

## ANCIENT ROME AND US ELECTIONS/GOVERNMENTS

**Course and Grade Level:** 6<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade World History

**Duration of Course:** 90 minutes

**Objectives/Goals for Students:** After completion of this lesson the students will be able to understand and appreciate the similarities and differences between the Ancient roman elections/government and the current United states elections/governments.

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### Resources Used:

Citizenship and voting rights reading

Roman campaigning website, <http://historybuff.com/5-roman-elections-that-make-modern-politics-look-tame-YW4rqlmmdl83>

Debates <http://generationnation.org/index.php/learn/entry/candidate-debates>

Websites for the notes,

<https://6thgradeciv.wikispaces.com/Comparing+the+Roman+Republic+and+US+Government>

<http://romangov.weebly.com/rome-vs-us.html>

Roman elections article website, <http://www.historyextra.com/article/romans/elections-late-roman-republic-how-did-they-work>

*Remember: you can have your students access the information in class if the technology is available or you can make copies for your students to use.*

### Instructions

1. As a warm up, have the students answer the following questions (5-10 min.) Students can either answer these questions on a sheet or paper or as a whole class.
  - ★ What is a democracy?
  - ★ What type of democracy does the United States have?
  - ★ Where did we get this type of government?
2. After the warm up explain to the students that they will be looking at two different governments today and how people vote in both types of governments. Give the students the citizenship and voting rights reading. Give the students some time to read on their own and then pose this question for the students to answer, either as a group or on a sheet of paper, do you think voting is a privilege or right of citizens? This can lead to a discussion as well. (15-20 min.)

MORE RESOURCES AND ACTIVITIES [www.GenerationNation.org/learn](http://www.GenerationNation.org/learn)

3. After students have completed the reading, show the students different clips of the current presidential candidates. <http://generationnation.org/index.php/learn/entry/candidate-debates>.
4. Next, show comparisons between Ancient Romans and current elections (use this site: <http://historybuff.com/5-roman-elections-that-make-modern-politics-look-tame-YW4rqlmmdl83>). Have the students compare and contrast both modern and ancient roman campaigns and elections. They can create a Venn-diagram or you can do this as a whole class. The following can be used to create the diagram <https://www.glify.com/uses/venn-diagram-software-template/>. (20-30 min)
5. Finally, have your students copy notes from the following websites. They can copy word for word or just short hand the notes. You can even create your own set to have the students fill out. Go over the notes to make sure the students understand what they are copying. <http://romangov.weebly.com/rome-vs-us.html> and <https://6thgradeciv.wikispaces.com/Comparing+the+Roman+Republic+and+US+Government> (25-30 min.)

**Closure:** To wrap up the lesson, have the students read the following article, <http://www.historyextra.com/article/romans/elections-late-roman-republic-how-did-they-work> . This article explains election process in Ancient Rome. You can either hold a discussion about the article or have students answer questions about the article. (10-15 min.)

## Citizenship and voting rights reading

### Citizenship and Rights

In ancient Rome and America, rights of citizenship were at the heart of what it meant to be “Roman” or “American.” The right to vote was—and is—one of the most important rights of citizenship. In America, however, citizenship did not always guarantee this right. Many groups in American history—such as Native-Americans, African-Americans, Roman Catholic and Jewish people, women, and the poor—were considered citizens but were denied the right to vote.

### Voting Rights

Though the Roman Empire never expanded voting rights to include women, or anyone who was enslaved, the Edict of Caracalla issued in 212 A.D. gave citizenship, and therefore voting rights, to every free man in the empire. Citizenship was expanded to increase the number of people who could be taxed and were eligible to serve in the armed forces. In America, voting rights were expanded over time to include all religious groups, women, African-Americans, and people of all classes. In 1971, the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment lowered the voting age to 18, in all elections. Today, however, certain people who are considered citizens are still denied the right to vote—including people under 18 years of age, and in some states, convicted felons.