

The Almost Painless Guide to the Election Process

Program Produced and Distributed by:

Media Rich Learning
www.mediarichlearning.com



TABLE OF CONTENTS

[General Description of Program](#)

[Instructional Notes](#)

[Suggest Instructional Procedures](#)

[Student Objectives](#)

[Blackline Master Descriptions](#)

[Answer Key](#)

[Script of Video Narration](#)

[The Election Process - Blackline Master Index](#)

[Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test](#)

[Blackline Master #2: Post-Test](#)

[Blackline Master #3: Video Quiz](#)

[Blackline Master #3: Discussion Questions](#)

[Blackline Masters #4: Design a Campaign Poster](#)

[Blackline Masters #6: Who Can Participate](#)

[Blackline Master #7: Learn the Terms](#)

[Blackline Master #8: Word Search](#)

[Blackline Master #9: Political Cartoon](#)

[Blackline Master #10: Vocabulary](#)

**THE ALMOST PAINLESS GUIDE
TO THE ELECTION PROCESS
Grades 5-Up
Running Time: 21 minutes**

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM

The Almost Painless Guide to the Election Process uses contemporary footage, archival footage and photographs, original graphics, and dialog narration to provide students in grades five and up with information on the election process.

The program explores the qualifications needed to vote or become a candidate, including the concept of citizenship and how it applies to running for political office and voting eligibility.

It explains political parties and their diversity and usefulness in presenting candidates to the public.

Time is also spent detailing platforms that were significant in United States electoral history, such as suffrage. The 15th, 19th, and 26th amendments, and how they expanded voting rights, are explained in detail.

The significance of the different types of elections are covered – including general, primary, initiative, and recall elections. The purpose of the electoral college and its role in electing the president is also clarified.

Throughout, emphasis is placed on the involvement of citizens in each step of the process, such as grass roots campaigning and citizen involvement. The program concludes with “The Almost Painless Review,” which offers an excellent synopsis of the entire program. Also, a Video Quiz is provided prior to the closing credits.

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

It is suggested that you preview the video and read the related Suggested Instructional Procedures before involving your students in the lesson activities. In this way, you will become familiar with the materials and be better prepared to adapt the program to the needs of your class.

You will probably find it helpful to follow the video and lesson activities in the order in which they are presented in this Teacher’s Guide, but this is not necessary.

It is also suggested that the video presentation take place before the entire class and under your direction. The lesson activities focus on the content of the video; therefore, the presentations should be a common experience for all students.

As you review the instructional program outlined in the Teacher’s Guide, you may find it necessary to make some changes, deletions, or additions to fit the specific needs of

your students. We encourage you to do so, for only by tailoring this program to your students will they obtain the instructional benefits afforded by the materials.

SUGGESTED INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES

Teacher Preparation

- Preview the video [The Election Process](#)
- Duplicate any blackline masters you intend to use.
- Read the descriptions of the blackline masters.

Student Preparation

The students should be supplied with the necessary copies of blackline masters required to complete the activities supplied. Teachers can extend any of the lessons on the Constitution by analyzing current events articles.

STUDENT PREPARATION

Students should be supplied with the necessary copies of blackline masters required to complete the activities. By keeping students informed of current events, teachers can extend any of the lessons on the election process.

STUDENT OBJECTIVES

After viewing the program, [The Election Process](#), and participating in the follow-up activities, students should be able to:

- Explain how political parties, campaigns, and elections provide opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process;
- Describe the role of political parties;
- Describe various kinds of elections, e.g. primary and general, local and state, congressional, presidential, recall;
- Explain ways individuals can participate in political parties, campaigns and elections

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES BLACKLINE MASTERS

The following duplicable blackline masters are included with this guide.

