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

Road to the White House: Campaign for the Presidency

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Rationale

This unit will cover the many facets of the presidency: the history, job responsibilities and the election (past and present) in great detail. While Kenwood Academy students have an interest in the general election process, they have a vested interest in the current election for many reasons; locality of one candidate, race, historical background, and the general outcome of the election.

It is my goal through this ten week unit, *Road to the White House* (divided into two, five week sub units: *The Presidency* and *Campaign for the Presidency*), that students will gain a better understanding of all aspects of surrounding the election and job of the presidency, so that they can better understand the current election. My greatest hope is that this unit will allow the students to make educated, calculated decisions as informed citizens, when carrying out their civic responsibility.

After completion of this unit, students will have learned many aspects of the presidency and the election process, and use that knowledge to participate in a study and debate about this years presidential election. Students in small groups of no more then five will research one campaign issue being discussed and debated by the candidates. The groups will find the current US policy/stance on this issue and any laws that support it. Students will research each candidates stance on the issue and how the candidate plans to implement it when president. In doing the research, the group will decide a compromised policy would be the most effective for their local constituents and the US as a whole. The group will also poll local community members to find their stance on the issue, and why they feel that way. Through data analysis of media coverage and opinion polls, students will ascertain why the candidates have taken this stance.

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.

Essential Questions:

1. Is the system of electing a President democratic?

2. Why has the election and role of the President changed over time?
3. Has society's view of the office of the President changed?
4. Has the office of the President evolved into an absolute ruler?
5. How is political opinions formed and are those opinions based on social groups from birth, or values that people fall under.
6. How does political opinion affect legislation, or does legislation affect political opinion?
7. How does political opinion affect political participation and action?
8. Why does the US have very low voter participation as compared to other western democracies?
9. How the US can get more citizens to be active in political participation, by voting, and be informed when doing so.
10. What is the mass media and how does it cover the news?
11. How is the ownership aspect of the media regulated to ensure factual, non-bias information to the public?
12. What is the current primary and general election process of the US and is it democratic?
13. How has this year's election exhibited all these theories?

Background

A unit on the origins and basic foundation of the United States government will precede *The Road to the White House* unit. With this rough outline of the structure of our government, students will then turn their focus to the 2008 presidential election as a means to understand the major concepts of government structure, operation, and behavior.

The first unit, *The Presidency*, will concentrate on the history and role of the President of the United States after taking the oath of office. When complete, students will understand these concepts:

- The (historical) role and responsibilities of the President, as dictated by the founding fathers and the U.S. Constitution (as well as other historical documents)
- The evolution of the office of the President from the ideal set forth by the founding fathers to modern day presidents
- The power of the President, both foreign and domestic
- The structure, organization, and philosophy of the office of the President
- The characteristics of the president, including the leadership role, as viewed through the eyes of external sources (the American public, competing political parties, the world, allies, enemies, etc)

To transition from *The Presidency* to the next five week unit, *Campaign for the Presidency*, students will learn how campaign strategists often use the "power of persuasion" to sway the American populace towards or against a candidate. Students will learn that political rhetoric is often designed for a specific outcome, and it does not always include the whole truth. The culminating project of the first unit will be to map out each states historical presidential voting history. This includes, and is not limited to demographics, non-presidential voting, and local and state issues. This first project will be continued into the *Campaign for the Presidency* unit, through campaign and election themes, but also in the culminating project which links directly with the overlying objective of both units, the presidency.

Objective Week 1: Public Opinion, Political Socialization, and Voter Participation

The question most students will know the answer to is "What is an opinion." Many students will be able to answer said question with real life examples, including how opinions affect behavior. However when asked what public opinion is, and more specifically how it affects the public's actions and government policy, students may have a more difficult time generating an answer. The idea of public opinion and its link to public actions must be answered at the outset for the larger themes of the unit to be relevant to students. The fact is that public opinion is closely tied to public action; more importantly it is tied to political and governmental action, as the public holds the ultimate tool - the ability to vote.

