



Welcome to our **Election Day** resource document, where our CivxNow partners have come together to offer a special collection of educational tools and resources. This collaborative effort celebrates Election Day and emphasizes the importance of civic learning for students at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate

Resource:

The Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate offers a unique and powerful experience in civic learning for students in K-12 and beyond. Our award-winning offerings are developed in collaboration with students, teachers, technologists, and policy experts. The professionally facilitated programs feature immersive role-play, inviting students to become “U.S. Senators for a day,” to debate and negotiate solutions to the nation’s most critical policy issues.

Resource: Political Posters Activity

This activity teaches students about political messaging and the importance of communication before political elections. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

The Rendell Center for Civics & Civic Engagement

Resource: Election Day Read Aloud Celebration

Join us for a special Election Day Read Aloud, where we inspire young minds to understand the importance of voting! Designed for students in K-5, this interactive and engaging program will explore why voting is a cornerstone of democracy and how every citizen’s voice makes a difference.

Volunteers lawyers, judges, and veterans will virtually visit classrooms across the nation to read aloud selected children’s books that highlight important themes of democracy and elections

- Each session lasts up to 30 minutes
- Ideal for students in grades 1-5

- Includes interactive discussions where students can ask questions, reflect on what they heard, and share their thoughts
- [Click here to register](#)

Vote Smart

Resource:

We provide nonpartisan, non-advocacy factual information on politics 365 days a year to all Americans. Our 800-telephone number, website, database, newsletters, candidate profiles, and chatbot are all tools in our civic education toolbox. Specific lessons for the grades below are designed to take advantage of many of the free tools available to the public. Our Civics Matter curriculum was developed by teachers for teachers:

- Lessons for grades K-2
 - [Lesson 1 - What is a Representative?](#)
 - [Lesson 2 - Why Are Representatives Important?](#)
 - [Lesson 3 - What Should We Ask Our Representative?](#)
 - [Lesson 4 - Writing a Letter to Our Representatives](#)
- Lessons for grades 3-5
 - [Lesson 1 - Who is in Charge? The 3 Levels of Government](#)
 - [Lesson 2 - What Makes a Speech?](#)
 - [Lesson 3 - Respecting Opinions](#)
 - [Lesson 4 - Let's Take a Vote](#)

MIDDLE SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Center for Civic Education

Resource: Expanding Voting Rights

In this inquiry-based lesson, students investigate how constitutional amendments and landmark legislation have expanded voting rights in the United States and examine the historical and contemporary barriers that have limited access along the way. Through a jigsaw activity, students collaborate to analyze primary sources and evidence, then apply their learning to evaluate the current state of voting access in America. The lesson culminates in a written assessment and student self-reflection, making it a strong standalone civics unit or complement to a broader unit on constitutional rights and democratic participation. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Amending Voting Rights

In this inquiry-based lesson, students trace how the U.S. Constitution has been amended over time to expand voting rights and investigate the ways current systems may still infringe on those

rights. Drawing on primary sources, video resources, and real-world voting scenarios, students build toward a culminating op-ed in which they argue for or against a new constitutional amendment to protect voting. A strong choice for civics or government courses exploring constitutional change, civil rights, and democratic participation. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

C-SPAN CLASSROOM

Resource: Video Clip: Character and Political Candidates

Former Reps. Steve Stivers (R-OH) and Steve Israel (D-NY) discuss whether the character of political candidates still matters to voters in advance of the 2026 midterm elections. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Bell Ringer: Why Do We Vote on the First Tuesday in November?

This resource takes a look at state and federal elections and the historical reasons for why we vote on the first Tuesday in November. [Click here to access this bell ringer.](#)

Resource: Lesson Plan: Why Do Americans Not Vote in Elections?

This lesson examines recent surveys and political polling about voter participation and seeks to answer the question “Why don’t eligible voters vote?” Using video clips of political scientists, pollsters and journalists, students will identify factors that affect voter participation and develop possible strategies to improve voter turnout in U.S. elections. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Deliberation: Should the voting age be lowered to 16?

