

Topic V

Mock Election Simulation



TOPIC V

MOCK ELECTION

LESSON 1

HOLDING A SCHOOL ELECTION

LESSON OBJECTIVES

The student will

- identify various components of a gubernatorial campaign and election.
- analyze campaign ads and organizations of gubernatorial candidates.
- assist in composing different aspects of an original campaign strategy.
- demonstrate how a campaign and election is run by participating in a simulation.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

- Handout 1.1 "Gubernatorial Candidates"
- Handout 1.2 "Campaign Committees"
- Handout 1.3 "Chart of Committee Responsibilities"
- MediaCenter/Theater/Cafeteria or other large room for site of rally
- newspapers listing of campaign headquarters and addresses

RATIONALE

Once students have collected information about the candidates' stands on the issues and qualifications for office, they are ready to formulate their own positions and conduct a mock campaign and election. This activity holds many opportunities for interdisciplinary study. Language Arts skills are required for organizing major points into speeches and brochures. The content of science is useful for examining environmental and defense issues. Mathematics skills can be integrated into the tabulation and analysis of data from the charts and graphs included in this unit and from surveys conducted by the students. Art activities might include designing campaign posters and political cartoons. And, of course, no political rally is worth its salt without plenty of rousing campaign music.

STRATEGIES

Reviewing the Candidates

Activity 1

Have students compile information about the candidates by completing Handout 1.1. They should be encouraged to contact the campaign headquarters of candidates for information as well as using the biographies in this document. Newspaper clippings can also be used to supplement this information.

Mock Election, Lesson 1 (continued)

Planning the Campaigns

Activity 2

Divide the class into two parties and then have them choose various candidate campaign staffs to join. Once students have been assigned to appropriate campaign staffs, distribute Handout 1.2 to help them choose which campaign committee to join. These committees must be formed to organize each candidate's campaign and to plan voter registration drives and rallies.

Activity 3

Once students have selected a candidate and campaign committee, the teacher should distribute Handout 1.3 and have committees meet in separate locations to record specific ideas and responsibilities. These lists should be prioritized and given a time frame.

Activity 4

Canvassing and a voter registration drive should be conducted the week prior to the election. During that week, the publicity campaign should go into full swing. Posters, speeches and video ads can be planned and displayed. A political rally would serve as a good focus for student committee activity. Parents and other classes might be invited the Monday before election day to hear speeches and music and view displays.

Conducting the Election

Activity 5

Prior to election day the teacher can duplicate voter registration cards (found in this unit) and contact the local voter registration office to obtain sample ballots. Another option would be to design the school's own ballot. On election day students would serve as poll workers to check voter registration cards against the registration rolls (provided by the school's student listing). Students should be given time throughout the school day to voluntarily go to the polling booth and vote. A bipartisan committee would count ballots and announce results at the end of the day.

GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATE

Personal Characteristics Candidate's Name: Party Affiliation: Age: Marital Status: Education: Occupation and Experience:	
ISSUE	POSITION
Taxes	
Education	
Immigration	
Economic Growth	
Other	

CAMPAIGN COMMITTEES

SPEECH

The **Speech Writing Committee** would be responsible for writing and delivering campaign addresses to inform voters about why they should support the candidate.

CANVAS

The **Canvassing Committee** would decide upon strategies for involving as many students as possible and persuading them to support their candidate. Strategies might include talking with other students at lunchtime, before and after school, or on the playground. The aid of the speechwriting committee could be enlisted for visiting other classes to make brief presentations.

MUSIC

The **Music Committee** might tape appropriate songs for broadcast at rallies, or talented students could even compose and perform original music.

MEDIA

Campaign literature such as leaflets or brief messages for distribution throughout the school could be the responsibility of a **Media Committee**. These students might also wish to make videotaped ads similar to those broadcast on television. In addition, the committee could design visual displays for hallways, classrooms, rally sites and even local businesses.

VOTER REGISTRATION

The **Voter Registration Committee** could set up a booth in the school cafeteria and register students (nonpartisan) throughout the school who wish to participate.

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Committee Name: _____

Candidate Being Supported: _____

Members: _____

Committee Tasks/Ideas	What Priority	When to Do	Who is Responsible	Resources Needed