

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Lesson 4: What is the President's Job?
Lesson 5: Who Gets to Vote?
Lesson 6: How America Elects a President: Timetable for the Election
Lesson 7: How America Elects a President: The Electoral College
Lesson 8: How America Elects a President:
Political Parties - Beyond Red and Blue

EACH LESSON CONTAINS:

- Basic assignment which can be completed in approximately 20-30 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

To help us understand how these materials were helpful to you please fill out the **Evaluation Form** and return it to us at maps@bpl.org or Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library
700 Boylston Street, Room 377
Boston, MA 02116

We are available to answer questions and provide **FREE** and **ONGOING** support. Please contact Debra Block, Director of Education, Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library, dblock@bpl.org

Elections 2008

Please return this evaluation to us at maps@bpl.org or
Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library
700 Boylston Street, Room 377
Boston, MA 02116

Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback on these curriculum materials.

Please indicate how you accessed this material. On line Binder

1. Was the mode of delivery effective?
2. Which lessons did you use?
3. Did the lessons fulfill their stated objectives?
4. Did they take more or less time than was anticipated?
5. Were the enrichment activities useful?
6. Was the language level appropriate?
7. Were the online resources appropriate?
8. Did you use these lessons as a centerpiece in your curriculum or as supplementary material?
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 4-8

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 5: US History, Geography, Economics and Government

Development of democratic institutions and ideas

Responsibilities and powers associated with federal officials

US History 1: Revolution to Reconstruction

Historical and intellectual origins of the US during the Constitutional Era

Basic framework of American democracy and concepts of government

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. For younger students, explain it as the rule book for the country. The Preamble is on the Student Sheet. Read with the class and ask what it suggests about the job of the government. Help them 'unpack' the underlined terms.
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. Depending on the age of your students, either read them the sheet or have them read it independently or in small groups.
8. Have them complete Part II of the Student Sheet and discuss their responses.
9. Provide students with either Checks and Balances Diagram A or B and have them complete Part III of the Student Sheet.

Time Allocation

Student Sheet Part I: 20 minutes
 Student Sheet Part II: 20 minutes
 Student Sheet Part III: 15 minutes

Materials Needed

Three Branches of Government Sheet
 The Job of the President Sheet
 Checks and Balances Diagram A [also available at:
<http://www.reasontofreedom.com/system/files/socialstudieshelp.gif>]
 Checks and Balances Diagram B

Assessment Criteria

Did the students identify the criteria for becoming president?
 Did the students identify the primary responsibilities of the president?
 Did the students articulate the concept of checks and balances?
 Were the students able to place specific tasks under the jurisdiction of the one of the three branches of government?

Enrichment Activities

1. Have the students read Article II of the U.S. Constitution and generate a job description for the President.
2. You are hiring a president. What would you put in the ad for this job?

The opening lines of the US 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.

Part I: The Job of the President

The President of the United States is a big job. Listen to your teacher as she reads or read The Job of the President Sheet to yourself 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: Three Branches of Government

Listen to your teacher as he or she reads or read The Three Branches of Government Sheet to yourself. See how many of the following terms you can define.

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?

Do you think the writers accomplished their goals with the three branches of government they created?

Part III: Checks and Balances Diagram A

Look at the Diagram and identify which branch of government (Executive, Legislative or Judicial) is responsible for the following:

1. Remove judges from office
2. Veto bills
3. Nominate judges
4. Override veto
5. Declare a law unconstitutional
6. Controls the budget
7. Propose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution
8. Approves president's nominations
9. Declare the president's acts unconstitutional
10. Impeach the president

Part III: Checks and Balances Diagram B

Look at the Diagram and identify which branch of government (Executive, Legislative or Judicial) is responsible for the following:

1. Remove judges from office
2. Veto bills
3. Appoint judges
4. Override veto
5. Call special session of Congress
6. Control appropriations (spending)
7. Fail to enforce a court order
8. Declare a law unconstitutional
9. Grant a pardon or reprieve
10. Set free a person being held by the FBI
11. Propose an amendment to the U.S. Constitution
12. Confirm appointments
13. Ratify treaties
14. Declare the president's actions unconstitutional

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 in our new country. At the same time, we need 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.

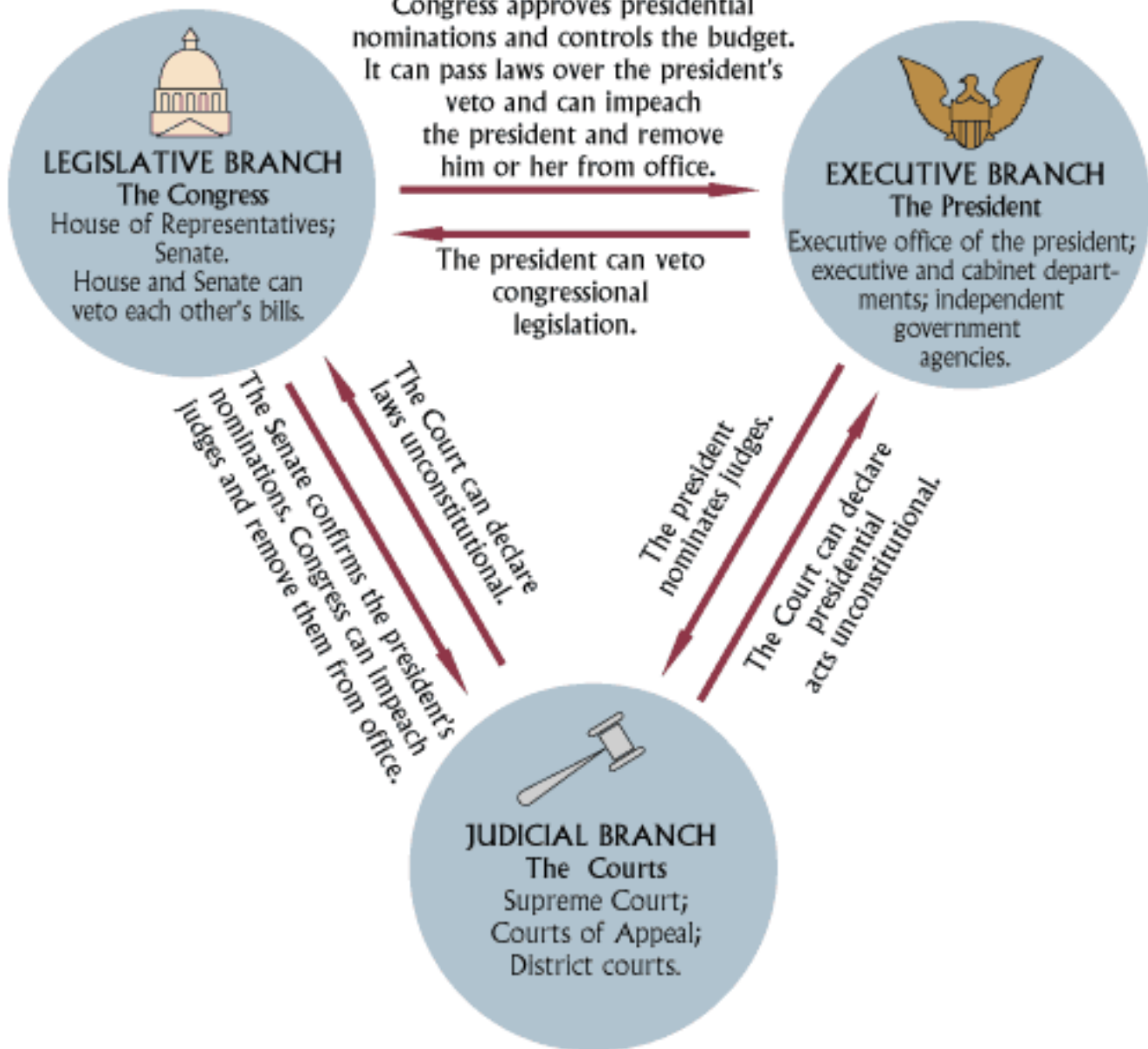
In Article II, Section 3, it says that:

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:

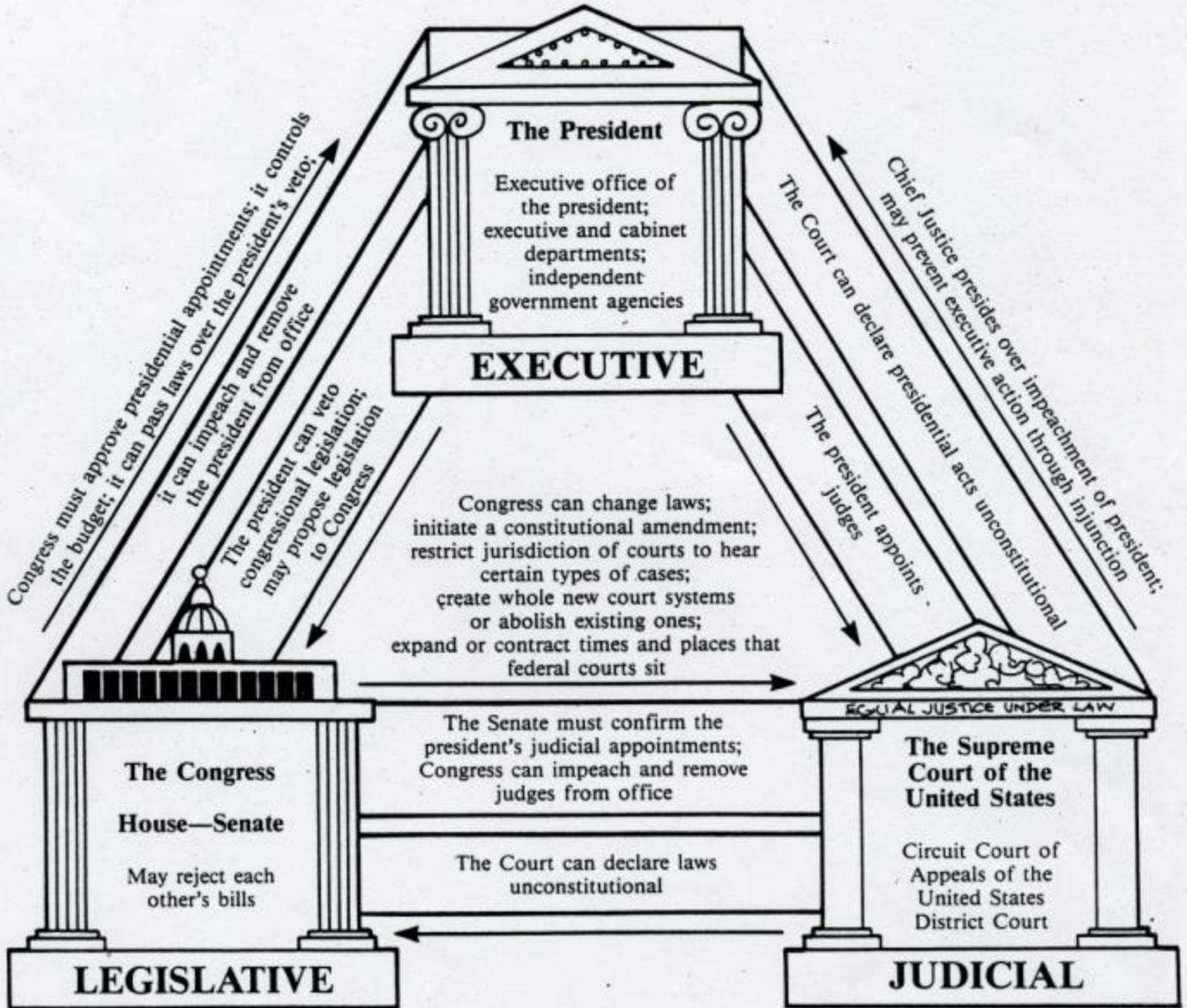
The President can be removed from office if he is found guilty of treason, bribery or other crimes. There will be a trial to see if he has broken the laws of the country.

Checks and Balances Diagram A



Separation of Powers and Checks and Balances

DIAGRAM B



Who

GETS TO VOTE?



