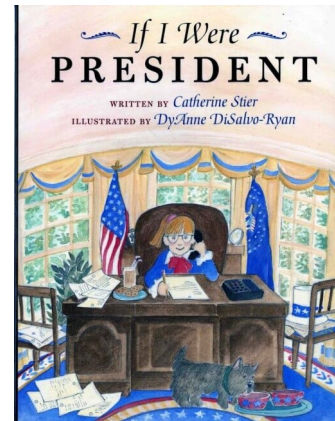


# Albert Whitman

## Discussion Guide grades K-4



**National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: Power, Authority and Governance (Standard 6) & Civic Ideals and Practices (Standard 10)**

Children will learn about politics and government as they relate to concepts like justice, fairness, freedom, and citizenship. As children explore these concepts, they will begin to understand their personal rights and responsibilities and become active members of society. This guide covers the National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies in Power, Authority and Governance & Civic Ideals and Practices.

In this discussion guide we will talk about the president and how the role of the president is to lead our country and help make decisions. We will talk about the idea that we vote for leaders who we think will do the best job and read about the voting process. Most importantly, we will have conversations about civic ideas and practices involving the freedom of all people, the first Amendment, and how to exercise and protect our freedoms- all from the point of view of relatable characters in stories.

## BUILDING BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE-

### Discuss

1. What is history?
2. What is historical fiction?
3. Give examples of historical fiction books you have read or movies you have watched.
4. Why study the past?
5. What can the past tell us about the present?
6. What is government?
7. A government makes laws to help people be safe and get along.
8. Why do we need a government?
9. What would happen if we did not have laws?
10. What is a citizen?
11. How can citizens of a community show they are responsible?
12. What are different kinds of communities?
13. What are your responsibilities at home, school, and in your neighborhood community?
14. How does our community and state government help people?
15. Why do we need leaders in government?
16. Who is the leader of our country?
17. Who chooses this leader?

## **Free for You and Me**

New Vocabulary

*freedom, responsibility, protect, U.S Constitution, amendment, protection, petition, rights, grievance, assembly, redress, faith*

### Before Reading

- What is freedom?
- What does it mean to be free?
- What responsibilities come with freedom?
- What is a free country?
- What rights do people have in a free country?
- What role does government play in our freedom and responsibilities?
- What are your basic freedoms?
- How are they protected?
- How do we exercise freedom in our homes, at school, in our communities?
- Are all people in the world free?

### After Reading

1. Write ten questions about The First Amendment. Ask a classmate to answer the questions and show you where he/she found them in the book.
2. The first amendment is part of the \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Why was the Bill of Rights added to the constitution?
4. Which protection do you believe is the most important? Why?
5. Why is the Constitution of the United States so important?
6. Why was it written?
7. Who benefited from this document?

Go back to the story and summarize each freedom. How did the author use reasons and evidence? Draw a picture or write a sentence.

Freedom of religion
Freedom of speech
Freedom of the press
Freedom of assembly
Freedom to petition the government

# **A Vote is a Powerful Thing**

New Vocabulary

*vote, election, candidate, campaign, citizen, ballot, community, fair*

## Before Reading

- What choices do you make each day?
- How do the choices you make affect you?
- How do your choices affect others at home, school or in your community?
- How are individual choices different from making choices as a group?
- How do other people's decisions impact you and your school, family and neighborhood communities?
- What is a citizen in a community?
- What are some of the responsibilities of citizens?
- How do good citizens participate in their government and community?
- What are things about you that show you are a thoughtful friend and neighbor?
- What is a vote?
- What kinds of things do you vote on?
- Why is voting "fair"?
- Why is a vote powerful?
- What are some things people vote for in your classroom, family and neighborhood communities?
- What is an election?
- What different kinds of elections are there?
- How do voting and elections affect Americans' everyday lives?

## After Reading

1. Find examples from the story that show us how the actions of people in the past can affect and change our future.
2. What types of things did the characters in the book vote for?
3. Why is voting considered a right and a responsibility?
4. How does the voting process work? Use examples from the book
5. Why is a vote a powerful thing in the story? What positive changes did voting bring to the community?
6. What do you feel passionate about in your community? How can you make a difference as a citizen?
7. Vote on something as a class or family. Think of things you can vote on. For example, "What are we having for desert tonight; Cookies or fruit?"

## ***If I were President***

New Vocabulary

President, duties, congress, judge, bill, campaign, leader, preserve, protect, defend, cabinet, armed forces, veto

### Before Reading

- What is a president?
- What is the job of the president?
- What are some specific duties of the President?
- What kinds of “perks” or special treatment does the president get?
- Who is the President of the United States?

### After Reading

#### **Go back to the story-**

Who is telling this story? Point of view?

How does the President of the United States get elected?

How does he/she prepare for this?

What 2 things must a person have to become president?

What is the President's job?

How long does the president serve in office?

Where does the president live?

Where does the president work?

Who helps the president?

Who is the president's boss?

If you were president, what would you do?

#### **Project**

In November, the United States of America will have a 2020 Presidential Election. Find current events articles and advertisements about the election. Who is running? What do the candidates stand for? What are their beliefs? How are they alike and different? What party do each represent? Who do you feel will be the best president? Why?

What did you learn about voting and your rights and responsibilities as a citizen?

What did you learn about the presidency?

What did you learn about freedom?





What did you learn about voting and your rights and responsibilities as a citizen?

What did you learn about the presidency?

What did you learn about freedom?