



REGISTRATION SIMULATION

(30 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students simulate registration to become familiar with the process.

MATERIALS

Voter Registration Application handout; *Application Instructions* handout; Internet access; a piece of lined paper

GET READY

- ✓ Download the national mail voter registration form and instructions from www.lwv.org/ and make a copy for each student, or use the copy and instruction sheet provided.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Show your students how to fill out the forms and registration sheet, reminding them that this is only a simulation.
- ✓ Fold a piece of lined paper down the middle and ask your students to sign their names on the left, to use as a registration sheet for the voting simulation activity.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Discuss questions that arise from the activity plus the following:

- ★ *Why are registration requirements different in each state? Should they be? Or should there be a federal law?*
- ★ *What criteria is essential for voter registration?*
- ★ *Why might some people be reluctant to register to vote?*
- ★ *Are there or have there recently been any changes made in state registration policies? If so, what are they?*
- ★ *As of the summer of 1999, the California State Assembly had passed a bill allowing registration on voting day. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?*
- ★ *Could you influence others to register? How?*

MORE!

Go to www.rockthevote.org/ for information on volunteering to help citizens register. Information is available for organizing a registration day at school for parents as well as to request forms for stickers, posters, etc.

REGISTRATION SIMULATION

VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION – FOR U.S. CITIZENS Please print in blue or black ink

1	Mr. Mrs. Miss Ms.	Last Name	First Name	Middle Name	Circle One Jr Sr II III IV	
2	Address (see instructions) – Street (or route or box #)		Apt. or Lot #	City/Town	State	Zip Code
3	Address Where You Get Your Mail If Different From Above			City/Town	State	Zip Code
4	Date of Birth ____/____/____ Month Day Year	5	Telephone Number (optional)	6	ID Number (see item 6 in the instructions for your State)	
7	Choice of Party (see item 7 in the instructions for your State)			8	Race or Ethnic Group (see item 8 in the instructions for your State)	
9	<p>I swear/affirm that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a United States Citizen. • I meet the eligibility requirements of my state and subscribe to any oath required. (see item 9 in the instructions for your State before you sign.) • The information I have provided is true to the best of my knowledge under penalty of perjury. If I have provided false information I may be fined, imprisoned, or (if not a U.S. citizen) deported from or refused entry to the United States. 			<p>Please sign your full name (or put your mark)</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 60px; width: 100%;"></div>		
				<p>Date</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> ____/____/____ Month Day Year </div>		

REGISTRATION SIMULATION

Box 1 – Name

Put in this box your full name in this order – Last, First, Middle. Do not use nicknames or initials.

Box 2 – Home Address

Put in this box your home address (legal address). Do not put your mailing address here if it is different from your home address. Do not use post office box or rural route without a box number.

Box 3 – Mailing Address

If you get your mail at an address that is different from the address from Box 2, put your mailing address in this box.

Box 4 – Date of Birth

Put in this box your date of birth in this order – Month, Day, Year.

Box 5 – Telephone Number

Most states ask for your telephone number in case there are questions about your application. However, you do not have to fill in this box.

Box 6 – ID Number

Many states use an ID number for record-keeping purposes. To find out what ID number, if any, you need to put in this box, see item 6 in the instructions under your state.

Box 7 – Choice of Party

In some states, you must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention. To find out if your state requires this, see item 7 in the instructions under your state. If you want to register with a party, print in the box the full name of the party of your choice. If you do not want to register with a party, write in "no party" or leave the box blank. Do not write in the word "independent" if you mean "no party" because this might be confused with the name of a political party in your state.

Box 8 – Race or Ethnic Group

A few states ask for your race or ethnic group, in order to administer the Federal Voting Rights Act. To find out if your state asks for this information, see item 8 in the instructions under your state. If so, put in Box 8 the choice that best describes you from the list below.

- American Indian or Alaskan native

- Asian or Pacific Islander – not Native Hawaiian
- Black; not of Hispanic Origin
- Hispanic
- Multi-racial
- Native Hawaiian
- White, not of Hispanic Origin
- Other

Box 9 – Signature

Review the information in item 9 in the instructions under your state. Before you sign or make your mark, make sure that:

1. You meet your state's requirements, and
2. You understand all of Box 9.

Finally, sign your full name or make your mark, and print today's date in this order – Month, Day, Year.

Box 10 – Name of Assistant

If the applicant is unable to sign, put in this box the name, address, and telephone number (optional) of the person who helped you.

If your **STATE INSTRUCTIONS** are unavailable, use the generic instructions.

6. **ID Number.** The last 4 digits of your social security number and your Indian Census number (if you have one) are requested.
7. **Choice of Party.** You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.
8. **Race or Ethnic Group.** Leave blank.
9. **Signature.** To register you must:
 - be a citizen of the United States
 - be a resident of this state at least 29 days preceding the next election
 - be 18 years old on or before the next general election
 - not have been convicted of treason or a felony (or have had your civil rights restored)
 - not currently be declared an incapacitated person by court of law

(If you were actually registering you would now mail or take your registration to the local voter registration office.)



VOTING BARRIERS

(45 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students consider the barriers to voting today, including their causes and the impact they have.