Is the fact that public opinion dictates political action necessarily a bad thing? Some will say that is the true nature of a democracy, and that this is the proper procedure for the system's success. "70% feel that the majority should have say and influence on policy (Janda 2008)." In actuality, however, there seems to be a clear division between public opinion and political action. One example of this is the issue of school prayer. "The Supreme Court has ruled against clergy-led prayers at public school graduations. Yet surveys continually show that a clear majority of Americans (75%) do not agree with that ruling (Miller 1981)."

This begs the question, is the Majoritarian or the Pluralist model the best philosophy for democratic policy? The Majoritarian model has the majority determine policy, whereas the Pluralist model is characterized by many smaller minority groups working together to determine policy. Should the majority of Americans' opinions determine policy or should it be in the hands of many minority interest groups? As these minority groups actually represent slices of the electorate, some would argue for the pluralist model. Every person is divided by many different factors; education, income, region, race, ethnicity, religion and gender are just some of the factors that people use to identify themselves. When one chooses one of these "identities," they are also inadvertently affiliating themselves with a particular political minority. The pluralist model insures that the voices of many are heard and that one voice does not overpower another.

It is important to remember that these individual identities have great political merit. We can trace these characteristics to family, school, communities and/or peers. They form values that will determine an individual's voting behavior and participation in the political system. The United States current bipartisan system treats small minority groups as part of the larger whole - the larger majority. Political agents form their policy based on these different social group's common interests hoping to garner their support and votes.

Identifying individual minorities and incorporating them into a larger whole is not always successful. No matter how much an individual participates, there are times when a true democracy cannot be attained. The Russian political system provides an excellent example. The Russian public is allowed to express their political opinion through voting, but when intimidation and corruption leave only one candidate or choice on a bill, how much of a difference can the public have? Is that considered democratic? Is it democratic that many social groups have not had the right to participate in the so-called democratic system?

Throughout history many groups have been frozen out of the democratic system by denying them the right to vote, in effect silenced their opinions and ability to fight for political change. The two largest groups in American history are African-Americans and women. The disenfranchisement of blacks and women denied two huge social groups their voice. Today these groups are heavily involved in the political process, as evidenced by the landmark 2008 democratic nominees for president.

The 2008 election can be seen as an example of how public acceptance can change the political landscape, but still many voters choose to abstain from the political process because they feel their opinions and voices go unheard. How does the government get them to vote? Does the government even want them to vote? Statistics and trends show that only 42% of Americans vote in non-presidential years and the number increases to 58% during election years (Berry 2008). Political scientists attribute this to lack of voter turn out to an inequity in education; those who are educated vote in higher numbers than those without higher degree.

Strategies

The students will be prompted with the bell ringer, "What is public opinion and how does it affect public action (and in turn government policy)?" After defining this idea, we will discuss whether or not they believe that politicians care about the general public's opinion. The class will also examine the process by which government policy is directly linked to the opinion of the general electorate. Students will use capitol punishment and school prayer as models to analyze the statistical relationship between public opinion and governmental policy. Students will then explore which philosophical model (majoritarian or pluralist) would be the most just for determining public policy, based on today's differences in public opinion and the political action of the government.

No doubt this discussion will spiral into questions of where/how opinions are formulated, and in order to ascertain students' individual opinions on policy, they will take a personality assessment. Though this personality quiz, students will find out not only where their opinions come from, but also their political socialization, political values, and application of their values into minority/social groups. The quizzes will be collected and students' answers charted and analyzed, allowing students to see that certain values and groups show recognizable trends. The use of spiraling questioning and the personality quiz is an effective method for identifying different values and groups.

To gain a deeper understanding of two minority groups that have been largely marginalized in the history of the United States election process, we will study suffrage rights of African Americans and women. One useful method to study these groups is by comparing graphs of voting numbers and trends from suffrage with data from the inception of voting rights to the present day. Using these graphs and reflecting on the time periods and the events occurring simultaneously, students will be able to understand the connection between public opinion and the concurrent [socioeconomic] environment. From that analysis, students will be able to formulate a prediction of voter turn out of these two social groups in the 2008 presidential election.