1. **Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test** is an assessment tool intended to gauge student comprehension of the Objectives prior to the launching of the executive branch lesson, which includes the video and the ensuing activities. The results of the Pre-Test may be contrasted with the results of the Post-Test to assess the efficacy of the lesson in achieving the Student Objectives.
2. **Blackline Master #2a-2c: Post Test** is an assessment tool to be administered after the lesson (Pre-Test, video, and follow-up activities) has been completed.
3. **Blackline Master #3: Video Quiz** is a printed copy of the questions which appear at the end of the video presentation. The Video Quiz is intended to reinforce the salient points of the video immediately following its completion and may be used for assessment or as a catalyst for discussion.
4. **Blackline Masters #4: Discussion Questions** offers a series of questions to spur discussion and help identify student misconceptions and comprehension.
5. **Blackline Masters #5: Design a Campaign Poster** challenges students to design a political campaign poster that accurately portrays a candidate.
6. **Blackline Masters #6: Who Can Participate?** provides examples of different citizens and asks students to decide and explain if they can participate in the political process.
7. **Blackline Masters #8a-8b: Word Search** prompts students to search for hidden words from the lessons.
8. **Blackline Master #9: Draw a Political Cartoon** instructs students to observe and collect political cartoons from newspapers and other sources and then to create their own.
9. **Blackline Master #10: Vocabulary** is a list of pertinent terms and definitions.

ANSWER KEY

Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test

1. **False** The U.S. Constitution does not mention political parties.
2. **False** The United States has had many political parties.
3. **False** Naturalized citizens can vote and run for any office but president.
4. **False** You can vote when you are eighteen.
5. **False** Women gained the right to vote with the Nineteenth Amendment.
6. **False** African American men gained the right to vote with the Fifteenth Amendment.
7. **False** U.S. presidents are officially elected by the electoral vote cast by the Electoral College.
8. **False** Initiative is a method citizens can use to pass legislation; recall is a method citizens can use to remove someone from office.
9. **True**
10. **False** Although students under eighteen cannot vote, they can participate in other ways, for example, by expressing their views to their elected officials and by campaigning for the candidate of their choice.

Blackline Master #2a-2c: Post-Test

1. **True**
2. **False** Naturalized citizens can vote.
3. **False** Elections are usually held on a Tuesday.
4. **False** People under the age of eighteen can participate.
5. **False** There have been many parties.
6. **False** The U.S. Constitution does not mention political parties.
7. **False** The elephant is a symbol of the Republican party.
8. **True**
9. **False** The place where citizens cast their vote is called a polling place.
10. **True**
11. A
12. B
13. D
14. B
15. D
16. B
17. B
18. C
19. B
20. B
21. Answers will vary. Possible answer: Citizens can campaign and, if they meet certain age and residency requirements, vote and run for office. They can also express their views in a variety of ways, including circulating petitions and communicating through letters to their elected officials.

22. Answers will vary. Possible answer: The number of voters has been expanded through three constitutional amendments. The Fifteenth Amendment gave African American men the right to vote. The 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote. The 26th Amendment lowered the voting age to those eighteen years old.

Blackline Master #3: Video Quiz

1. **False** A citizen is anyone born in the United States (or whose parents are U.S. citizens) or naturalized.
2. **True**
3. **False** The Fifteenth Amendment gave the right to vote to African American males.
4. **False** To be a senator, a person needs to be at least thirty years old.
5. **False** It is necessary to register.
6. **True**
7. **False** The two major U.S. political parties are the Republican party and the Democratic party.
8. **False** Women gained the right to vote with the Nineteenth Amendment; African American men gained the right to vote with the Fifteenth Amendment.
9. **False** Initiative is a method by which citizens can propose legislation.
10. **True**

Blackline Master #4: Discussion Questions

1. Answers will vary. Possible answers: They can vote, campaign for candidates, run for office, educate themselves, and express their views on important issues.
2. Answers will vary. Possible answer: They cannot vote or run for office, but they can campaign for candidates, learn about important issues, and express their views (for example, by writing letters to public officials or newspapers; by wearing campaign buttons; by making posters or banners for campaign rallies; and so forth).
3. Answers will vary. Possible answers: Political candidates try to get their message across to voters any way they can. They make speeches; give interviews; participate in debates, parades, and political rallies; visit citizens in schools, community centers, factories, nursing homes, and other places; put ads in newspapers, billboards, and on radio and television; create bumper stickers, buttons, hats, T-shirts, other campaign materials for voters; have their supporters make phone calls; get endorsements from anyone the voters might trust or believe: elected officials, movie stars, sports heroes.
4. Answers will vary. Possible answer: Citizens have a loyalty to the country.
5. Answers will vary. Possible answer: Political parties provide a way for candidates of similar views to present themselves to voters. Many minor political parties (third parties) have campaigned for issues such as women's right to vote that have later been adopted by the major parties.
6. Answers will vary. Possible answer: A democracy relies on interested and educated voters to succeed.