MATERIALS

No materials are necessary for this activity.

GET READY

- ✓ Remind your students that a democracy is a form of government in which policy is decided by the majority of the citizens' votes.
- ✓ Break your students up into five evenly sized groups. (There will be one group for each of five voting barriers the students list.)

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Tell your students that they are going to explore the reasons why some people do not vote.
- ✓ Have your students brainstorm five barriers (one for each group) that prevent adults from registering and voting, such as:
 - ✓ Polling hours and the fact that elections are held on a workday.
 - ✓ The fact that you need to vote in the precinct where you lived at the time of registration.
 - ✓ The inconvenience of registering and the need to be registered a certain length of time before an election.
 - ✓ Being a convicted felon, a non-citizen, or merely uninformed.

- ✓ Assign each group a barrier.
- ✓ Have each group identify the causes and effects of their barrier and state their opinion on whether or not the barrier is justified.
- ✓ In class, the same or following day, have each of the five groups present their ideas and opinions to the class. When each group presents, make sure the rest of the class is brainstorming a list of questions to ask the presenters.
- ✓ Allow the class to ask questions of each group after they present.
- ✓ End the activity with a class discussion of voting barriers using the discussion questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What were some of the causes of the voting barriers we identified?*
- ★ *What were some of the effects of the voting barriers we identified?*
- ★ *In your opinion, do some of these voting barriers need to exist? Why or why not?*
- ★ *In your opinion, are some of the voting barriers not justified? Why or why not?*



SUFFRAGE SEQUENCE CARDS

(20-25 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students order and examine the history of voting rights to gain a better understanding of the right to vote.

MATERIALS

U.S. Suffrage Timeline Cards handout; *U.S. Suffrage Timeline Cards with Dates* handout

GET READY

- ✓ Copy and cut a set of *U.S. Suffrage Timeline Cards* for each group of three to five students.
- ✓ Copy a *U.S. Suffrage Timeline Cards with Dates* handout sheet for each group.
- ✓ See “The Right to Vote” in the Appendix.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Have your students divide into groups of three to five.
- ✓ Give each group a set of suffrage sequence cards.
- ✓ Explain to the groups that they need to put the cards in chronological order. Allow an adequate amount of time for the groups to order the cards.
- ✓ When it seems like all, or most, of the groups have finished, call the game and provide each group with an answer key handout.
- ✓ Go over the correct sequencing as a class.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Do you think we will ever need to add new cards to this game? If yes, what makes you think so?*
- ★ *Who still cannot vote? Should they be able to vote? Why or why not?*
- ★ *Why do people want the right to vote?*
- ★ *Why did it take so long for some groups to gain the right to vote?*
- ★ *Do you know what each group did to gain the right to vote? How could you find out?*

MORE!

Assign students to discover and report what various populations did to gain the right to vote.

VOTE QUOTE

“Vote as an individual; lemmings end up falling off cliffs.” –Pierre S. du Pont



U.S. SUFFRAGE TIMELINE CARDS

<p>The Declaration of Independence is signed. The right to vote is based on property ownership. Suffrage is primarily for white male Protestants over the age of 21.</p>	<p>The 24th Amendment passes, outlawing the poll tax.</p>	<p>With the Civil War over, lawmakers enact the 14th Amendment, granting citizenship to African-Americans and permitting them to vote. But state officials still attempt to deny them the right to vote.</p>
<p>The Constitution is drafted. States are given the power to regulate their own suffrage laws and favor white male landowners.</p>	<p>Further amendments to the Voting Rights Act require that many voting materials be printed in the languages of various minority groups.</p>	<p>The 15th Amendment is ratified, providing the legal rights of African-Americans to vote and prohibiting state and local governments from denying that right.</p>
<p>The Electoral College elects George Washington president. Only 6 percent of the entire population is involved in the election.</p>	<p>The Voting Rights Act passes after Martin Luther King, Jr. leads 25,000 people on a march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to dramatize the need for more voting rights.</p>	<p>Wyoming becomes a state and is the first state to provide suffrage for women in its Constitution.</p>
<p>Vermont declares that all adult white males, regardless of property ownership or religion, can vote.</p>	<p>The 26th Amendment lowers the voting age from 21 to 18.</p>	<p>The Civil Rights Act passes, allowing punishment for interference with, or disruption of, protection for African-American voters.</p>
<p>Rhode Island does not follow the lead of Vermont and other states with reformed voting rights. A rebellion begins and forces Rhode Island to adopt a new Constitution. This allows broader voting rights.</p>	<p>Before the signing of the Constitution, many communities vote in ways similar to their European home countries.</p>	<p>The 19th Amendment is ratified, giving women the right to vote.</p>
<p>Because African-Americans and women suffer discrimination at the polls, Elizabeth Cady Stanton sets forth resolutions for women's suffrage at the first convention of women's rights advocates. They pass.</p>	<p>A Civil Rights Act defines citizenship and prohibits discrimination based on race. The Republican Congress overrides the veto of President Andrew Jackson, hoping to lure the vote of former slaves.</p>	<p>Poll taxes, grandfather clauses and literacy tests are introduced in many Southern states. They are designed to restrict the ability of African-Americans to register and vote.</p>
<p>Georgia lowers its voting age from 21 to 18 in state and local elections.</p>	<p>The National American Woman Suffrage Association is founded, with Susan B. Anthony as president.</p>	<p>Miguel Trujillo, a Native American and former Marine, wins a suit against New Mexico for not allowing him to vote. New Mexico and Arizona are required to give the vote to all Native Americans.</p>
<p>The Voting Rights Act is amended to lower the voting age to 18 and ban the use of literacy tests.</p>		



