

**Election  
Lesson Plans  
for the  
Middle School  
Classroom**

Prepared by  
Cliff Cromwell  
Dawn Willis  
Updated, 2004

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## I. Delaware Content Standards for Civics

## II. Lessons

### 1. Who Represents Me?

In this lesson students will use a variety of community resources to investigate the duties of various state and federal offices. They will identify their Election District, Representative District, Senatorial District and County District. They will also identify the office holders and candidates running for these offices.

### 2. What Do You Think?

This lesson will allow students to investigate the voting performance and political opinions of their adult community by conducting political polls/interviews. Based on the information gathered, students will hopefully conclude that voting is a privilege that is accompanied by responsibility.

### 3. If Elected . . .

In this lesson students will use a variety of community resources to investigate the duties of a particular county, state or federal office (See Lesson 1). The student will investigate the qualifications of one candidate for this office and design an advertisement for the candidate's campaign.

### 4. Who Votes in the United States?

This lesson allows students the opportunity to investigate and analyze some of the reasons citizens do not always actively participate in their right and responsibility to vote.

### 5. The Electoral College

This lesson introduces students to the Electoral College. There are four activities that you may be used in any order.

### 6. The 2004 Election

This lesson introduces students to the concept that a candidate can win the popular vote, but not win the election in the Electoral College.

# Delaware Content Standards for Civics

Civics directly addresses citizenship education within the context of political systems. Students study the assumptions upon which governments are founded, and the organizations and strategies governments employ to achieve their goals. With specific respect to the United States, students learn the underlying principles of representative democracy, the constitutional separation of powers, and the rule of law. They need to comprehend that an essential premise of representative democracy is the willingness of citizens to place a high premium on their own personal responsibility for participation in social decision-making. Students develop the skills which citizens must possess in order to discharge those responsibilities while protecting their rights and the rights of others. The study of civics prepares students to translate their beliefs into actions and their ideas into policies.

End of Cluster Expectations for Grade Cluster 6 – 8

## **Civics Standard One: Students will examine the structure and purposes of governments with specific emphasis on constitutional democracy [Government].**

Governments exist and are instituted for specific purposes and employ a variety of organizational structures to pursue their objectives. Constitutional democracy attempts to balance individual freedom with the needs of the society as a whole. American citizens need a basic understanding of the structure of different forms of government and a detailed knowledge of a constitutional democracy.

**6-8:** Students will understand that governments have the power to make and enforce laws and regulations, levy taxes, conduct foreign policy, and make war.

**6-8:** Students will analyze the different functions of federal, state, and local governments in the United States and examine the reasons for the different organizational structures each level of government.

## **Civics Standard Two: Students will understand the principles and ideals underlying the American political system [Politics].**

The American political system was intentionally created to rest on a foundation of individual liberty, freedom of religion, representative democracy, equal opportunity, and equal protection under the law. These principles and ideals are codified in the United States Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and other significant documents. Understanding, achieving, and upholding them represents a major challenge to each succeeding generation of American citizens.

**6-8:** Students will understand that the concept of majority rule does not mean that the rights of minorities may be disregarded and will examine and apply the protections accorded those minorities in the American political system.

**6-8:** Students will understand the principles and content of major American state papers such as the Declaration of Independence; United States Constitution (including the Bill of Rights); and the Federalist Papers.

**Civics Standard Three: Students will understand the responsibilities, rights, and privileges of United States citizens [Citizenship].**

The political, religious, and economic freedoms provided to American citizens are accompanied by the responsibility of active civic participation at the individual, community, state, and national levels. Effective citizens need to understand the dedication and commitment necessary to safeguard those rights for themselves and future generations, as well as the potential consequences of inaction. They should also be able to distinguish between rights and privileges.

**6-8:** Students will understand that civil rights secure political freedom while property rights secure economic freedom and that both are essential protections for United States citizens.

**6-8:** Students will understand that American citizenship includes responsibilities such as voting, jury duty, obeying the law, service in the armed forces when required, and public service.

**Civics Standard Four: Students will develop and employ the civic skills necessary for effective, participatory citizenship [Participation].**

The intent to participate in the American political system must be matched with the specific skills necessary to be effective. Such skills include but are not limited to: registering to vote; interacting successfully with government agencies; organizing and working in civic groups; researching and advocating a position; or serving in an office of public trust.

**6-8:** Students will follow the actions of elected officials, and understand and employ the mechanisms for communicating with them while in office.

# Who Represents Me?

(Learning about elected offices, officials, and candidates)

## DELAWARE STANDARDS addressed by this lesson

**Civics 1** – Students will analyze the different functions of federal, state, and local governments in the United States and examine the reasons for the different organizational structures each level of government employs (Citizenship)

**Civics 2** – Students will understand the principles and content of major American state papers such as the United States Constitution (Politics)

**Civics 4** – Students will understand and employ the mechanisms for communicating with elected officials while in office (Participation)

**Geography 1** – Students will demonstrate mental maps of the world and its sub-regions which include the relative location and characteristics of political divisions (Maps)

## **INTRODUCTION**

In this lesson students will use a variety of community resources to investigate the duties of various state and federal offices. They will identify their Election District, Representative District, Senatorial District and County District. They will also identify the office holders and candidates running for these offices.

## **PURPOSE**

The major focus of this lesson is for the student to analyze the functions and organizational structure of the three levels of government in the United States. Identification of the offices held by local officials and their functions will provide the student with basic knowledge necessary for this analysis.

## **LESSON OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Identify the Election, Representative, Senatorial, and County District in which s/he resides
- Identify the office holders and candidates running for various offices in Delaware
- Identify the duties of an elective office in Delaware
- Develop a profile of a recent Delaware candidate
- Compare and contrast the functions and organizational structures of local, state and federal governments
- Communicate with an elected official/candidate

## Who Represents Me?

### PROCEDURES

1. Display maps of Delaware's Election, Senatorial, and Representative Districts (available from the county Department of Elections or their internet site <http://www.state.de.us/election>)
2. Demonstrate to the class how to use and read the Election, Senatorial, and Representative Districts maps.
3. Students work in a whole group setting to identify their respective districts.
4. Students collect materials for a Classroom Library about the elected offices, the office holders and the candidates.
5. Students work individually to complete *Activity Sheet One--Who Represents Me* to identify office holders and candidates seeking public office.
6. Students work in groups, by office, to develop a profile of each office holder and candidate which includes the duties of the office, position on a relevant issue, and contact information (i.e., 5-6 students create a profile for the insurance commissioner) and complete *Activity Sheet Two--Candidate Profile*
7. Students individually create a job advertisement for the elected office (newspaper, web page, poster, television/radio commercial, etc.)
8. Students work in jigsaw groups (a mixed group with one student from each of the original groups created in step six) to reach conclusions about differences in governmental structures and the purposes of government at the local, state, and national levels. Each student will complete *Activity Sheet Three—Structures and Purposes of Government*.  
NOTE: Depending on the age/developmental level of the students, this may need to be a teacher-led activity
9. Each group debriefs with the entire class to reach a consensus on the structures and purposes of government at each level.

### MATERIALS

- U. S. Constitution (optional)
- Delaware Constitution (optional)
- Maps of Delaware's Election, Senatorial, and Representative Districts  
(Additional information is available at the Department of Election site--see menu at site): <http://www.state.de.us/election>
- Student Activity Sheet 1
- Student Activity Sheet 2
- Student Activity Sheet 3

### ASSESSMENT

- Materials Collection
- Activity Sheets One, Two, Three
- Candidate's Job Advertisement

### Who Represents Me?

*DIRECTIONS:* Complete this form using the Classroom Library's election material, teacher handouts, classroom maps, information from the Department of Elections, etc.