7. Answers will vary. Possible answer: Yes, it is fair because voters will still be able to express their views in the general election. No, it isn't fair because voters do not get to help select the candidate.
8. Answers will vary. Possible answer: These techniques give average citizens who vote the opportunity to pass a law the legislature wouldn't consider, approve a law already passed, or to remove someone from office.
9. Answers will vary. Possible answer: The Electoral College is made up of the people who actually vote to elect the president. Each state selects a number of members of the Electoral College, depending on the total number of the state's senators and representatives in Congress (also known as its electoral votes). In most states the presidential candidate who wins the general election gets all of that state's electoral votes.
10. Answers will vary. Possible answer: Each of these amendments has expanded the number of voters. The Fifteenth Amendment gave the vote to African American males. The Nineteenth Amendment gave the vote to women. The Twenty-Sixth Amendment lowered the voting age to eighteen years old.

Blackline Master #5: Design a Campaign Poster

Answers will vary. Campaign posters can be judged on 1) execution – how well the poster is drawn, and 2) content – how well the poster reflects a reason to vote for the candidate.

Blackline Master #6: Who Can Participate?

1. No, she can't because she is not eighteen years old.
2. If he is at least 18 years old and registered, he can vote using an absentee ballot.
3. She can vote if she is a naturalized citizen, 18 or older, and registered to vote.
4. He can vote if he is 18 or older and registered to vote.
5. No, she cannot vote if she hasn't registered.
6. Yes, he can vote because an open primary means everyone can vote.
7. Yes, she can participate because there are no age requirements.
8. Yes, he can if his state permits the initiative.
9. Yes, they can start a new political party. However, there may be state requirements to fulfill to get a new political party listed on the ballot.
10. He cannot be a candidate because he is too young – he needs to be at least 25 years old to be a congressman.

Blackline Master #7: Learn the Terms

1. citizen, alien naturalization
2. Democratic party, Republican party, to register
3. Fifteenth Amendment, Nineteenth Amendment
4. Twenty-Sixth Amendment
5. polling places
6. absentee ballot
7. third parties
8. primary, candidate, closed primary, open primary
9. initiative, recall

Blackline Master #8a-8b: Word Search

1. The two major U.S. political parties are the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.
2. To vote, a citizen needs to be at least eighteen years old.
3. A political party can choose its candidates through a primary election.
4. The president of the United States is elected through the electoral college.
5. Citizens who are campaigning door-to-door are involved in politics at the grassroots level.
6. The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave women the right to vote.
7. African American men gained the right to vote with the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
8. Voters can remove someone from office using the recall.
9. Voters can pass laws that legislatures won't consider with the initiative.
10. The absentee ballot gives voters who will be away on Election Day a way to vote.
11. An alien can become a citizen through the process of naturalization.
12. Before voting, it is necessary to register.
13. Citizens can take part in the political process by expressing their opinions, voting in elections, running for office, and campaigning for candidates.
14. The place where citizens vote is called a polling.

Blackline Master #9: Draw a Political Cartoon

Answers will vary. Campaign posters can be judged on 1) execution – how well the drawings are made, and 2) content – how well the issue is addressed.

**THE ELECTION PROCESS
SCRIPT OF NARRATION**

An *Almost* Painless Guide to the Election Process

HARLAN: (in a melodramatic classical actor style)
That's it - I can not go on!

MARIE: (sighs)
And just why would that be, Harlan.

HARLAN:
I can not tell a lie, Marie.

MARIE:
Hello...You are my friend Harlan, right. I don't recall that bending the truth a little bit was ever a problem for you.