Students will also investigate the reasons behind the low voter turn out in the United States, as compared to other western democratic nations. Students will again use graphs and surveys touching on potential causes that might keep certain political social groups out of the voting process. After exploring some of these causes, students will propose ideas to change and improve the percentage of eligible voters who actually vote. Students will be expected to provide an implementation strategy for their plan, predict their expected results, and hypothesize why they expect these results to occur. Students should also come to the realization that perhaps a high voter turnout may not necessarily be a good thing, particularly if said voters are uninformed and/or uneducated on the candidate/issues. Students will expand on these ideas by comparing their findings with current research on the subject.

Objective Week 2 and 3: Mass Media

Today's society has changed largely due to mass media and its penetration of the general United States public. "Adults and teens will spend nearly five months (3,518 hours) in 2007 watching television, surfing the Internet, reading daily newspapers and listening to personal music devices. (medialiteracy.com 2008)" Over 112 million households own a television (NTCA 2007). Political agents know that to get voters to the polls and vote for them, they must shape many of those voter's opinions through the use of mass media. Effective advertising campaigns generally rely on two important strategies: the mode in which political agents submit information to the viewer and the repetition or penetration of the message.

Mass media is generally broken down into two major categories, with various sub categories: print media (newspapers and magazines), broadcast media (TV and radio). The internet is generally seen as a form of broadcast media, but can also be listed as a separate category due to its links to print media (online magazines, etc). Internet media presents a radical departure from the traditional print and broadcast media; political groups now have countless outlets to disseminate their message. YouTube, podcasts, social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace, not-for-profit fact checking sites like factcheck.org, all of these sites change the arena that political agents compete in and change the way public opinions are formed.

The use of these new media outlets generally implement either push or pull marketing. Push marketing is characterized by the agent telling the audience why they should agree with their opinion. Pull marketing is in direct opposition to push marketing. Pull marketing is characterized by the audience telling the political agent what information they want in order to make a decision. Many of these sites promote individuals to share their political opinion with others via online relationships, social networking or non-political interest sites allowing proactive people to pass their opinions others. In essence, these new internet outlets exhibit both push and pull marketing, the public may not even be aware that political factions are "planting" the messages; they may believe that they are directing the process.

Beyond the differences in the type of media (broadcast or print), there are also differences in the audience, the message and the medium that contains it, and how that message is regulated. The regulation and dissemination of information by the media is in constant question, and a multitude of government agencies attempt to provide clear guidelines for those questions. These government regulations are often at odds with the main goal of the media agency - profit. Large media corporations have been known to do anything to make a profit - yellow journalism, muckraking, sensationalization of a story, anything to make their message more palatable to the general public. These corporations must decide what is news worthy, how will this news benefit their sponsors/advertisers, and most importantly keeping their audience. One group is attempting to keep the news as unbiased and truthful to keep the general public informed, while the other group is trying to maximize profits, perhaps altering the truth. This struggle causes a public dilemma.

The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) was founded in 1934 to regulate the telephone industry, but its current jurisdiction includes the broadcast industry. The FCC has passed three rules in an effort to insure the media industry does not interfere with the public's right to truth, but many feel it still isn't enough. The fairness doctrine, the equal opportunities rule, and the reasonable access rules all were designed to regulate media's content. The fairness doctrine maintained that the content on broadcast television be "fair and balanced (MBC 2008)." However, this rule was repealed during the Reagan administration citing the diversity of stations would create a "fair and balanced" marketplace of ideas. The Equal Opportunity Rule extended the idea of a fair and balanced media by regulating candidate airtime. Under this rule, broadcasters are forced to offer

equal airtime at equal costs to all candidates. By the FCC's regulation of the media industry, the public access to fair and balanced news has been protected, but with the ever-changing types of media, legislation and regulation is not responding fast enough to insure these standards are met.

The 2008 presidential election can be analyzed to assess if the news media are presenting a truly fair and balanced message. It is difficult to believe that the news could ever be reported in a fully unbiased manner. However, is today's media regulated and broadcasted to come as close to this standard as possible? Is the coverage of the president and the candidates fair and balanced? When analyzing the process of how the president informs the public, it is also understood that the delivery of his information always has a "spin". Any president will try to sway the media to his point of view, hoping that their message will earn them high approval ratings, a clear indicator of the general public's support. These ratings not only tell the president what the public wants, but also their feelings about his actions. The president's press staff is devoted to crafting his message in a way that will show him in a positive light, regardless of content. This message is conveyed each day to a core of White House reporters through a daily briefing. The reporting of the president on a daily basis would make one believe that constant communication with the public will guarantee him a positive rating, but more importantly, allow him to control the amount of time with the public.