#### Personal Data

Representative District: \_\_\_\_\_ Senatorial District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Election District: \_\_\_\_\_ County/City District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Polling Place: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Office Holders

Governor: \_\_\_\_\_ Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Lt. Governor: \_\_\_\_\_ Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

U. S. Senator: \_\_\_\_\_ Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address (county office): \_\_\_\_\_

U. S. Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address (county office): \_\_\_\_\_

State Senator: \_\_\_\_\_ Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address (county office): \_\_\_\_\_

State Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address (county office): \_\_\_\_\_

Who Represents Me?  
Lesson One - Activity Sheet #1 (continued)

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Who Represents Me?

Attorney General: \_\_\_\_\_ Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Commissioner: \_\_\_\_\_ Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_

County Council/Levy Court Members/Wilmington City Council:  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_



**Candidates for Office**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office (seeking): \_\_\_\_\_  
Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office (seeking): \_\_\_\_\_  
Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office (seeking): \_\_\_\_\_  
Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office (seeking): \_\_\_\_\_  
Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office (seeking): \_\_\_\_\_  
Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office (seeking): \_\_\_\_\_  
Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office (seeking): \_\_\_\_\_  
Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office (seeking): \_\_\_\_\_  
Political Party: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
email: \_\_\_\_\_

---

(Name)

Office Holder – Candidate  
(circle one)

for the office of

---

Duties of the office include:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Position on the Issue of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information

Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**STRUCTURES AND PURPOSES OF GOVERNMENT  
AT DIFFERENT LEVELS**

**National Government**

**Structure:**

**Purpose:**

**State Government**

**Structure:**

**Purpose:**

**Local Government (County/City)**

**Structure:**

**Purpose:**

# What Do You Think?

(Learning about and conducting political polls)

## DELAWARE STANDARDS addressed by this lesson

**Civics 3** – Students will understand that American citizenship includes responsibilities such as voting (Citizenship)

**Civics 4** – Students will understand that in order to select effective leaders, citizens have to become informed about candidates qualifications and the issues of the day (Participation)\*

\*Grade 4-5 Benchmark, but is a pre-requisite for the 6-8 Civics Standard Four

**History 2** – Students will master the basic research skills necessary to conduct an independent investigation of historical phenomena (Analysis)

## **PURPOSE**

This lesson will allow students to investigate the voting performance and political opinions of their adult community by conducting political polls/interviews. Based on the information gathered, students will conclude that voting is a privilege that is accompanied by responsibility.

## **LESSON OBJECTIVE**

Students will be able to:

- Develop a polling questionnaire
- Conduct a political poll
- Interpret the data acquired from the poll
- Share their findings with an appropriate audience

## **PROCEDURES**

1. Teacher leads information/discussion session about political polling (see attached *Teacher Guide*)
2. Select how students will conduct the poll to reach a wide variety of people (phone, email, in person, etc.) Students could map the respondents' answers by hometown or region for a geographic perspective/correlation analysis
3. Determine the number (10?) of people you want each student to interview (may need to discuss the need for diversity within the population interviewed and interviewing people who have not already been interviewed by a classmate)
4. Design the survey and chart for recording the data gathered
5. Identify the survey question(s)
  - Did you vote in the last election? Why?
  - For whom do you plan to or would you vote for this year for the office of (President, Governor, etc. – students might want to list the candidates names for each office)
  - What do you believe is the most important issue in this election?

What Do You Think?

- Which candidate do you believe can be most trusted?
  - Other questions as decided by the teacher and class
6. Determine the demographic questions that should be asked (examples follow)
    - Gender: Male, Female
    - Age: Under 20, 20-30, 30-49, 50 and older
    - Race: African-American, American-Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, White, Other
    - Education (highest level) – Grade School, High School, College, Post College
    - Religion: Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Muslim, Other
    - Hometown or U. S. Region (East, Midwest, South, West)
  7. Prepare a polling script (*Activity Sheet One, Your Polling Script*)
    - Introduction
    - Purpose of survey
    - Length of time to complete
    - Promise of anonymity and confidentiality
  8. Practice conducting the survey in class
  9. Conduct the survey
  10. Students share results of polls and conclusions drawn in class
  11. Students decide how, where and with whom to share their findings

## **MATERIALS**

Clipboards can be made using rubber bands and cardboard cut in 9” x 12” rectangles

## **ASSESSMENT**

1. Students design and conduct the survey
2. Students will analyze their data by converting it to a chart or graph form (this could be accomplished on poster board or with an Excel spreadsheet)
3. Students will make a prediction on the outcome of the election based on their findings
4. Students share their data with an appropriate audience (call a candidates office, publish in the school/local newspaper, post in faculty room, PowerPoint presentation for a PTA meeting, posters in school hallway,

## **EXTENSION**

1. Design a “Get Out the Vote” campaign targeted to groups as identified in the survey
2. Students conduct a random survey in school.
  - Acquire a master list of students
  - Select students who will be asked to participate on a ratio; start with a given student on the list (the third, fourth, etc.) and choose every tenth, fifteenth, twentieth name.
  - Prepare a printed survey form that includes instructions and purpose
  - Distribute and collect all forms on the same day at the same time period
  - Collect, tabulate, and analyze data

(Source: AskERIC Lesson Plans; Bishop, Rob; [Political Polls](#))

## TEACHER GUIDE

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

#### **What is the purpose of poll taking?**

A poll is a survey of a portion of the population taken in order to come up with the same results that would have been obtained had every person in the population been interviewed.

#### **How can a sample poll represent the entire population?**

Survey research is based on the principle of probability sampling. The basic tenet is that, if properly selected, a randomly selected percent of a population of people will represent the same attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of the entire population.

#### **How many interviews does it take to get an adequate sample?**

Gallup poll traditionally interviews approximately .0004% of the population to get a sample response. But, all of the poll respondents are selected randomly! Gallup polls are usually accurate within a margin of error of plus or minus three percentage points.

#### **How are the questions decided?**

Wording of the question and question order are the major source of bias and error in the data gathered.

#### **Kinds of Polls**

- *Benchmark Poll:* A poll taken at the beginning of a campaign to establish a baseline
- *Tracking and Bushfire Polls:* Quick surveys done in the last few weeks of a campaign
- *Push Polls:* A technique used in the last hours before an election to influence voters
- *Exit Polls:* Polls used to analyze public opinion to evaluate the course of the campaign







# If Elected . . .

(Learning about and ‘selling’ a candidate)

## DELAWARE STANDARDS addressed by this lesson

**Civics 3** – Students will understand that American citizenship includes responsibilities such as voting and public service (Citizenship)

**Civics 4** – Students will understand and employ the mechanisms for communicating with elected officials while in office (Participation)

## **INTRODUCTION**

In this lesson students will use a variety of community resources to investigate the duties of a particular county, state or federal office (See Lesson 1). Each student will investigate the qualifications of one candidate for this office and design a 60-second television/radio advertisement for the candidate’s campaign.

## **PURPOSE**

The major focus of this lesson is for the student to analyze a candidate’s qualifications for a specific elected office and develop an argument to support the candidate’s election.

## **LESSON OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Identify the candidate running for a particular political office
- Identify the qualifications for and the duties of that elected office
- Communicate with the declared candidate to acquire information about the individual
- Develop a profile of the candidate
- Compare and contrast the requirements for office and the candidate’s qualifications
- Present a television/radio advertisement in support of (or opposing) the candidate

## **PROCEDURES**

1. Student selects or teacher assigns a minimum of two elected offices for each student to research
2. Student selects the office she/he wishes to investigate
3. Student identifies all the candidates for the office selected
4. Student selects one candidate for extensive investigation
5. Teacher and students identify issues specific and common to the offices being researched
6. Student develops a profile of the candidate (marital status, family, political experience, opinions on class-identified issues, agenda/plans for the office if elected)
7. Teacher and students create criteria and evaluation rubric for the lesson product
8. Student creates/presents final product for sharing with class

## **ASSESSMENT**

- Student/Teacher developed rubric for content and presentation of product

If Elected . . .

