

ELECTION 2008

CHOOSING THE FUTURE

Resources

Resources for Learning about the Presidential Election Compiled by the Center for Urban Education

General Non-Partisan Sources

League of Women Voters of Chicago: present information about elections, voting process, and issues along with advocating for or against particular policies in the public interest.

www.lwvchicago.org

(312) 939-5935

Chicago Board of Election Commissioners: provide a great deal of general election information

www.chicagoelections.com

(312) 269-7900

Contact Information for the Two Major Candidates

John McCain

www.johnmccain.com

Barack Obama

www.barackobama.com

(866) 675-2008

Resources for Teaching Elementary School Students about the Election

Kid's Voting USA

www.kidsvotingusa.org

The PBS Democracy Project

<http://pbskids.org/democracy/vote/>

Persuasive Writing and Social Studies: Election Issues Projects

This set of teaching ideas is adaptable to all grade levels. For example, a primary grade teacher could adapt the issues to focus on concerns of the younger child, and teachers at all grade levels could take this opportunity to organize a class election of officers.

The approach is flexible so that it can be organized as individual projects, small group projects, and full-class activities. Older students can be involved in organizing the project and then sharing the work they do with younger students.

Because the activities deal with issues of immediate concern to every citizen, this approach is ideal as a way to involve parents.

Project 1: My Favorite Candidate

Choose your favorite candidate for President.

Who is your favorite? _____

Write five reasons why you want this person to win the election:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

Make up a newspaper ad for your candidate. You have to give reasons why other people should vote for this person. You can use pictures in your ad.

Project 2: Three Choices—Ways to Solve One Problem

There are many different answers to some questions. For example, what is the best way to improve your school?

Part 1 of the Project:

Think of as many ways to improve your school as you can. Write them on the back of this page.

Part 2:

Choose the three you think are most important.

Write them here.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Part 3:

Talk with people about your ideas. Ask which plan is their favorite. And ask them to tell why they believe that is the best way. Make notes when they tell you what they think.

Part 4:

Choose the one plan that you think is best now that you have talked with people about it.

Part 5:

Write a persuasive letter to someone who is in the election this year. Tell what you think the best plan is to improve schools. Explain how you talked with people and what you learned about this plan when you talked with them.

Project 3: A Better Future

There are many things we can do now to make the future better.

Choose one of these kinds of improvements:

more jobs

better schools

better transportation

more educational television

a cleaner environment

better housing

more health care

less crime

(another kind of improvement)

Make a plan for that improvement.

List the steps that people need to take to make this progress.

Then plan a poster to persuade people that your plan is a good one.

Project 4: Electing the Future

All of the candidates who are running for election are in charge of the future. They will make choices that affect your future.

Choose one thing to listen and read for this election. It could be schools, jobs, health, crime, or anything else that is important.

Listen to two candidates. Read what they say, too.

Make a list of their opinions.

What Candidate 1 Says

What Candidate 2 Says

Write a letter to the editor in support of the candidate you think should be elected. Explain why you chose this candidate.

Project 5: My Favorite Citizen

There are many people in your community who are great citizens. They would be great leaders, too.

Choose one citizen in your community who you think should be elected President.

Who is the citizen?

Why do you think this person should be President?

What kinds of changes would this person make to help Chicago?

Make a list of reasons why voters should choose this person as President.

Project 6: TV Commercial

Choose one person who is running for election this year. Plan a commercial for that person.

First, look at the commercials that the candidates are showing now.

Then, plan your commercial:

What things will you show?

What people will speak?

What will they say?

What music will you play? (Will you write a special song for the commercial? If you think you need a song, write it on the back of this page.)