U.S. SUFFRAGE TIMELINE CARDS WITH DATES

1776 – The Declaration of Independence is signed. The right to vote is based on property ownership. Suffrage is primarily for white male Protestants over the age of 21.	1964 – The 24th Amendment passes, outlawing the poll tax.	1868 – With the Civil War over, lawmakers enact the 14th Amendment, granting citizenship to African-Americans and permitting them to vote. But state officials still attempt to deny them the right to vote.
1787 – The Constitution is drafted. States are given the power to regulate their own suffrage laws and favor white male landowners.	1975 – Further amendments to the Voting Rights Act require that many voting materials be printed in the languages of various minority groups.	1870 – The 15th Amendment is ratified, providing the legal rights of African-Americans to vote and prohibiting state and local governments from denying that right.
1789 – George Washington is elected president by the Electoral College. Only 6 percent of the entire population is involved in the election.	1965 – The Voting Rights Act passes after Martin Luther King, Jr. leads 25,000 people on a march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to dramatize the need for more voting rights.	1890 – Wyoming becomes a state and is the first state to provide suffrage for women in its Constitution.
1791 – Vermont declares that all adult white males, regardless of property ownership or religion, can vote.	1971 – The 26th Amendment lowers the voting age from 21 to 18.	1957 – The Civil Rights Act passes, allowing punishment for interference with, or disruption of, protection for African-American voters.
1842 – Rhode Island does not follow the lead of Vermont and other states with reformed voting rights. A rebellion begins and forces Rhode Island to adopt a new Constitution. This allows broader voting rights.	Before 1776 – Before the signing of the Constitution, many communities vote in ways similar to their European home countries.	1920 – The 19th Amendment is ratified, giving women the right to vote.
1848 – Because African-Americans and women suffer discrimination at the polls, Elizabeth Cady Stanton sets forth resolutions for women’s suffrage at the first convention of women’s rights advocates. They pass.	1865 – A Civil Rights Act defines citizenship and prohibits discrimination based on race. The Republican Congress overrides the veto of President Andrew Jackson, hoping to lure the vote of former slaves.	1876 – Poll taxes, grandfather clauses and literacy tests are introduced in many Southern states. They are designed to restrict the ability of African-Americans to register and vote.
1943 – Georgia lowers its voting age from 21 to 18 in state and local elections.	1869 – The National American Woman Suffrage Association is founded, with Susan B. Anthony as president.	1947 – Miguel Trujillo, a Native American and former Marine, wins a suit against New Mexico for not allowing him to vote. New Mexico and Arizona are required to give the vote to all Native Americans.
1970 – The Voting Rights Act is amended to lower the voting age to 18 and ban the use of literacy tests.		



OUR NATIONAL SYMBOL

(45-50 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students participate in a primary election simulation and in a caucus simulation to explore and compare the processes.

MATERIALS

Paper for ballots

PART ONE: HOLD PRIMARY

ELECTIONS GET READY

- ✓ Tell students that the bald eagle, our national symbol, has decided to retire after years of public service. Our country's animals are gathering to decide who should run for the office of the new national symbol.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Divide your students into two groups. Tell them that half of them will be the bird party and half of them will be the mammal party. Explain that a party is a group of people who have some of the same political beliefs. Tell them the birds believe that since the symbol has always been a bird there is no reason to change it, and the mammals believe it is time for a change.
- ✓ Instruct them to gather into the two groups and hold a primary election to produce candidates. Explain that a candidate is someone who would like to be elected to a government office. If students need help,

possibilities for the bird candidate are: Great Horned Owl – wise, Mourning Dove – peaceful, Wild Turkey – independent; possible candidates for the mammals are: Raccoon – clever, Coyote – independent, Grizzly Bear – strong .

- ✓ Help each party vote to choose a candidate.
- ✓ Write the candidates on the board and discuss the pros and cons for each. Inform the students that they can now vote outside their party and must choose the national symbol they feel is best.
- ✓ Hold a general election with a secret ballot and choose a new national symbol. Celebrate!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Was your favorite mammal or bird chosen?*
- ★ *Was this a fair way to vote? Why or why not?*
- ★ *Was this democratic, meaning did every one get to participate in the decision?*
- ★ *Can you think of a better way to choose a national symbol?*
- ★ *Is this the way we choose candidates in our state?*



OUR NATIONAL SYMBOL (continued)

PART TWO: HOLD CAUCUSES

GET READY

- ✓ Tell your students that there is another way to choose a national symbol for our country — the caucus system.
- ✓ Share with your students the definition of a *caucus*: a meeting of local members of a political party that select delegates to a convention or register preferences for candidates running for office.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Divide your students into two groups, half will be the bird party and half will be the mammal party.
- ✓ Organize each party into four groups (caucuses) of three or four students. Ask each student to choose and announce in their caucus which bird or mammal he or she thinks is best and why. Help each caucus choose one delegate to go to the party convention. Explain that the delegate will cast a vote for their caucus.
- ✓ Hold the party conventions one at a time in front of the class. There should be four delegates to the bird convention and four to the mammal convention. Have the class watch and listen quietly as the delegates choose a candidate.

