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- Lesson 8: How America Elects a President:  
Political Parties - Beyond Red and Blue

**EACH LESSON CONTAINS:**

- Basic assignment which can be completed in approximately 15-20 minutes
- Teacher sheet
- Objectives
- Student sheet
- Detailed procedure
- Enrichment activities to supplement the basic lesson
- Assessment criteria
- Hard copies of all materials necessary to complete the basic assignment
- Links to web resources for enrichment activities
- Clearly identified links to Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks

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**Elections 2008**

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9. We are always eager for feedback from teachers. Please tell us what worked best in these lessons. How might you improve them?
10. What kinds of lessons would you like us to create in the future?
11. Would you be interested in being one of our Pilot Teachers for our next Curriculum unit?

# WHAT IS THE PRESIDENT'S job?



**LOCATION** US

**TIME PERIOD** 1789-Present

**GRADES** 2-5

## **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

What is the job of the President of the US as part of the federal government?

## **OBJECTIVES**

Students will identify the three branches of the federal government.

Students will learn the concept of checks and balances in the federal government.

Students will learn the specific responsibilities of the President of the United States.

## **★ CURRICULUM STANDARDS**

Grade 2: US History and Geography

American citizenship, political principles and system of government

Grade 5: US History, Geography, Economics and Government

Development of democratic institutions and ideas

Responsibilities and powers associated with federal officials

The system of the federal government established in the Constitution has weathered many difficult times but the basic frame holds. The three branches of government have done as the framers intended, kept each other in check and balanced the respective power of each.

### Procedure

1. Discuss with students what the job of government is. To prompt discussion, you might ask them what would happen if there were no rules. While they might enjoy a lot of freedom, it would be hard to get anything done. At the same time, one person in charge all the time wouldn't be fair either.
2. In light of the upcoming election, ask if they know what the job of the President of the United States is. Write their answers on the board.
3. Introduce the Constitution of the United States. Simply say it is the rule book for the country.
4. Provide students with the Job of the President Sheet. Depending on the age of your students, either read them the sheet or have them read it independently or in small groups.
5. Have them complete Part I of the Student Sheet and discuss their responses.
6. Discuss that the president is only one part of the government. What else does the country need to make sure things run smoothly? Ask the students if they know who else helps to run the country. Write any responses on the board.
7. Provide the students with the Three Branches of Government Sheet and Checks and Balances Diagram A. Depending on the age of your students, either read the sheets to them or have them read the students read independently or in small groups.
8. Have them complete Part II of the Student Sheet and discuss their responses.

### Time Allocation

Student Sheet Part I: 20 minutes  
Student Sheet Part II: 20 minutes

### Materials Needed

*Three Branches of Government* sheet  
*The Job of the President* sheet  
[Checks and Balances Diagram A](#)

### Assessment Criteria

Did the students identify the criteria for becoming president?  
Did the students identify the primary responsibilities of the president?  
Did the students identify the three branches of government?  
Did the students articulate the concept of checks and balances?

### Enrichment Activities

1. You are hiring a president. What would you put in the ad for this job?
2. The opening lines of the U.S. Constitution are:

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defence, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Ask the students if they think the writers accomplished their goals with the three branches of government that they created?

**Part I**

Being President of the United States is a big job. Listen to your teacher as he or she reads *The Job of the President* sheet and then answer the following questions:

1. What must someone do before he or she can become president?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What are the president's responsibilities?

**Part II**

Listen to your teacher as he or she reads *The Three Branches of Government* sheet. Look at the *Checks and Balances Diagram A*. See how many of the following terms you can define using this information.

**KEY TERMS**

Ratify	Executive Branch	Congress	Checks and Balances
Justice	Legislative Branch	House of Representatives	Veto
Liberty	Judicial Branch	Senate	

How does each branch keep the other from getting too strong?

Do you think one branch of government could get stronger than the other two? How might this happen? Would it be good or bad for the country if it did?

## THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT SHEET

The basic rule book for our country is the United States Constitution. The Constitution was written in 1787 and ratified (or approved) by the States. The writers or framers of the Constitution had to make sure that this Constitution did many things, such as

1. Protect our freedoms
2. Make us safe
3. Collect money so that the government could do its job
4. Make sure the country would be fair to everyone

To accomplish these goals, the Constitution divides the government into three parts.

### The Legislative Branch

This section of the government makes the laws. The legislative branch is called the Congress. It has two parts. One part is the Senate. Every state sends two people to the Senate. The other part of Congress is the House of Representatives. Each state sends people to the House of Representatives. The number of people a state gets to send depends on how many people live there. A state with a lot of people, like California, gets to send 53 people to the House of Representatives. A state with a small population, like Alaska, only sends one person to the House of Representatives.

### The Executive Branch

An executive is someone who is in charge. The President is the head of the Executive Branch. The President can decide if the laws that Congress passes are OK. He is the Commander in Chief of the Army. He gets to pick judges. We elect a president every four years. So far we have had 43 presidents.

### The Judicial Branch

This part of the government is made up of the judges, people who decide if things are fair. They get to decide if the President and the Congress are being fair to everyone. They get to decide if the laws that Congress passes are OK.

### Checks and Balances

When they wrote the Constitution, America had just won its independence, or freedom, from England. England had a king and we did not want that kind of ruler in our new country. At the same time, we needed to make sure things were fair and orderly. To do that, the Constitution made sure that each of the three branches of government would be able to check up on the other two branches. The idea was to keep the three parts of our government balanced, no one part stronger than the other two.

## JOB OF THE PRESIDENT SHEET

The job of the President is clearly written in the US Constitution.

**In Article II, Section 1**, it says that:

The President shall serve for four years.

He must be a natural born citizen of the United States.

He must be 35 years old.

He must have lived in the United States for 14 years.

He will get paid for doing this job but may not take money from anyone else during his term.

When he becomes President, he must recite the following:

*I do solemnly swear that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States*

**In Article II, Section 2**, it says that:

The President is the Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States.

He can get people out of trouble even if they have broken the law.

With the help of the Senate, and approval of 2/3 of the Senators, he can make treaties (written agreements) with other countries.

He can pick Ambassadors or representatives to other countries.

He can pick judges for the courts.

