals, and one who is willing to voluntarily help others, putting passion and care first.

Through the past 12 years of attending elementary, middle and high school I can honestly say that I have never heard the term “ global citizen”. The only thing close to that is the definition of an “ American citizen”, which involves knowledge of civics, values, and skills. It is not until I read the selections, “ Making Conversation and The Primacy of Practice” by Appiah, that the term global citizen has sunken in to my mind and wanting to master a true definition. There must be a reason into why school boards haven’t implied the teachings of global citizenship in the curriculum.

Though reading the rest of Appiah's essay and from researching on my own time other writer opinions, it seems as if there is no consensus meaning on the term, which is understandable into avoiding the teachings of this concept. I believe it is a topic that must be brought up to children starting in elementary and over the years of continuing education. Imagine, having a child raised in your house, therefore they accustom your language, beliefs, and basically are just used to you. You send them to school and they realize that everyone looks different.

Gender, skin color, kids with disabilities and so on so forth. Eventually, being curious they will ask questions, such as where are they from, why do his shoes look different from mine, why is she much taller then me? As a child growing up in America we are exposed to seeing people of different cultures, therefore making it important for the learning and understanding the variety of different kinds of people in the world. Even continuing growing up, since

we have acquired more knowledge and we are able to have and discuss opinions, it makes it just as important to continuing educating ones self.

With that said, one can understand why Muslim women wear face veils, the fighting over Jerusalem, why America's school system is slacking, or what political party you want to vote for. Understanding the world outside from where you live opens your mind for ideas, such as world peace. And if it's not that, how can we protect and make the world a better place. Being an ideal global citizen must include the passion for accepting others beside yourself. If people would inquire the customs of others we would have a better understanding of one another.

With that, it could avoid children growing up to typical stereotypes, or blaming others for dilemmas in the world. In general, it's really a commonality we share with foreign countries, its just done slightly different. Moreover, in what is seen, a global citizen is that of people putting aside religion and political views that cause so much controversy inn the world we live in. What should be recognized are morals and common views that everyone can somewhat seem to agree on. One example is the Gordon Rule- treat others as you would want to be treated.

Now the most known example for that is to have respect towards one another. A global citizen indeed should acquire this and understand it fully. In addition, basic morals that seem right also come along in being an ideal global citizen, such as being against dehumanization. Taking away what basically makes you, you is something that is not agreed with the views of a global citizen. Anti-patriotism is another form of showing to be an ideal global citizen. Promoting and what is heard often, " my country this, my

county that” is not in favor of global citizens. One must be open to all forms of people and their cultures.

A global citizen is one that can travel to any country and adjust to the customs or at least be open to them. Ways of living, the food they eat, how they dress, overall not being judgmental. When it is thought about, many conflicts are brought up due to the strong pride of patriotism that the people of the country have. American soldiers, for instance show strong patriotism to our country because they are willing to kill others that are either a threat to us or stand in our way. The same goes with the group we are fighting with on the other side of the world.

They have so much pride for their country and are fighting for it on a daily basis. No matter what the outcome maybe turn out to be, it's the fact that they're showing devotion to where they were born and grew up. A global citizen is yet far from that, on top of that, the image of world peace is number one. World peace is something that a global citizen would promote. People being free, respectful to each other, and as well as helping one another to have a better future and life for everyone living on Earth. One must understand what hurts the earth such as war, pollution, natural disasters, and/or ignorance of one another.

An ideal global citizen to me is one that is eco friendly and as well caring for everything around or on Earth besides humans, such as animals. From using recycled bags to put your groceries in, to buying hybrid cars, which ever it may be, an ideal global citizen will do such things to better earth itself. When it comes to animals, yes, we don't necessarily have to all become vegetarians, but possibly the way of handling animals in a slaughterhouse is

one to be thought of. Being cruel and inhumane to animals, whether it's in a slaughterhouse, or poaching for fur, to animal testing in laboratories should be done in a moral justifying way.

A global citizen sees how we all connect to one another, animals, humans, and the air we breathe and they manage to do what's right for all. Appiah's opinion of how the coming of a global citizen begins is the use of conversation. "Conversation doesn't have to lead to consensus about anything especially not values; it's enough that it helps people get used to one another" (Appiah 72). What he means is that to even start to think about becoming or defining an ideal global citizen one must understand conversation. Conversing with others is the beginning of attempting to understand one another.

It's like meeting a boy/girl. You can't ask them on a date without approaching them and wanting to get to know them. You ask their name, their age, what's their favorite color or food. What their goals are in life and so on. Having conversation expands one's minds and ideas or opinions other than their own. To be an ideal global citizen this indeed is the first step into the "real world". All in all, in "Making conversation" Appiah points out great ideas that would make an ideal global citizen. Putting together the views of both Albright and Appiah has indeed opened my mind to new thoughts and ideas.

While Albright suggests the importance of needing religion involved with in politics and then reading Appiah's view of a global citizen and therefore shouldn't have religion involved, both different thoughts yet both present strong views. Though there isn't one specific definition of what one may

appear to be like, the key roles such as being open to other cultures, anti-patriotism or putting aside religion and beliefs, thinking about the earth and who lives in it and of course the need to understand and make conversation are all essential into putting together the image of an ideal citizen.