- ✓ When each party has a candidate, hold a secret general election. Either have the students close their eyes and raise their hands to vote or provide a paper ballot.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Was your favorite mammal or bird chosen?*
- ★ *Was this as fair as the primary election? Why or why not?*
- ★ *Was this democratic, meaning did every one get to participate in the decision?*
- ★ *Can you think of a different way to choose a national symbol?*

MORE!

Repeat the process with other questions or actual decisions the class could make such as what to play at recess or which subject could be skipped today.



APATHY CARTOON ANALYSIS

(30-45 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students analyze political cartoons portraying apathy to examine the value of voting.

MATERIALS

Political Cartoon Analysis handouts 1 and 2;
Apathy Cartoons handout

GET READY

- ✓ Copy the *Political Cartoon Analysis* forms for each student or group. Copy a political cartoon for each student or group.
- ✓ See “Voter Apathy” in the Appendix.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Divide the class into groups of three.
- ✓ Decide which of the political cartoons each group will analyze (mix it up so different groups have different cartoons).
- ✓ Give the students time to complete the *Political Cartoon Analysis 1* handout. If time allows, students can exchange cartoons and complete another analysis.
- ✓ When the forms have been completed, have the groups share their analysis with the rest of the class.
- ✓ For homework, consider giving your students the task of finding a political cartoon on their own and analyzing it with the *Political Cartoon Analysis 2* handout.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What is the purpose of these political cartoons?*
- ★ *What are some reasons for voter apathy in this country?*
- ★ *How do these cartoons remind us of the power of voting?*
- ★ *Can these political cartoons help encourage people to vote?*
- ★ *What are the responsibilities of citizens in a democracy? How can you prepare for these responsibilities?*
- ★ *What can happen to a democracy when citizens are not responsible and don't use their right to vote?*

MORE!

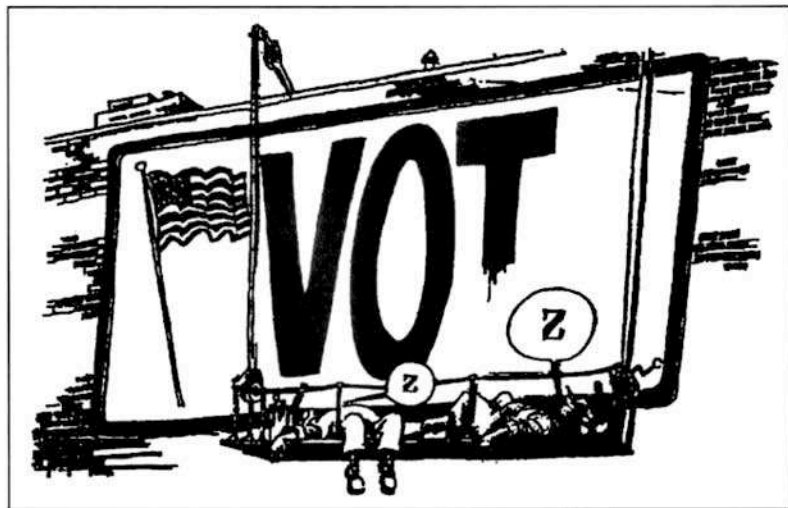
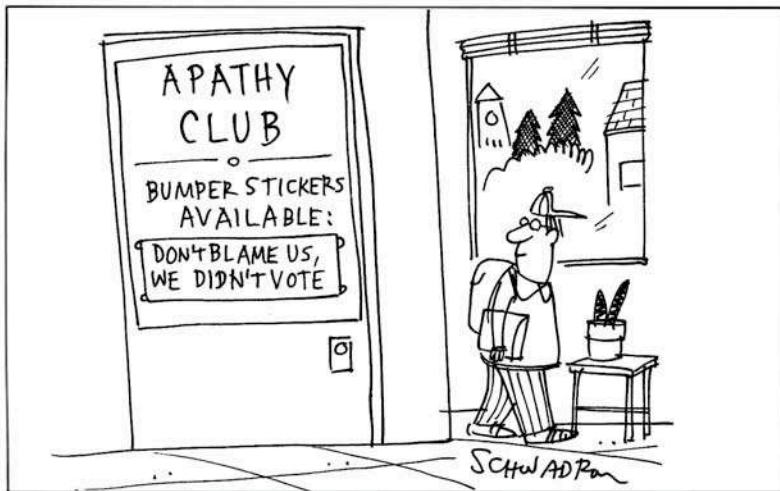
Encourage students to make their own political cartoons about any issue.

