

Kids Voting USA Classroom Activities Overview - High School

See last page of this document for instructions on accessing the curriculum



GRADE	THEME	CONCEPT/ACTIVITY	OBJECTIVE	MATERIALS & RESOURCES	DESCRIPTION
9-12	Elections and Voting	My Vote Gives Me Power	Students will develop an appreciation for the power and influence of voting.		
		Lesson 1: Election Judge Trainees	Students learn the significance of voting as they assist at the polls during a Kids Voting election.	Kids Voting Election (Charlotte area: www.generationnation.org)	Students will participate in an interactive lesson and can volunteer in their community.
		Lesson 2: Voting and Local Government	Students research the individuals, groups, and committees that make up their local government and determine what part voting plays in how local government operates.	Local phone book, access to the Internet Many other local govt resources at www.generationnation.org	Students will practice working with flow charts and learn about local governments.
		Lesson 3: The Power of One	Students learn to overcome apathy and appreciate how one vote can make a difference. Note: some of the “one votes” are legend rather than fact – have students explore this	Just One Vote! How Important Am I? handout (provided); Teacher’s Example handout (provided); Internet access	This lesson allows students to practice research skills and learn about voting.
9-12	Elections and Voting	I Register and Vote	Students will understand what is involved in the registration and voting process.		
		Lesson 1: Build your Voter IQ	Students will disseminate information about voter registration/voting procedures and conduct a voter registration drive. Note: in NC, students who are 16 and 17 can pre-register to vote. Check www.generationnation.org for resources	Voter Information Quotient Page handout (provided); voting guides www.generationnation.org	This lesson is interactive and allows students to learn about voting procedures.
		Lesson 2: Registration Simulation	Students simulate registration to become familiar with the process.	Voter Registration Application handout	This interactive lesson has students learn about

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			Note: in NC, students who are 16 and 17 can pre-register to vote. Check www.generationnation.org for resources	(provided); Application Instructions handout (provided); Internet access; a piece of lined paper	responsibility and civic responsibility.
		Lesson 3: Voting Simulation	Students vote in a simulated polling place to become familiar with the voting process.	Kids Voting election	This interactive lesson allows students to apply what they have learned and prepare for the Kids Voting election.
9-12	Elections and Voting	Suffrage Then and Now			
		Lesson 1: Supreme Court Voting Rights Cases	Students study Supreme Court voting rights decisions to gain a greater appreciation for what shapes the right to vote.	Dunn v. Blumstein handout; Reynolds v. Sims handout; Kramer v. Union Free School District handout (all handouts provided)	Students will practice presentation skills by presenting a court case to the class.
		Lesson 2: In the Right	Students become familiar with suffrage and how it has evolved over the years.	Research material	Students will research a topic and then present it to the class.
		Lesson 3: Stop that Teenager Before He Votes	Students evaluate and respond to commentary on teen-voters. You can use just the quiz to help students determine if they are more conservative or more liberal. Fun and informative!	What is Your Ideology? handout (provided); Stop That Teenager Before He Votes handout (provided)	This lesson allows students to think about their ideologies.

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		Lesson 4: 1965 Alabama Literacy Test	Students experience the injustice of voter discrimination. Great questions for warm ups and prep, also	1965 Alabama Literacy Test handout (provided); Answers to Alabama Literacy Test handout (provided)	This lesson has students practice using primary sources to learn about information in the lesson.
		Lesson 5: We, The Women	Students take the part of women suffragists and their opponents to understand the need for legal protection.	Remarks of Ortestes A. Brownson; Remarks of Abraham L. Kellogg; Remarks of Reverend Father Walsh and Representative Clark; Jane Addams & Alice Stone Blackwell Respond to the Antisuffragists; Women's Suffrage Timeline (all handouts provided)	This interactive lesson allows students to interpret a text by creating a skit. Students also get to practice their presentation skills
		Lesson 6: Voting Rights Act of 1965	Students consider the impact of the Voting Rights Act Of 1965.	Voting Rights Act Of 1965 handout (provided)	This lesson allows students to use their knowledge and creativity to present a project that involves research.
		Lesson 7: Nelson Mandela Votes in the Election of 1994	Students compare voting injustices in South Africa to those of the United States.	Nelson Mandela Votes In The Election Of 1994 handout (provided)	This lesson allows students to work on compare and contrast skills and use their research techniques.
9-12	Democracy and the People	What is Democracy?	Students will understand the principles that make a government democratic.		

