Teaching about Elections

Elections provide many interesting opportunities to teach students about civics, how government works, the electoral process, current event, 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.
Teaching Tools: Before, During & After Elections

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

9 Ways To Teach about the Election: A Social Justice Approach

Campaigns and elections are ripe with opportunity to discuss government, the electoral process, civics and history as well as the myriad of specific issues that are important to...

LESSON PLAN

Debate Watch Teaching Guide

MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL

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.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**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.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**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
This middle and high school lesson provides some teaching ideas for watching, discussing and analyzing the Presidential inauguration.

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

11 Ways Schools Can Help Students Feel Safe in Challenging Times (en Español)

In recent years, we have seen alarming images and biased language in schools and universities: name-calling, hate-filled taunts, vandalism, racial slurs...

Lesson Plans on Election-Related Issues
**Elections and the Youth Vote**

HIGH SCHOOL

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.

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

MIDDLE SCHOOL, HIGH SCHOOL

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.
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.
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?

Teach high school students the importance and impact of election polls as they analyze why identity and demographics are critical factors in polling results.
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

U.S. Census Bureau/CC BY-ND 2.0
This lesson provides an opportunity for high school students to explore the difference between the right to vote and the ability to vote, learn more about the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and reflect on some of the current day threats to voting rights and what can be done about it.

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LESSON PLAN

Addressing Hate Online: Countering Cyberhate with Counterspeech (En español)

High school students define, discuss and learn more about cyberhate and explore the role of counterspeech in being an online ally.
This high school lesson will help students reflect on some of the underlying problems and issues that have emerged from cases like those involving Eric Garner and Michael Brown, undertake research and present viable solutions.

Exploring Solutions to Address Racial Disparity Concerns

The Alt Right and White Supremacy
High school lesson plan to help students learn about the alt right and explore historical and current day examples of white supremacy.

LESSON PLAN

The 'Muslim Ban' and the Power of Protest

Teach students about the "Muslim ban" executive order. Gain insight into people's thoughts through posted hashtags, reactions of protestors and reflect on their own point of view on the topic by writing an op-ed.
Middle and high school students explore the connection between anti-Muslim acts of bigotry and the misunderstandings and stereotypes about Muslim people, and identify ways they can be allies in the face of bias and discrimination.
Help high school students understand political asylum as they explore the concept of a caravan and the stories of migrants fleeing persecution, poverty and violence.

LESSON PLAN
Why Are Families Being Separated and Detained at the Border?

Family separations and detentions are happening at the U.S. border. This lesson plan helps students understand the issue, learn about asylum and consider their own opinions.
What is the Dream Act and Who Are the Dreamers?

In this lesson, high school students learn about the DREAM Act—its background, history, current status—and reflect on different perspectives about it as well as develop their own.
TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

**Election Polls**
Talk with your family members about how polls inform, influence and impact elections.

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**Bias in the Presidential Election**
Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about bias and bullying in the presidential election.
Family Separations and Detentions at the Border

There have been horrific stories of children being ripped from their parents at the border. Discuss with your youth what they have heard, how they feel about the situation, what it means to seek asylum and how they can help.

U.S. Customs and Border Control

Gun Violence and Mass Shootings

Tips and strategies for parent and family roundtable discussion with youth about mass shootings, violence, guns and gun laws.
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.

**TOOLS AND STRATEGIES**

**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.