This media control is a major reason for the increase of public awareness regarding the president's profile. The president's message is always accessible to the public, allowing him to push his agenda to congress, creating legislation based solely on his view of government policy. Should the media have this great of an affect on public policy? Knowing this, should the president (or any other political agent) strive to control this medium of communication to the populace? In turn, does the media have a responsibility to the people to use this power in a moral way? Is the media truly fair and balanced? All these questions are inherent to understanding the interconnected nature of politics and the media.

Strategies

Students are bombarded with many forms of advertising and messaging on a daily basis. These messages not only affect how they look and characterize themselves but also how they perceive others. The broadcast media is a lens for which our students see the world, a lens that is focused and yet ever changing, often by incoming messages. The type of media has changed over time, so students will use statistical and graphical data to analyze the effects of these changes. Students will also examine the effectiveness of the media to influence political opinion, focusing on how differing contents or amounts of these messages yields varied results.

YouTube, MySpace, and Facebook are just a few Internet based media outlets that students use on a daily basis. Each of these channels provides students with powerful message about society and politics; messages that have the ability to shape and change viewpoints. Through the critical analysis of these media outlets and the political agendas and messages they convey, students will become "informed skeptics," looking at the media with a curious eye. Students will be able to view the 2008 presidential election from an objective, informed position as a political analyst.

A few private corporate conglomerations own the countless television media outlets viewed by the general public. Over the past eight years, the FCC has lowered its restrictions of media ownership, and corporate conglomerates have bought up most of the independent news outlets in cities across the nation, giving the power to broadcast media to a handful of companies. Through research students will have a better understanding of the history of this ownership change, but also the effects of the media being in the hands of a few. Students will explore questions of media ownership such as: what merits "news," the affect of news on

the public, is the news sensationalized, are profit and responsibility balanced, and finally how has society's need for immediate coverage changed the accuracy of the news. Students will be able to research these questions and discuss and defend their findings to their peers.

The president's media coverage has evolved since the creation of the motion picture camera and home television. The most famous example of this changes the 1960 Presidential debate between Senator John F. Kennedy and Vice President Richard Nixon. Students will watch the debate as if they were television viewers in 1960, analyzing what factors could have launched Senator Kennedy to the presidency over the more popular sitting Vice President Richard Nixon. Students will also examine the amount of media coverage the modern president has by researching the presidential press briefing process and identifying the roles and responsibilities of the Press Secretary. Students will read excerpts of Scott McCellan, former Press Secretary for President George W. Bush to understand how a president and press secretary communicate and devise plans to address the public on a myriad of issues.

Many politicians will first decide their position on an issue, polling the public's opinion afterwards. Politicians can use the data from these opinion polls to manufacture a message that the public will endorse, regardless of the actual content. The Terry Schaivo case of 2005 is an example of how the media's coverage directly affected the public's opinion and directly affected their politician's actions. Politicians watched the medias coverage of the day-to-day goings on with Terry Shaivo and reacted based on local public opinion polling data. Is this the true way democracy should work? Should politicians push their political agenda on the public? Students will listen to a National Public Radio Show podcasted on NPR's website with Terry Shaivo's husband explaining how the media and politicians affected legislation affecting his wife's right to die. Students will take a position not on the legal aspect of the case, but on whether or not the media's coverage affected the political actions of each representative district to act on this case.

Object Week 4 and 5: The Election Process

The first five weeks of the *Road to the White House* unit discusses the position of the President. This section of the unit, *Campaign for the Presidency* discusses the steps that a candidate takes to be elected to the position of President. The first step in this process is the primary election process. Many inspired politicians announce their candidacy and immediately start fundraising; meeting with constituents who want the ear and attention of the [potential] future president. Candidates travel all over the country fundraising and lobbying for votes, hoping to gain the majority of the states' support and earning their party's endorsement for the general election.