**EXTENSION**

- Conduct a debate between students who researched opposing candidates for the same office
- Conduct classroom forum/debate on a particular issue (education, gun control, etc.) involving all students role-playing their respective candidates
- Student will take the role of the candidate to deliver a speech arguing for voter support. Student-candidate's argument should reflect what he/she believes, why he/she believes this, and what he/she will do based on these beliefs.

# Who Votes in the United States?

(Searching for the real reasons why citizens may not vote)

**DELAWARE STANDARDS** addressed by this lesson

**Civics 3** – Students will understand that American citizenship includes responsibilities such as voting (Citizenship)

## **PURPOSE**

This lesson allows students the opportunity to investigate and analyze some of the reasons citizens do not always actively exercise their right and responsibility to vote.

## **LESSON OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Identify reasons citizens do not vote
- Identify problems with the election process that may contribute to a lack of voter participation
- Design a solution to address one of the identified problems and potentially improve voter participation

## **PROCEDURES**

1. Teacher leads students in discussion about voting patterns (voters vs non-voters) and specifically about non-voters that they know.
2. Students will do a think, pair, share of the reasons they have heard or reasons they believe influence people to not vote.
3. Teacher will lead a mini-discussion and pass out Handout #1 “Why I Don’t Vote”
4. Students, in small groups, will examine the class generated list and Handout #1, “Why I Don’t Vote,” to discuss which reasons indicate real problems with elections in the United States.
5. Student groups will choose three problems to share with the class.
6. As a class, students will create a list of the five most important problems with elections in the United States.
7. Individually, or in pairs, students will write a plan for how they might address and eventually solve one of the identified problems.

## **MATERIALS**

- Handout #1
- Pencils, Paper

## **ASSESSMENT**

- Problem Identification Papers
- Individual plan for solving one of the identified problems

### INTRODUCTION

Below are ten reasons people often give why they don't vote. In pairs or small groups, discuss which reasons you think indicate genuine problems with the election process in the United States. Choose three to share with the class. Then as a class, create a list of the five most important problems with elections in the United States today.

1. "I work in a factory all day. It's not very safe and I have no insurance and the pay is bad. I want a political party that fights for what I need."
2. "It's too much trouble. Anyway—who ever heard of somebody winning by one vote?"
3. "When I went to vote for the governor last year, I knew which candidate I wanted to vote for. But on the ballot there were candidates for nineteen other offices, too! How can I find out about all these candidates? It's too much."
4. "I don't read very well. It would take too long for me to read what the candidates say."
5. "I'd like to vote for Smith for mayor. He's an honest guy. He wants to make the schools better and help small businesses. But he doesn't have a chance. The other candidate, Taylor,—he's a millionaire—he's got signs on every street, and ads on TV every night."
6. "It cold and rainy outside. I just got home and I'm tired. I need to fix dinner. I'll vote next time."
7. "I knew I had to register to vote, but I didn't know where to go or what number to call to find out. Then my neighbor said I could register at the library. But when I went, they said they only registered until a month before the election. Now it's two weeks before the election. The government sure doesn't make it easy for me to vote."
8. "Both parties are the same."
9. "They're just going to do things for big businesses. They don't care about us. Anybody can see we're just getting poorer."
10. "I don't know what their ideas are! The TV ads are so short, and each candidate just talks about how bad the other one is."

Source: Civil Rights Foundation <http://www.crfc.org/voting.html>

# The Electoral College

(How the USA Elects the President)

## DELAWARE STANDARDS addressed by this lesson

**Civics 1** - Students will examine the structure and purposes of governments with specific emphasis on constitutional democracy.

**Civics 3** - Students will understand the responsibilities, rights and privileges of United States Citizen.

**Civics 4** - Students will develop and employ civic skills necessary for effective, participatory citizenship.

## **Introduction**

This lesson introduces students to the Electoral College. There are four activities that you may be used in any order. The reading in this lesson includes a brief summary of the process that the Electoral College follows in electing the President and Vice-President of the United States. There is information for holding a debate or panel discussion and election results from 1988 through 1996 for analysis and predictions.

## **PURPOSE**

Most of people of the United States believe that when they vote for the President during an election they are actually electing the leader of their country. This is false. The Electoral College formally elects the President and Vice-President. Students will learn how the state electoral votes are counted and how many votes are needed to win an election.

## **LESSON OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to:

- Explain what the Electoral College is and does.
- Examine the pros and cons of the Electoral College.
- Determine the winner of an election.
- Analyze the voting trends of states during the past 3 elections.
- Predict possible outcomes for this coming election based on their findings.

## **MATERIALS**

- Colored Pencils
- Five Political U. S. Outline Maps <http://www.50states.com/tools/usamap.htm>
- Handouts 1 - 7

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Activity 1: Background information on Electoral College**

1. Distribute handout #1. Have students read the handout on the Electoral College.

## Electoral College

2. Hold a discussion of the process to access understanding by the students or have students write step by step the procedures involved. (This may be a individual, group or whole class activity)

### **Activity 2: Debate Pros and Cons of the Electoral College**

1. Distribute student handout #2. Have students read the handout on the Electoral College.
2. Divide students into groups. (size and makeup are up to the instructor.)
3. Have students prepare for a debate on the question: *Should the Electoral College be replaced by direct popular election of the President?*
4. Presentation may be in the form of an essay, speech or panel discussion with members from each group participating.

### **Activity 3: Election of 1824**

1. List the 24 states that were in the union at this time (student handout #3) on the board. Have students choose a state and the teacher tells them how many electoral votes that state had and who was the winner of that state. (note: some states have a split ticket)
2. Have students determine how many electoral votes each candidate received.
3. Have the students add up all electoral votes and divide by 2. Round up to the next number. They should get the number 131. That is how many votes were needed to win the election outright.
4. Ask the students to announce the outcome of their state's vote as the teacher tabulates the results on the board or overhead. (Note the votes each candidate received.)
5. Ask the students what happened with the results. Who will be President? What happens when there is no winner? (See U.S. Constitution; Amendment 12.) The House chooses from the top 3 candidates. Each state has only one vote and a majority of states is needed to win.

(NOTE: *Andrew Jackson has actually won the most popular votes but lacks the majority of electoral votes required to take office. The outcome moved to the House of Representatives as the 12th amendment requires. Because of his power in the House, Henry Clay could swing the election either way. Jackson/s supporters urged Clay to support their candidate because he won the most popular votes. Clay disliked Jackson personally and mistrusted his lack of political experience. John Adams had a view of government similar to Clay's. Clay and Adams met and then Clay used his influence to get the members of the House to vote for Adams as President.*

6. Have the students hold an election just as the House of Representatives did (one vote per state). There must be some amount of 'politicking' in order for a candidate the win a majority of the House.
7. Debrief the students on this election. Ask: "Is the 12<sup>th</sup> amendment workable in our society today?" "Should the states have just one vote?" "What remedy would you propose?"

#### **Activity 4: Analyzing Voting Trends**

1. Distribute handout #4. Have students calculate the winner of the 1996 election by electoral votes. A variation to this is for the teacher to put the information from the handout on to 3" by 5" cards. Have the students shuffle the cards and draw them one at a time and keep track of the ongoing election.
2. Distribute handout Outline Map. Students are to color in the states that were won by each candidate. (Note: Teacher and/or student should assign a color/pattern for each candidate.)
3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 for handout #5, #6 and #7. At the completion of this they should have 4 maps of the past elections.
4. Have students compile the three maps into one map using the following key.  
(NOTE: Teachers and/or students should assign a color/pattern for each condition.)
  - A. Color states where the Democrats won all four elections
  - B. Color states where the Democrats won three times.
  - C. Color states where the Democrats won two times.
  - D. Color states where the Democrats won one time.
  - E. Color states where the Democrats won zero times.
5. Have students make predictions for individual states, regions and the country for the upcoming election. They should justify their prediction from information available to them.