LOCATION US

TIME PERIOD 1789-Present

GRADES 4-8

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 5: US History, Geography, Economics and Government

- Democratic institutions and ideas

- Responsibilities and powers associated with federal officials

US History 1: Revolution to Reconstruction

- Historical and intellectual origins of the US during the Constitutional Era

- Basic framework of American democracy and concepts of government

- Antebellum expansion of suffrage

- Age of Jackson

- Civil War and Reconstruction

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. 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 privileges and obligations.
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 Voting Amendment Sheet. You may choose to read it together as a class or allow students to read it independently or in small groups. Also give them the Voting Rights Cartoon. Then have students complete Part I of the Student Sheet. 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: 20-30 minutes

Materials Needed:

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

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

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

Voting Amendment Sheet

Voting Access Cartoon

Assessment Criteria

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

Did the students learn which Amendments gave different groups the right to vote?

Did the students explore an obstacle that existed despite the rules?

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. Look at the dates of the four Amendments on the Voting Amendment Sheet. What else was happening in the United States before each of these was passed? How did their passage reflect broader issues of the time period?
3. Just because people are allowed to vote, doesn't mean they do. Have students explore the changing rate of voter turnout and the reason for declining rates.

For some more information and data go to:

<http://www.fairvote.org/?page=262>

<http://www.fec.gov/pages/htmlto5.htm>

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

In 1789, the Constitution becomes the rule book for America. Changes to the Constitution are made by Amendments. Read the Voting Amendment Sheet and answer the following questions

1. Which four groups needed specific Amendments to help them get the vote?
2. The language in all four Amendments says that you can't stop someone from voting because of their race, gender, age or ability to pay a tax. Might there be some other way to stop someone from voting even with these new rules in place?
3. All four Amendments have a second part. What do they say? Why you think Congress is mentioned in all four?
4. Look at the Voting Rights Cartoon. What does the White person have to do to vote? What obstacles are in the way for the Black man to vote? How does each obstacle work against the promises of the 15th Amendment?

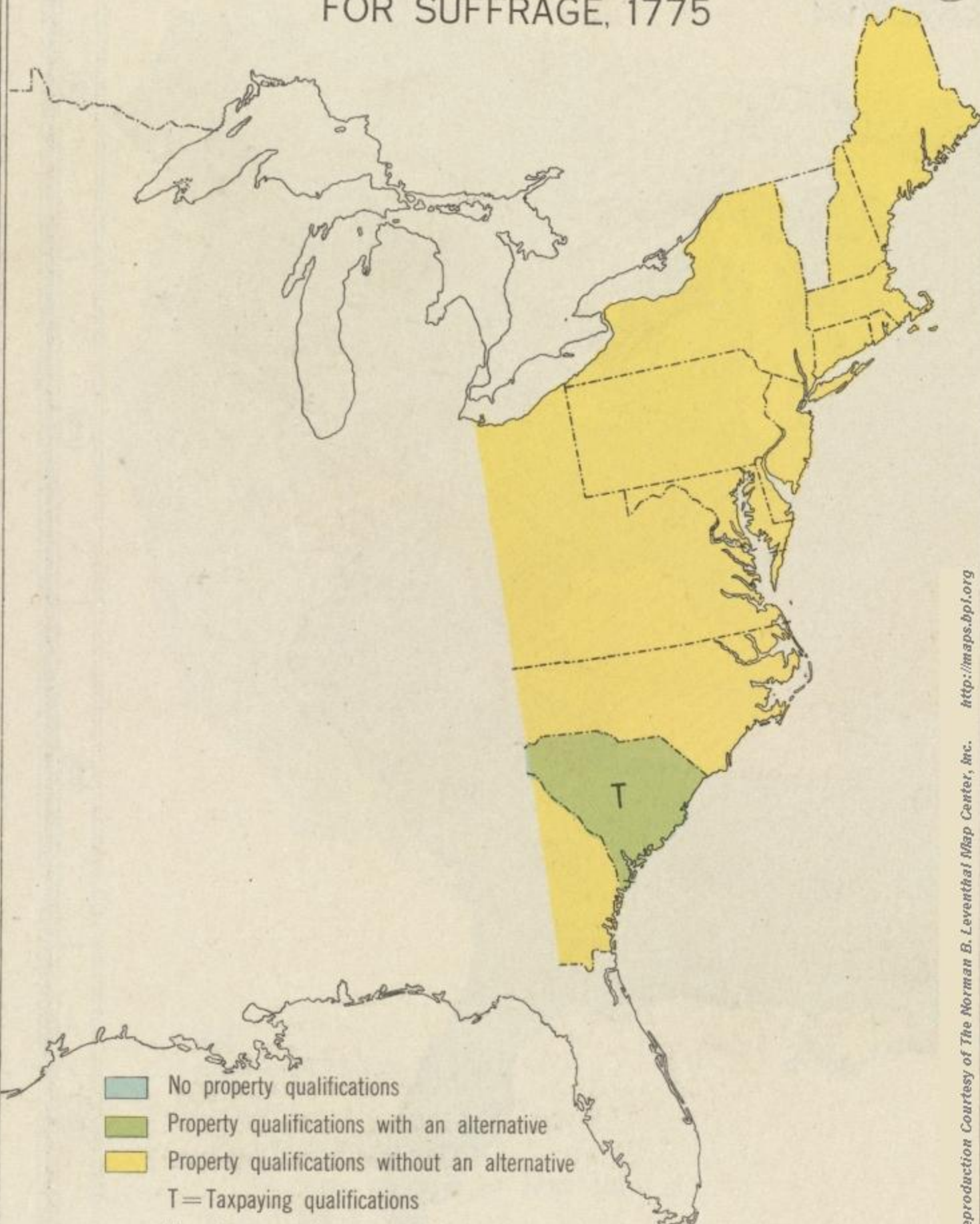
Part II




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 there is an alternative (or different) way to vote, even if you do not own property. Will that allow more people to vote? Will it allow all people to vote?
3. Do the voting rules seem fair to you? Why or why not?