The 26th Amendment to the Constitution was passed and ratified in 1971, lowering the voting age to 18 in response to the military draft during the Vietnam War and the rise in youth activism. In 2013, the city of Takoma Park, MD, began allowing 16-year-olds to vote in local elections and several other cities have followed suit. Based on the recent rise in youth activism relating to issues affecting their future, advocates for lowering the voting age have pushed for the expansion of voting to 16-year-olds for federal elections. This classroom deliberation lesson has students learn about the history of lowering the voting age and explore the question: *Should the voting age be lowered to 16?* [Click here to access this lesson.](#)

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Resource: Background Overview: United States Election Policy

In this lesson, students will examine multiple sources to gain a deeper understanding of how changes to election laws have affected the electorate and our government. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Voting Rights in America Timeline Worksheet: In this activity, students will examine a timeline of voting rights in America and answer comprehension questions to learn when different groups of Americans gained the right to vote. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Facing History & Ourselves**Resource: Teaching Resources for US Elections - Collection | Facing History & Ours**

Facing History's US election resources were designed and curated to help students explore the role of elections, voting, and civic participation in creating and sustaining a just and healthy democracy. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Free and Fair Elections: Why Do They Matter? - Lesson plan | Facing History & Ourselves

This lesson helps students consider the importance of elections, examine what makes an election "free and fair," and learn about electoral systems in their area. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Free and Fair Elections - Explainer | Facing History & Ourselves

This Explainer describes the standards that governments need to meet before, during, and after an election to ensure that the election is "free and fair." [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Free and Fair Elections: The Role of Election Officials - Lesson plan | Facing History & Ourselves

Students analyze the film *The Officials* to explore the role that election officials, political leaders, and voters play in ensuring that elections are fair and trustworthy. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Processing US Election Results - Lesson plan | Facing History & Ourselves

This mini-lesson contains guidance for teachers on how to discuss an upcoming election with students, as well as a collection of activities to help students process their emotional responses to an election, find accurate information, and consider the impact of an election once the results are known. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

IssueVoter**Resource:**

This lesson plan, "Using IssueVoter to Understand the Lawmaking Process," was created to help students learn about the legislative process with real legislation, and how to track and understand an active bill in Congress using IssueVoter. It helps youth answer the questions: *How does a bill become a law? How can youth advocate for issues they care about?* [Click here to access this resource.](#) It includes:

- Teacher preparation materials for easy classroom implementation,
- A detailed guide to IssueVoter, and
- Student worksheets that build research and critical thinking skills.

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- Lessons for Grades 6-8
 - [Lesson 1 - The Three Branches of Government](#)
 - [Lesson 2 - The Legislative Branch](#)
 - [Cool Down Activity](#)
 - [Lesson 3 - How a Bill Becomes a Law](#)
 - [Lesson 4 - Three Levels of Government](#)
 - [Cool Down Activity](#)
 - [Lesson 5 - Finding and Writing Representatives](#)
 - [Lesson 6 - Unit Wrap Up](#)

HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Center for Civic Education

Resource: Civic Participation & Voter Turnout

Students examine the state of civic participation in the United States by analyzing voter turnout data across local, state, and federal levels to identify trends and consider what they reveal about the health of American democracy. Through data analysis and policy exploration, students develop their own evidence-based proposals for how policy changes could improve voter turnout. The lesson culminates in a civic action plan, making it an effective capstone for units on political participation, electoral systems, or democratic engagement. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Amending Voting Rights

Building on a rich history of constitutional change, students examine how voting rights have been expanded through amendments and investigate where current systems may still fall short. Through research and evidence-based argumentation, students take and defend a position on whether new constitutional protections for voting are needed today — demonstrating their learning through either a written argument or a formal presentation. A natural fit for AP

Government, We the People, constitutional law, or any high school civics unit on rights, representation, and democratic reform. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Peaceful Transition of Power

Students explore one of democracy's most essential traditions through primary source analysis and structured civic dialogue. Anchored by President Washington's Farewell Address, the lesson traces the history of peaceful transfers of power in American elections and asks students to grapple with what happens when that tradition is threatened. The lesson culminates in a Paideia Seminar, where students practice the skills of respectful, evidence-based civic conversation while defending a position on why peaceful transition of power is foundational to self-government. A strong fit for units on democratic norms, constitutional history, or civic dispositions. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

C-SPAN CLASSROOM

Resource: Video Clip: Public Opinion and Campaign 2026

Ipsos Public Affairs' Polling and Societal Trends President Cliff Young shares public opinion research on President Donald Trump and issues voters say are top of mind with the 2026 midterm elections. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Bell Ringer: The History of State Voting Methods

