



Unit 5

Making Your Voices Heard

Unit Overview

Introduction

Students learn how they can make their voices heard both before Election Day, when they can disseminate information to the media and to their peers and community about the candidates and issues that matter to them, and on Election Day, by taking part in a Mock Election.

Lesson 1: Media and Community Outreach

Students disseminate the information they have learned about candidates and the campaign through a variety of channels, from writing letters to the editor for their local or school newspaper, to publishing brochures or mounting websites to serve as Voters' Guides, or holding an in-school Issues Expo to educate their school or community about the candidates' positions on issues of importance to them.

Lesson 2: Mock Election

On Election Day, students carry out a mock election in their class or among fellow students in the school. They distribute ballots and tabulate results. Students consider what it would be like to live in a nation where citizens were not given the right to vote.



Overview

Objectives of the Lesson

Students will:

- Share their research on the campaign, candidates, and issues with the community

Preparation before Lesson 1

- Remind students to bring their [How to Write an Op-ed](#) and [Sample Op-ed](#) handouts to class.



Lesson Plan

1. If the class has prepared an Issues Expo on the candidates and the issues, use this class to hold the expo, inviting members of the school (seniors who are likely voters, teachers, administrators, parents) or local community.
2. If the class has prepared print materials to inform voters about the candidates and issues, use this class to disseminate the materials to the community.

Assignment Suggestion

- Have students use [How to Write an Op-ed](#) to write an op-ed about one of the issues on their Youth Issues Agenda and send it to their local or school newspaper.



Overview

Lesson Objectives

Students will:

- Conduct a mock election
- Tally results to determine the mock election winners

Preparation before Lesson 2

- Make ballots for the mock election.

NOTE: To avoid the perception that your school or the Student Voices project favors one candidate over another, results from the mock election should not be shared or posted prior to the availability of actual election results.



Lesson Plan

- Ask the students to distribute ballots to voters. (The voters may include the members of your class, other selected classes, the entire school, district, etc.)
 - As a class: Ask students to cast their votes in the Student Voices election.
 - As a school: Students may cast their votes at a central location or several central locations.
- Students should let voters know how they will be able to find results from the mock election on the [Student Voices website](#) once votes are tabulated.
- Students should tabulate and submit results of the mock election to the Student Voices Web Editor for posting on the [Student Voices website](#).

NOTE: If there is time in this session, discuss with students how voters locate their polling place on Election Day, if they are voting for the first time.

Assignment Suggestions

- Ask students to find the results of the actual election and compare the results of the mock election with the results of the actual election.
- Ask students to calculate voter turnout results.