**In Article II, Section 3**, it says that:

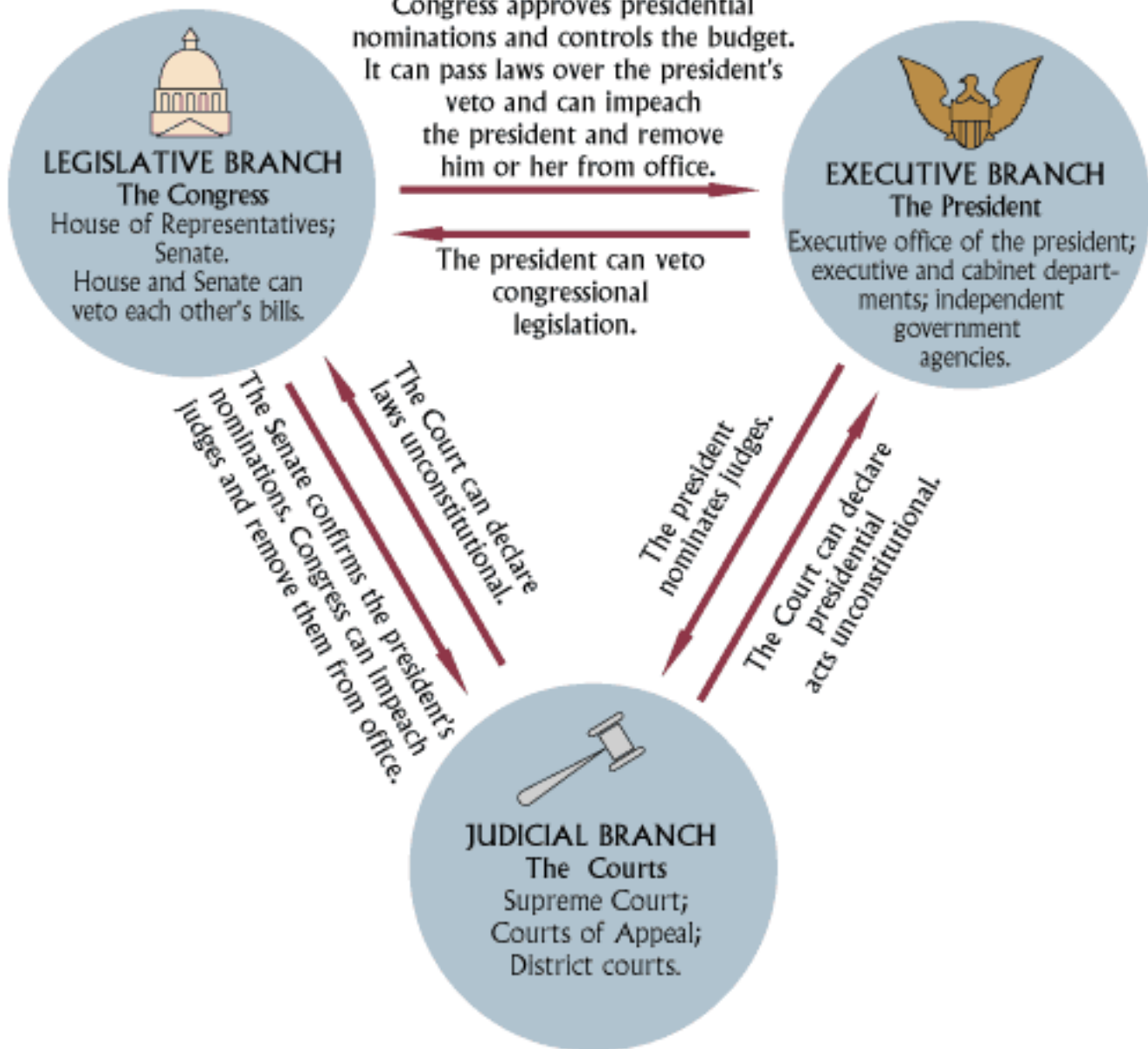
The President must report to the Congress how the country is doing in a State of the Union message.

**In Article II, Section 4**, it says that:

The President can be removed from office if he is found guilty of treason, bribery or other crimes. There will be a trial to see if he has broken the laws of the country.



## Checks and Balances Diagram A



# Who

## GETS TO VOTE?



**LOCATION** US

**TIME PERIOD** 1789-Present

**GRADES** 2-5

### **ESSENTIAL QUESTION**

How has the right to vote evolved over the course of the nation's history?

### **OBJECTIVES**

Students will learn when different groups in America got the vote.

Students will construct a timeline to identify when each group got the vote.

Students will understand property qualifications as a criterion for voting.

### **★ CURRICULUM STANDARDS**

Grade 2: US History and Government

American citizenship

Political principles

Explain information in historical timelines

Read maps and follow narrative accounts using them

Grade 5: US History, Geography, Economics and Government

Democratic institutions and ideas

Responsibilities and powers associated with federal officials

Voting is both a right and a privilege in the United States. Who gets to vote has been one of the most important parts of our nation's story. Originally, only white men who owned property were allowed to vote. The struggle to include everyone else has reflected the best and worst of our history.

### Procedure

1. Ask students what it means to vote. Prompt responses that include making choices, expressing an opinion. Extend the discussion to voting for a president and encourage them to see how voting is a way to influence their society.
2. Write the words RIGHT and RESPONSIBILITY on the board. Ask the students to define each word. Try to prompt responses that include "I have the right to say what I want as long as it doesn't hurt someone else" or "I have a responsibility to help others". A RIGHT is something you want the freedom to do. A RESPONSIBILITY is something you must do. Help them to see that being a good member of a society means having certain rights and responsibilities.
3. Tell class that even though Americans have been voting since 1789, not every one got to vote. Ask them what might have prevented some people from voting.
4. Give class Student Sheet and have them complete Part I independently or in small groups. Discuss their results.
5. Explain what property is. When the Constitution was first written, only people with property were allowed to vote. Ask the students why that might have been the case. Look for answers that focus on being able to trust who was voting, being afraid of how some people might vote. Show the students the following 3 maps:  
Property Qualifications for Suffrage, 1775  
Property Qualifications for Suffrage, 1800  
Property Qualifications for Suffrage, 1830  
Explain that Suffrage means voting. Have them complete Part II of the Student Sheet independently or in small groups. Discuss their results.

**Time Allocation:** 20 minutes

### Materials Needed

[Property Qualifications for Suffrage Map, 1775](#)

[Property Qualifications for Suffrage Map, 1800](#)

[Property Qualifications for Suffrage Map, 1830](#)

### Assessment Criteria

Did the students learn when different groups in America got the vote?

Did the students construct a timeline to identify when each group got the vote?

Did the students understand property qualifications as a criterion for voting?

### Enrichment Activities

1. States determine voter eligibility. Have the students see what the requirements are in their state to vote. Voter eligibility is usually under the state Secretary of State. This information is on the state's website.

2. Have students read the actual text of the 15<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> Amendments. What is actually guaranteed? What opportunities still existed to deny people the vote?
3. The 24<sup>th</sup> Amendment was ratified (passed) in 1964. Have students read the Amendment and brainstorm about why it was necessary to make this the law of the land.

**Amendment 24:**

1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax.
2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Voting is about making choices. Americans have been voting in Presidential elections since 1789. But everyone has not always been allowed to vote. The rules for voting are listed in the United States Constitution.

### **Part I**

1789: The Constitution becomes the rule book for America.

1870: The States add the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution. It says that you can't stop someone from voting because of their race.

1920: The States add the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution. It says that you can't stop someone from voting because of their gender.

1971: The States add the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution. It says that you can't stop someone over 18 from voting.

1. Construct a timeline of voting based on this information.
  
2. The language in all three Amendments says that you can't stop (prevent) someone from voting because of their race, gender or age. Might there be some other way to stop someone from voting even with these new rules in place?

