

A VOTE IS A POWERFUL THING

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EDUCATOR GUIDE

GRADE LEVEL

First Grade, Second Grade

LENGTH OF LESSON

Varies based on educator needs, classroom requirements, and chunking of activity steps

OBJECTIVES

Students understand how elections work.

Students design their own campaign.

Students develop mathematical processing skills.

Students practice data collection and analysis.

TEKS ADDRESSED IN THIS LESSON

1st Grade

113.12 Social Studies

(12) *Citizenship*. The student understands characteristics of good citizenship as exemplified by historical figures and other individuals. The student is expected to:

(A) identify characteristics of good citizenship, including truthfulness, justice, equality, respect for oneself and others, responsibility in daily life, and participation in government by educating oneself about the issues, respectfully holding public officials to their word, and voting;

(17) *Social studies skills*. The student communicates in oral, visual, and written forms. The student is expected to:

(A) use a simple timeline to distinguish among past, present, and future;

(C) express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences;

(D) create and interpret visual and written material; and

(E) use social studies terminology correctly.

111.3 Math

(1) *Mathematical process standards*. The student uses mathematical processes to acquire and demonstrate mathematical understanding. The student is expected to:

(A) apply mathematics to problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace;

(D) communicate mathematical ideas, reasoning, and their implications using multiple representations, including symbols, diagrams, graphs, and language as appropriate;

(E) create and use representations to organize, record, and communicate mathematical ideas;

(F) analyze mathematical relationships to connect and communicate mathematical ideas; and

(G) display, explain, and justify mathematical ideas and arguments

(8) *Data analysis*. The student applies mathematical process standards to organize data to make it useful for interpreting information and solving problems. The student is expected to:

(A) collect, sort, and organize data in up to three categories using models/representations such as tally marks or T-charts

2nd Grade

113.13 Social Studies

(9) *Government*. The student understands the role of public officials. The student is expected to:

(C) identify ways that public officials are selected, including election and appointment to office

(10) *Citizenship*. The student understands characteristics of good citizenship as exemplified by historical figures and other individuals. The student is expected to:

(A) identify characteristics of good citizenship, including ... participation in government by educating oneself about the issues, respectfully holding public officials to their word, and voting

(16) *Social studies skills*. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

(B) apply vocabulary related to chronology, including past, present, and future;

(D) use social studies terminology correctly;

(E) express ideas orally based on knowledge and experiences; and

(F) create written and visual material such as stories, maps, and graphic organizers to express ideas.

111.4 Math

(1) *Mathematical process standards*. The student uses mathematical processes to acquire and demonstrate mathematical understanding. The student is expected to:

(A) apply mathematics to problems arising in everyday life, society, and the workplace;

(D) communicate mathematical ideas, reasoning, and their implications using multiple representations, including symbols, diagrams, graphs, and language as appropriate;

(E) create and use representations to organize, record, and communicate mathematical ideas;

(F) analyze mathematical relationships to connect and communicate mathematical ideas; and

(G) display, explain, and justify mathematical ideas and arguments using precise mathematical language in written or oral communication.

(2) *Number and operations*. The student applies mathematical process standards to understand how to represent and compare whole numbers, the relative position and magnitude of whole numbers, and relationships within the numeration system related to place value. The student is expected to:

(D) use place value to compare and order whole numbers up to 1,200 using comparative language, numbers, and symbols ($>$, $<$, or $=$)

(10) *Data analysis*. The student applies mathematical process standards to organize data to make it useful for interpreting information and solving problems. The student is expected to:

(A) explain that the length of a bar in a bar graph or the number of pictures in a pictograph represents the number of data points for a given category

Vocabulary to Consider

Accessibility	Candidate	Funds	Pond	Scramble
Ballot	Citizen	Government	Representative	Veteran
Campaign	Election	March	Sample	Vote

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

- What is a vote?
- Who can vote?
- What is a citizen?
- What do citizens do?

Used with permission -



POST-READING QUESTIONS

- How is a vote a powerful thing?
- What power does voting give you?
- Why is it important to vote?
- Do you vote on anything with your family? Friends?
- Why don't you vote on laws like Callie's grandmother did?
- What is campaigning?
- Why is it important to listen to the different sides when people are campaigning?
- How does campaigning influence the listener?
- What would you have voted for after hearing Callie and Lynn: the cookie factory or the wilderness park? Why?
- How do citizens vote?