## **Teacher Guide for Activity #4**

### **Electoral College**

**Answer Key** for Compiled map for election 1988, 1992, 1996 & 2000

#### **❖ Democrats won four times**

<b>Hawaii</b>	<b>Minnesota</b>	<b>Washington</b>	<b>Iowa</b>	<b>New York</b>
<b>Oregon</b>	<b>Wisconsin</b>	<b>Massachusetts</b>	<b>Rhode Island</b>	

#### **❖ Democrats won three times**

**West Virginia**

#### **❖ Democrats won two times**

<b>California</b>	<b>Nevada</b>	<b>New Mexico</b>	<b>Maine</b>
<b>Missouri</b>	<b>Arkansas</b>	<b>Louisiana</b>	<b>Illinois</b>
<b>Tennessee</b>	<b>Kentucky</b>	<b>Michigan</b>	<b>Ohio</b>
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	<b>Maryland</b>	<b>Delaware</b>	<b>New Jersey</b>
<b>Connecticut</b>	<b>Vermont</b>	<b>New Hampshire</b>	

#### **❖ Democrats won one time**

**Arizona**   **Colorado**   **Montana**   **Georgia**   **Florida**

#### **❖ Democrats won zero times**

<b>Alaska</b>	<b>Idaho</b>	<b>Utah</b>	<b>Wyoming</b>
<b>North Dakota</b>	<b>South Dakota</b>	<b>Nebraska</b>	<b>Kansas</b>
<b>Oklahoma</b>	<b>Texas</b>	<b>Mississippi</b>	<b>Alabama</b>
<b>Indiana</b>	<b>Virginia</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>South Carolina</b>



# The Electoral College

## Background

When voters go to the polls on a presidential election day in November, they do not directly select a President. Instead they choose a slate of presidential electors. Why are there presidential electors? The Framers of the Constitution gave a great deal of thought to the method for choosing the President. It was, said James Wilson of Pennsylvania, “the most difficult of all on which we have had to decide.” It was difficult because the Framers did not want to select the President by a direct vote of the people. They were certain that would lead “to tumult and disorder.” Nor did they believe that the people would be able to make wise, informed choices about the candidates. So they had to find another method. After weeks of debate, the Framers agreed on a plan first put forward by Alexander Hamilton. Under the plan, the President was to be chosen by a special body of electors. Each State would have as many electors as it has members of Congress (which may change each decade according to the size of each state’s population as determined by the census). For example, in 1992 Oklahoma had 8 electoral votes since it had 6 representatives in the House and, like all states, 2 U.S. senators. By contrast, California had 54 electoral votes because it had 52 representatives in the House and 2 in the Senate. The entire electoral college is made up of 538 electors, which is the sum of the number of members in the House (435), the total number of senators (100), and 3 electoral votes awarded to the District of Columbia through the 23rd Amendment.

How, then, is a candidate elected President? It’s simple. To win, a candidate must receive a majority of all Electoral College votes—at least 270. The political parties (or independent candidates) in each state submit to the state’s chief election official a list of individuals pledged to their candidate for president and equal in number to the state’s electoral vote. Usually, the major political parties select these individuals either in their state party conventions or through appointment by their state party leaders while third party and independent candidates merely designate their electors.

After their caucuses and primaries, the major parties nominate their candidates for president and vice president in their national conventions traditionally held in the summer preceding the election. Third party and independent candidates follow different procedures according to the individual state laws. The names of the duly nominated candidates are then officially submitted to each state’s chief election official so that they might appear on the general election ballot.

On the Tuesday following the first Monday of November in years divisible by four, the people in each state cast their ballots for the party slate of Electors representing their choice for president and vice president. Whichever party slate wins the most popular votes in the state becomes that state’s Electors—so that, in effect, whichever presidential ticket gets the most popular votes in a state wins all the Electors of that state. (The two exceptions to this are Maine and Nebraska where two Electors are chosen by statewide popular vote and the remainder by the popular vote within each congressional district.)

On the Monday following the second Wednesday of December, each state’s Electors meet in their respective state capitals and cast their electoral votes—one for president and one for vice president. In order to prevent Electors from voting only for “favorite sons” of their home state, at least one of their votes must be for a person from outside their state. The

## **Student Handout #1 (con't.)**

electoral votes are then sealed and transmitted from each state to the President of the Senate who, on the following January 6, opens and reads them before both houses of the Congress.

The candidate for president with the most electoral votes, provided that it is an absolute majority (one over half of the total), is declared president. Similarly, the vice presidential candidate with the absolute majority of electoral votes is declared vice president.

In the event no one obtains an absolute majority of electoral votes for president, the U.S. House of Representatives (as the chamber closer to the people) selects the president from among the top three contenders with each State casting only one vote and an absolute majority of the States being required to elect. Similarly, if no one obtains an absolute majority for vice president, then the U.S. Senate makes the selection from among the top two contenders for that office. At noon on January 20, the duly elected president and vice president are sworn into office.

### **The Election of 1992**

To go back to the election of 1992, a voter in Oklahoma voting for George H.W. Bush was actually selecting 8 electors who had pledged to support the Bush-Quayle ticket. A voter choosing Bill Clinton was really selecting a different 8 electors who were pledged to support the Democratic ticket. Since Bush won the popular vote in Oklahoma, he received all of Oklahoma's 8 votes. Clinton, however, won the popular vote in California, thereby gaining that state's 54 electoral votes. This is known as the winner-take-all feature.

In 1992, Bill Clinton won 370 electoral votes while George Bush won 168. The popular vote totals for the two candidates were nearly 45 million votes for Clinton and more than 39 million for Bush. Meanwhile, in spite of winning almost 20 million popular votes, independent candidate Ross Perot won no electoral votes.

As almost always happens, the candidate with the biggest popular vote also won the most votes in the Electoral College. Similarly, the Electoral College results usually exaggerate the popular vote. Thus, Clinton won a clear majority of the electoral votes while winning only 43 percent of the popular vote.

# The Electoral College

Student Handout #2

## Time for a Change?

Critics of the Electoral College point out that the system may someday cause a crisis, particularly when three strong candidates keep anyone from winning a majority. (In that case the House of Representatives chooses the President and the Senate the Vice President.) Also, nothing in the Constitution requires electors to cast their votes for the candidate receiving the most popular votes. Why not simply do away with the Electoral College in favor of a direct popular election.

## Arguments for Change

1. The Electoral College is undemocratic. It is possible for one candidate to win a majority of the popular vote, but still lose the presidency. This happened in 1824, 1876, 1888 and 2000. In 15 other elections, a shift of less than 1 percent of the national popular vote would have had the same result. It would have made the popular-vote loser the President.
2. The reasons for creating the Electoral College no longer apply. In 1787, not everyone could read or write. It was also difficult to get information because communications were so poor. Now voters are much better informed. They do not need electors choosing the President for them.
3. Letting Congress decide, in the event no candidate receives 270 votes, is unfair. In 1976 a shift of a little more than 11,000 votes in Delaware and Ohio would have given the electoral votes in those States to Gerald Ford instead of Jimmy Carter. Neither candidate would have had 270 votes, thus turning the election over to the House, letting that body rather than the voters elect a President.
4. Electors do not have to cast their votes for the candidate receiving the most popular votes. Sometimes electors refuse to vote for the candidate who won the most popular votes in his or her state. This happened as recently as 1988. In a close vote, an elector could cause the election to result in a tie, thereby sending the election to the House!

