



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2012 Volume III: The American Presidency

I think, therefore I do? Conscious and unconscious factors influencing our choice for President of the United States

Guide for Curriculum Unit 12.03.01, published September 2012
by Audra Bull

The election of the President of the United States is one of the most important decisions an American can make. The Founding Fathers created a deliberative democracy predicated upon the suppression of emotion in lieu of a thoughtful, reflective, and informed populace capable of utilizing reason when voting for President. Utilizing brain-based instruction, this unit addresses the theme of decision-making through the vehicle of the Presidential election. The students will read, discuss and participate in inquiry activities designed to heighten awareness as to how the brain is naturally structured to make decisions, the structure of the student's current decision-making process, and how the students can make better, thoughtful, more informed future decisions. The students will also explore the influences of their social network (i.e. friends, family, church) upon their decisions. Through their investigation the students will engage in an in-depth discussion of the explicit and implicit powers of a President as defined and implied in the United States Constitution. In addition the students will explore conscious and unconscious factors which impact the choice for President.

(Developed for Reading, grade 8; recommended for Reading, grades 6-8, American History, grades 6-12)

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