HARLAN:
Well, knowing that we're going to discuss the election process got me thinking about our very first President - George Washington – you know what he's supposed to have said....

MARIE
"I cannot tell a lie."

MARIE:
.... And?

HARLAN:
...And, I know personally that elections can be (slight sob) very painful, so we have to change the title because it's-a-lie!

MARIE:
Oh yea, I remember how you lost out in the vote for Captain of the Football Team, American tragedy really.

HARLAN:
Not that...

MARIE:
Soccer Captain? Field Hockey? Baseball?

HARLAN:
No, No, No, and thanks for reminding me how many times I lost an election.

MARIE:
Sorry, does this help?

HARLAN:

Well, at least it's a little more honest...besides there are worse things than *losing* an election.

MARIE:

That's right.

(pause, thinking)

Although I can't think of any...

HARLAN:

I can...winning.

MARIE:

You actually won an election?

HARLAN:

Yea, kinda...I was elected Student Council President

MARIE:

...Wow...

HARLAN:

...For a day.

MARIE:

One day?

HARLAN: (under his breath)

Longest day of my life.

How did I know they wouldn't let me put big screen TV's in the cafeteria?

MARIE:

Well you're not the first candidate for political office who, try as he might, wasn't able to fulfill every campaign promise.

HARLAN:

I guess not.

MARIE:

And it certainly does show how the voters have the ultimate say! They, and only they, decide to elect or keep a candidate in public office.

HARLAN:

My compliments to your writers, Marie THAT was a darn fine transition into the "educational" part of this program.

MARIE: (overly dramatic Hollywood starlet acceptance speech)



Why, I'd be nothing without the help of all the little people behind the scenes, Harlan! It's just nice to know you like me, you really, really like me!

HARLAN: (cuts her off)

So when George Washington was running for office with that "Can't Lie - Don't Ask Me" slogan did he have those nifty buttons and bumper stickers?

MARIE:

Our first President, ran unopposed, Harlan.

HARLAN:

Wow, that's exactly how I got elected.

MARIE:

Figures, but most Presidential candidates since then have had to campaign hard, and use lots of different forms of advertising, to convince voters to choose them.

HARLAN:

I suppose that's true for anyone running for almost any public office.

MARIE:

Right, whether you're a candidate for Mayor, Congress, or President, you have to get citizens to vote for you.

HARLAN:

Citizens...

That's us right?

MARIE:

Yep, a Citizen is anyone who was born in the United States, or subject to its jurisdiction,

or whose parents are U.S. Citizens....

Although I really do believe you're from Mars.

HARLAN:

That would make me an Alien, Marie

MARIE:

Actually that's correct. An alien is not only a mythical creature from another world, a person who is not a citizen of the United States is also called an alien, although many aliens do become citizens through a process called naturalization.

HARLAN:

So then, *citizens* can vote, and be elected to office.

MARIE:

Right, but ...

HARLAN:
But what?

MARIE:
Well, you must also be at least 18 years of age to vote. (The 26th amendment to the constitution lowered the voting age from 21.) ,

and many elected offices do have age and residency requirements.

HARLAN:
That's simple.

MARIE:
And you have to register as a voter, in advance of upcoming elections.

HARLAN:
A little less simple.

MARIE:
Well, you have to plan ahead a little. But the National Voter Registration Act has made registering a bit easier.

HARLAN:
How so?

MARIE:
It allows you to register to vote when you renew your driver's license!

HARLAN:
That's easy...
Now when do I go stuff that ballot box?

MARIE:
Elections are traditionally held on a Tuesday at various public buildings.

HARLAN:
What if I'm working?

MARIE: (chuckles)
I'd be amazed....

However, most polling places are open from seven in the morning 'till about eight at night, so you'll find the time...

...And by the way you can't *stuff* the ballot box.
One person, one vote.

HARLAN:

What if I was out of town...like enrolled at Harvard for instance?

MARIE:

In that case you can use what's called an "Absentee Ballot".
You send for one, fill it in, and mail it back.