University of Florida professor Michael McDonald examines the history of early voting in the United States. He discusses early voting in the 19th Century, absentee voting during the Civil War and the development of modern voting methods. [Click here to access this bell ringer.](#)

Resource: Lesson Plan: Election Prediction Project

After reflecting on two related brainstorming questions and reviewing three introductory video clips related to how political polls are conducted, students will study an upcoming senatorial election. Students will self-select two or three data sets to focus on as they analyze previous election results and current polling data to make their predictions. During the project, students will reflect on their learning through written prompts and the development of a poster. The lesson concludes with students reflecting on how their perspectives or understanding of polling and/or voter groups has changed. [Click here to access this lesson.](#)

Resource: Deliberation: Should the Federal Government Regulate States' Election Procedures?

On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon Johnson signed the landmark Voting Rights Act. The Act required that areas of the country that had a history of discrimination receive pre-clearance of any election procedure changes from the federal government. However, the Supreme Court's decision of *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013) eliminated a major element of this legislation. Ongoing Congressional efforts include modifications and expansions of this legislation, notably in 2021's proposed John Lewis Voting Rights Act and Freedom to Vote Act. Using the arguments surrounding this debate, students will examine the historical and contemporary role of the federal government in state elections to determine if the federal government should regulate states' election procedures. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

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Resource: The Citizen’s Senate: Women’s Fight For Suffrage

This activity explores the history of the suffrage movement and the people and politics behind it. Students will act as newspaper reporters in 1920, writing articles about the fight for suffrage and the debates over suffrage in the U.S. Senate. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

Resource: Considering Leadership: A Civic Art Project

This curriculum packet guides students to think about the qualities of good leadership and helps them create a political poster representing leadership and a shared vision of the future. The guide also teaches students about elections generally and helps them consider issues that matter to them so they can lend their voices to the national conversation about leadership. [Click here to access this resource.](#)

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Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

Resource: The Right to Vote: The Role of States and the US Constitution

A multi-year project to develop a high school program on the role of the states in determining and protecting voting rights. As part of this project, the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History has produced a suite of resources for high school students, their teachers, and the general public on the history of voting rights, including

- [New lesson plans](#) in our Teaching Civics through History model
- [Historical background essays](#)
- [A pop-up panel exhibition](#) to tour at the Institute's Affiliate Schools, Affiliate Libraries, and other partner organizations, plus [a digital companion](#) to the traveling exhibition

This resource suite is available to all high school teachers and students and is available at gilderlehrman.org/right-to-vote.

Additionally, the Institute's resources on Kahoot! include a quiz on [Election Day](#), as part of our series celebrating American holidays, key civic dates, and heritage months.

The Civics Center

Resource: Educator Bundle

We've launched new inquiry-based lesson plans that guide high schoolers through local youth voter registration rates and the policies that affect young people's ability to register. Students then design solutions to make voting more accessible for their peers. Plus, a bonus lesson that explores what the numbers being reported by the media after an election actually mean. [Click here to access this lesson](#).

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- Lessons for Grades 9-10
 - [Lesson 1 - What is a Special Interest Group?](#)
 - [Lesson 2 - The Role of Special Interest Groups](#)
 - [Lesson 3 - Politicians and Special Interest Groups](#)
 - [Lesson 4 - Special Interest Group Ratings](#)

- Lessons for Grades 11-12
 - [Intro Lesson](#)
 - [Lesson 1 - The Political Spectrum](#)
 - [Political Spectrum Activity](#)
 - [Lesson 2 - Special Interest Groups \(SIGs\) Jeopardy](#)
 - [Jeopardy Game PowerPoint](#)
 - [Lesson 3 - Creating a Campaign Website](#)
 - [Lesson 4 - Unbiased Research Writing](#)
 - [Lesson 5 - Finding Your Political Match](#)

Youth Leadership Initiative

Resource:

Create a free account, register your class, and customize your 2026 National Elections ballot. Polls will be open from October 19-29, with races for US House, US Senate, and Governor. With your customizable ballot, you have the option to add or remove races, add referenda, or include school-wide contests. Results post October 30 allowing you to compare your students' votes with others in your district and state. Everything is free and easy! [Click here to access this resource](#).