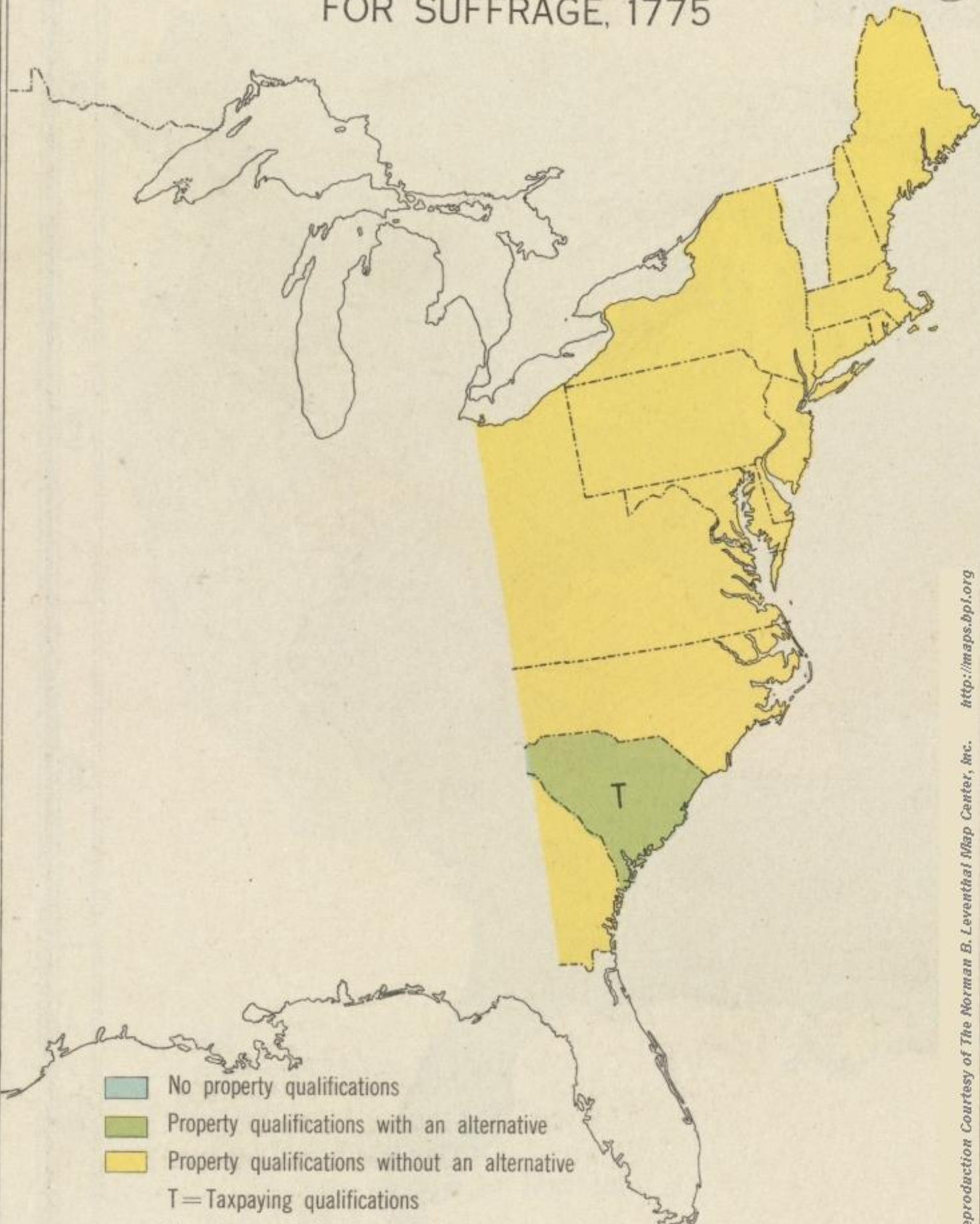
### **Part II**




Look at the three Property Qualification maps that your teacher gives you and answer the following questions:

1. What do the yellow states represent? The blue states? The green states?
  
2. A 'T' on a state means that even if you do not own property, you can still vote if you pay money called a POLL TAX. Do you think that let more people vote? Did it let all people vote? Who still was not allowed to vote in those states?
  
3. Do the voting rules seem fair to you? Why or why not?

# PROPERTY QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUFFRAGE, 1775

(B)



-  No property qualifications
-  Property qualifications with an alternative
-  Property qualifications without an alternative

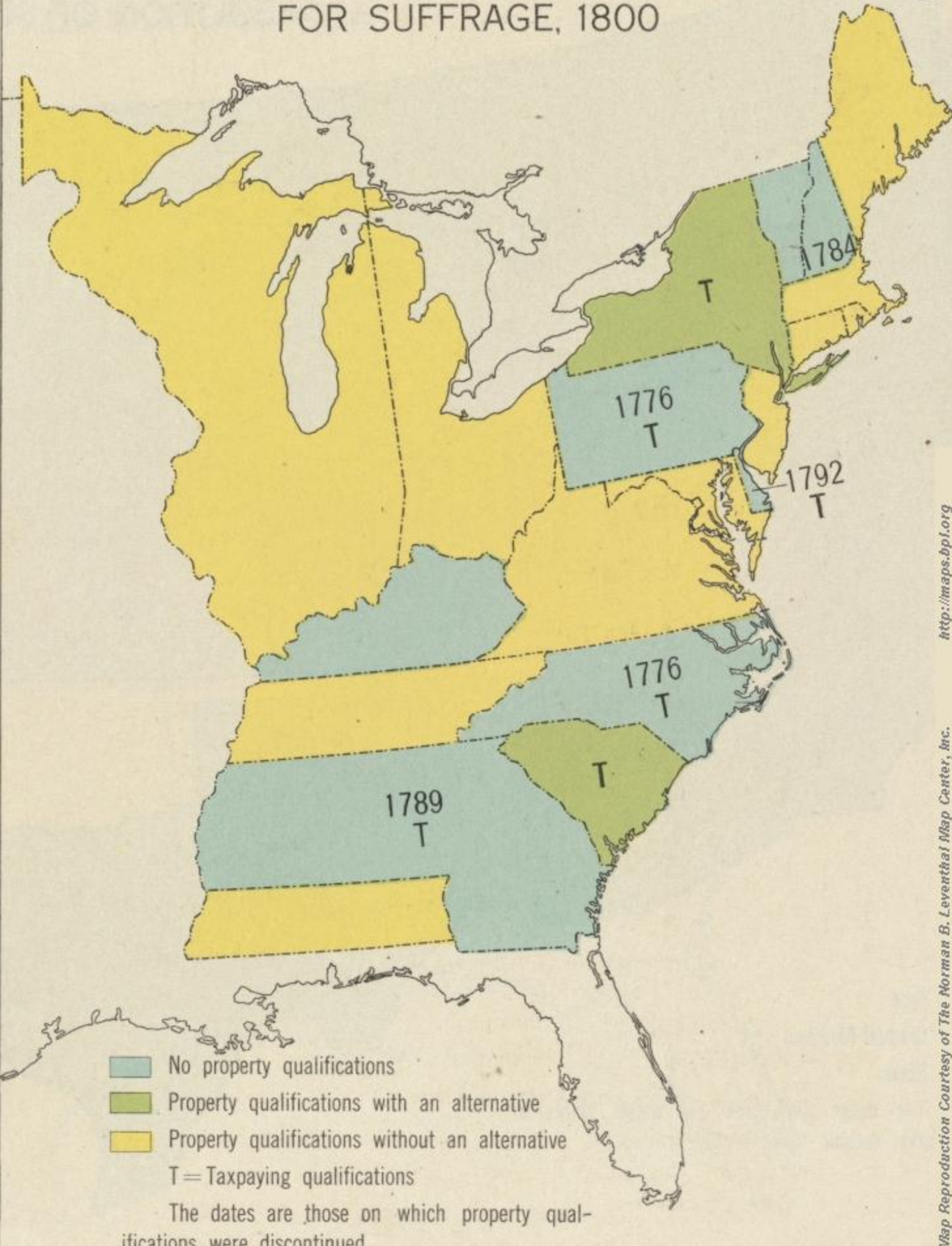
T = Taxpaying qualifications

The dates are those on which property qualifications were discontinued



# PROPERTY QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUFFRAGE, 1800

(C)