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		Lesson 1: Democracy: What is it Really?	Students internalize the meaning of democracy as a process for both individuals and societies. Great for different levels of government, global studies, role-play and comparing historic periods and current events.	Democracy: What Is It Really? handout (provided); Democracy in U.S. History handout (provided)	This lesson requires students to use a source to help explain their opinions.
		Lesson 2: Democracy as Sport	Students internalize the meaning of democracy by connecting it to their favorite sport.	Democracy As Sport handout (provided)	This lesson allows students to gain understanding by making connections.
9-12	Democracy and the People	Democracy in America	Students will understand how America fits the model of a democracy.		
		Lesson 1: Experiencing America	Students conduct research and interview adults about historical events. Great for different levels of government, global studies, role-play and comparing historic periods and current events.	Access to the library and/or Internet	Students will use a primary source when writing a paper.
		Lesson 2: Choosing a Capital City	Students learn how Washington, D.C. was selected as the capital city of the United States and students evaluate how other U.S. cities might be as the capital city of the United States.	Historical background on Washington D.C. "Capital City Project description" handout Poster Board, Markers, Pencils Capital City Project Rubric	Students gather, analyze and assess information.

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		Lesson 3: Democracy in America “Jay Walking”	Students determine which facts adults in their community know, compare the knowledge of surveyed adults, and analyze the results.	“Democracy in America Jay Walking” worksheet Graph Paper “Democracy in America Jay Walking” answers	Students communicate and gather, analyze and assess information
		Lesson 4: First Ladies of the USA	Students learn about various First Ladies and how the office of the First Lady has changed over time.	“First Lady Trivia” worksheet Poster Board Computer/Internet Access Markers “First Lady Trivia” answer key	Students gather, analyze and assess information
		Lesson 5: The Race for the State	Students determine which character traits are common in past and present governors of their individual states. Students identify day-to-day duties and responsibilities in which the governor participates.	Computer/Internet Access “Requirements to be Governor” informational handout “Character Cluster for the Perfect Governor” graphic organizer Poster Board Marker	Students gather, analyze and assess information
		Lesson 6: Wanted: Full Time President	Students will determine which character traits are common to past and more recent presidents, identify day-to-day duties and responsibilities of a president, and learn legal requirements for the executive position as defined by the United States Constitution.	Computer/Internet Access “Character Cluster for Perfect President” graphic organizer Poster Board, Markers, paint, etc. United States Constitution	Students gather, analyze and assess information

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		Lesson 7: What is a mid-term election?	Students learn the purpose of a mid-term election, differences between mid-term elections and presidential year elections, and their state’s role in the next mid-term election.	“What is a Mid-Term Election?” handout Computer/Internet Access “Mid-Term Elections in My State” worksheet	Students gather, analyze and assess information
9-12	Democracy and the People	A Citizen’s Rights and Responsibilities	Students will learn the rights and responsibilities of an American citizen.		
		Lesson 1: Voter Survey	Students survey adults to learn why they vote or don’t vote. Great for different levels of government, global studies, role-play and comparing historic periods and current events.	Computer or paper/pen	This lesson allows students to practice interviewing skills and data-gathering techniques.
		Lesson 2: Register Your Opinion	Students explore voter registration and voting and write letters to the government expressing their own opinions Great for different levels of government, global studies, role-play and comparing historic periods and current events.	Register Your Opinion handout (provided); access to the Internet Government contacts on www.generationnation.org	This lesson builds communications skills and helps students to establish and expand on a position.
		Lesson 3: Save Your Rights	Students select the rights most important to them and develop a rationale for protecting Constitutional guarantees.	Save Your Rights handout (provided); Save Your Rights Scorecard handout (provided)	This interactive lesson allows students to personally consider, and then collaborate, on rights and responsibilities.

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		Lesson 4: To Be or Not To Be a Citizen	Students will understand the naturalization process, evaluate their own knowledge of history and civics facts required of those wanting to become U.S. citizens, analyze the reasons why citizens may not know this information, and understand why the government requires new citizens to have this knowledge.	Computer/Internet Access Naturalization Test (web address provided)	Students gather, analyze and assess information
9-12	Democracy and the People	Democracy in the World	Students learn about democracy in a global context		
		Lesson 1: Global Neighbors	Students contact other students around the globe to learn about different democracies.	Letter writing materials	This interactive lesson allows students to learn about the world around them and practice their letter writing skills.
		Lesson 2: Athenian Democracy	Students learn the basic structure of Athenian government and how it functioned; they compare Athenian democracy with American democracy.	Athenian Democracy at Work handout (provided); Athenian Democracy Questions handout (provided)	This lesson allows students to learn about history through reading and evaluating an article.
9-12	Informed Citizen	Technology/Media Literacy	Students will use technology and media to identify, analyze and think critically about information.		
		Lesson 1: Selling the Candidates	Students analyze candidates' television advertisements to identify techniques of persuasion and fallacies of logic.	Selling The Candidates handout (provided); if possible obtain The Classics of Political TV	The lesson familiarizes students with persuasive techniques.