HARLAN:

Got it.

But it seems unfair, if you're not eighteen you can't participate, and you can't go to the parties.

MARIE:

I know I'll regret asking this but...what parties?

HARLAN:

Those political parties I keep hearing about.

MARIE:

Wrong, Wrong, Wrong.

HARLAN:

Why, Why, Why?

MARIE:

Because, Because, Becuz...we have to stop talking like this.

HARLAN:

Into Microphones?

MARIE:

In three's.

HARLAN:

OK, OK, OK...Opps sorry.... You were saying.

MARIE:

Anyone can participate in elections Harlan, even if they can't actually cast a vote.

For example, you can discuss candidates and issues and then try to persuade others to vote a certain way. Or you can write letters to candidates or present office holders expressing your opinions. As a matter of fact, some U.S. Senators receive as many as ten thousand communications from people just like us, every week!

HARLAN:

Well I'd prefer communicating my political views closer to home. Like slapping one of those impossible-to-remove-without-an-air-hammer bumper sticker's on your Mom's car, or... secretly pinning campaign buttons to the back of your Dad's suit coat.

MARIE:

You, and only you, would come up with that...

But, in a sense you're right, you can make your opinion known even if you aren't able to vote. You could also volunteer to help at a candidate's campaign headquarters, they need lots of people, of all ages, to distribute petitions, and literature, put up signs, and canvass neighborhoods. That means going door to door asking people to vote for their candidate.

HARLAN:
...And go to parties!

MARIE:
Yes - and no.

HARLAN:
"Yes - and No."
You sound just like the kids who elected me Student Council President.

MARIE:
"Yes" - candidates do have *parties*, to raise funds, and hopefully celebrate victory...but "No" - a *political party* is something completely different.

HARLAN:
And I have the feeling you are about to explain that difference in minute detail.

MARIE:
And you would be right.
You see, Harlan although the U.S. Constitution doesn't mention political parties, they quickly developed.

And political parties became the major way candidates for public offices are presented to the voters.

HARLAN:
You're talking about the Elephant and Donkey guys...right?

MARIE:
I'm talking about the two major American parties, Harlan:
The Republicans and The Democrats...although there have been, and always will be, many other political parties as well, they are usually referred to as third parties.

HARLAN:
I never heard of any, name two.

MARIE: (sped up electronically)
The Federalists, Democratic Republicans, Whig, Copperheads, Union, Progressive, State's Rights, American Independent, Socialist, Libertarian, Populist, Prohibition, Anti-Mason, Liberty, Free-Soil, Peoples, National, Peace and Freedom, Reform, Constitutional Union, National Women's Party, Southern Democratic, American Party, also known as the know-nothings (Marie takes deep breath and exhales)
Among others.

HARLAN:

Enough let it go already!
Geez ask for two examples, get a roll call...look, you convinced me...
But the Donkey and Elephant guys are the biggies....

Whigs! Copperheads! Talk about strange party names.

MARIE:

And you've convinced me to let it go.

Now, even though third parties have never elected a President or controlled Congress, they have made a big difference in our lives.

HARLAN:

How could that be?

MARIE:

Many smaller parties have concentrated on a single political issue, often motivating the two major parties to react.

The Prohibition and Populist parties for example, originally advocated our 19th amendment to the constitution, giving women the right to vote.

HARLAN:

As if I haven't suffered enough...

MARIE:

What?

HARLAN:

I said...

getting that amendment passed must have been tough...

MARIE:

It was. You see Harlan; suffrage means the right to vote. But, for the first 144 years of this country's existence, women couldn't vote. In 1848, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton organized the first women's rights convention in America. She and Susan B. Anthony joined forces campaigning tirelessly year after year for Women's suffrage. Beginning in 1878 an amendment to give women that right was introduced in Congress...and promptly defeated. But finally, in 1918 Jeannette Rankin, the first woman Congresswoman, again proposed the amendment. Although it barely passed the House of Representatives by the required two thirds vote, it *was* passed by two-thirds of the Senate and three-fourths of the States, and women finally got the vote.

HARLAN:

About time! Talk about unfair...