VOTE QUOTE

“The Greek word for idiot, literally translated, means ‘one who does not participate in politics.’ That sums up my conviction on the subject.” – Gladys Pyle



APATHY CARTOONS





POLITICAL CARTOON ANALYSIS 1

Cartoons are a way of expressing an opinion. Cartoons have been used in publications for hundreds of years. Early cartoons were used to give messages to people who could not read.

Editorial cartoons have certain characteristics. Check to see how many of the following characteristics your cartoon has:

Presents a problem, not a solution	
Deals with one issue at a time	
Has people drawn as caricatures	
Uses exaggeration to prove a point	
Shows institutions, such as the government, as people	

Cartoonists use several techniques to get their message across.

Check the techniques your cartoon includes:

Caricature – changing or distorting a person’s features in a way that makes the person recognizable	
Exaggeration – overemphasizing an event or situation	
Stereotyping – showing all persons of the same group looking and acting the same	
Symbols – using a sign or object to stand for something	
Satire – using wit and ridicule to make fun of something that seems wrong	
Labeling – using written words to identify figures and causes	



POLITICAL CARTOON ANALYSIS 2

Name of Publication:

Date of Publication:

Page:

Do you agree with the opinion expressed in the cartoon? Explain.

What is the issue in this cartoon?

Whom or what do the characters represent?

Are any symbols used to add meaning? What are they?

Are any labels used to add meaning? What are they?

Is there a caption? What meaning does it add to the cartoon?

Is the cartoon humorous? What makes it so?

What seems to be the cartoonist's opinion on this issue?

Do you agree with the opinion expressed in the cartoon? Explain.



REGISTRATION SIMULATION

(30 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students simulate registration to become familiar with the process.

MATERIALS

Voter Registration Application handout;
Application Instructions handout;
Internet access; a piece of lined paper

GET READY

- ✓ Download the national mail voter registration form and instructions from www.lwv.org/ and make a copy for each student, or use the copy and instruction sheet provided.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Show your students how to fill out the forms and registration sheet, reminding them that this is only a simulation.
- ✓ Fold a piece of lined paper down the middle and ask your students to sign their names on the left, to use as a registration sheet for the voting simulation activity.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Discuss questions that arise from the activity plus the following:

- ★ *Why are registration requirements different in each state? Should they be? Or should there be a federal law?*
- ★ *What criteria is essential for voter registration?*
- ★ *Why might some people be reluctant to register to vote?*
- ★ *Are there or have there recently been any changes made in state registration policies? If so, what are they?*
- ★ *As of the summer of 1999, the California State Assembly had passed a bill allowing registration on voting day. What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?*
- ★ *Could you influence others to register? How?*

MORE!

Go to www.rockthevote.org/ for information on volunteering to help citizens register. Information is available for organizing a registration day at school for parents as well as to request forms for stickers, posters, etc.

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3	Address Where You Get Your Mail If Different From Above			City/Town	State Zip Code
4	Date of Birth ____/____/____ Month Day Year	5	Telephone Number (optional)	6	ID Number (see item 6 in the instructions for your State)
7	Choice of Party (see item 7 in the instructions for your State)			8	Race or Ethnic Group (see item 8 in the instructions for your State)
9	<p>I swear/affirm that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am a United States Citizen. • I meet the eligibility requirements of my state and subscribe to any oath required. (see item 9 in the instructions for your State before you sign.) • The information I have provided is true to the best of my knowledge under penalty of perjury. If I have provided false information I may be fined, imprisoned, or (if not a U.S. citizen) deported from or refused entry to the United States. 				
				Plea _____ Date ____/____/____	

REGISTRATION SIMULATION

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Box 1 – Name

Put in this box your full name in this order – Last, First, Middle. Do not use nicknames or initials.

Box 2 – Home Address

Put in this box your home address (legal address). Do not put your mailing address here if it is different from your home address. Do not use post office box or rural route without a box number.

Box 3 – Mailing Address

If you get your mail at an address that is different from the address from Box 2, put your mailing address in this box.

Box 4 – Date of Birth

Put in this box your date of birth in this order – Month, Day, Year.

Box 5 – Telephone Number

Most states ask for your telephone number in case there are questions about your application. However, you do not have to fill in this box.

Box 6 – ID Number

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Box 8 – Race or Ethnic Group

A few states ask for your race or ethnic group, in order to administer the Federal Voting Rights Act. To find out if your state asks for this information, see item 8 in the instructions under your state. If so, put in Box 8 the choice that best describes you from the list below.

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- Native Hawaiian
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Box 9 – Signature

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1. You meet your state's requirements, and
2. You understand all of Box 9.

Finally, sign your full name or make your mark, and print today's date in this order – Month, Day, Year.

Box 10 – Name of Assistant

If the applicant is unable to sign, put in this box the name, address, and telephone number (optional) of the person who helped you.

If your **STATE INSTRUCTIONS** are unavailable, use the generic instructions.

6. ID Number. The last 4 digits of your social security number and your Indian Census number (if you have one) are requested.

7. Choice of Party. You must register with a party if you want to take part in that party's primary election, caucus, or convention.

8. Race or Ethnic Group. Leave blank.

9. Signature. To register you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of this state at least 29 days preceding the next election
- be 18 years old on or before the next general election
- not have been convicted of treason or a felony (or have had your civil rights restored)
- not currently be declared an incapacitated person by court of law

(If you were actually registering you would now mail or take your registration to the local voter registration office.)