The modern primary election process is designed to narrow the candidates through a public state-by-state election process, rather than the archaic "smoke filled back room" negotiations of party leaders. The past system allowed a candidate to proceed to the general election with his armor unchinked by his own party. However, this process relied on the philosophy that the party itself could pick the most elect-able candidate.

The 1968 democratic primary saw Hubert Humphrey chosen by party officials as the Democratic candidate, even though Eugene McCarthy had more support of the public voters. Humphrey ended up losing the general election to Richard Nixon because of the rift between party elites and the average party voter. After this failure, the Democratic Party formed a commission to change the primary process, making the average voter

more important, insuring that the candidate would carry significant support to the general election.

The Democratic Party as well as the Republican Party uses more of a public voter system to choose their general election candidate. The system is quite confusing as it uses many different forms of the primary election process by both parties in every state. This has caused much confusion amongst the candidates and public about who is most elect-able in the general election. Most primaries use a system of calculating ballots on primary night and awarding delegates based on those results. Some states give a percentage of the total delegation to each candidate, in others the winner takes all the delegates.

Other states use a caucus system, in which voting districts meet on caucus night and through a series of rounds, the caucus decides viable candidates (a viable candidate must have over 15% of the total votes) to receive a proportion of the delegates. The state can split its total delegates by this system of deciding local delegates.

The differences between the primary and caucus system are a topic of frequent debate. The main cause for debate has been which system produces a viable general election candidate that is party joining and elect able by independents. The two major candidates each has an advantage in their type of nomination process, which has continued to raise questions about which system should be used.

The candidate who has the most delegates and super delegates at the convention will be his party's candidate for president. This system enables more people to participate in the primary process, but it also allows minorities to have more of a voice in candidate choice than political party elites. However, this system has caused more extreme candidates to be nominated by the party's base, rather than who the party as a whole views as a winning candidate. The reason behind this is due to the installation of a closed primary process, allowing only registered party voters a vote in the primary, whereas in the general election, non party voters or independents are also able to cast their vote. The closed election process often favors a nominee who is more polarized to the party's extreme position on certain issues, insuring a greater percentage of the party's primary votes. This becomes a problem when the nominee reaches the general election, as he may not appeal to moderate independents that often make up a large percentage of the electorate.

Is there a better system for determining what the American public wants and needs, and which candidate represents those interests? Is the candidate going to fulfill the roles and responsibilities expected of the office of the president? These questions hint at the larger overarching question, "Is this process significant to the greater process of electing a president?" There is not one correct answer to this question, but many diverging viewpoints that are subject to change given the events of each election.

Once the party's presidential nominee has been chosen, the general election process begins. This process is as dynamic as the primary system. Each state's electoral votes are equal to their representatives in congress, plus their senators. The total number of available electoral votes is 538 - 435 members of congress plus 100 senators, as well as 3 delegates for the District of Columbia. To win the presidency, a candidate must have the majority (51%) of the electoral votes; 270 votes gain an electoral victory. If neither candidate has a simple majority, then each state will cast one vote in the House of Representatives for the candidate of their choice. The candidate with the majority of votes from the House will be the next president.

The practical differences between these election processes warrant the question, which process is the most democratic? This question is central to better understanding this unit. The predominant primary system in use is the so called "First Past the Post" system. In this system, the candidate with the most votes at the primary will receive all the electoral votes of that state. Is this system the best and most democratic system available?

Some would argue that the system should require a 51% majority (similar to the Electoral College) of the public's vote in order to declare a winner. One major problem with this system stems from the division of votes when there are more than two candidates. A third party candidate can often pull votes away from the leading candidates, insuring that no one will receive a 51% majority.

Another election strategy would be the use of a proportional system of election to distribute electoral votes; each state's electoral votes are divided amongst the candidates based on proportionality of popular votes of that state. Another system currently used in Australia lets voters rank their candidates; if their candidate is eliminated, their vote will be cast for the second choice the voter has selected, progressing upwards until the winner has been chosen out of two final candidates. The issue many have with this system is that the candidate with the most votes in the beginning might not be the candidate with the most votes at the end. However, this system allows every vote to count towards the final tally and gives every voter a powerful voice in the election process.

