

Growing Voters and Election 2016

Activity Title: **Why Vote? Flier Goes Public (Civic Lemonade Stand)**

Grades 7th-12th (easily adapted for upper elementary level)

Precursor Activity Overview

This is part two (optional) of the GrowingVoters.com activity

Why Vote? Class Flier or Pamphlet

Students in a class (Middle School or High School and organized as age-appropriate) have the assignment to produce a WHY VOTE pamphlet of their own. Websites with various resources are provided in our activity. See the Growing Voters resource list online.

The students come to some decisions about the content of their pamphlet (or flier). That in itself is immediately important: students' own answers to why someone eligible to vote should do so. For creating the hand-out/pamphlet, some students will undertake to research the content material, some students will consider the pamphlet design, others about art work, and still others about production. In this way the students take ownership of the Why Vote pamphlet.

In Part Two -- deepen the impact of this activity by asking students to take their Why Vote? pamphlet out into the public; to a school event, to a mall, out on the sidewalk in front of their school, to a sporting event, etc.

Objective

Students can set up in public, with a small table, in public canvasser fashion, students distribute not a pamphlet from an organization (like the League of Women Voters' materials), but their very own creation. With that they get engaged in the civic process. When ask a passing adult "excuse me, are you going to vote on November 8th?"; or "May I give you the voting pamphlet that my class made?" and they have a dialogue with the person. That is a participatory opportunity and one at the heart of creating democratic norms.

Activity

A "Civic Lemonade Stand" →Voter Information and Registration Table

Equipped with the "Why Vote" fliers/pamphlets they've developed in class, students will volunteer to staff a voters' information table at a store, on the street, during a school open house or athletic event, or in some other appropriate venue. The students will hand out their pamphlet and talk with potential voters; if necessary, a parent or teacher will chaperone and provide background support for the student volunteer(s). Along with the Why Vote? pamphlets, students could also have voter-registration card available if desired.

Teach the Presidential Election: A range of technology-infused classroom activities, resources, and tools are **available for free** at GrowingVoters.org, a non-partisan educational effort to enliven and motivate student engagement in the political process. Professor Jo-Anne Hart is the project creator with support from *Lesley University* Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA: Hart@Lesley.edu

Students will provide information to people visiting their table, help them fill out the registration cards, and offer to take the cards to the appropriate location and turn them in.

If PowerPoint presentations have been created by the class or other students in collaboration, a laptop on the table can be playing these materials for interested viewers.

Sample ballots would be another item to include at the table for people to study.

Buttons, stickers, pencils, and balloons (donated by the parties' headquarters) could also be passed out.

Class Discussion

Students can report on their experiences handing out their pamphlet; they can compare reactions and interactions they had with voters and non-voters. The class can analyze what they learned from being part of the political process.

Students' results and analysis could also easily be added to a blog and the pamphlet shared with other students who want to do this in their community.

Students can also put their flier on Voicethread.com and comment there on the experience with the public and some of the replies they received from voters on the election.

Lesson Extension: Additional Activity to Integrate Math

Evaluating the effectiveness of the student volunteers' efforts at the Voter Information and Registration Table(s)

1. Students will keep track of the number of people who meet each of the requirements stated below.

- Number of non-registered voters who stop at the table.
- Number of registered voters who stop at the table.
- Number of people who said they were going to vote / not planning to vote.
- Number of people who take a pamphlet (created by the students) with them.
- Number of people who pick up other informative materials such as that provided by one of the political parties.
- Number of people who watch some or all of the slideshow presentation the students created.
- Number of people who fill out a voter's registration card.
- Number of registration cards that are filled out and left with the students to be turned in.

2. Using a spreadsheet program, students will graph the information gathered at the Voter Information and Registration Table(s).

3. Students will evaluate the effectiveness of their efforts to inform and register voters.