PROPERTY QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUFFRAGE, 1775

(B)



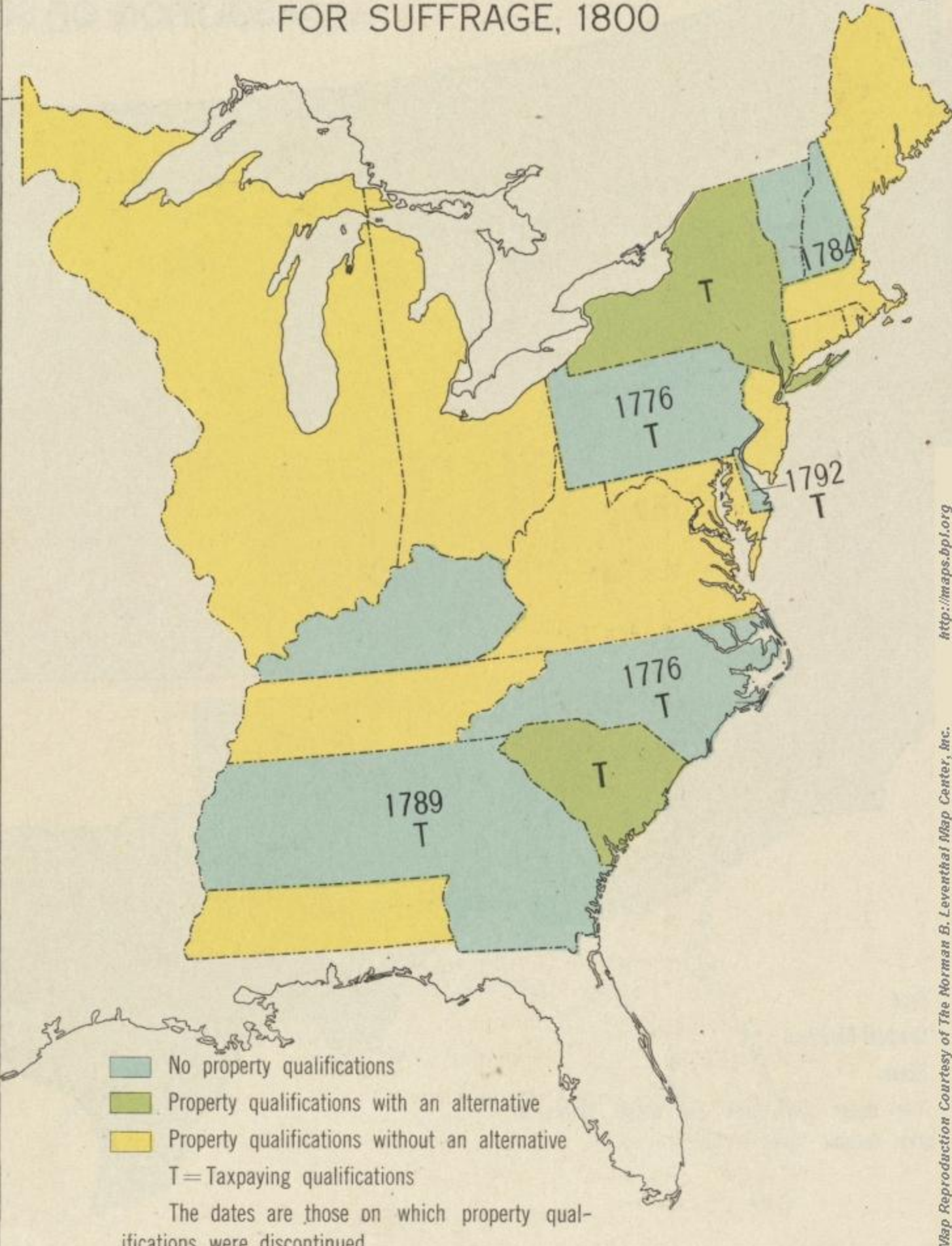
-  No property qualifications
-  Property qualifications with an alternative
-  Property qualifications without an alternative

T = Taxpaying qualifications

The dates are those on which property qualifications were discontinued

PROPERTY QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUFFRAGE, 1800

(C)

