Teaching about Elections

Elections and voting provide many interesting opportunities to teach students about civics, how government works, the electoral process, current events, historical context and campaign politics. Young people want to be part of the conversation--and should be. They are eager for information, reflection and dialogue. Below are education resources, lesson plans, family resources and other election-related content to assist you in teaching and talking about elections.

Because elections often bring about differences of opinion and strong feelings, it is important to review classroom guidelines for safe, respectful and inclusive dialogue.
Campaigns and elections are ripe with opportunity to discuss government, the electoral process, civics, history and other important issues. Teach students about the election with a focus on social justice issues using these strategies and activities.

Political debates can provide important learning opportunities. Use this teaching guide to help students analyze and understand any political election or debate, both national and local.
It's important to remember our civic duty does not end at the ballot box. This classroom resource assists teachers with engaging students in discussions after an election.

**The Election is Over... Now What?**

It's important to remember our civic duty does not end at the ballot box. This classroom resource assists teachers with engaging students in discussions after an election.

**Let's Talk Politics: Bias, Dialogue and Critical Thinking**

Tools and resources teachers may want to use to engage young people in conversations about the election and presidential campaign.
Is a 6th grader chanting “Build a Wall” in his classroom a political statement or a deliberate act to intimidate other students in the class? Rosalind Wiseman talks about effective neutrality in facilitating student discussions.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**When Do Teachers Stay Neutral?**

Is a 6th grader chanting “Build a Wall” in his classroom a political statement or a deliberate act to intimidate other students in the class? Rosalind Wiseman talks about effective neutrality in facilitating student discussions.

**LESSON PLAN**

**7 Ideas for Teaching about the Presidential Inauguration**

MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL
Lesson Plans on Election-Related Issues

LESSON PLAN

Will New State Laws about Vote Counting Overrule the Will of the People?

HIGH SCHOOL

Teach high school students about the vote counting process and help them understand current laws that shift power from independent election officials to partisans and its potential impact on election results.
LESSON PLAN

Elections and the Youth Vote

With a steady increase among young adults who vote, help high school students explore the role and importance of the youth vote, consider barriers to the youth vote, and propose ideas for taking action.
Middle and high school students analyze President-elect Biden and Vice President-elect Harris’ victory speeches. Students identify and research issues they think should be a priority in the Biden-Harris Administration.

Help high school students understand the Electoral College and its origins and explore their opinion about it as they consider the pros and cons.
LESSON PLAN

Sexism and the Presidential Election

HIGH SCHOOL

This high school lesson gives students the opportunity to analyze gender bias in presidential elections and explore how sexism surfaces during campaigns, past and present.

LESsON PLAN

Representing the People: Diversity and Elections

MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL
This lesson plan helps 8-12 grade students explore and understand the current landscape of elected officials and Presidential hopefuls and how the 2018 midterm election broke records and barriers regarding diversity.

LESSON PLAN

How Do Polls Inform, Influence and Impact Elections?

HIGH SCHOOL

Teach high school students the importance and impact of election polls as they analyze why identity and demographics are critical factors in polling results.
To what extent are caucuses equitable and reflect "the will of the people"? Teach students the difference between caucuses and regular primary elections, and how caucuses work.

LESSON PLAN

Election Caucuses: Who's In and Who's Out?

To what extent are caucuses equitable and reflect "the will of the people"? Teach students the difference between caucuses and regular primary elections, and how caucuses work.

LESSON PLAN

Ballot Initiatives Expand Voting Rights

Ballot Initiatives Expand Voting Rights
Students use primary and secondary sources to learn about ballot initiatives and how they were used to expand voting rights in the 2018 midterm elections.

LESSON PLAN
Census Question Controversy
MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL

The Justice Department's request to add citizenship question to the 2020 Census causes a great deal of controversy. In this lesson, students gain insight about the U.S. Census and the controversy by developing a potential School Census.
LEsson Plan

Voting Rights Then and Now

HIGH SCHOOL

Help high school students explore the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the difference between the right to vote and the ability to vote and reflect on some of the current day threats to voting rights and what can be done about it.
Let's Talk about Voting!

Learn more about the history and purpose of voting and the ways in which the right to vote has been prevented and suppressed throughout our history. (*Ages 10 and up*)

**The Dangers of Disinformation**

Talk with your family about the dangers of "false" news and disinformation by examining the January 6 U.S. Capitol invasion and the events leading up to it. (*Ages 10 and up*)
Talk with your family about what voter suppression is and how it impacts our ability to vote. (Ages 10 and up)

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

What is Voter Suppression?

Talk with your family about what voter suppression is and how it impacts our ability to vote. (Ages 10 and up)

BLOG

7 Engaging Picture Books about Voting and Elections
A round-up of picture books for elementary students about voting, elections and the power of democracy.

Engage in a family conversation about what the U.S. Census is, why it's important, how it impacts the Electoral College and what some of the issues and controversies have been over the years. *(Ages 10 and up)*

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**What’s the Census and Why Does it Matter?**

Engage in a family conversation about what the U.S. Census is, why it's important, how it impacts the Electoral College and what some of the issues and controversies have been over the years. *(Ages 10 and up)*
What is the Electoral College and Why Is it Controversial?
Learn about the Electoral College, find out why it's controversial and discuss whether you think it's fair and equitable. *(Ages 10 and up)*

![Electoral Votes per State](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

Election Polls
Talk with your family members about how polls inform, influence and impact elections. *(Ages 10 and up)*

![Image of a woman and a man at a desk](https://via.placeholder.com/150)
TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

Bias in the Presidential Election

Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about bias and bullying in the presidential election. *(Ages 10 and up)*

Election-Related Children's Literature

**Equality's Call: The Story of Voting Rights in America**

This unflinching and inspiring history of voting rights looks back at the activists who answered equality's call, working tirelessly to secure the right for all to vote, and it also looks forward to the future and the work that still needs to be done.
CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Lillian's Right to Vote
This book recalls America's battle for civil rights in an account of one woman's fierce determination to make it up the hill and make her voice heard.

Grace for President
When Grace's teacher reveals that the United States has never had a female president, Grace decides to be the first.