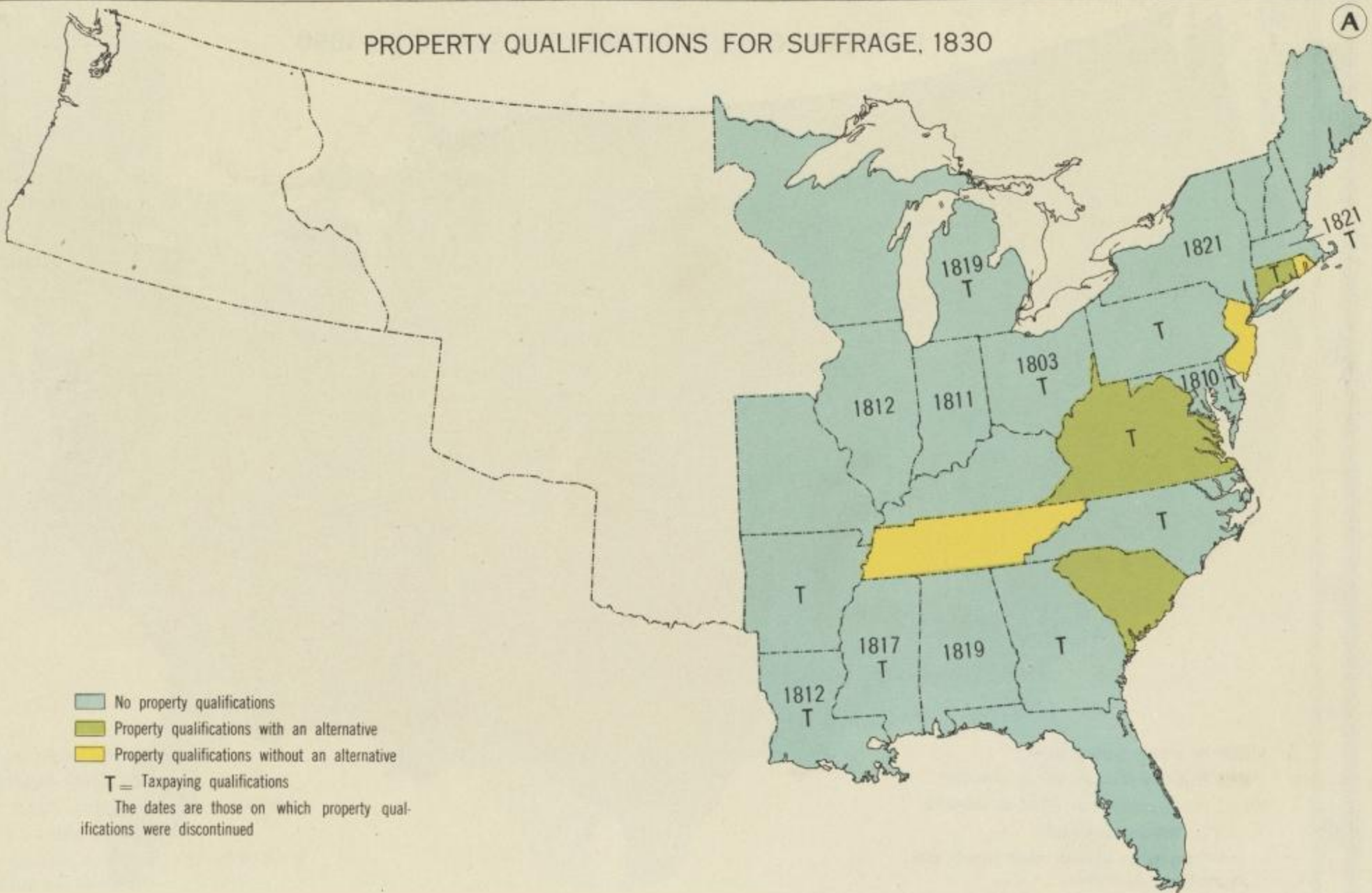


<http://maps.bpl.org>

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# PROPERTY QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUFFRAGE, 1830

A



- No property qualifications
  - Property qualifications with an alternative
  - Property qualifications without an alternative
  - T = Taxpaying qualifications
- The dates are those on which property qualifications were discontinued



# Timetable

## FOR THE ELECTION



**LOCATION** US

**TIME PERIOD** Current Events

**GRADES** 2-5

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the steps towards electing a president?

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will identify the major steps towards electing a president.
- Students will construct a timeline of the major steps of this year's presidential election.

### ★ CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Grade 2: US History and Government

- American citizenship
- Political principles
- Explain information in historical timelines

Grade 5: US History, Geography, Economics and Government

- Democratic institutions and ideas
- Interpret timelines

America elects its president in a complicated way. Some parts make sense while others are quite confusing. But there is a strict set of rules to follow. One can question the wisdom of this 18<sup>th</sup> century system that dictates to voters in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The framers considered voting a privilege and an obligation and ensured that the people would have to work hard for this opportunity to participate in a republican form of government.

### Procedure

1. Discuss with students what it means to vote for something or someone. Remind them that they are making a choice.
2. Introduce/Review that this country will be voting for a president in November. Ask them how many steps they think it will take to choose the president. Here prompt to see if they think it is just something that happens in one day. You want them to see that it takes almost two years from start to finish to elect a president.
3. Give Students Election Time Line Sheet. Read it with them and fill in the dates for Numbers 1-5 together. For these dates, go to <http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/> or <http://elections.nytimes.com/2008/index.html>
4. Have them complete the Student Sheet and discuss their results.

### Time Allocation:

20 minutes

### Materials Needed

Election Timeline Sheet  
Paper and Markers for Timeline

### Assessment Criteria

Did the students identify the major steps towards electing a president?  
Did the students construct a timeline of the major steps of this year's presidential election?

### Enrichment Activities

1. Neither Primaries nor Party conventions existed when the country was founded. Have students research their origins and development over time.
2. 2008 had a lively primary season. Have students explore the events that resulted in Obama and McCain getting their parties' nomination. A good place to start: <http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/primaries/>



**ELECTION TIMELINE**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Individuals announce that they are going to run for president. They become candidates.  | 18-24 months before the general election |
| 2. Party Primaries by state.   | January-June of the election year        |
| 3. Party Conventions.  | August/September of the election year    |
| 4. Presidential and Vice-Presidential Debates. There is no requirement to debate.  | Number and dates to be determined        |
| 5. General Election.   | First Tuesday in November                |
| 6. States determine official results.  | By December 15 of election year          |
| 7. Electors meet to select winner from their state. Note that there is no rule in the U.S. Constitution or Federal Requirement that forces the electors to agree with the popular vote in their state. | December 15 of election year             |
| 8. State "signs, seals, and delivers" Certificates of Vote to the President of U.S. Senate and the National Archivist.   | By December 24 of election year          |
| 9. The new Congress meets and the National Archivist gives the Certificates of Vote to the Congress.   | On or before January 3 after election    |
| 10. Both houses of Congress (the Senate and the House of Representatives) meet and count the vote.   | January 6 after the election.            |
| 11. The President is inaugurated.  | January 20 after the election            |

## THE electoral COLLEGE



**LOCATION** US

**TIME PERIOD** 1789-Present

**GRADES** 2-5

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What is the Electoral College and how does it help the United States elect its president?