## Arguments Against Change

1. Why tamper with a system that works? The Electoral College has been in place for more than 200 years and has worked well with few problems.
2. A popular election system would cause new problems. With the present system, there is never the need for a runoff election. Without the Electoral College, if no candidate received 40 percent of the vote there would have to be a runoff election. That would be expensive and needlessly complex.
3. A popular election system would weaken the two-party system. Under the electoral system, minor party candidates might receive millions of popular votes, but no electoral votes. If that changed, minor parties would be encouraged to run, drawing votes away from major party candidates. Again, the likelihood of no candidate receiving the necessary 40 percent would be increased.
4. The problem of uncontrollable electors is a minor one. More than 17,000 electors' votes have been cast since 1789, but in only 10 cases have electors voted for candidates not winning the popular vote. In no case did such votes come close to changing an election outcome.

## Election of 1824; Electoral Votes-Winner of State

<p><b>Alabama</b> Electoral Votes = 5 Andrew Jackson</p>	<p><b>Connecticut</b> Electoral Votes = 8 John Q. Adams</p>	<p><b>Delaware</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Adams-1, Crawford-2</p>
<p><b>Georgia</b> Electoral Votes = 9 William Crawford</p>	<p><b>Illinois</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Jackson-2, Adams-1</p>	<p><b>Indiana</b> Electoral Votes = 5 Andrew Jackson</p>
<p><b>Kentucky</b> Electoral Votes = 14 Henry Clay</p>	<p><b>Louisiana</b> Electoral Votes = 5 Jackson-3, Adams-2</p>	<p><b>Maine</b> Electoral Votes = 9 John Q. Adams</p>
<p><b>Maryland</b> Electoral Votes = 11 Jackson-7, Adams-3, Crawford-1</p>	<p><b>Massachusetts</b> Electoral Votes = 15 John Q. Adams</p>	<p><b>Mississippi</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Andrew Jackson</p>
<p><b>Missouri</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Henry Clay</p>	<p><b>New Hampshire</b> Electoral Votes = 8 John Q. Adams</p>	<p><b>New Jersey</b> Electoral Votes = 8 Andrew Jackson</p>
<p><b>New York</b> Electoral Votes = 36 Jackson-1, Adams-26, Crawford-5, Clay-4</p>	<p><b>North Carolina</b> Electoral Votes = 15 Andrew Jackson</p>	<p><b>Ohio</b> Electoral Votes = 16 Henry Clay</p>
<p><b>Pennsylvania</b> Electoral Votes = 28 Andrew Jackson</p>	<p><b>Rhode Island</b> Electoral Votes = 4 John Q. Adams</p>	<p><b>South Carolina</b> Electoral Votes = 11 Andrew Jackson</p>
<p><b>Tennessee</b> Electoral Votes = 11 Andrew Jackson</p>	<p><b>Vermont</b> Electoral Votes = 7 John Q. Adams</p>	<p><b>Virginia</b> Electoral Votes = 24 William Crawford</p>

131 electoral votes needed for election. No candidate for president reached the necessary number of electoral votes. The election moved to the House of Representatives where each state received only one vote regardless of their population. John Quincy Adams received 13 state votes, Andrew Jackson won 7 states and William Crawford received 4 state votes.

## Election of 2000; Electoral Votes-Winner of State

<p><b>Alabama</b> Electoral Votes = 9 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Alaska</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Arizona</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Arkansas</b> Electoral Votes = 6 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>California</b> Electoral Votes = 54 Al Gore</p>	<p><b>Colorado</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Connecticut</b> Electoral Votes = 8 Al Gore</p>	<p><b>Delaware</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Al Gore</p>	<p><b>District of Columbia</b> Electoral Votes = 2<sup>1</sup> Al Gore</p>
<p><b>Florida</b> Electoral Votes = 25 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Georgia</b> Electoral Votes = 13 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Hawaii</b> Electoral Votes = 4 Al Gore</p>
<p><b>Idaho</b> Electoral Votes = 4 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Illinois</b> Electoral Votes = 22 Al Gore</p>	<p><b>Indiana</b> Electoral Votes = 12 George W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Iowa</b> Electoral Votes = 7 Al Gore</p>	<p><b>Kansas</b> Electoral Votes = 6 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Kentucky</b> Electoral Votes = 8 Al Gore</p>
<p><b>Louisiana</b> Electoral Votes = 9 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Maine</b> Electoral Votes = 4 Al Gore</p>	<p><b>Maryland</b> Electoral Votes = 10 Al Gore</p>
<p><b>Massachusetts</b> Electoral Votes = 12 Al Gore</p>	<p><b>Michigan</b> Electoral Votes = 18 Al Gore</p>	<p><b>Minnesota</b> Electoral Votes = 10 Al Gore</p>
<p><b>Mississippi</b> Electoral Votes = 7 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Missouri</b> Electoral Votes = 11 George W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Montana</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George W. Bush</p>

1. Washington DC. has 3 votes...there was one abstention

**Election of 2000; Electoral Votes-Winner of State (continued)**

<b>Nebraska</b> Electoral Votes = 5 George W. Bush	<b>Nevada</b> Electoral Votes = 4 George W. Bush	<b>New Hampshire</b> Electoral Votes = 4 George W. Bush
<b>New Jersey</b> Electoral Votes = 15 Al Gore	<b>New Mexico</b> Electoral Votes = 5 Al Gore	<b>New York</b> Electoral Votes = 33 Al Gore
<b>North Carolina</b> Electoral Votes = 14 George W. Bush	<b>North Dakota</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George W. Bush	<b>Ohio</b> Electoral Votes = 21 George W. Bush
<b>Oklahoma</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George W. Bush	<b>Oregon</b> Electoral Votes = 7 Al Gore	<b>Pennsylvania</b> Electoral Votes = 23 Al Gore
<b>Rhode Island</b> Electoral Votes = 4 Al Gore	<b>South Carolina</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George W. Bush	<b>South Dakota</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George W. Bush
<b>Tennessee</b> Electoral Votes = 11 Al Gore	<b>Texas</b> Electoral Votes = 32 George W. Bush	<b>Utah</b> Electoral Votes = 5 George W. Bush
<b>Vermont</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Al Gore	<b>Virginia</b> Electoral Votes = 13 George W. Bush	<b>Washington</b> Electoral Votes = 11 Al Gore
<b>West Virginia</b> Electoral Votes = 5 Al Gore	<b>Wisconsin</b> Electoral Votes = 11 Al Gore	<b>Wyoming</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George W. Bush

**Bush = 271**  
**Gore = 266**  
**270 needed to win**

**How did this happen? Al Gore won the popular vote, but George W. Bush won the electoral vote.**

## Election of 1996; Electoral Votes-Winner of State

<p><b>Alabama</b> Electoral Votes = 9 Robert Dole</p>	<p><b>Alaska</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Robert Dole</p>	<p><b>Arizona</b> Electoral Votes = 8 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Arkansas</b> Electoral Votes = 6 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>California</b> Electoral Votes = 54 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Colorado</b> Electoral Votes = 8 Robert Dole</p>
<p><b>Connecticut</b> Electoral Votes = 8 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Delaware</b> Electoral Votes = 3 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>District of Columbia</b> Electoral Votes = 3 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Florida</b> Electoral Votes = 25 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Georgia</b> Electoral Votes = 13 Robert Dole</p>	<p><b>Hawaii</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Idaho</b> Electoral Votes = 4 Robert Dole</p>	<p><b>Illinois</b> Electoral Votes = 22 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Indiana</b> Electoral Votes = 12 Robert Dole</p>
<p><b>Iowa</b> Electoral Votes = 7 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Kansas</b> Electoral Votes = 6 Robert Dole</p>	<p><b>Kentucky</b> Electoral Votes = 8 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Louisiana</b> Electoral Votes = 9 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Maine</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Maryland</b> Electoral Votes = 10 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Massachusetts</b> Electoral Votes = 12 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Michigan</b> Electoral Votes = 18 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Minnesota</b> Electoral Votes = 10 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Mississippi</b> Electoral Votes = 7 Robert Dole</p>	<p><b>Missouri</b> Electoral Votes = 11 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Montana</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Robert Dole</p>

