



# YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative  
2008 Volume III: Democracy in Theory and Practice

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## Road to the White House: Campaign for the Presidency

Guide for Curriculum Unit 08.03.01, published September 2008

by Adam Kubey

This unit will cover the many facets of the campaign for presidency: public opinion, political socialization, political participation and voting, the media, and the election process. While the goal of the unit is for students to better understand the election and post of the presidency, my true hope is that the students will become informed citizens, making educated, calculated decisions in the election process.

Upon completion of this unit, students will have learned about the presidency and the election process. Students will apply that knowledge through research and a debate about the 2008 presidential election. Students will work in small groups to research one issue currently being discussed/debated by the candidates, as well as finding the current US stance on this issue with supporting laws. In addition to researching each candidate's stance on said issue, students will also look at the implementation plans upon election. Students will use this information to determine the most effective compromised policy for local constituents and the US. Students will conduct a poll of local community members to determine their stance and reasoning on the issue, to ascertain the needs of their constituents. By analyzing media coverage and opinion polls, students will establish the reasons behind the candidates' stance on the issue. Collecting data from various sources will enable students to make a compromised policy plan.

The information that the students gather will allow them to participate in a debate with Yale National Teaching Initiative classes around the country, who will be completing a similar project. As students from classrooms across the country share the concerns of their specific constituents, all students will gain a deeper appreciation of how complex and multidimensional these issues truly are — as complex and multidimensional as the office of the presidency itself.

(Developed for U.S. Government and World History, grades 9-12; recommended for U.S. Government and U.S. History, grades 8-12)

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