MARIE:

I agree. Originally the right to vote was a privilege given only to white men wealthy enough to own land.

But amendments like the 15th stating that the right to vote cannot be denied because of race, color, or previous condition of slavery...

and the 19th, granting suffrage to women, have given all citizens...

HARLAN:

...18 and older...the 26th amendment as I recall...

MARIE:

You were listening ...18 and older. The right to vote.

And not just in national elections Harlan, we can vote in Local, State, General and Primary elections. And before you even say it "Primary" does not refer to kindergarten elections...

HARLAN:

A joke that childish would never cross my mind Marie.

MARIE: (sighs again)

Oh brother...A Primary is an election where voters choose a party's candidate for the upcoming general election. A closed primary, means only that party's registered voters can participate, and an open primary....

HARLAN:

Let's everyone vote!

MARIE:

Excellent grasp of the obvious.

HARLAN:

Thank you...I think.

Can I vote on anything else?

MARIE:

I'm glad you asked that, and yes, you can vote on important matters in addition to choosing candidates for public office.

For example, many states have adopted the "Initiative" as a way of passing laws that their legislature wouldn't consider.

HARLAN:

Initiative Huh? That's what my teachers always said I didn't have.so how does this "political" initiative work?

MARIE:

If citizens can collect a certain minimum number of signatures of qualified voters on a petition, then the proposed legislation is put on the ballot, for all the voters to decide on. Initiatives are often called "Propositions" as well. By the way, collecting signatures on a petition you believe in, is another great way to be involved in the political process on a "grass roots" level.

HARLAN:

I want you to know, Marie I am not going to make any seedy, jokes about the term "grass roots"

I just don't understand what the heck it means.

MARIE:

It refers to political action on a local, person-to-person level Harlan. And thanks for sparing us the “Lawn Ranger” and “grass is always greener” gags.

HARLAN:

Well, “Queen of Crabgrass,” I figure this whole election thing is in your field, your turf, in your ballpark so to speak – I am merely here to learn...

MARIE:

Speaking of learning do you know what a “Referendum” is?

HARLAN:

No, and I can’t spell it either, but I’m sure you’ll fill me in.

MARIE:

I shall. You see, sometimes a state legislature will ask the voters to approve a law they have already passed if, for example, it involves spending large amounts of money, or issuing state bonds.

And sometimes, voters are asked to consider a “recall” Sound familiar?

HARLAN:

Whatdayamean?

MARIE:

Recall, as in *removing* someone from office....

HARLAN:

As in former student council president?

MARIE:

Exactly!

HARLAN:

Ouch, you sure know how to hurt a guy....

All right, I think I’ve got this election thing down...pretty simple really.

MARIE:

It is, there is one kind of complicated thing though, when it comes to electing a President...

HARLAN:

Well, why don’t you just keep it to yourself...life’s hard enough and I think I’ve learned all I need to know. You register, show up, cast your ballot, let’s say for Presidential candidate A, he...

MARIE:

...Or she...

HARLAN:

...Or she...gets the most votes and voila’ they’re Mr....

MARIE:
...Or Ms....

HARLAN:
...President.

MARIE:
There is one small, but important-to-understand-complication though...

HARLAN:
Explain this complication to me in short form ok?
I have a limited life span.

MARIE:
I'll explain it in just two words Harlan:
Electoral College.

HARLAN:
Never heard of 'em – do they have a football team?

MARIE: (slight sigh)
Nope, but the Electoral College consists of the people who *actually* vote and elect the president, Harlan. You see, each state legislature appoints as many members as the total of its representatives and senators in congress to the electoral college. That way each state is represented in the Electoral College in direct proportion to the size of its population.

During a presidential election, the candidate that wins a state's popular vote gets all of the state's electoral votes. Whoever gets the most electoral votes nationwide, wins – even if they don't win the popular vote.

HARLAN:
But what if there's a tie?

MARIE:
Then the House Of Representatives would decide.

HARLAN:
I liked my description better...it was so simple.