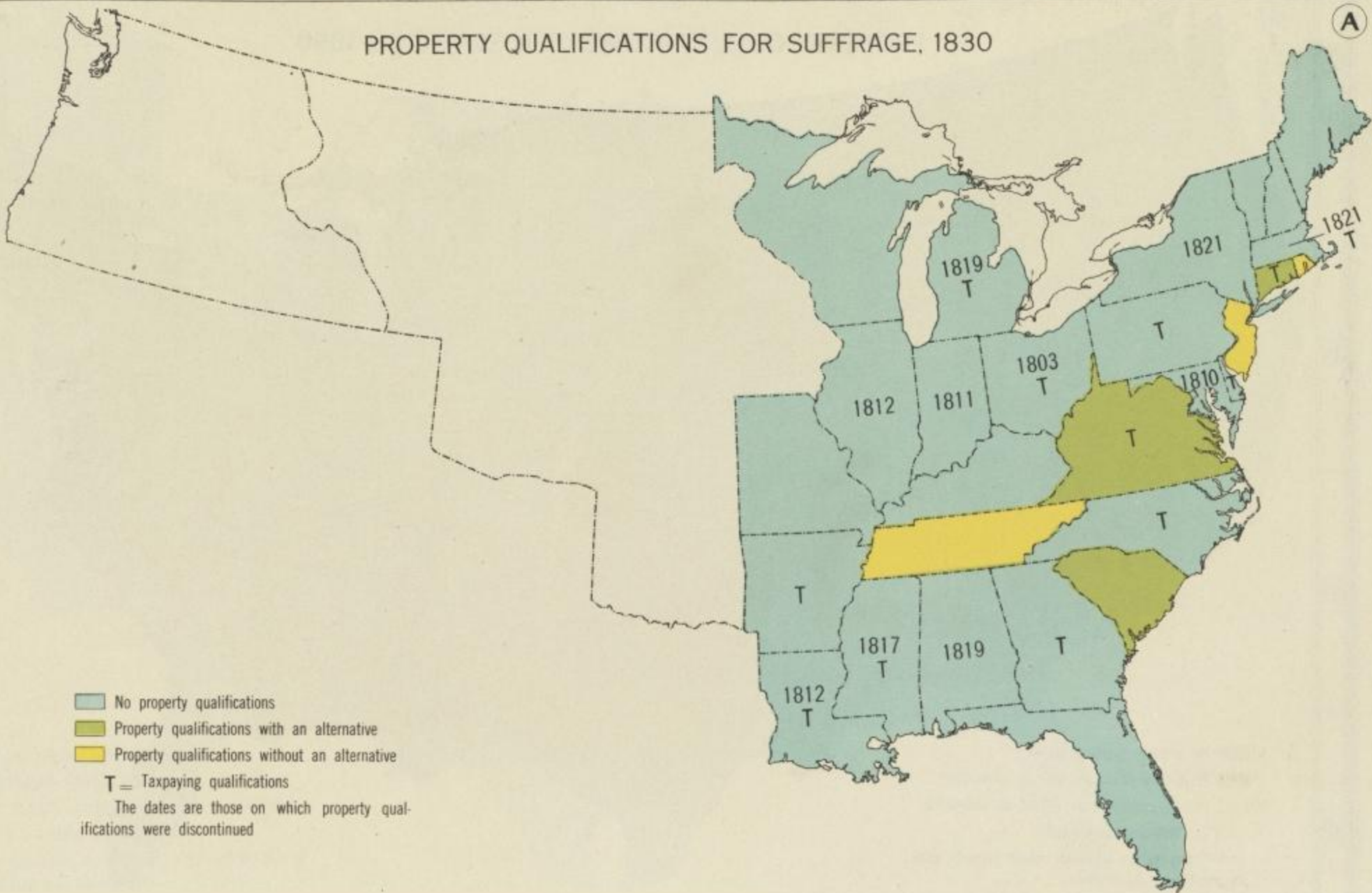


<http://maps.bpl.org>

Map Reproduction Courtesy of The Norman E. Leventhal Map Center, Inc.

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

VOTING AMENDMENT SHEET

Amendment 15 Ratified February 3, 1870

1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.
2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment 19 Ratified August 18, 1920

The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

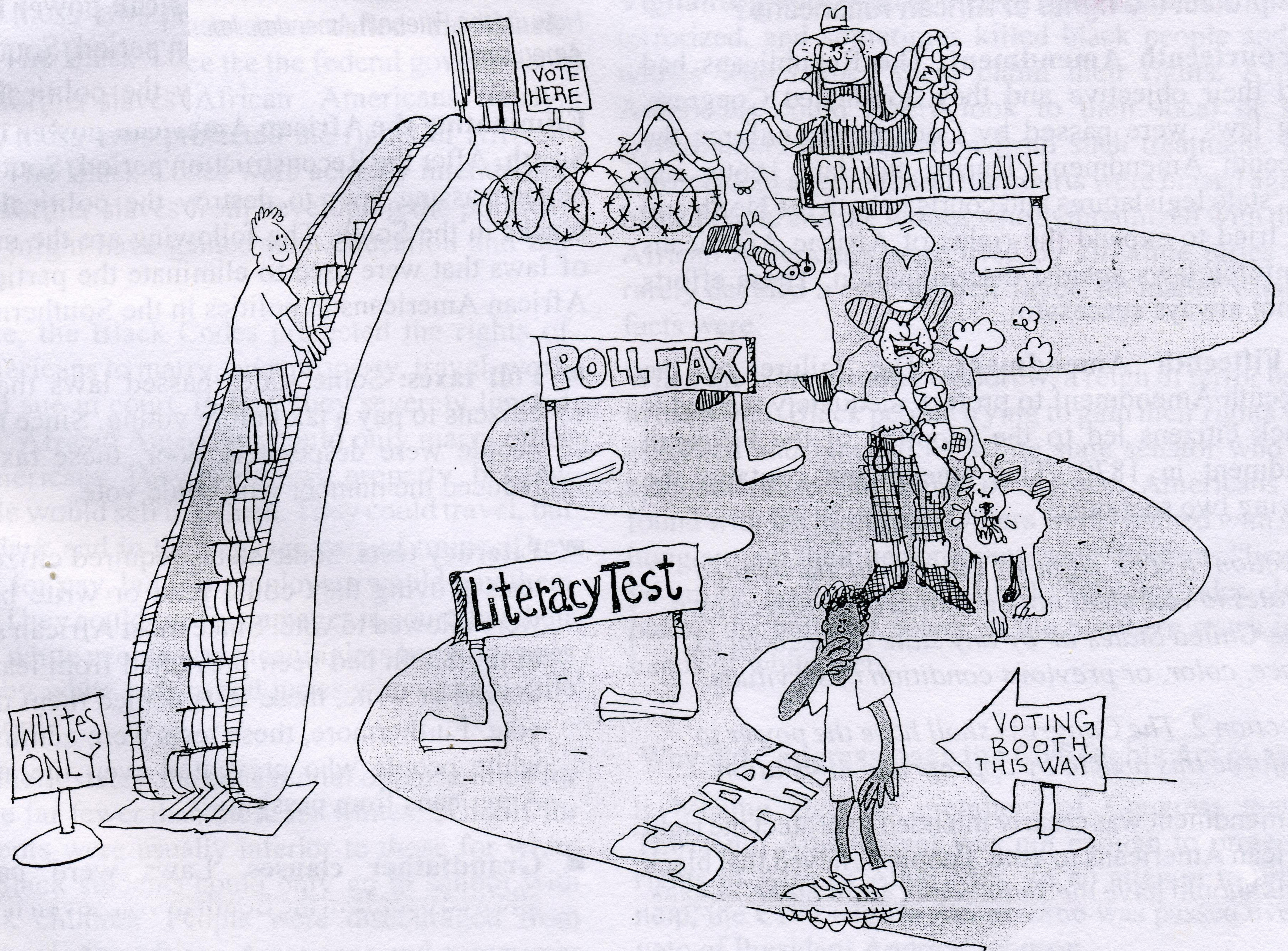
Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

Amendment 24 Ratified January 23, 1964

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.

Amendment 26 Ratified July 1, 1971

1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.
2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.



Timetable

FOR THE ELECTION



LOCATION US

TIME PERIOD Current Events

GRADES 4-8

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 5: US History, Geography, Economics and Government

Democratic institutions and ideas

Interpret timelines

Responsibilities and powers associated with federal officials

US History 1: Revolution through Reconstruction

Basic framework of American democracy and concepts of government

Concepts and Skills: Interpret and construct 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 18th century system that dictates to voters in the 21st 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 to elect a president.
3. Give Students Election Time Line Sheet. Read it with them and help them 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. The Presidential inauguration changed from March 4 to January 20 after 1933 as a result of the 20th amendment. Research why this change occurred.
2. Neither Primaries nor Party conventions existed when the country was founded. Have students research their origins and development over time.
3. 2008 had a lively primary season. Have student s 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 4-8

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.

Students will learn that the Electoral College has not always work as intended.