LITERATURE CONNECTION ACTIVITY

Voting and the Spirit of American Democracy edited by Donald W. Rogers

OBJECTIVE

Students investigate the history of voting rights in America.

MATERIALS

Voting and the Spirit of American Democracy
– Donald W. Rogers, Editor

GET READY

- ✓ Secure eight copies of *Voting and the Spirit of American Democracy*.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Inform your students that they will be investigating the history of voting rights in America through the text, *Voting and the Spirit of American Democracy*.
- ✓ Explain that the book is comprised of eight essays, each essay detailing one chapter of the history of American suffrage.
- ✓ Break your class up into eight groups, one group for each essay in the book. Assign each group to an essay. (Each essay is about 10-15 pages.)
- ✓ Ask the groups to look at the title of their assigned essay and conjecture what it is about. Give the group members a couple of minutes to consult with each other, and then have them share with the class what they think their essay is going to cover.
- ✓ Have each group read their essay. (This can be assigned for homework.)
- ✓ Tell each group that they need to think of a creative way to relate the information in their essay to the rest of the class. Provide class time for students to brainstorm ideas. (Encourage students to think of all possibilities: video, visual arts, dramatics, etc.)

- ✓ Make sure that each group knows that it needs to include in its presentation the more substantive points made in the essay they were assigned. The groups should determine these points before developing their presentations.
- ✓ Give each group time to practice their presentations.
- ✓ Have each group present in the order in which their essay appears in the table of contents. Each presentation should be followed by a question period from the class.
- ✓ After the last presentation, engage the class in a discussion on the complete *Voting and the Spirit of American Democracy*. (You can use the questions provided, at least in part.)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What are some of the significant changes to suffrage that have been made in America?*
- ★ *Were you surprised by what you read or by what another group presented? If so, what surprised you?*
- ★ *What trends can you detect in the development of the right to vote in the United States?*
- ★ *What are some of the challenges that face suffrage in America today?*
- ★ *The title of the book is "Voting and the Spirit of American Democracy." After studying this book, what do you think is the spirit of American democracy?*



THE POWER OF ONE

(60 minutes over one to two days)

OBJECTIVE

Students learn to overcome apathy and appreciate how one vote can make a difference.

- ✓ Have your class use the Internet or print resources to briefly answer the questions below.
- ✓ Have each group present their findings to the rest of the class.

MATERIALS

Just One Vote! How Important Am I? handout; *Teacher's Example* handout; Internet access (optional)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Why is your topic significant?*
- ★ *How did the subject you researched impact history?*
- ★ *Who was the "one vote" in your historical event? Was it a citizen? A member of the Electoral College? A senator?*
- ★ *What would have happened had that one person not practiced their right to vote?*
- ★ *How would things be different today if the outcome of the vote you researched was different?*
- ★ *What did you learn about the importance of a single vote?*

GET READY

- ✓ If possible, arrange for your students to have access to the Internet.
- ✓ Photocopy the *Just One Vote! How Important Am I?* handout for your class.
- ✓ Review the *Teacher's Example* handout and do any extra research you feel is necessary.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- ✓ Break your class up into groups of three or four.
- ✓ Read to the class your *Teacher's Example* handout. (Read aloud the event followed by the event description).
- ✓ Give each group a copy of the *Just One Vote! How Important Am I?* handout to read.
- ✓ Inform the groups that they will be researching one of the events on the handout.
- ✓ Tell the groups to pick by consensus their top three choices in terms of interesting voting events.
- ✓ Go from group to group asking for their top choice, their second choice if the top choice is already taken, and a third choice if their top two are taken, etc. No two groups should be researching the same topic.



JUST ONE VOTE! HOW IMPORTANT AM I?

In 1845, one vote brought Texas into the Union.

In 1845, one vote admitted California, Oregon, and Washington into statehood.

In 1867, The Alaska Purchase was ratified by just one vote paving the way for the eventual admission of America's largest state in 1958.

In 1868, Andrew Johnson was impeached; one vote saved him from removal.

In 1875, one vote changed France from a monarchy to a republic.

In 1890, by a one vote margin, Idaho became a state.

In 1916, if presidential hopeful Charles E. Hughes had received one additional vote in each of California's precincts, he would have defeated President Woodrow Wilson's re-election bid.

In 1920, one vote in a last minute decision ratified the 19th Amendment to the Constitution — giving women the right to vote.

In 1923, one vote gave Adolf Hitler leadership of the Nazi party.

In 1941, one vote saved Selective Service (drafting into the armed services) — just weeks before Pearl Harbor was attacked.

In the 1960 presidential election, an additional one vote per precinct in Illinois, Missouri, New Jersey, and Texas may have altered the course of America's modern history by denying John F. Kennedy the presidency and placing Richard Nixon in the White House eight years earlier.

In 1962, the governors of Maine, Rhode Island, and North Dakota were all elected by a margin of one vote per precinct.

In 1994, the U.S. House of Representatives enacted a law banning specific classes of assault weapons. The vote was initially tied but one member changed his vote to approve the ban.

