



## Get Out The Vote!

Developed by Patricia King, ESL Instructor

*Appropriate for ESL & EL/Civics classes, Intermediate Low – Advanced levels*

### Resources

[History of Voting!](#) - You Tube video

[Voice of the Voters: Washington Youth](#) - PBS Video from *Washington Week*

[What will shape your voting in the upcoming election?](#) - KQED News: *Public Insight Network*. Share your experience directly with KQED newsroom.

<http://www.rockthevote.com> - **Rock The Vote**: a non-partisan, non-profit organization for youth

[KQED's Election 2012 Blog](#)

### Objective

Identify and discuss the voting process in the United States.

### Context

On November 6, 2012, citizens of the United States will elect a president and vice-president who will serve for the following four years. In some states, people will also vote for state senators and representatives. There may also be initiatives on the ballot about local regulations and taxes. First-time voters have much to learn about why voting is important, and how to vote for the first time. The right to vote for elected representatives is the most important right we have as citizens.

### Preview Activity/Introductory Questions

- What kinds of things have you voted on in your life?  
(*Student elections in school, sports teams, club officers, Academy Awards, elected officials...*)
- What are the differences between the voting process in the U.S and the process in your country?
- Have you ever voted? If so, were you happy with the result?
- If you decided not to vote, why did you make that choice?

## Vocabulary Check

Write terms on board. For each term, elicit what students know first, and then write a simple definition on the board which relates it to the political process. Give examples, where applicable (*issues, policies*).

Students can check off vocabulary as they hear the words in the videos.

absentee (ballot)	advantage	apathy	candidates	conservative
crucial	Democratic Party	identify with	impact	influence
issues	legalize	liberal	media	outlaw
overseas	peers	policies	protest	Republican Party

## Focus Questions for Video #1

View **You Tube** video - [History of Voting!](#)

Play two or three times to help with comprehension. Students may answer questions as they watch. Review answers as a group.

1. When was our country's first election? \_\_\_\_\_
2. The Voting Rights Act guaranteed African American men the right to vote. When did Congress pass this Act? \_\_\_\_\_
3. When did women get the right to vote? \_\_\_\_\_
4. When did 18-year-olds get the right to vote? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Why do you think so many people fail to vote? \_\_\_\_\_

## Focus Questions for Video #2

View the video clip from **Washington Week: [Voice of the Voters: Washington Youth](#)**

Play two or three times to help with comprehension. Students may answer questions as they watch. Review answers as a group.

1. Where are the students in this video? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How many students in the video do you think will vote? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How many students in the video do you think will not vote? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Name three things that will probably influence the way students will vote in the coming election?  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Are *students* generally politically active? Why or why not, in your opinion? \_\_\_\_\_

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## Post Viewing Discussion

- Which of the students in the (second) video did you identify with?
- Do you think it's important to vote? Why?
- What issues do you think will influence how *you* would vote?

## Post Viewing Activities

Divide students into groups. Assign Task 1 to half the groups, Task 2 to the other half. Assign one recorder per group, and allow 10 minutes.

Task 1: Make a list of ways to research *how* you will decide who to vote for.  
(*i.e., newspaper, Internet, TV...*)

Task 2: Make a list of key *issues* in the upcoming elections.  
(*i.e., healthcare, the economy, immigration reform...*)

This group may want to use **KQED's Election 2012 Blog** for reference –  
<http://blogs.kqed.org/election2012/category/issues>

Have representatives from each group report findings on the board. Discuss as class and allow students time to take notes.

## Reflection

Organize students in pairs, with one computer for each pair. Direct them to the survey form on **KQED News: Public Insight Network**, [What Will Shape Your Voting in the Upcoming Election?](#)

Students can discuss the questions necessary to fill out the form and each partner approve the answers before submitting. By submitting the form, they will be telling KQED which issues they are concerned about, which will inform the station's coverage and conversation about the election.

*If no computers are available, the form can be copied for use as a handout.*

## Contact Assignments

- A) Ask students who are citizens to go to the **Rock the Vote** website - [www.rockthevote.com](http://www.rockthevote.com) and follow the links to register to vote, and find their polling places. If time allows and computers are available in classroom, this assignment can be done in class.
- B) For students who are non-citizens, suggest they interview family and friends about what **issues** are important to them in the upcoming election, and report their findings to the class.

- C) Ask all students to bring in newspaper or magazine articles which report on **issues** that are important to them in the upcoming election. If space allows, post articles on a bulletin board.

### **Additional Resources**

#### **Mi Familia Vota**

<http://mifamiliavota.org/> -information about citizenship and voting

In the 2008 presidential election, only half of the eligible Latino voters actually voted.

#### **League of Women Voters of California**

<http://cavotes.org/>

#### **California Secretary of State**

[http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections\\_vr.htm](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/elections_vr.htm) - answers to frequently asked questions about the elections and voting