### OBJECTIVES

Students will identify the components of the Electoral College.

Students will distinguish between the popular vote and the electoral vote.

Students will label a map of the 50 United States with the correct number of electoral votes for each state.

### ★ CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Grade 2: US History and Geography

American citizenship, political principles and system of government

Grade 4: North American Geography

US political geography

Grade 5: US History, Geography, Economics and Government

Development of democratic institutions and ideas

Responsibilities and powers associated with federal officials

America elects its president in a complicated way. Some parts make sense while others are quite confusing. But there is a strict set of rules to follow. One can question the wisdom of this 18<sup>th</sup> century system that dictates to voters in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The framers considered voting a privilege and an obligation and ensured that the people would have to work hard for this opportunity to participate in a republican form of government.

### Procedure

1. Discuss with students what it means to vote. Ask them how a group makes a choice. Prompt them to understand the concept of simple democracy, where the majority rules.
2. Now ask them to consider what might happen if several groups have to make a decision together. Think about an election in their school. What are possible ways that it might work? Prompt replies that recognize the following options:
  - A. School wide majority
  - B. Each grade votes and gets to cast a single vote as a grade
  - C. Each grade votes and the number of votes it gets to cast is based on how many students are in the grade
3. Have students consider the benefits of each of these choices. What is good about each one? What is bad about each one?
4. Introduce/Review that America has a big choice to make in November when it elects a new president. And America uses Option C. To explain this, read the Electoral College Overview with the class.
5. Have them work individually or in small groups and complete Part I of the Student Sheet. Discuss their results.
6. Give students the following and have them complete Part II of the Student Sheet.  
State Population and Electoral Votes Chart  
[Map of the 50 States](#)

### Time Allocation

Part I: 15-20 minutes  
Part II: 15-20 minutes

### Materials Needed

[Map of the 50 States](#) [click on States and Capitals]  
State Population and Electoral Votes Chart  
Electoral College Overview Sheet

### Assessment Criteria

Did the students identify the components of the Electoral College?  
Did the students distinguish between the popular vote and the electoral vote?  
Did the students label a map of the 50 United States with the correct number of electoral votes for each state?

### Enrichment Activities

1. The number of electoral votes a state has changes over historic time. Go to <http://www.270towin.com/states/>  
Have each student select a state and chart its influence over time. Has it increased or decreased its percentage? What are some reasons for this change?
2. States change their political views. Select a state and track how it has voted over historic time. <http://www.270towin.com/states/>
3. The electoral map of the United States has grown and changed along with the country. Select any two election maps from the Map Center website:  
[http://maps.bpl.org/search\\_advanced/?mtid=1165](http://maps.bpl.org/search_advanced/?mtid=1165)  
Compare and explain the change over time between the dates of the two maps.

There are different ways for a group of people to make their choice about something. The United States has a very complicated way of choosing its president. Rather than just counting all of the votes and seeing who gets the most, we use something called the Electoral College.

### **Part I**

Your teacher will read to you about the Electoral College. Follow along as she or he reads and then answer the following questions:

1. Is the Electoral College a place? What do we use it for?
2. What is the popular vote?
3. What is the connection between the popular vote in a state and that state's electoral vote?
4. How many electoral votes does it take to become president?

### **Part II**

Look at the State Population and Electoral Vote Chart. Fill in the number of electoral votes each state gets on the blank map of the 50 United States.





**State Population and Electoral Votes Chart**

Rank	State or District	Population based on 2000 census	Share of US Population	Number of electoral votes	Rank	State or District	Population based on 2000 census	Share of US Population	Number of electoral votes
1	California	33,871,648	12.04%	55	27	Oklahoma	3,450,654	1.23%	7
2	Texas	20,851,820	7.41%	34	28	Oregon	3,421,399	1.22%	7
3	New York	18,976,457	6.74%	31	29	Connecticut	3,405,565	1.21%	7
4	Florida	15,982,378	5.68%	27	30	Iowa	2,926,324	1.04%	7
5	Illinois	12,419,293	4.41%	21	31	Mississippi	2,844,658	1.01%	6
6	Pennsylvania	12,281,054	4.36%	21	32	Kansas	2,688,418	0.96%	6
7	Ohio	11,353,140	4.03%	20	33	Arkansas	2,673,400	0.95%	6
8	Michigan	9,938,444	3.53%	17	34	Utah	2,233,169	0.79%	5
9	New Jersey	8,414,350	2.99%	15	35	Nevada	1,998,257	0.71%	5
10	Georgia	8,186,453	2.91%	15	36	New Mexico	1,819,046	0.65%	5
11	North Carolina	8,049,313	2.86%	15	37	West Virginia	1,808,344	0.64%	5
12	Virginia	7,078,515	2.52%	13	38	Nebraska	1,711,263	0.61%	5
13	Massachusetts	6,349,097	2.26%	12	39	Idaho	1,293,953	0.46%	4
14	Indiana	6,080,485	2.16%	11	40	Maine	1,274,923	0.45%	4
15	Washington	5,894,121	2.09%	11	41	New Hampshire	1,235,786	0.44%	4
16	Tennessee	5,689,283	2.02%	11	42	Hawaii	1,211,537	0.43%	4
17	Missouri	5,595,211	1.99%	11	43	Rhode Island	1,048,319	0.37%	4
18	Wisconsin	5,363,675	1.91%	10	44	Montana	902,195	0.32%	3
19	Maryland	5,296,486	1.88%	10	45	Delaware	783,600	0.28%	3
20	Arizona	5,130,632	1.82%	10	46	South Dakota	754,844	0.27%	3
21	Minnesota	4,919,479	1.75%	10	47	North Dakota	642,200	0.23%	3
22	Louisiana	4,468,976	1.59%	9	48	Alaska	626,932	0.22%	3
23	Alabama	4,447,100	1.58%	9	49	Vermont	608,827	0.22%	3
24	Colorado	4,301,261	1.53%	9	50	District of Columbia	572,059	0.20%	3
25	Kentucky	4,041,769	1.44%	8	51	Wyoming	493,782	0.18%	3
26	South Carolina	4,012,012	1.43%	8					

## **ELECTORAL COLLEGE OVERVIEW**

[Overview compiled from information at the [National Archives website](#)]

### **What is the Electoral College?**

The Electoral College is not a place. It is a process, or way of doing something. In this case, it is the way the United States elects its president. When the country was founded, there was a disagreement about the way to choose the president. Some people want to just let everyone vote and let the person with the most votes become president. Other people wanted only the people already in the government to choose the president.

The Electoral College was a compromise between those two choices. In each state, adults are allowed to vote for one of the candidates for president. Who ever gets the most votes in that state, wins all of that state's electoral votes.

### **What is the Popular Vote?**

The popular vote is the actual number of votes each candidate gets.