In 2000, George W. Bush won the Electoral College vote over Al Gore by receiving 271 votes, just one more than the 270 needed to win.



TEACHER'S EXAMPLE

In 1876, one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the presidency of the United States.

Elected by a heavy majority, Hayes entered Congress in December 1865, troubled by the “rebel influences...ruling the White House.” Between 1867 and 1876 he served three times as Governor of Ohio. Safe liberalism, party loyalty, and a good war record made Hayes an acceptable Republican candidate in 1876.

He opposed Governor Samuel J. Tilden of New York. Although a galaxy of famous Republican speakers, and even Mark Twain, stumped for Hayes, he expected the Democrats to win. When the first returns seemed to confirm this, Hayes went to bed, believing he had lost.

But in New York, Republican National Chairman Zachariah Chandler, aware of a loophole, wired leaders to stand firm: “Hayes has 185 votes and is elected.” The popular vote apparently was 4,300,000 for Tilden to 4,036,000 for Hayes. Hayes’s election depended upon contested electoral votes in Louisiana, South Carolina, and Florida. If all the disputed electoral votes went to Hayes, he would win; a single one would elect Tilden.

Months of uncertainty followed. In January 1877 Congress established an Electoral Commission to decide the dispute. The commission, made up of eight Republicans and seven Democrats, determined all the contests in favor of Hayes by eight to seven. The final electoral vote: 185 to 184.

Source:

<http://clinton4.nara.gov/textonly/WH/glimpse/presidents/html/rh19.html>



STOP THAT TEENAGER BEFORE HE VOTES

(60 minutes over one to two days)

OBJECTIVE

Students evaluate and respond to commentary on teen-voters.

MATERIALS

What is Your Ideology? handout; *Stop That Teenager Before He Votes* handout

GET READY

- ✓ Print one copy of the *What is Your Ideology?* handout for yourself.
- ✓ Duplicate a copy of the *Stop That Teenager Before He Votes* handout for each student in your class.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Say to your class, *A couple of reasons that people use to explain why 18- to 20-year-olds don't vote in large numbers is that they don't have any opinions on the issues. You're not quite 18 (in most cases), so let's see about that.* Take the *What is Your Ideology?* handout and choose statements from the document to present to the class. Ask students for their opinions on the various issues.
- ✓ Encourage your students to respectfully engage one another in a discussion of the issues you bring up.
- ✓ Say, *It turns out that you do have some very definite opinions, and a very good reason to vote your mind — on a Kids Voting ballot now or an official one, as soon as you turn 18.*
- ✓ Say, *Now I am going to give you an article from a man who does not think that teenagers should be encouraged to vote.* Have the students read the article.

- ✓ Ask, *How did that article make you feel? Is there anything you would say to Mr. Rosenberg in response to his article?* Listen to a couple of responses and then give your students an opportunity to list why they think teenagers 18 years and older deserve to vote (pay taxes, participation in armed forces, etc.)
- ✓ Provide your students the opportunity to draft letters to local/national newspaper editors explaining why young adults should be encouraged, not discouraged, to vote. (Refer to the *Letter to the Editor* activity in the Active Citizenship theme.)
- ✓ Have students share their written responses with the rest of the class and then mail them (optional).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Did you find that you had stronger opinions on the issues than you thought? If yes, what does that tell you about yourself?*
- ★ *Why do you think Mr. Rosenberg felt the need to write that article? What do you think about his reasoning?*
- ★ *Was this activity powerful in making you want to vote? How so?*
- ★ *Do you have the right to vote? What are the current requirements for suffrage?*
- ★ *Some people think the voting age should be lowered to 17 or maybe even 16. How do you feel about that? (Ask students to defend their point of view.)*
- ★ *What are your responsibilities in regards to voting?*



WHAT IS YOUR IDEOLOGY?

An ideology is a systematic set of values that enables a person to view policy issues in a consistent way. Your answers to these questions will indicate if your political values lean toward the liberal or conservative ideologies. Circle T for true or F for false in response to the following statements.

1. The federal government places too many restrictions on the way corporations conduct their business. T F
2. Unions reduce productivity by discouraging workers from performing tasks not agreed to in a labor management contract. T F
3. High government taxes discourage citizens from working hard. T F
4. Most people on welfare would prefer a real job. T F
5. Government should create programs that will reduce America's large number of poor people. T F
6. The best way to help the poor is to set policies that help businesses earn a profit so they can hire the underprivileged. T F
7. Taxes should be used to redistribute income by taking from the wealthy and giving to the poor. T F
8. The government has a special responsibility to protect and assist disadvantaged minorities. T F
9. Government programs on behalf of the disadvantaged discourage people from helping themselves. T F
10. America's high crime rate is directly traceable to the persistence of poverty and discrimination. T F
11. America's high crime rate is due to courts being too lenient with criminals. T F
12. Crime, unemployment and poverty will be reduced if Americans return to the traditional values of hard work, self discipline and belief in God. T F
13. Government should censor or restrict films and publications that undermine the nation's moral fiber. T F
14. The First Amendment should protect pornography from government censorship. Adults must be free to think and speak as they wish. T F
15. Most Third World unrest can be traced to Communist attempts to inspire anti-Western revolutions in these areas. T F
16. Most Third World unrest is caused by weak governments and economics, poverty, famine and internal conflict—legacy of Western political and economic imperialism. T F

Note: This survey is designed to measure students' value orientations on key ideological issues. It does not scientifically determine ideology. The answers are below: L is for liberal and C for conservative.