**Election of 1996; Electoral Votes-Winner of State (continued)**

<b>Nebraska</b> Electoral Votes = 5 Robert Dole	<b>Nevada</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton	<b>New Hampshire</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton
<b>New Jersey</b> Electoral Votes = 15 William Clinton	<b>New Mexico</b> Electoral Votes = 5 William Clinton	<b>New York</b> Electoral Votes = 33 William Clinton
<b>North Carolina</b> Electoral Votes = 14 Robert Dole	<b>North Dakota</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Robert Dole	<b>Ohio</b> Electoral Votes = 21 William Clinton
<b>Oklahoma</b> Electoral Votes = 8 Robert Dole	<b>Oregon</b> Electoral Votes = 7 William Clinton	<b>Pennsylvania</b> Electoral Votes = 23 William Clinton
<b>Rhode Island</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton	<b>South Carolina</b> Electoral Votes = 8 Robert Dole	<b>South Dakota</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Robert Dole
<b>Tennessee</b> Electoral Votes = 11 William Clinton	<b>Texas</b> Electoral Votes = 32 Robert Dole	<b>Utah</b> Electoral Votes = 5 Robert Dole
<b>Vermont</b> Electoral Votes = 3 William Clinton	<b>Virginia</b> Electoral Votes = 13 Robert Dole	<b>Washington</b> Electoral Votes = 11 William Clinton
<b>West Virginia</b> Electoral Votes = 5 William Clinton	<b>Wisconsin</b> Electoral Votes = 11 William Clinton	<b>Wyoming</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Robert Dole

Clinton = 379  
Dole = 159  
270 needed to win



## Election of 1992; Electoral Votes-Winner of State

<p><b>Alabama</b> Electoral Votes = 9 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Alaska</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Arizona</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George H. W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Arkansas</b> Electoral Votes = 6 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>California</b> Electoral Votes = 54 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Colorado</b> Electoral Votes = 8 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Connecticut</b> Electoral Votes = 8 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Delaware</b> Electoral Votes = 3 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>District of Columbia</b> Electoral Votes = 3 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Florida</b> Electoral Votes = 25 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Georgia</b> Electoral Votes = 13 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Hawaii</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Idaho</b> Electoral Votes = 4 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Illinois</b> Electoral Votes = 22 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Indiana</b> Electoral Votes = 12 George H. W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Iowa</b> Electoral Votes = 7 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Kansas</b> Electoral Votes = 6 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Kentucky</b> Electoral Votes = 8 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Louisiana</b> Electoral Votes = 9 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Maine</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Maryland</b> Electoral Votes = 10 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Massachusetts</b> Electoral Votes = 12 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Michigan</b> Electoral Votes = 18 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Minnesota</b> Electoral Votes = 10 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Mississippi</b> Electoral Votes = 7 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Missouri</b> Electoral Votes = 11 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Montana</b> Electoral Votes = 3 William Clinton</p>

**Election of 1992; Electoral Votes-Winner of State (continued)**

<p><b>Nebraska</b> Electoral Votes = 5 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Nevada</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>New Hampshire</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>New Jersey</b> Electoral Votes = 15 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>New Mexico</b> Electoral Votes = 5 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>New York</b> Electoral Votes = 33 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>North Carolina</b> Electoral Votes= 14 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>North Dakota</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Ohio</b> Electoral Votes = 21 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Oklahoma</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Oregon</b> Electoral Votes = 7 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Pennsylvania</b> Electoral Votes = 23 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>Rhode Island</b> Electoral Votes = 4 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>South Carolina</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>South Dakota</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Tennessee</b> Electoral Votes = 11 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Texas</b> Electoral Votes = 32 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Utah</b> Electoral Votes = 5 George H. W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Vermont</b> Electoral Votes = 3 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Virginia</b> Electoral Votes = 13 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Washington</b> Electoral Votes = 11 William Clinton</p>
<p><b>West Virginia</b> Electoral Votes = 5 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Wisconsin</b> Electoral Votes = 11 William Clinton</p>	<p><b>Wyoming</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush</p>

**Clinton = 370**

**Bush= 168**

**270 needed to win**

## Election of 1988; Electoral Votes-Winner of State

<b>Alabama</b> Electoral Votes = 9 George H. W. Bush	<b>Alaska</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush	<b>Arizona</b> Electoral Votes = 7 George H. W. Bush
<b>Arkansas</b> Electoral Votes = 6 George H. W. Bush	<b>California</b> Electoral Votes = 47 George H. W. Bush	<b>Colorado</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George H. W. Bush
<b>Connecticut</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George H. W. Bush	<b>Delaware</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush	<b>District of Columbia</b> Electoral Votes = 3 Michael Dukakis
<b>Florida</b> Electoral Votes = 21 George H. W. Bush	<b>Georgia</b> Electoral Votes = 12 George H. W. Bush	<b>Hawaii</b> Electoral Votes = 4 Michael Dukakis
<b>Idaho</b> Electoral Votes = 4 George H. W. Bush	<b>Illinois</b> Electoral Votes = 24 George H. W. Bush	<b>Indiana</b> Electoral Votes = 12 George H. W. Bush
<b>Iowa</b> Electoral Votes = 8 Michael Dukakis	<b>Kansas</b> Electoral Votes = 7 George H. W. Bush	<b>Kentucky</b> Electoral Votes = 9 George H. W. Bush
<b>Louisiana</b> Electoral Votes = 10 George H. W. Bush	<b>Maine</b> Electoral Votes = 4 George H. W. Bush	<b>Maryland</b> Electoral Votes = 10 George H. W. Bush
<b>Massachusetts</b> Electoral Votes = 13 Michael Dukakis	<b>Michigan</b> Electoral Votes = 20 George W. Bush	<b>Minnesota</b> Electoral Votes = 10 Michael Dukakis
<b>Mississippi</b> Electoral Votes = 7 George H. W. Bush	<b>Missouri</b> Electoral Votes = 11 George H. W. Bush	<b>Montana</b> Electoral Votes = 4 George H. W. Bush

**Election of 1988; Electoral Votes-Winner of State (continued)**

<p><b>Nebraska</b> Electoral Votes = 5 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Nevada</b> Electoral Votes = 4 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>New Hampshire</b> Electoral Votes = 4 George H. W. Bush</p>
<p><b>New Jersey</b> Electoral Votes = 16 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>New Mexico</b> Electoral Votes = 5 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>New York</b> Electoral Votes = 36 Michael Dukakis</p>
<p><b>North Carolina</b> Electoral Votes = 13 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>North Dakota</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Ohio</b> Electoral Votes = 23 George H. W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Oklahoma</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Oregon</b> Electoral Votes = 7 Michael Dukakis</p>	<p><b>Pennsylvania</b> Electoral Votes = 25 George H. W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Rhode Island</b> Electoral Votes = 4 Michael Dukakis</p>	<p><b>South Carolina</b> Electoral Votes = 8 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>South Dakota</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Tennessee</b> Electoral Votes = 11 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Texas</b> Electoral Votes = 29 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Utah</b> Electoral Votes = 5 George H. W. Bush</p>
<p><b>Vermont</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Virginia</b> Electoral Votes = 12 George H. W. Bush</p>	<p><b>Washington</b> Electoral Votes = 10 Michael Dukakis</p>
<p><b>West Virginia</b> Electoral Votes = 6 Dukakis = 5; Bentsen = 1</p>	<p><b>Wisconsin</b> Electoral Votes = 11 Michael Dukakis</p>	<p><b>Wyoming</b> Electoral Votes = 3 George H. W. Bush</p>

Bush = 426  
 Dukakis = 111  
 Bentsen = 1  
 270 needed to win

**NOTE: The number of electors from several states will be altered for the 2004 election based on the 2000 Census data.**

