

Michael Farmer, Mt Everett Regional High School in western Massachusetts, with his customized version of GrowingVoters.org learning activity for 7th grade students to create their own Why Vote brochure and use it in their community.

Election Unit Lesson Plan – WHY VOTE?

Concepts and Skills – HG 4, 6, 7, 9, 10; GES 14

Standards Social Studies– US1 9, 11, 13, 15, 19, 20 21; 7.26

Computer Science (6-8) – CAS.c.4, CAS c.5, DTC a.4, DTC a.5, DTC b.1,

DTC b.3, DTC c.1-5

Objective: Students will be able to:

- Explain the process of voting in the federal election as citizens of Massachusetts
- Demonstrate learning by building a convincing argument for voting to others
- Communicate their understanding/arguments for voting to others in a well-executed “online” brochure
- Solicit and syndicate feedback from the community on the reasons to vote

Overview of lesson(s)

1). Students will research the process of voting in Massachusetts. They will answer several key questions:

- What is citizenship?
- What are four rights and three duties of all American citizens
- Why should we vote?
- When we vote, who or what are we voting for?
- How does our vote count?
- How does the process of voting actually work (both registration and on election day)?
- When are federal elections held?
- How is the president elected?
- What is “the popular vote”?
- Is the electoral college better than the popular vote as the means for electing the president?

2). Students will incorporate elements of the above into a PowerPoint document which will be emailed as a brochure to families in the school district. The brochure will contain a link to a

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survey (which the class needs to design), seeking community input as to their view on why people should vote.

3). Survey results will be analyzed and published in the subsequent edition of the school newspaper and placed onto the school website as a splash item.

Total elapsed time = 2 weeks (October 20 – November 4)

Day One

Students will be briefed about the overall 2-week project. Assigned into evenly matched heterogeneous groups. Each group will prepare a “what you know about voting already” page and share their findings with the class. This will be posted on the board and discussed.

Day Two - Four

Students will be given a copy of the question guide together with a list of the resource pages they can go to in order to complete it. Each student in each group will need to hand in a completed copy of the question guide at the end of day 3’s class.

Day Five

Students will come up with a class list of reasons to vote. This will be consolidated for the grade (i.e. across all 4 classes) and then be the list which is used to create the Survey Monkey link on each group’s brochure. Each team will give up on member to the survey team. The remaining team members will commence brochure design activities.

Day Six – Seven

Brochure design and survey creation activities will continue.

Day Eight – Nine

Students will integrate the brochure and survey hyperlink, prepare a brief email notice to recipients, create the email and send the brochure out.

Day Ten

Students will receive the results and prepare a school-wide summary of responses. Each group will prepare a communication slide to be loaded to the school’s homepage.

Day Eleven – Twelve

Slippage, review of learning, student feedback and other items.

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