★ CURRICULUM STANDARDS

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

US History 1: Revolution through Reconstruction

Concepts: Origins of sectionalism

Formation and framework of American Democracy and concepts of government

Political democratization, 1790-1860

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 18th century system that dictates to voters in the 21st 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, give students the Electoral College Overview. You may want to read it to younger students.
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](#)
7. Let students know that the Electoral College is not perfect. Ask them what possible problems might occur? Prompt them to see two problems:
 - A. No candidate gets a majority of the electoral votes
 - B. There is a problem reporting the results

Show the class the following Presidential Election maps: 1800, 1824, 1876 and 2000
Have them complete Part III of the Student Sheet.

For those students who wish to find out what happened, the answers should be in their history text book or look on the web:

<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/votes/index.html>

Time Allocation

Part I: 15-20 minutes

Part II: 15-20 minutes

Part III: 15-20 minutes plus time to do independent research

Materials Needed

[Map of the 50 States](#) [click on States and Capitals]

State Population and Electoral Votes Chart

Electoral College Overview Sheet

Presidential Election maps:

- 1800: [also available at: http://maps.bpl.org/details_12388/?mtid=1165]
- 1824: [also available at: http://maps.bpl.org/details_12394/?mtid=1165]
- 1876: [also available at: http://maps.bpl.org/details_12407/?dl_pp=1&mtid=1165]
- 2000: [also available at:
<http://www.nationalatlas.gov/asp/popups.asp?imgFile=../printable/images/preview/elections/elect14.gif&imgw=588&imggh=450>]

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?

Did the students see those times when the Electoral College did not work as intended?

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 of the Electoral College? What might be 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. Compare and explain the change over time between the dates of the two maps.
4. Do the math. Have the students look at the numbers on the State Population and Electoral Vote Chart. A candidate only has to win a state by one vote in the popular vote to get all of its electoral votes. What are the possible outcomes that could have a candidate lose the popular vote but win the electoral vote?
5. Simulate election results. This web activity allows students to try out different possible election outcomes: <http://www.270towin.com/simulation/>
6. Several presidents have been elected without winning the popular vote. Research one of those elections:
1824, 1876, 1888, 2000

There are different ways for a group of people to make their choice about something. America 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

Read about the Electoral College 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.

Part III

1. According to the maps, what was the problem in 1800 and 1824? What were possible ways to solve this problem? Do some research outside of class to find out what happened in those elections.
2. In 1876 and 2000, one state had trouble counting its votes. What was the state? What were possible ways to solve the problem? Do some research outside of class to find out what happened in those elections.



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 wanted to just let everyone vote and let the person with the most votes become president. Other people wanted only the people 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 votes. 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 4-8

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What role 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 4: North American Geography

US Political geography

Grade 5: US History, Geography, Economics and Government

Development of democratic institutions and ideas

US History 1: Revolution through Reconstruction

Concepts: Origins of sectionalism

Formation and framework of American democracy

Political democratization, 1790-1860

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 Activities

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/>
4. There have been many political parties in our nation's history. Look at the following chart and construct a timeline:
http://www.edgate.com/elections/inactive/the_parties/

The United States will elect a new president on November 4th. 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

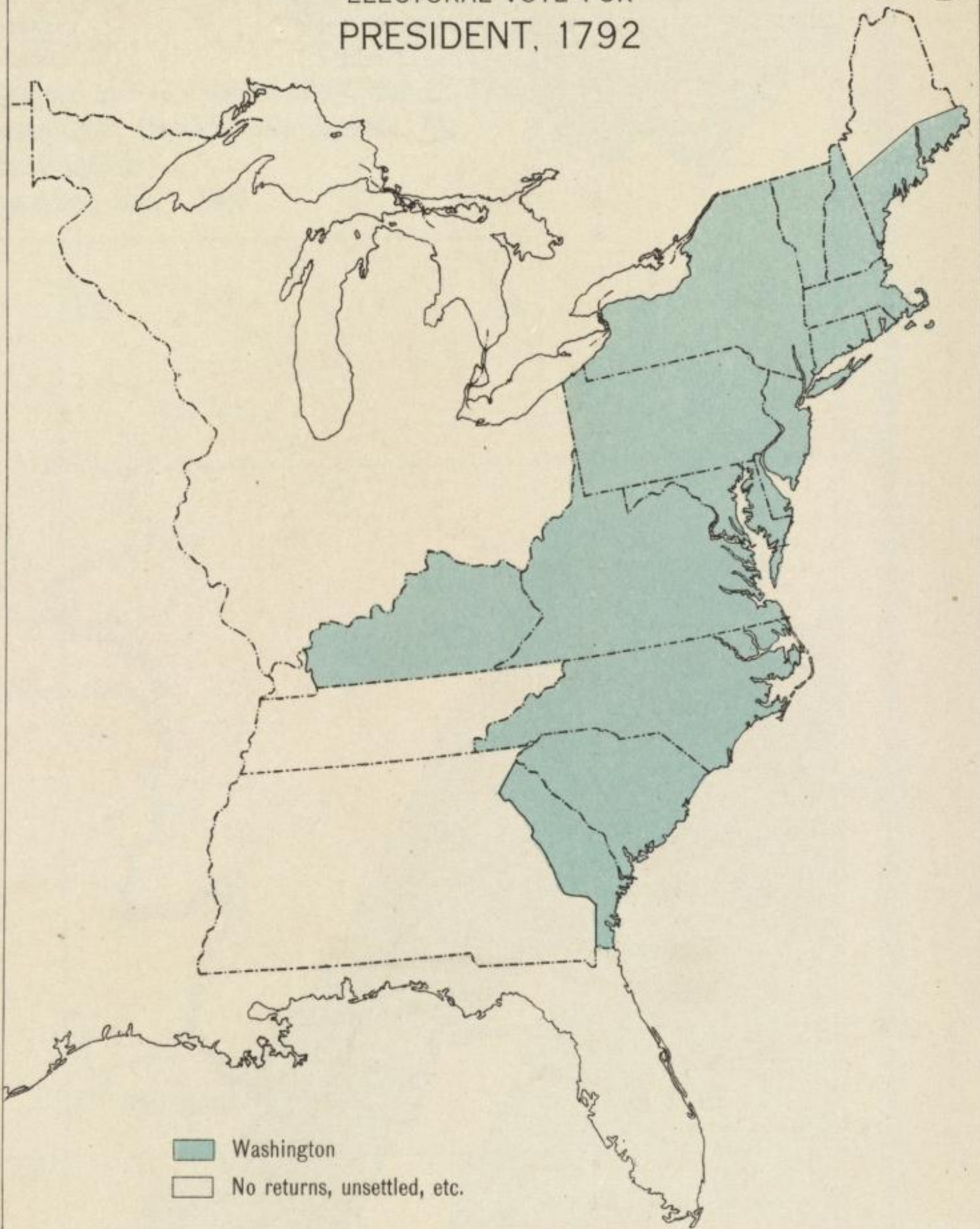
Look at the map of the last presidential election from 2004. President Bush, a Republican, ran against John Kerry, a Democrat.