A campaign must have a solid strategy in order to win an election. The general election is vastly different from the primary in a variety of ways, including campaign financing. "There are four parts to any campaign; the candidate, the issues of the candidate, the campaign organization, and the money to run the campaign with. Without the money you can forget the other three. (Berry 2008)." Campaign financing is necessary in order to have all other parts of the campaign operational. Campaigns raise money from donors through fund raising. The money is packaged in two categories, either soft or hard contributions.

Hard money is classified as direct contributions to the candidate's election campaign. No one person can give more than \$1000 to the campaign of any one candidate. Soft money is any money that a person donates to the party of the candidate. The party can use this money as it sees fit, but the hope of the candidate is that the money will be used by the party for campaign advertising, staffing, facilities, or any other needs that the candidate needs for his campaign, rather than for the party as a whole. Soft money does not have limits, which makes this finance classification very important for a campaign. In 2002 Senator John McCain and Senator Russell Feingold passed a bipartisan bill reforming campaign financing. One of the reforms was public financing of a presidential campaign, provided that candidate agreed to not take private funds. This reform has not led to a decrease in campaign spending, but curbed the use of private funding by those interested in buying a piece of a winning campaign.

With this legislation, interest groups who donate to candidates to gain access have been curbed. Many special interest groups defended the right to access as a form of the first amendment right to freedom of speech. However, critics argue that the first amendment rights of an interest group and their use of funds infringes on all others who do not have the funds to gain the same access. This debate has raged on for years, remaining an issue today, though in the 2004 election candidates John Kerry and George Bush both elected to make use of public funds rather than private raised funds.

Campaigns use these funds in many ways, but a large proportion goes to TV and Internet advertising. Advertising is the most common form of a media message used to garner support for a candidate. These advertisements can come in many forms. The most common forms are party centered, issue centered, and candidate centered advertisements. These types of advertisements serve a variety of purposes and candidates use them at different times during the campaign. The goal of party centered advertisements is to get people on board due to party support; these generally occur early in the campaign. The goal of issue centered advertisements is to get the public to support the candidate base on the issues; these occur throughout the election. Candidate centered advertising centers on the candidate's personal characteristics,

values, morals and other traits that will appeal to public sentiment. Candidate centered advertising can be used at the beginning of a campaign to help voters get to know the candidate, or could also be used at the end to sway borderline voters.

Strategies

The American presidential election process is an interactive topic that allows a teacher to create many different activities and demonstrations to make the subject understandable without losing relevance. By using this year's presidential election as an example, students will understand all the parts of the election process.

Students will first learn how elections work by understanding the party nomination process. We will begin exploring the nature of different nomination processes and discuss their evolution, using the 1968 Democratic Primary as a starting point. We will discuss whether the nomination process was truly democratic for different political social groups, and if the changes made to insure a greater voice to minority groups, have actually led to more polarization. By analysis of data we will see if the trends of the 2008 election prove that the nomination process gets the most unanimous nominee. Students will also watch a video of the Governor Howard Dean's "I have a scream" speech. Students will explore why the general voting public changed their opinion of the governor from highly favored in most states before the speech and connect the ideas in the previous units to this event.

The party nomination process done through primary and caucus systems is very different. Both primaries systems serve the same purpose, which is choosing the candidate for the general election. Each state has control over which type of election process for the primary - traditional or caucus. The two primary systems, represented by Iowa and New Hampshire, are the caucus system and primary system respectively. The students will participate in a mock caucus and primary, writing down observations on the system as a whole, their feelings about whether or not it's democratic and if the process serves its purpose of electing a popular president.

For students to understand whether any election process of a president is "just" and "democratic" I will have students complete an activity showing them what the different system are, how they work, and then have them decide the positive and negatives of each election process. Students will participate in an activity that will get students up and moving around and another student will record student's observations and comments. The students will replicate the first past post, majority, majority with coalition, proportional, and rank order systems of elections in the classroom. After the class has completed all the processes, we will compare and contrast them to determine if one system is better than another or if they are all equal in their differences.