<b><u>STATE</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>	<b><u>2004</u></b>
Alabama	9	9
Alaska	3	3
Arizona	8	10
Arkansas	6	6
California	54	55
Colorado	8	9
Connecticut	8	7
Delaware	3	3
District of Columbia	3	3
Florida	25	27
Georgia	13	15
Hawaii	4	4
Idaho	4	4
Illinois	22	21
Indiana	12	11
Iowa	7	7
Kansas	6	7
Kentucky	8	8
Louisiana	9	9
Maine	4	4
Maryland	10	10
Massachusetts	12	12
Michigan	18	17
Minnesota	10	10
Mississippi	7	6
Missouri	11	11
Montana	3	3
Nebraska	5	5
Nevada	4	5
New Hampshire	4	4
New Jersey	15	15
New Mexico	5	5
New York	33	31
North Carolina	14	15

<b><u>STATE</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>	<b><u>2004</u></b>
North Dakota	3	3
Ohio	21	20
Oklahoma	8	7
Oregon	7	7
Pennsylvania	23	21
Rhode Island	4	4
South Carolina	8	8
South Dakota	3	3
Tennessee	11	11
Texas	32	34
Utah	5	5
Vermont	3	3
Virginia	13	13
Washington	11	11
West Virginia	5	5
Wisconsin	10	10
Wyoming	3	3

# The Election of 2000

(The Popular Vote vs. the Electoral Vote)

DELAWARE STANDARDS addressed by this lesson

**Civics 1** – Students will analyze the different functions of federal, state, and local governments in the United States (Government)

**Civics 3** – Students will understand that American citizenship includes responsibilities such as voting (Citizenship)

## INTRODUCTION

This lesson introduces students to a major reality of presidential elections in the United States—you can win the popular vote and still lose the election.

## PURPOSE

The major focus of this lesson is for the student to analyze the election of 2000. They should also be able to use the Electoral College to determine different scenarios for a candidate to win an election.

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to:

- Explain what the Electoral College is and does.
- Examine the pros and cons of the Electoral College.
- Determine the winner of an election.
- Analyze the voting trends of states during the past 3 elections.
- Predict possible outcomes for this coming election based on their findings.

## MATERIALS

Handouts 1, 2, and 3

## ELECTORAL OVERVIEW

The election was predictably close. However, few could have foreseen the complicated outcome of Election Day 2000. As polls began closing, Gore seemed to be leading in the popular and electoral votes. The final results hinged on the outcome of the voting in Florida where Bush's brother was governor. The initial count declared George W. Bush the winner. But speculation surfaced surrounding Bush's victory and Florida's ballot legitimacy, as Palm Beach County reported a large number of votes for third party candidates. When an automated recount still put Bush ahead by a few hundred votes (out of nearly six million cast), Gore filed a lawsuit demanding a manual recount in several Florida counties. Bush sued to block the hand count. Political and legal wrangling ensued among county and state officials of different parties and in both

the Florida state and federal courts. Uncertainty as to who was the legitimately-elected President stretched to mid-December. In the end, the U.S. Supreme Court in a 5-4 decision barred the recounting of ballots in only certain Florida counties, effectively assuring all of Florida's twenty-five electoral votes, and by extension, the presidency, for Bush.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Activity 1:**

1. Distribute Student Handout #1. Assign any number of the questions as you choose.
2. Distribute Student Handout #2, the Electoral College Map
3. Have students determine the fewest number of states a candidate would have to win in order to acquire a majority of the electoral votes.
4. This could be staged as a competition between two classroom teams after which each group would determine and electoral strategy for the candidates.

### **Activity 2:**

1. Group students into small groups and assign each group a geographic region of the United States (New England, Mid-Atlantic, Southern, Midwest, Great Plains, Pacific).
2. Distribute to each group one or more copies of Handout #3
3. Ask the groups to tabulate both the electoral and popular votes of the states in their assigned region.
4. Record and tabulate the totals from each region on the board or overhead.
5. When all the tabulation is completed, ask the students to explain why Al Gore, who won the popular vote, did not become president.

*NOTE: If you want to create a "what if" situation to force this election to be decided by the House of Representatives, then use the following procedure. The electors of Nebraska are not required to vote strictly by party or popular vote results. Change Nebraska's result to Bush has 2 electoral votes and Gore has 3 electoral votes. The resulting tie of 269 to 269 will cause the 12th amendment to be involved (See Activity 3 in the Electoral College lesson). Remember that one vote in Washington, DC was in abstention.*

## **ASSESSMENT**

1. Students share their reasoning and methods of calculation for determining the fewest number of states that give a candidate a simple majority of the electoral votes.
2. Students share their reasoning and methods of calculation for determining the electoral vs. the popular votes for each candidate in their assigned region.
3. Students write and/or share their explanation of why Al Gore won the popular vote, but did not become president.