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?

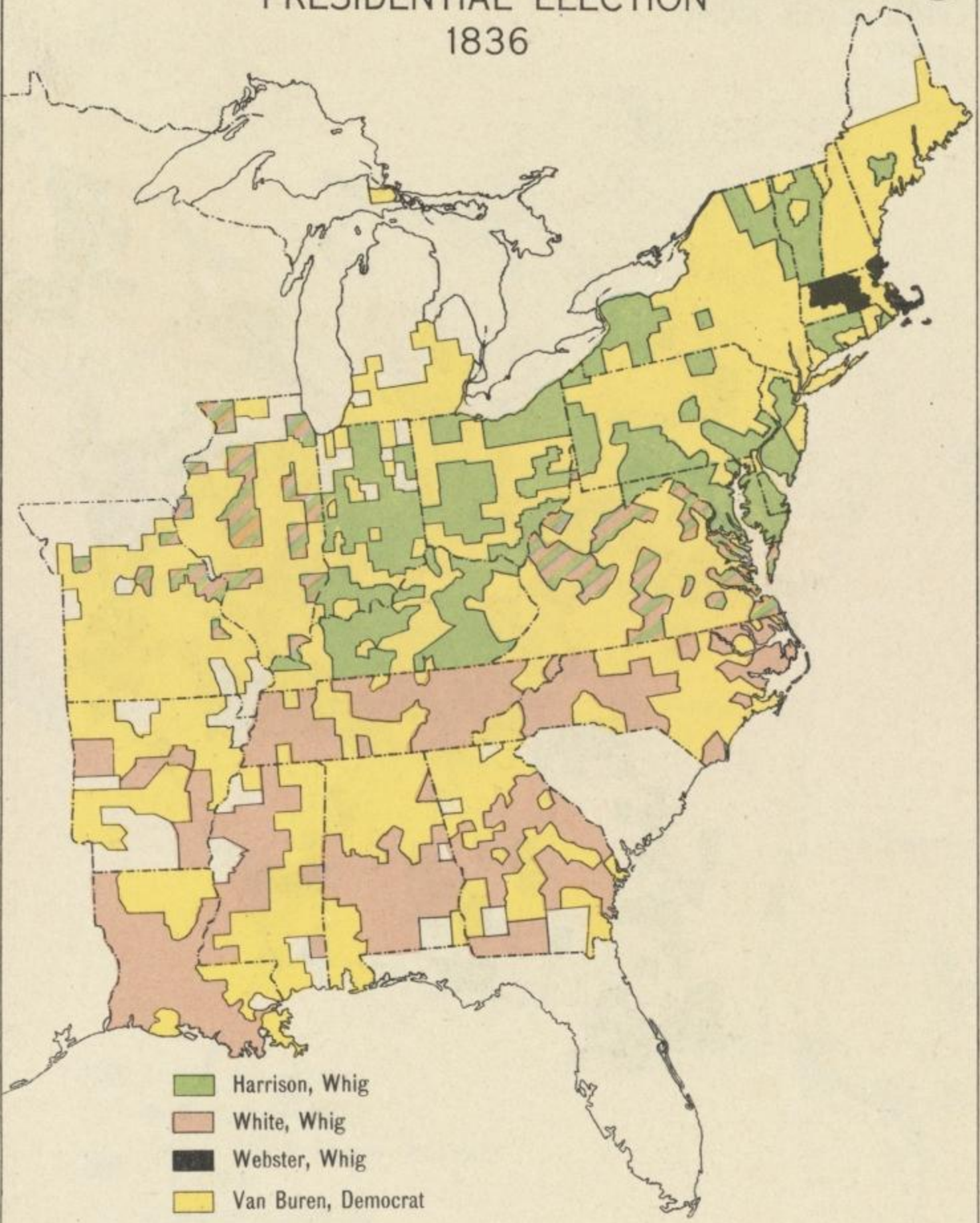
ELECTORAL VOTE FOR PRESIDENT, 1792








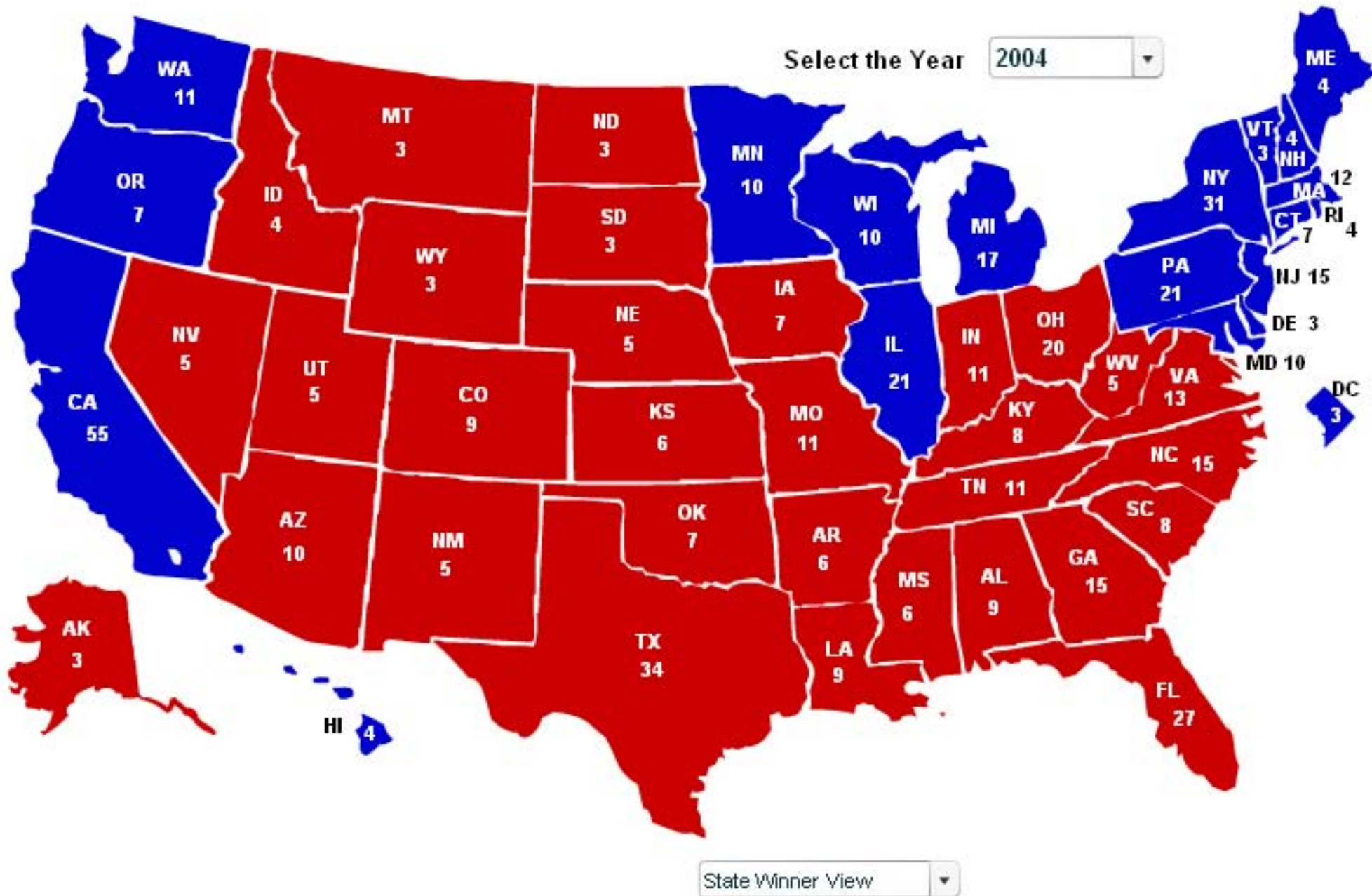
Washington
No returns, unsettled, etc.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION 1836

A



-  Harrison, Whig
-  White, Whig
-  Webster, Whig
-  Van Buren, Democrat
-  No returns, unsettled, etc.



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