To understand how the 2008 presidential candidates are financing their campaigns, and who is donating to the candidates, students will collect data of hard and soft money contributions that are published for releases each campaign is required to make of their campaigns financing. We will compare these contributions to the candidate's stances on major issues and discuss whether there is a correlation between the two. We will discuss if this system of financing is democratic or if it is a violation of moral democratic principles.

Classroom Activities

"How to Increase Voter Turnout Activity"

Objective: Students will explore ways to increase American voter turnout by coming up with creative ideas to do so, and research how they would be implemented.

Summary: After discussing why voter turnout is low in the United States, students will discuss ideas to increase voter participation and turnout. Students will discuss what would need to happen for the idea to achieve the goal, and research on the Internet, how they would carry out the plan to achieve those goals.

"Deliberative Polling Activity"

Objective: Students will use deliberative polling to analyze that if after students discussed a topic of which a vote is being cast, they felt positive about the results of the ballot.

Summary: Students will cast an initial vote on a topic that they do not know much about. Students will then be asked on a scale of 1 to 10, 10 being the most, how much they were happy with the outcome of the vote. Then students will read research on the topic that they had just voted on, and have a group of fellow students debate the issues of the vote in front of them. Students will recast their ballot and recast their satisfaction vote. Votes will be tabulated and presented to the class for analysis. We will discuss the results and how deliberative polling and Fishkin's research can lead to more informed, satisfied voters based on the deliberative polling strategy.

"How to Calculate who won Activity"

Objective: This activity will give students a brief idea of different ways of tabulating votes to calculate the winner. Students will analyze which system they feel is the most accurate and democratic.

Summary: Students will participate in an activity that will get students up and moving around and they will record observations and comments. We will be deciding where we would go for lunch. The choices will be three different places. First past post, in which when the final tally is counted, no one choice has a majority of the votes, so the winner is the choice with the most votes. Students will decide if it is fair that the majority of the people did not choose the winner. Majority system is where the one with more than 50% of the votes. If no one choice has that, a majority with coalition, or a compromise between the second and third choices is made so they form a majority. This system shows that minority groups banded together to form a majority. A proportional vote where each restaurant is visited the proportionate amount of times its vote receives. Lastly we will use a rank order system vote, where student's choices would be ranked and even if they did not get their first choice, their vote would be given to their second choice. After the class has completed all the processes, we will compare and contrast them to determine if one system is better than another or if they are all equal in their differences.

Week Outlines

Week 1: Political Opinion, Socialization, and Participation

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Objective	Though completion of current events and in class debate, students will connect modern information to government theory.	Through in-class chart analysis, students will discuss connections to content to government themes.	Though completion and discussion of Q and A students will understand concepts of government themes.	Though group activity students will discuss and analyze voter turnout.	Though PowerPoint students will better understand concepts of government theory and themes.
Bell Ringer	What is public opinion and how does it affect public action?	Complete small quiz on political values and answer these questions Should gov't limit abortions? Should gov't provide jobs?	On which criteria, gender, race, religion, age, income, education do most people vote based on? Why?	Read Stem cell research info	Group presentations of "How to increase voter turnout" activity.
In Class	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review last weeks info 2. Bell Ringer 3. CE and in class Debate 4. Intro Reading (pg 125-127) 5. KWL 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bell Ringer quiz 2. Discussion of chart and answers to quiz (pg 144/151) 3. Introduce project 4. Take political type quiz 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bell Ringer 2. Go over Q and A questions 3. Analysis of charts (pg. 207, 213, 214, 216, 218) 4. Start "How to increase voter turnout activity" 5. Stem cell vote 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read stem cell research info 2. Retake stem cell vote and discuss results 3. Discuss Fishkin article 4. Finish "How to increase voter turnout" activity 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Presentations 2. PowerPoint 3. KWL revisited
After Class/ Homework	-Read and outline Chapter 5 and answer Q and A	Read and outline Chapter 7 and answer Q and A	Read Fishkin "Deliberate polling"	Start to read Frank "What's the matter with Kansas" and Bartels "What's the matter with what's the matter with Kansas" excerpts	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work on week 6 Current Events/ debate Q: Who makes the better argument Bartels or Frank?" 2. Finish Reading Bartels and Frank