### **What is the Electoral Vote?**

Each state gets a certain number of electoral votes. Whoever wins the popular vote in a state, gets all of that state's electoral votes.

### **What is an Elector?**

Each state has electors. They are the people that actually elect the president. Sometime between the general election in November and the middle of December, the electors meet in the state capital and choose who will get the state's votes for president. The voters in each state choose the electors. Usually whoever gets the most votes in the state, gets all of the electors.

### **How many electors does each state get?**

The number of electors a state gets is connected to its population, or the number of people that live in the state. States with big populations get lots of electoral votes. States with small populations get very few electoral votes. California has the most people and it gets 55 electoral votes. Alaska has very few people and it only gets 3 electoral votes.

### **How many electors does someone need to win the vote?**

There are a total of 538 electoral votes among the 50 states and the District of Columbia. A person must get more than half, 270, to win the presidential election.

### **Is it possible that someone might not get enough votes to win?**

Yes. At some points in American history, no one got more than half of the electoral vote. This happened when more than two people ran for president. There have also been times when the states could not decide who won and were unable to turn in their votes on time.

## POLITICAL PARTIES beyond RED AND BLUE



**LOCATION** US

**TIME PERIOD** 1789-Present

**GRADES** 2-5

### ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What roles do political parties play in the election of a president?

### OBJECTIVES

Students will learn to identify the major political parties.

Students will read election maps that identify election result by party using colors.

Students will note party variation within state results.

### ★ CURRICULUM STANDARDS

Grade 2: US History and Geography

American citizenship, political principles and system of government

Different ways that maps convey information, generate narrative accounts  
from maps

Grade 4: North American Geography

US political geography

Grade 5: US History, Geography, Economics and Government

Development of democratic institutions and ideas

Identify specialized maps

Powers and responsibilities of government officials



When the Constitution was adopted in 1789, there were no political parties. The framers were wary of political parties but somehow they have become one of the permanent fixtures of the political landscape. For a while, politics has been simplified into voter results as shown on maps, i.e. Red States and Blue States. The reality of both election results and party adherence is much more complicated.

### Procedure

1. Introduce/remind students that our country will be electing a new president in November. Ask what they know about the candidates. Write their responses on the board. Prompt for party affiliation, identification. Ask if they know which party each candidate represents.
2. Write Democrat and Republican on the board. Ask what they know about either party. There are no correct answers here. What you are looking for are impressions and the simple reality that there are two parties and each one runs a candidate for president.
3. Look at the 2004 Election Map, State results only. Have them complete Part I of the Student Sheet. Discuss their results.
4. Explain to the students there were parties before the Democrats and the Republicans, such as the Whigs, the Federalists, even the Know-Nothings!! Look at the map of the 1792 Presidential Election. Ask them why it is all one color. You want to prompt them to understand that when our country began there were no political parties and everyone voted for George Washington.
5. Look at the Presidential Election Map from 1836. Have them complete Part II of the Student Sheet and discuss their results.

### Time Allocation:

Part I: 15 minutes  
Part II: 10 minutes

### Materials Needed:

[Presidential Election Map, 1792](#)  
[Presidential Election Map, 1836](#)  
[2004 Election Map, State results only](#)  
[2004 Election Map, State and County results](#)

### Assessment Criteria:

Did the students learn to identify the major political parties on election maps?  
Did the students read election results by party using colors on maps?  
Did the students note party variation within states in election results?

### Enrichment:

1. What happens when three parties run candidates? Look at election results from 1912, 1968 and 1992. <http://www.nationalatlas.gov/printable.html#elections>

2. Party influence has changed over historic time. Look at the election results from 1960 and 2000. Which states did the Democrats win in 1960? In 2000? What might explain this change?
3. What is each Party's position in 2008? Have students check their websites for an overview.  
<http://www.democrats.org/>  
<http://www.rnc.org/>

The United States will elect a new president on November 4<sup>th</sup>. The two candidates represent two different groups, called political parties. The two major parties in our country are the Democrats and the Republicans.

### **Part I**

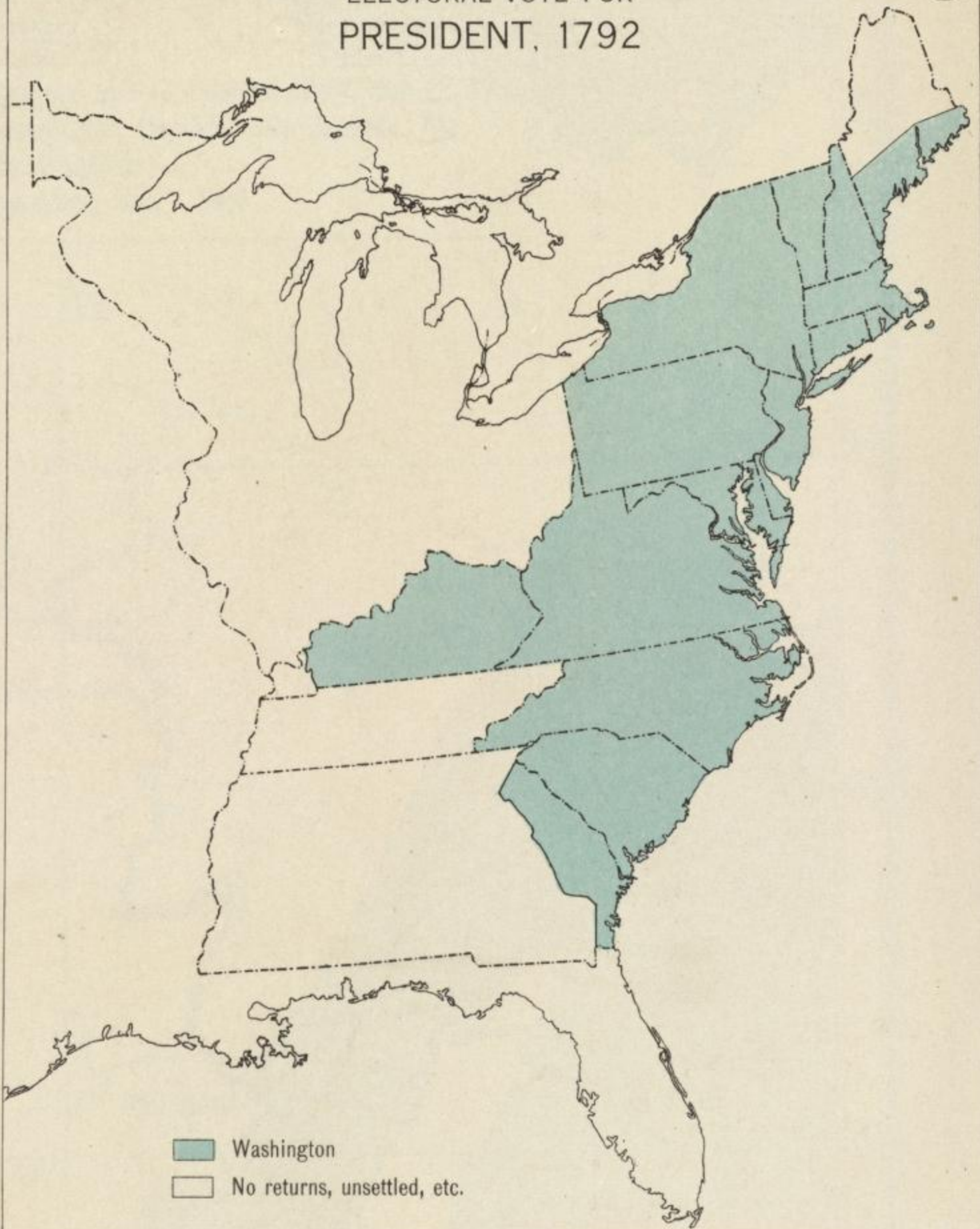
Look at the map of the last presidential election from 2004. President Bush, a Republican, ran against John Kerry, a Democrat.