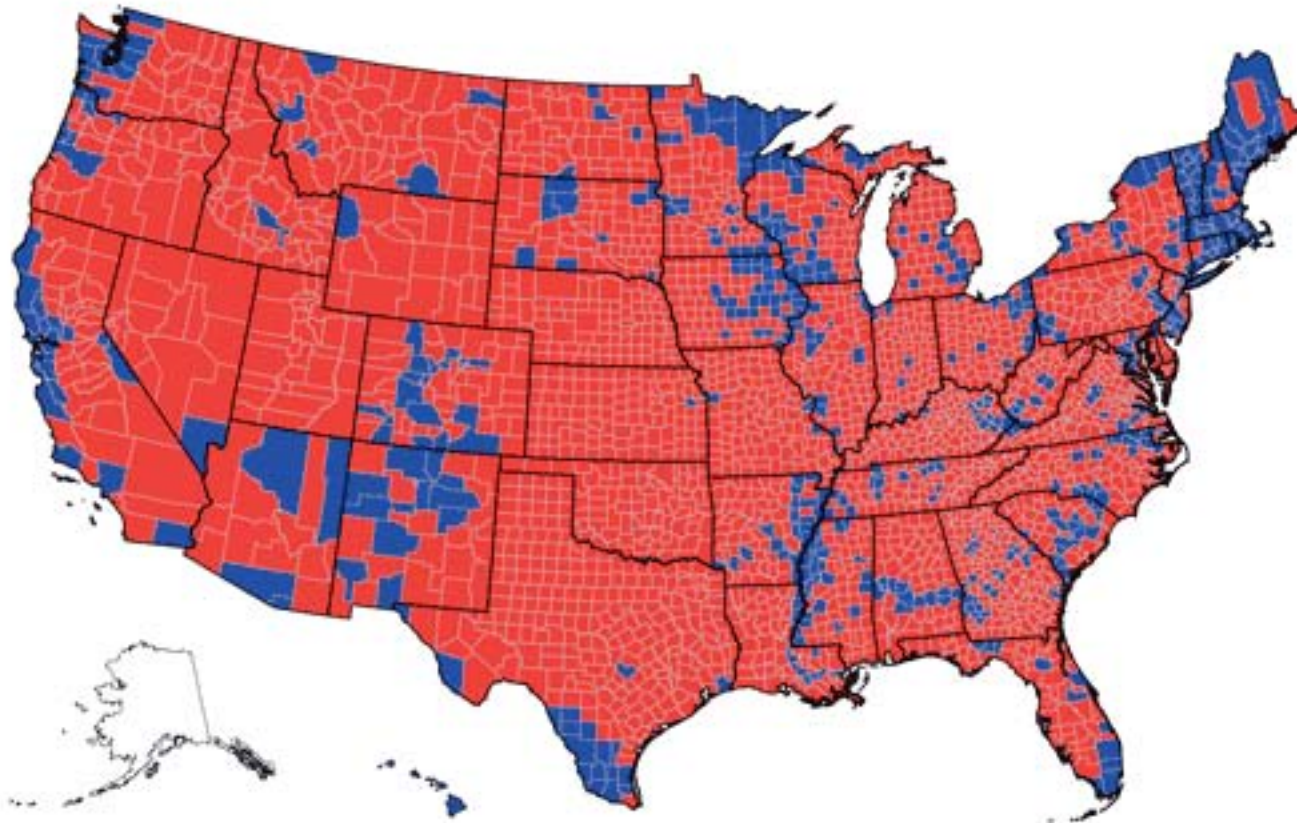
Election 2004

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

Bush	2.54 million
Kerry	592,000

Population (2003) of counties won

Bush	159.2 million
Kerry	130.9 million

Counties won by less than 5 percentage points

Bush	164
Kerry	146

Note: County election data is not reported for Alaska.

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