Week 2: Media, Government and the Presidency

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Objective	Though completion of current events and in class debate, students will connect modern information to government theory.	Through in-class think, pair, share, students will discuss connections to content to government themes.	Though reading and discussion of media ownership, students will understand concepts of government themes.	Though videos and PowerPoint students will better understand concepts of government theory and themes.	Though discussion and group project students will connect government themes.
Bell Ringer	Who makes the better argument Bartels or Frank?"	What is news? What makes news, news? How should it be covered?	Describe a terrorists physical characteristics and personality so that anyone could identify one if we met/ saw them.	How does the media change your view of a candidate? How? Why?	Who gets more media coverage, Actors, athletes, congressmen or the president and why?
In Class	1. Bell Ringer 2. CE and in class debate 3. Discussion on Frank and Bartels 4. KWL on Media	1. Bell Ringer 2. Think, pair, share on chapter 6 3. Assign different media outlets for analysis	1. Bell Ringer 2. Presentations of station research 3. Analysis of charts (pg. 178/ 179) 4. Start reading about Media Ownership	1. Bell Ringer 2. Watch videos on Nixon v Kennedy Debate, Howard Dean, Gore v Bush Debate 3. PowerPoint	1. Bell Ringer 2. President Media coverage discussion 3. Work on project 4. KWL revisited
After Class/ Homework	-Read and outline Chapter 6	1. Analyze assigned media outlet and answer questions 2. Work on projects	Finish Media ownership reading	1. Listen to Terry Schaivo NPR podcast and read article 2. Bring in outline of project	1. Work on week 7 Current Events/debate Q: Should the candidate with the most popular votes or the candidate who wins the most states be president? 2. Start reading chapter 9

Week 3: Elections and Campaigns

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Objective	Though completion of current events and in class debate, students will connect modern information to government theory.	Though group activity students will discuss and analyze primary systems.	Though group activity students will discuss and analyze election systems.	Though reading and discussion of 527s and campaign finance, students will understand concepts of government themes.	Though PowerPoint students will better understand concepts of government theory and themes.

Bell Ringer	Should the candidate who wins the most votes of the candidate who wins the most states be elected president? Why?	Primary/ Caucus System activity	What is the electoral college and how does it work?	What is the difference between hard money and soft money contributions?	Watch campaign ads videos
In Class	1. Bell Ringer 2. Review last weeks info 3. CE and in class Debate 4. Intro Reading (pg 266-267) 5. KWL	1. Primary/ Caucus System activity 2. Read pg 270 and discuss 3. Go over Q and A	1. Bell Ringer 2. Electoral college activity 3. Different types of election voting calculation activity.	1. Bell Ringer 2. Go over actual 527 legislation 3. Debate pro con of campaign contributions vs. public funding	1. Videos 2. Discussion of ads 3. PowerPoint 4. KWL revisited
After Class/ Homework	-Read and outline Chapter 9 and answer Q and A	Work on project and visit www.270towin.com	Write journal about today's activities and analyze pros and cons of each.	Visit living candidate website and other campaign ads video sites. And analyze	1. Work on week 8 Current Events/ debate Q: What is more important to most voters, a candidate's stance on the issues or his attributes/ characteristics?

Week 4/5: Campaign for the Presidency Project

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Objective	Though completion of current events and in class debate, students will connect modern information to government theory.	Though project, students will discuss and analyze 2008 presidential election.	Though project, students will discuss and analyze 2008 presidential election.	Though project, students will discuss and analyze 2008 presidential election.	Though project, students will discuss and analyze 2008 presidential election.
Bell Ringer	What is more important to most voters, a candidate's stance on the issues or his attributes/ characteristics?				
In Class	1. Bell Ringer 2. CE and in class debate 3. Intro reading (pg. 284 & 285) 4. KWL	1. Discuss ideal candidate 2. Project	Project	Project	Project
After Class/ Homework	-Describe an ideal candidate for you and how you would run their campaign.	Work on projects	Work on projects	Work on projects	Work on week 9 Current Events/ debate Work on project

Resources

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