MARIE:
True, but remember that at the time the constitution was being written there were no computers, voting machines, or even telephones. It's generally felt that the electoral college was instituted because the *mechanics* of counting actual, individual votes would have taken too long, cost too much, and at the time, been too complicated.

HARLAN:
Maybe we should modernize the system? We just saw that the constitution can be changed through amendments.

MARIE:

Many people agree and many proposed amendments have been presented including one that President Jimmy Carter made in 1979, strongly recommending abolishment of the electoral college, but it didn't receive enough votes. But in the future...who knows?

HARLAN:

You know all this talk about elections, voting, and political campaigns... I'm starting to get that strange urge I always seem....

MARIE: (finishes his sentence)

....always seem to get about now.

HARLAN & MARIE: (together)

FIELD TRIP!!!

MARIE:

Here we are Harlan, The Museum of American Political Life in Hartford, Connecticut, this is going to be fascinating...

HARLAN:

This is going to be educational...

MARIE:

Walk over here...

HARLAN:

Wow, I've never seen so much political stuff, you're right this is fascinating ...and look at all the campaign buttons! I could put one on the back of every man, woman, and child in America!

MARIE:

Lovely thought, do you know when the first campaign pinback buttons were made, Harlan?

HARLAN:

I don't even know when our flight back is Marie...

MARIE:

It was 1896! They're even older than you are Harlan...

Over the years just about everything from Pipes and Cigars, to buttons and posters have helped elect candidates, or change public opinion...

Check out this Christmas stocking from the Women's Suffrage movement.

HARLAN:

Hey Marie, here's some of those "Donkey Guys" posters...

MARIE:

The Democrats Harlan, the Demo...

HARLAN:
And those Elephant Guys

MARIE:
The Grand Old Party, Harlan...the Republic...

HARLAN:
So, who are these "moose guys"

MARIE:
They weren't the "moose guys" Harlan, but the Progressive Party is a good example of one of the many third parties we talked about.

You know, maybe you should just sit in here for the rest of the visit...

HARLAN:
neat old voting machine, I feel like I just stepped back in time and, speaking of time...

HARLAN & MARIE: (together)

HOME!

MARIE:
That was fun, but I'm glad to be back, and I'm ready for one of our soon-to-be-famous painless reviews.

HARLAN:
I'll try to stay awake...

MARIE:
What?

HARLAN:
I said: "I can hardly wait."

MARIE:
Ready? I promise this won't hurt a bit:
(delivered fairly fast)

Citizens of the United States who are least 18 years old and have registered can vote in elections. Each voter has one vote, and can vote for candidates for public office in general, national, primary and local elections as well as other issues, such as referendums, initiatives, and even amendments to the United States Constitution.

Constitutional amendments concerning voting rights were the 15th giving all men the right to vote regardless of race, color or previous condition of slavery, the 19th giving women the right to vote, and the 26th lowering the minimum voting age from 21 to 18 years..

The two major political parties in the United States are the Republican and Democratic Parties, although there are many others, usually referred to as third parties.

Voting in elections, communicating your beliefs to elected officials, and becoming involved with political parties and campaigns are a few of the ways each citizen can participate in the political process.

HARLAN:

Wow! Painless and Fast!

MARIE:

Thank you and I think pretty interesting as well...

HARLAN:

Particularly the field trip...I learned a lot

MARIE:

Really?

HARLAN:

Yeah, for example I never knew about that "moose guys party" or that Presidential who had a city named after him...

MARIE:

What in the world are you talking about, Harlan.

HARLAN:

I distinctly remember seeing that poster Marie – Grover ... Cleveland. I wonder if he was actually from Ohio?

MARIE:

You, and only you, could go all the way to Connecticut, and learn nothing!

HARLAN:

What do you mean? I learned a lot, for example, "Win with Wilke", ridiculous slogan...almost as bad as "Tippecanoe and Tyler Too" ...what does that mean anyway? Marie...Marie...Marie?