1. What color are the states that President Bush won?
2. What color are the states that John Kerry won?
3. President Bush is from Texas. Did he win that state? Do you think he got every vote in Texas? John Kerry is from Massachusetts. How did he do there? Do you think he got every vote in Massachusetts?
4. When you are done with Question 3, ask your teacher for the other map of the 2004 Presidential election. Find Texas on that map. Why do you think there is both red and blue there? In Massachusetts?

### **Part II**

1. Look at the map of the 1836 presidential election. How many different candidates ran?
2. How many different parties can you see on the map? What are their names?
3. Are any of those parties still around today?
4. Why does each state have more than one color?

# ELECTORAL VOTE FOR PRESIDENT, 1792

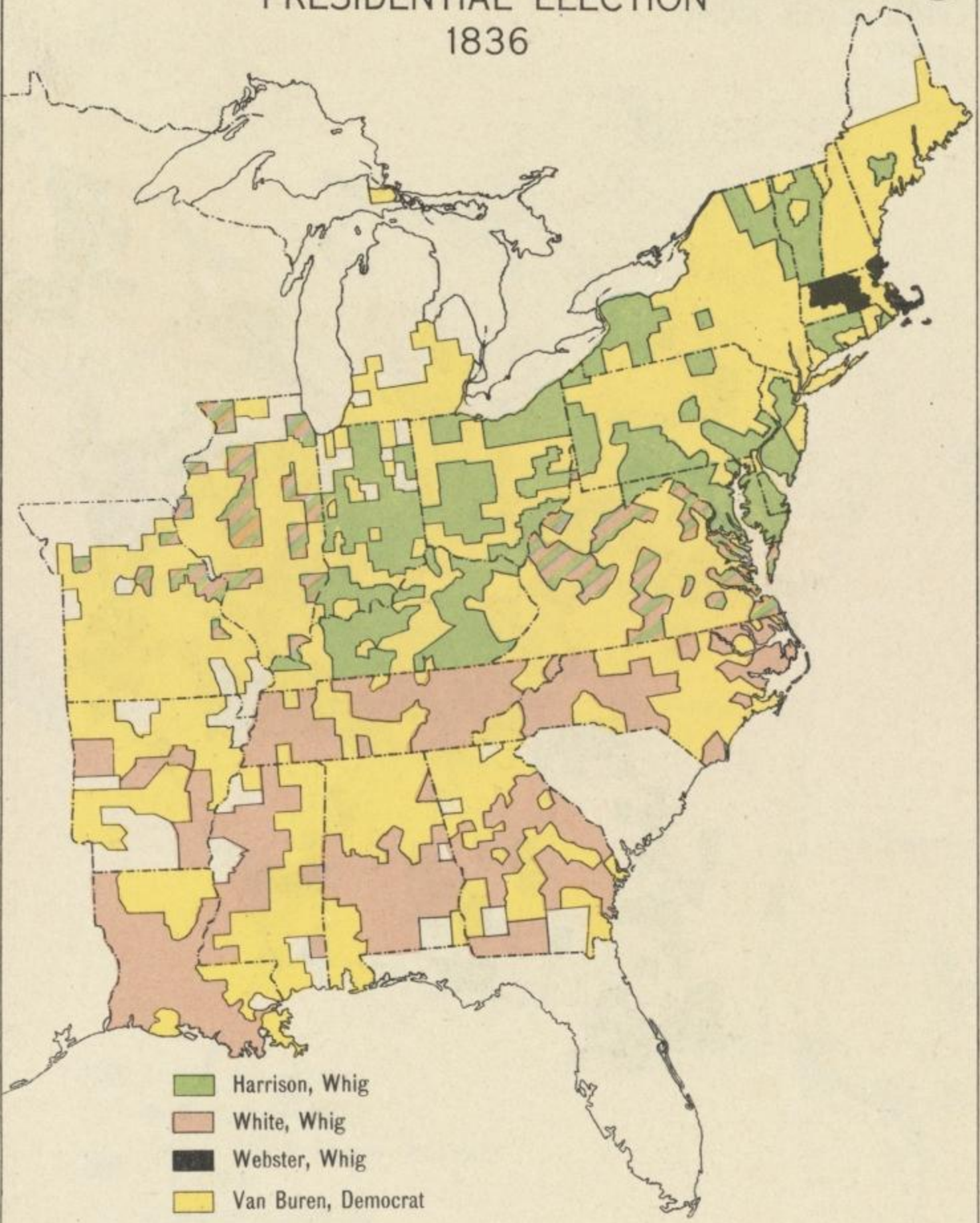


Washington  
No returns, unsettled, etc.