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				Advertising (video) Additional resources at www.generationnation.org	
		Lesson 2: It's Party Time!	Students use their knowledge of political parties to analyze the actions of current political leaders.	It's Party Time! handout (provided); Internet access	This lesson has students use resources to learn about a topic.
		Lesson 3: In the News: Fact or Fiction?	Students write a newspaper article that incorporates a headline, lead paragraph, body, and conclusion.	Copies of local or national newspapers or web access	This lesson familiarizes students with newspapers and gives builds writing skills.
		Lesson 4: The Public Agenda	Students gather and classify media coverage to determine national, state, and local issues.	Newspapers and news magazines	This lesson allows students to practice comparing and contrasting, information gathering, analysis and more.
		Lesson 5: Political Cartoons	Students analyze symbolism and messages in political cartoons and draw one on a current issue.	Political Cartoon by Steve Benson handout (provided); political cartoons from newspapers Also use Kevin Siers cartoons at www.charobs.com	This lesson allows students to interpret political cartoons and create their own.
		Lesson 6: Letter to the Editor	Students write letters to the editor or a local newspaper about a candidate or issue.	Letter writing materials; sample letters to the editor; Internet access More resources at www.generationnation.org	Students are able to practice their research skills and synthesize the info they learn in the form of a letter.

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		Lesson 7: Contacting elected officials (via social media)	Students learn how to use social networking sites of Facebook and Twitter and contact elected officials to gather information.	Computer/Internet Access "Contacting Elected Officials" handout "Contacting Elected Officials" worksheet	Students communicate and gather, analyze and assess information
9-12	Informed Citizen	I Study the Candidates and Issues	Students use information to learn, think and decide about issues and candidates		
		Lesson 1: Campaign Issue	Students write papers describing several candidates' positions on selected campaign issues.	Web and newspapers	This lesson has students practice research techniques and writing a research paper based on information they gather.
		Lesson 2: Leader or Politician?	Students construct ideal qualities for political leadership to evaluate the qualities of past leaders and current candidates. Great for different levels of government, global studies, role-play and comparing historic periods and current events.	Brainstorming List handout (provided)	Students evaluate leadership, use brainstorming and use Venn Diagrams.

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		Lesson 3: Choosing an Issue	Students research an issue of interest to them and write a report about what they learned. Great for different levels of government, global studies, role-play and comparing historic periods and current events.	Internet access	In this lesson students practice their research and writing skills.
		Lesson 4: The Election of 1800	Students design campaign signs, buttons, and bumper stickers for John Adams, Federalist Party, Thomas Jefferson, and Democratic-Republican Party. Great for different levels of government, global studies, role-play and comparing historic periods and current events.	Election of 1800 handout (provided) Election Media handout (provided); overhead or blackboard	Students are able to express what they have learned by artistically displaying information.
9-12	Civic Engagement/ Service-Learning	Communicating Your Position/With Others	Students will learn how to clearly and effectively communicate with others.		
		Lesson 1: Exit polling	Students poll voters after they participate in an election.	Exit Polling Survey handout (provided); graphing paper or access to a computer graphing program.	This lesson allows students to practice methods for gathering data.
		Lesson 2: Debate the Issue	Students debate a topic and communicate effectively with one another.	Debate The Issue handout (provided); Debate Ballot handout (provided); stopwatch; debate films	This lesson allows students to practice their debate skills.
		Lesson 3: Designing a Campaign Button	After discussing/describing the visual and technical qualities of campaign buttons, students will understand the use of art to	Scratch Paper Drawing Paper Circle Stencils	

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			help communicate a message; will understand the importance and significance of campaign buttons in elections since 1896; will use historical campaign buttons as primary sources for discussion of the use of color, lettering, composition, and the message to be conveyed at the time; and use active imagination to create an original design for an effective campaign button.	Pencils/Erasers Markers "Samples of Campaign Buttons" handouts Selected web pages to enhance lesson	
9-12	Civic Engagement Service-Learning	Working Together	Students learn the importance of teamwork and service		
		Lesson 1: Koosh Ball Catch	Students play and modify a ball game to discover the power of group deliberation in a democracy.	Shaggy rubber Koosh ball; four other small balls; stopwatch	This lesson teaches students the value of teamwork through a game.
		Lesson 2: Creative Expressions	Students create an artistic display or a public performance to educate the school community about different perspectives on a school issue.	Varies depending on the artistic display/performance	Students work together to present information about a topic to their peers.
9-12	Civic Engagement/ Service-Learning	I Make a Difference	Students will learn how to stay involved with civic affairs after an election.		
		Lesson 1: An Hour or Two	Students work for a cause or candidate in the community.	An empty bulletin board; index cards	Students gather, analyze and assess information.
		Lesson 2: Registering New Voters	Students distribute voter registration information to people who are not currently registered to vote. In NC, 16 and 17 year olds can pre register to vote. Resources at www.generationnation.org	Varied	This interactive lesson allows students the opportunity to artistically display information and get people involved in the voting process.