RESOURCES NEEDED

- The book A Vote Is A Powerful Thing by Catherine Stier
- Handouts/printouts from the lesson
 - Campaign topic signs, 1 per group
 - Campaign Speech Template, 1 per group
 - Campaign Poster Template, 1 per group
 - Voting ballot, 1 per student
 - Vote Tallying Activity Sheet, 1 per student
- Markers, crayons, or colored pencils
- Pencils

ACTIVITY OUTLINE

Students will participate in the read-aloud of A Vote Is A Powerful Thing. Educators will ask the pre-reading questions to prepare students for the book. After the read-aloud, follow up with the reading comprehension post-reading questions. In a subsequent activity, students will conduct a mock campaign and election to understand the campaign, election, and voting process.

After the student ballots have been cast, use their votes for a math lesson to help understand numeration and data analysis.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Discuss the pre-reading questions with students.
2. Read A Vote Is A Powerful Thing.
3. Discuss the reading comprehension post-reading questions.
4. Explain the steps of a campaign, as explained in the book. Students will then go through the campaign process:
 - a. Premise: students will vote for how to use the last few minutes of the school day:
Having a dance party or playing a game

- i. Note: Educators, you will need to plan for this activity or change your voting items to reflect what can be done in your classroom (blank templates are available in this lesson if you need to change the topics).
- b. Break students into 2 or 3 groups.
- c. Each group will be assigned an end-of-day activity they will campaign for. Each of the groups will conduct the same steps, but for their end-of-day activity.
- d. Students will work as a group to make a list of reasons why others should vote for their end-of-day activity.
- e. From there, each group will split into 2 (can be self-selected or teacher-directed). One group will design a campaign poster and the other will create a short campaign speech.
 - i. Campaign Poster group: students will design a poster that highlights reasons why their peers should vote for their activity. This will be a pictorial representation.
 - ii. Campaign Speech group: students will create a short (1 minute) campaign speech that highlights reasons why their peers should vote for their activity. A representative will be chosen (by the group or teacher) to deliver the speech to the class.
- f. Hang up the posters and have each group's representatives deliver the speeches.
- g. Students will then have the opportunity to vote for an end-of-day activity through the voting ballots. Encourage students to vote based on what sounds fun and by who gave the most convincing argument rather than voting for their own group.
- h. Tally the votes as a class using the Vote Tallying Activity Sheet. Together, the class will discover which activity won the popular vote (and the activity they can look forward to).
 - i. Note: there are different Vote Tallying Activity Sheets for 1st and 2nd grade to correspond to the math TEKS.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- A. Voting is important! Have students explain in their own words (written, verbal, pictorial), the importance of voting. How does voting impact their lives? Why should people vote?
 - a. Students with the ability to write at this level may respond to sentence stems such as
 - i. "Voting is important because _____."
- B. Informed voting. Talk with students about issues important to them and developmentally appropriate. Examples may include endangered animals, conservation, school lunches. Have students look up information in appropriate sources (books, websites, etc.). You can compare this to Carrie's grandmother in A Vote Is A Powerful Thing and how informed voting is important.
 - a. Students with the ability to write can respond to sentence stems such as
 - i. "Being informed about _____ is important because _____."
 - ii. "I would want people to know that _____ should be saved/changed/etc. [whichever is appropriate to the topic] because _____."

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Barnes, Peter W., and Cheryl Shaw Barnes. *Woodrow for President: A Tail of Voting, Campaigns, and Elections*. Little Patriot Press, 2012.

Britannica Kids, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., <https://kids.britannica.com/>.

DiPucchio, Kelly, et al. *Grace for President*. Disney/Hyperion Books, 2012.

Stier, Catherine, and Lynne Avril. *If I Ran for President*. AV2 By Weigl, 2013.

Stier, Catherine. *If I Were President*. Albert Whitman and Company, 2004.

Stier, C., & Dawson, C. (2020). *A vote is a powerful thing*. Albert Whitman & Company.