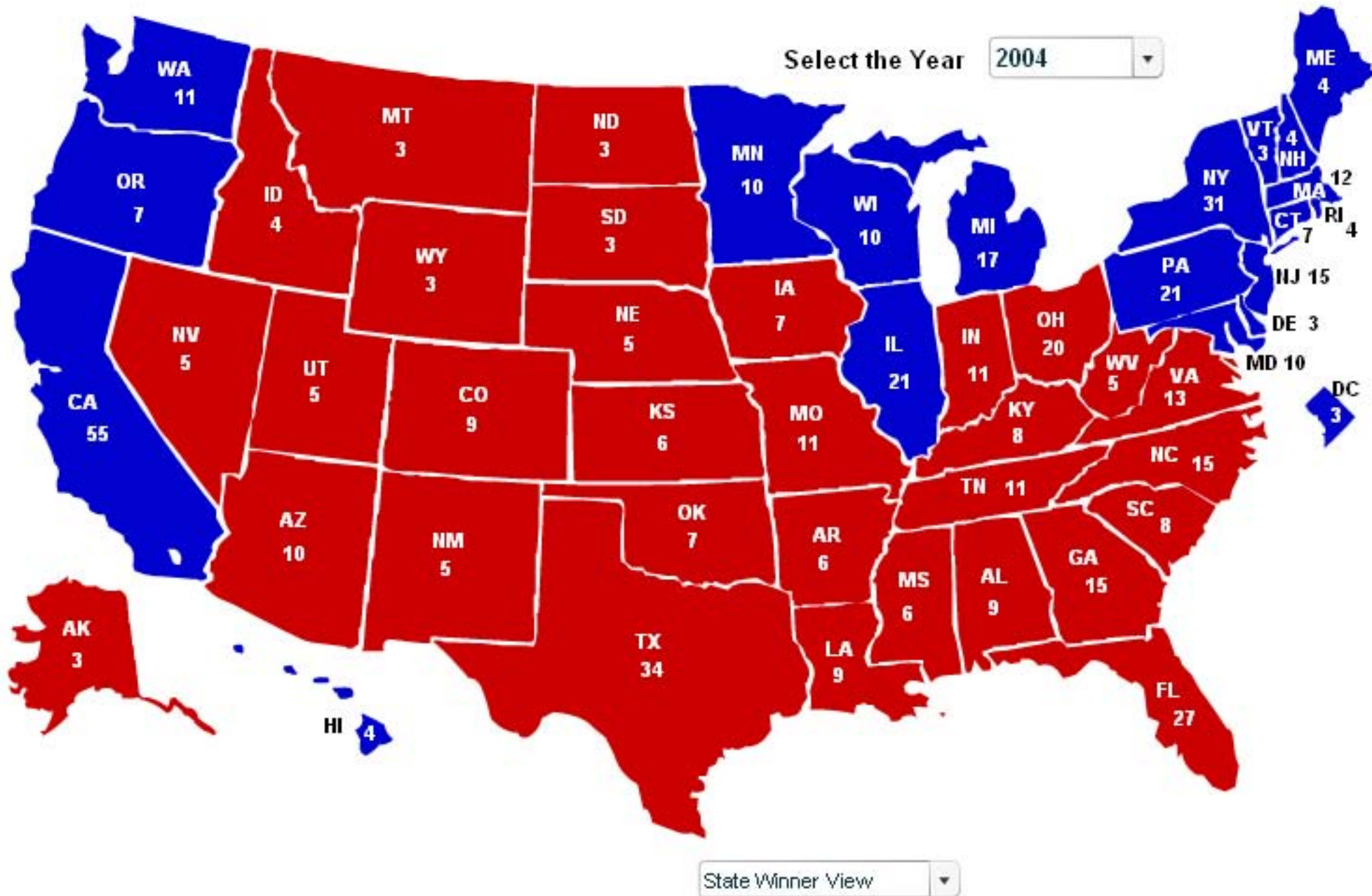


# PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 1836

A







# 2004

■ George W. Bush (R) ✓  
 Electoral 286  
 Popular 62,039,073  
■ John F. Kerry (D)  
 Electoral 251  
 Popular 59,027,478  
 (R) = Republican  
 (D) = Democratic

Maps © 2004-2008 270toWin.com

## 2004 Election Facts

- Kerry won Minnesota; however one Elector cast a vote for Dem. Vice-President candidate John Edwards. It may have been unintentional, as this ballot also voted for John Edwards as Vice-President
- Bush and Kerry each received more votes than any candidates in history. The prior record, about 54.5 million votes, was set in 1984 by Ronald Reagan
- Electoral Vote changes for 2004 based on 2000 Census: [+2: AZ, FL, GA, TX], [+1: CA, CO, NV, NC], [-1: CT, IL, IN, MI, MS, OH, OK, WI], [-2: NY, PA]
- **Issues of the Day:** Terrorism, Iraq War, Job growth



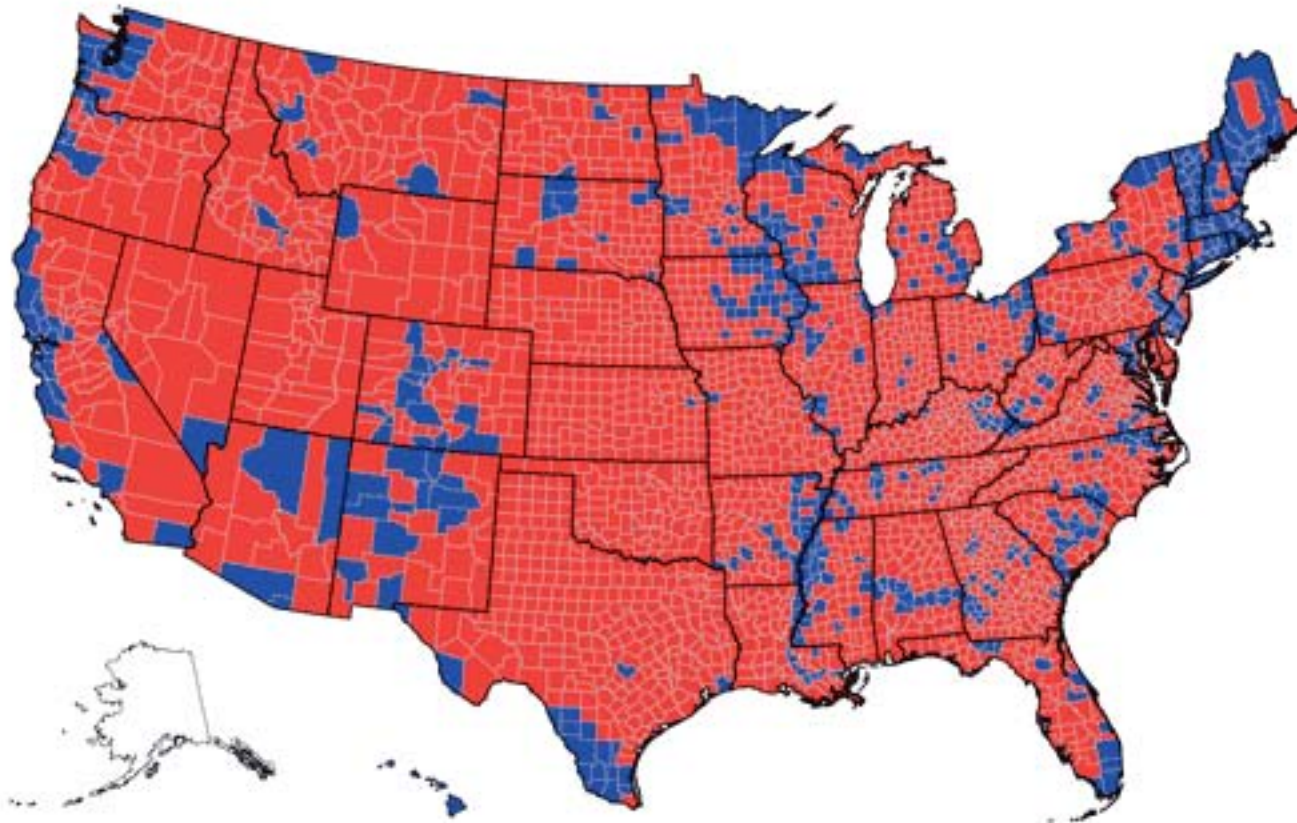
# Election 2004

## Latest vote, county by county

2004

2000

Colored counties are those where a candidate has won with 100% of precincts counted. Click the 2000 tab to compare with the last presidential election.



### Choose a race

- President by county
- U.S. Senate/House
- Statewide offices
- Ballot initiatives
- State Senate
- State House

Select a state

### ...more results

- [President by state](#)
- [Senate by state](#)
- [House overview](#)
- [All governor races](#)
- [Key ballot initiatives](#)

### [Purchase keepsake map](#)

#### Square miles of counties won

<b>Bush</b>	2.54 million
<b>Kerry</b>	592,000

#### Population (2003) of counties won

<b>Bush</b>	159.2 million
<b>Kerry</b>	130.9 million

#### Counties won by less than 5 percentage points

<b>Bush</b>	164
<b>Kerry</b>	146

Note: County election data is not reported for Alaska.

Source: the Associated Press, ESRI Inc. USATODAY analysis by Paul Overberg.