- | | | | |
|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1. T-C F-L | 5. T-L F-C | 9. T-C F-L | 13. T-C F-L |
| 2. T-C F-L | 6. T-C F-L | 10. T-L F-C | 14. T-L F-C |
| 3. T-C F-L | 7. T-L F-C | 11. T-C F-L | 15. T-C F-L |
| 4. T-L F-C | 8. T-L F-C | 12. T-C F-L | 16. T-L F-C |

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STOP THAT TEENAGER BEFORE HE VOTES

By ELLIOT ROSENBERG

Each fall I commit an act of willful sabotage. It is premeditated, unabashed and performed in an American classroom beneath the Stars and Stripes. And when the deed is done, I harbor no feelings of guilt. For in weakening, ever so slightly, one pillar of democratic mythology, I have helped preserve the Republic.

New York City's Board of Education would disagree. My high school's administration would, too. Also, my union, the United Federation of Teachers, and every Republican and Democrat who has ever run for public office, anywhere. And, most vehemently of all, the League of Women Voters.

What is this act of possible sedition? Through tactically indirect means, I discourage some teenagers from voting, checkmating the vigorous campaigns to register them and get them into those curtained booths. I do it for a good reason: Many teenagers do not deserve to vote. Their teacher should know. Let me explain: Each campaign season my immediate superior, the Social Studies Department chairman, asks whether any of my classes hold sizable numbers of 18-year-olds. Instead of taking the cowardly way out and simply saying "No," I welcome two genteel, well-dressed women from the League of Women Voters into my classroom. As the well-meaning pair talk about citizen responsibility, the duty of all eligible teenagers to make their collective voice heard across the land, their opportunity to make democracy truly work, they never take note of the fidgeting body-language signs before them. Nor the subtle eye-to-eye contact by which students query me: "When they gonna finish?"

When the lecture ends, the women distribute several pamphlets and a manila voter-registration form to all the

18-year-olds. Self-addressed by the Board of Elections, it spares teenagers any inconvenience on the road to becoming good citizens. And it's marked, "No Postage Necessary If Mailed In The United States," fulfilling one's civic duty also becomes financially painless. And if a journey to the nearest mail box might prove arduous, arrangements are in place for a table-top "drop" site in the school lobby.

Then the women make their first major mistake. Instead of leading their quarry line by line through the rows of questions on the registration form, they depart.

"Hey, what's the color of my eyes for item 7?"

"Can I get in trouble if I sign the aff-i-dav-it?"

"What do I write in the box marked 'For Official Use Only'?"

Possibly the league representatives figure any 18-year-old can fill out a simple form. That seems a logical conclusion by any group also capable of presuming all 18-year-olds belong in a voting booth. Or perhaps they assume I'll enthusiastically pick up where they enthusiastically leave off.

Another grievous mistake.

I'll go this far: "Your eyes are hazel... you won't get in trouble if your answers are honest... don't write anything in the box marked 'Official Use'." But not a step further.

"Mr. Rosenberg, I don't want to register and I don't care about voting. Do I have to?"

"Say, If I fill this thing out, will you give me extra credit?"

Effective sabotage need not be violent. It can be as subtle as an ambiguous shrug or its verbal equivalent.

"I'm not telling you to vote; I'm not telling you not to vote. That's your decision to make."

Then I add the fatal caveat: "If you decide to vote, take the trouble to be

informed, *learn* the candidates' backgrounds, *learn* the issues, *learn* where the candidates stand on those issues."

That strikes some in the room as too much spinach, not enough candy. So the number of uncompleted manila registration forms I find in the waste basket at the end of the school day never alarms me.

If we hesitate to let teenagers drink until they're 21, why entrust them with shaping the fate of the Republic at 18? Since the 26th Amendment's ratification in 1971, about 400 youngsters have passed through my economics and history classes each school year. Many I'd happily escort, umbrella in hand, to the polls on a stormy day. But many others constitute a sleeping giant best left unawakened.

After marking a few tests, a teacher is a better judge of a youngster's readiness to share in his country's governance than any voter-action group, however well-intentioned. In social studies class, a platter is placed before the student containing the roots and structure of American government, the essence of our Constitution, its evolution, its enduring issues. And if he leaves his plate untouched, the nation will be better served if he also leaves no fingerprints on a voting booth lever.

Consider an essay on government that informs the reader that the president "passes" laws but Congress can veto them and the Supreme Court can make the law work anyway by overriding Congress's veto. Or a history essay that affirms Franklin Roosevelt was to blame for the Depression that took place in the 1950s, but he made up for it by winning World War II after the Chinese bombed Pearl Harbor.

"Getting Out the Vote" is an important endeavor. To my mind, "Keeping 'Em Away" is often just as necessary.

Mr. Rosenberg is a high-school teacher in New York.

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