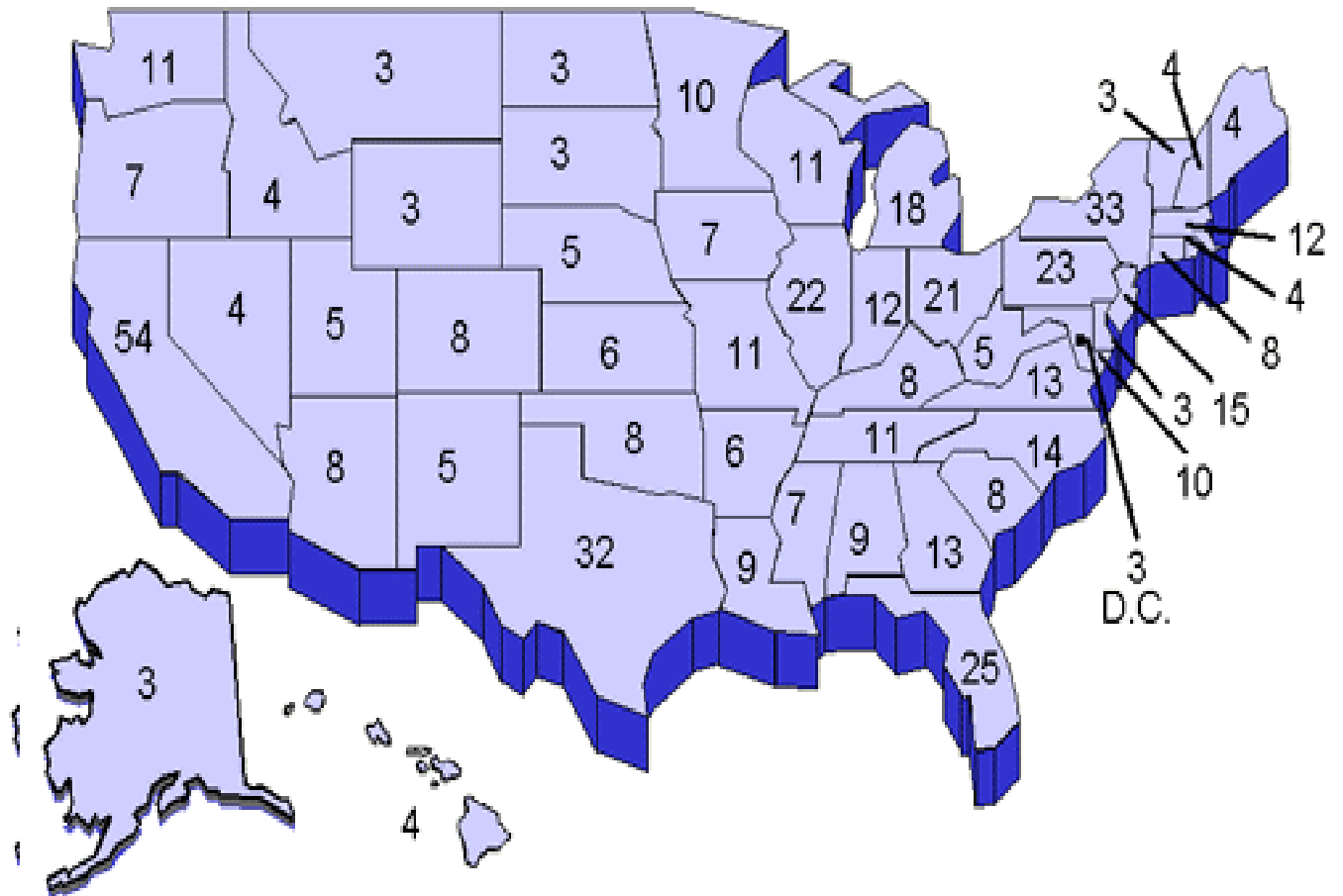


## Using the Electoral College Map

### Answer the following questions:

1. Can a candidate win 270 electoral votes without winning California, Texas, or New York? Explain your answer with evidence from the map.
2. Can a candidate win 270 electoral votes by winning only states that have 12 or more electoral votes? Explain your answer with evidence from the map.
3. Can the presidency be won by only winning states that are east of the Mississippi river? How many electoral votes do those states determine?
4. What is the most efficient way to reach 270 electoral votes? (i.e. list the fewest states that equal 270 electoral votes.)
5. Make your own predictions about which states will vote Democratic or Republican in the 2004 Election. Are there any states that you would classify as "swing" states? If so, list each state and explain why you think that state has such importance.  
Definition of "swing" or "battleground" states: *States that do not vote consistently for Democrat or Republican candidates, but have mixed voting histories and "swing" between the two major political parties in presidential elections, rendering it a very attractive campaign target.*

### ELECTORAL COLLEGE 2000 MAP



**Presidential Election of 2000, Electoral and Popular Vote Summary**

Principal Candidates for President and Vice President:

**Republican—George W. Bush; Richard B. Cheney (winner)**

Democratic—Albert A. Gore, Jr.; Joseph I. Lieberman

Green—Ralph Nader; Winona LaDuke

	George W. Bush		Albert A. Gore, Jr.		Ralph Nader		Electoral votes		
	Popular vote	%	Popular vote	%	Popular vote	%	R	D	G
AL	941,173	56%	692,611	42%	18,323	1%	9		
AK	167,398	59	79,004	28	28,747	10	3		
AZ	781,652	51	685,341	45	45,645	3	8		
AR	472,940	51	422,768	46	13,421	1	6		
CA	4,567,429	42	5,861,203	53	418,707	4		54	
CO	883,748	51	738,227	42	91,434	5	8		
CT	561,094	38	816,015	56	64,452	4		8	
DE	137,288	42	180,068	55	8,307	3		3	
DC	18,073	9	171,923	85	10,576	5		2 <sup>1</sup>	
FL	2,912,790	49	2,912,253	49	97,488	2	25		
GA	1,419,720	55	1,116,230	43	13,432 <sup>2</sup>	.5	13		
HI	137,845	37	205,286	56	21,623	6		4	
ID	336,937	67	138,637	28	12,292 <sup>2</sup>	2	4		
IL	2,019,421	43	2,589,026	55	103,759	2		22	
IN	1,245,836	57	901,980	41	18,531 <sup>2</sup>	.8	12		
IA	634,373	48	638,517	49	29,374	2		7	
KS	622,332	58	399,276	37	36,086	3	6		
KY	872,492	57	638,898	41	23,192	2	8		
LA	927,871	53	792,344	45	20,473	1	9		
ME	286,616	44	319,951	49	37,127	6		4	
MD	813,797	40	1,145,782	56	53,768	3		10	
MA	878,502	33	1,616,487	60	173,564	6		12	
MI	1,953,139	46	2,170,418	51	84,165	2		18	
MN	1,109,659	46	1,168,266	48	126,696	5		10	
MS	572,844	58	404,614	41	8,122	.8	7		
MO	1,189,924	50	1,111,138	47	38,515	2	11		
MT	240,178	58	137,126	33	24,437	6	3		

<b>NE</b>	433,862	62	231,780	33	24,540	4	5		
<b>NV</b>	301,575	50	279,978	46	15,008	2	4		
<b>NH</b>	273,559	48	266,348	47	22,198	4	4		
<b>NJ</b>	1,284,173	40	1,788,850	56	94,554	3		15	
<b>NM</b>	286,417	48	286,783	48	21,251	4		5	
<b>NY</b>	2,403,374	35	4,107,697	60	244,030	4		33	
<b>NC</b>	1,631,163	56	1,257,692	43	—	—	14		
<b>ND</b>	174,852	61	95,284	33	9,486	3	3		
<b>OH</b>	2,351,209	50	2,186,190	46	117,857	3	21		
<b>OK</b>	744,337	60	474,276	38	—	—	8		
<b>OR</b>	713,577	47	720,342	47	77,357	5		7	
<b>PA</b>	2,281,127	46	2,485,967	51	103,392	2		23	
<b>RI</b>	130,555	32	249,508	61	25,052	6		4	
<b>SC</b>	785,937	57	565,561	41	20,200	1	8		
<b>SD</b>	190,700	60	118,804	38	—	—	3		
<b>TN</b>	1,061,949	51	981,720	47	19,781	1	11		
<b>TX</b>	3,799,639	59	2,433,746	38	137,994	2	32		
<b>UT</b>	515,096	67	203,053	26	35,850	5	5		
<b>VT</b>	119,775	41	149,022	51	20,374	7		3	
<b>VA</b>	1,437,490	52	1,217,290	44	59,398	2	13		
<b>WA</b>	1,108,864	45	1,247,652	50	103,002	4		11	
<b>WV</b>	336,475	52	295,497	46	10,680	2	5		
<b>WI</b>	1,237,279	48	1,242,987	48	94,070	4		11	
<b>WY</b>	147,947	68	60,481	28	4,625 <sup>2</sup>	2	3		
<b>Total</b>	<b>50,456,002</b>	<b>47.87%</b>	<b>50,999,897</b>	<b>48.38%</b>	<b>2,882,955</b>	<b>2.74%</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>266</b>	

NOTE: Total electoral votes = 538. Total electoral votes needed to win = 270. Dash (—) indicates not on ballot.

1. The District of Columbia has 3 votes. There was 1 abstention.

2. Write-in votes.

Source: Federal Election Commission.

Voting age population (Census Bureau Population Survey for Nov. 2000): 205,815,000

Percentage of voting age population casting a vote for president: 51.3%

<http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0876793.html>

## CHANGES TO THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE, 2004

**NOTE: The number of electors from several states will be altered for the 2004 election based on the 2000 Census data.**

<u>STATE</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2004</u>
Alabama	9	9
Alaska	3	3
Arizona	8	10
Arkansas	6	6
California	54	55
Colorado	8	9
Connecticut	8	7
Delaware	3	3
District of Columbia	3	3
Florida	25	27
Georgia	13	15
Hawaii	4	4
Idaho	4	4
Illinois	22	21
Indiana	12	11
Iowa	7	7
Kansas	6	7
Kentucky	8	8
Louisiana	9	9
Maine	4	4
Maryland	10	10
Massachusetts	12	12
Michigan	18	17
Minnesota	10	10
Mississippi	7	6
Missouri	11	11
Montana	3	3
Nebraska	5	5
Nevada	4	5
New Hampshire	4	4
New Jersey	15	15
New Mexico	5	5
New York	33	31

<b><u>STATE</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>	<b><u>2004</u></b>
North Carolina	14	15
North Dakota	3	3
Ohio	21	20
Oklahoma	8	7
Oregon	7	7
Pennsylvania	23	21
Rhode Island	4	4
South Carolina	8	8
South Dakota	3	3
Tennessee	11	11
Texas	32	34
Utah	5	5
Vermont	3	3
Virginia	13	13
Washington	11	11
West Virginia	5	5
Wisconsin	10	10
Wyoming	3	3

**U.S. States - [www.50states.com](http://www.50states.com)**

