



Lower Elementary Lesson

The Electoral College



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Target Grade Levels:

Elementary (3-4)

Lesson Length:

Approximately 40 minutes

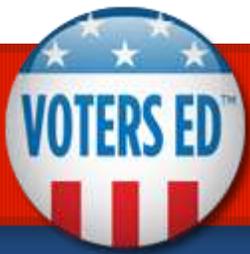
This lesson is correlated with state and NCSS standards. Please reference the Standards Master Correlation document for a more detailed and comprehensive description of all correlated standards.

State Standards

- California
 - Goal of Democratic Understanding and Civic Values
 - Constitutional Heritage
 - Civic Values, Rights, and Responsibilities
 - Goal of Skills Attainment and Social Participation
 - Participation Skills
 - Critical Thinking Skills
- Florida
 - Civics and Government Strand
 - Elementary Standard 3, SS.5.C.3.2
 - Geography Strand
 - Elementary Standard 4, SS.5.G.4.1
 - Elementary Standard 4, SS.5.G.4.2
- Massachusetts
 - History and Geography
 - Concept and Skill 6
 - Civics and Government
 - Concept and Skill 8
- New York
 - Standard 5
 - Key Idea 2
 - Key Idea 3
 - Key Idea 4
- Texas
 - Grade 5, Social Studies Skills, Standard 24

NCSS

- Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Theme 10: Civic Ideals and Practices



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Objectives

The objective of this lesson is to introduce students to the Presidential election and the Electoral College.

By the end of this lesson:

- Students will be able to explain that the President is elected every four years through the Electoral College.
- Students will be able to explain how many states the President won in the 2012 presidential election.

Differentiation Strategies

- Group/team work
- Guided questions
- Smartboard/computer/tablet presentation

Materials

- Paper and pencils for each student
- Whiteboard, chalkboard, or Smartboard
- Voter's Ed app

Procedure

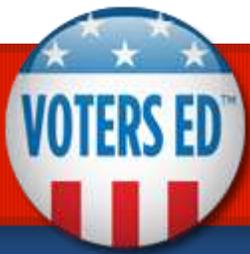
Anticipatory Set (Warm-up):

Ask students to write down their favorite ice cream flavor. Using a whiteboard or Smartboard, tally the number of votes for each flavor and determine which was most popular.

Explain that students have just voted for the favorite ice cream flavor of the class, and that citizens do the same thing during elections.

Introduction:

Discuss how citizens vote for candidates who govern the country, which includes members of Congress. You may need to remind students that Congress writes the laws of the country, and the President enforces those laws and defends the country.



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Guided Practice:

1. Present students with only two choice of ice cream. Ask students to vote again for their favorite ice cream given the limited choice. Explain that this is how people vote for members of Congress. Ask students how they determined who won the limited choice election. Discuss the concept of majority rule, and explain how this is how people vote for members of Congress.
2. Open the Voter's Ed app and display a blank Electoral College map (click on the "Prediction Map" button and then click on the "Clear my predictions" button on the bottom left. Encourage students to examine the map, and ask whether each state has the same number of Electoral College votes. Discuss how some states have more votes than others, because some states have more people living in them than others. Explain the concepts of Republican and Democratic candidates, and discuss how this is similar to the ice cream flavor activity. Ask students to use the app to show how states contribute differing numbers of Electoral votes for each party, and how these help us determine who becomes President.

Independent Practice:

3. Display the 2012 results map, and ask students to point out how many states voted for President Obama and how many voted for Governor Romney. Ask students to talk with a partner about who won the election.

Closure:

If you have extra time, you can ask students to create their own in-class election for favorite color, favorite book, or favorite recess activity. Group students so that some groups have a greater "population" and thus more votes. Ask each group to submit their "Electoral" votes, then ask students to calculate the results.

Formative Assessment

Distribute an "exit ticket" asking students to define one or more terms (e.g. vote, Electoral College, election) and one question they have about the topic.