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		Lesson 3: Assisting People with Disabilities	Students develop and carry out plans to assist individuals with disabilities in registering to vote and voting.	Internet access; a local phone book	This lesson allows students to create a plan and put it into motion.
		Lesson 4: Voicing Your Opinion	Students attend a meeting (school board, town, city council, etc.) and voice their views on a selected issue either verbally or in writing. Many resources and activities: www.generationnation.org	Newspapers; public opinion surveys; printed materials from the school board or city council.	Students experience government and build civic participation and communications skills.
		Lesson 5: My Turn – Targeting a Problem for Teens	Students learn about different problems affecting teenagers, choose one, and brainstorm ways to make a difference.	Taking Action handout (provided)	Students communicate and gather, analyze and assess information
		Lesson 6: Helping an Organization	Students identify an organization working on an issue of concern to them and assist the organization with one of its projects. Contact www.generationnation.org for assistance in Charlotte	Organization lists; Internet access; newspaper or magazine articles; information on how to properly conduct an interview	This lesson allows students to use their research skills to learn about organizations that benefit the community.
		Lesson 7: Teaching an Elementary Lesson	Students teach an aspect of civic education and/or participation to an elementary class. In Charlotte, GenerationNation School Reps may be able to assist with connections. Contact www.generationnation.org	Varied	Students learn about teaching, presentation of information and how their actions impact others.

Many more activities and resources for civics, leadership, government and more at www.generationnation.org



Using the Kids Voting USA Curriculum

To access free online lessons about elections and voting, democracy, media literacy, citizenship, civic engagement and more, take the following steps:

1. Go to www.kidsvotingusa.org/curriculum
2. A **login page** will open.

New users

- Click on the “**register**” link
- Enter, and re-enter, **your email address**
- Fill in your **first name** and **last name**
- For affiliate name, write “**Kids Voting Charlotte**”
- Fill in your **school name** and **city**
- Choose your **state** from the drop-down box
- Create, and re-enter, a **password**
- Fill in the “captcha” **code**
- Click “**register**”

Within a period of time, you will receive an email from Kids Voting USA a confirmation and other login information

Returning users

- Login using your email and password

3. After you log in, an **introductory curriculum page** will open. At the bottom of the page, select the appropriate links for

K-2 activities

3-5 activities

6-8 activities

9-12 activities

4. Using the curriculum

The **Kids Voting USA curriculum** is designed to be **flexible and easy to incorporate** into existing lesson plans. Within each age grouping, activities are divided into 4 major themes. From the curriculum page, click on the appropriate theme to access the individual activities.

Elections and Voting

The intent of this theme is to educate students about elections, from gaining an appreciation of the power of voting including what suffrage is and why it is an important concept today to understanding the registration process and participating in an election. The theme's activities fall under three concepts: My Vote Gives Me Power; I Register and Vote; and Suffrage Then and Now. *Note: lessons in other themes tie in to elections and voting*

Democracy and the People

The intent of this theme is to provide an understanding of and a context for American democracy and citizenship, from the rights and responsibilities of students in their local, state and national communities to the world beyond. The theme's activities fall under four concepts: What is Democracy; Democracy in America; A Citizen's Rights and Responsibilities; and Democracy in the World.

Informed Citizen

The intent of this theme is for students to learn how to evaluate information, intelligently form decisions and communicate your positions to others. The theme's activities fall under three concepts: I Study the Candidates and Issues; Gathering and Weighing Information; and Technology/Media Literacy.

Civic Engagement/Service Learning

The intent of this theme is for students to practice the skills of democratic living as they learn important civic lessons in the classroom and participate in activities in their communities. The theme's activities fall under three concepts: Working Together; I Make A Difference; and Communicating with Others.

5. For your convenience, a PDF file of each activity is available for printing

6. **ESL resources** are also available on the website

7. Curriculum is **aligned to national, state and district standards and goals**. Alignment guides for the Common Core, North Carolina Essential Standards for Social Studies and other correlations are being developed in mid-2012. This content will be posted at www.generationnation.org and shared with teacher contacts. Contact info@kidsvoting.org for information.