The Almost Painless Guide to the Branches of Government

THE ELECTION PROCESS

BLACKLINE MASTERS

[Blackline Master #1: Pre-Test](#)

[Blackline Master #2: Post-Test](#)

[Blackline Master #3: Video Quiz](#)

[Blackline Master #4: Discussion Questions](#)

[Blackline Masters #5: Design a Campaign Poster](#)

[Blackline Masters #6: Who Can Participate?](#)

[Blackline Masters #7: Learn the Terms](#)

[Blackline Masters #8a-8b: Word Search](#)

[Blackline Masters #9: Draw a Political Cartoon](#)

[Blackline Masters #10: Vocabulary](#)

Activity: **Pre-Test**

Name _____

Subject: **The Election Process**

Date _____

DIRECTIONS: Read the following statements and mark true or false.

1. The role of political parties is outlined in the U.S. Constitution.

True False

2. The United States has had only two political parties, the Democratic party and the Republican party.

True False

3. You can't vote or run for office if you weren't born in the United States.

True False

4. You must be at least 21 years old to vote.

True False

5. Women have always had the right to vote in the United States.

True False

6. African American men gained the right to vote with the 26th Amendment.

True False

7. U.S. presidents are officially elected by the popular vote.

True False

8. Initiative is a way citizens can use to remove someone from office.

True False

9. Political parties can choose their candidates through a primary.

True False

10. Students under the age of 18 cannot play a role in the American political system.

True False

Activity: **Post-Test**

Name _____

Subject: **The Election Process**

Date _____

DIRECTIONS: Read each of the following statements. Then circle the correct answer. If a statement is false, change the statement to be correct.

1. Anyone born in the United States is a citizen.
True False
2. Naturalized citizens cannot vote.
True False
3. Elections are usually held on a Saturday.
True False
4. People must be at least 18 years old to participate in campaigns.
True False
5. There have always been only two political parties in the United States.
True False
6. The U.S. Constitution outlines the role of political parties.
True False
7. The elephant is a symbol of the Democratic party.
True False
8. Another word for initiative is proposition.
True False
9. The place where citizens cast their vote is called an Electoral College.
True False
10. Collecting signatures for a petition is an example of working on a grass roots level.
True False

Multiple-Choice Questions

Directions: Read each of the following statements. Then circle the best answer.

11. African American men gained the right to vote with the:
(a) the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
(b) the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
(c) the 20th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
(d) the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

12. Women gained the right to vote with the:
- (a) the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
 - (b) the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
 - (c) the 20th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
 - (d) the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
13. A citizen who is traveling on Election Day can still vote using:
- (a) a recall vote
 - (b) the initiative
 - (c) the phone
 - (d) an absentee ballot
14. An election to choose a political party's candidate for an upcoming general election is called:
- (a) a local election
 - (b) a primary election
 - (c) a referendum
 - (d) a congressional election
15. To run for president, a U.S. citizen must be:
- (a) at least 35 years old
 - (b) native-born
 - (c) have lived in the United States for at least 14 years
 - (d) all of the above
16. To be a senator, a U.S. citizen must at least be:
- (a) 35 years old
 - (b) 30 years old
 - (c) 25 years old
 - (d) 20 years old
17. To be a congressional representative, a U.S. citizen must be :
- (a) native-born
 - (b) a citizen for at least seven years
 - (c) a citizen for at least nine years
 - (d) none of the above
18. Citizens can propose new legislation through the technique of:
- (a) recall
 - (b) referendum
 - (c) initiative
 - (d) primary

19. In a presidential election, a president is actually chosen by:

- (a) the popular vote
- (b) the electoral vote
- (c) both a and b
- (d) none of the above

20. Which of the following events should a citizen do first?

- (a) vote in a general election
- (b) register to vote
- (c) vote in a primary
- (d) run for office

Essay Questions

Directions: Choose *one* of the following questions. Then write a paragraph to answer it.

21. Describe how citizens can take part in the political life of our country.

22. How has the U.S. Constitution been changed over the years to expand the number of voters?

Activity: **Video Quiz** Name _____
Subject: **The Election Process** Date _____

DIRECTIONS: Read the following statements and mark the correct answer

1. A citizen is anyone who lives in the United States.
True False
2. An alien can become a citizen through a process called naturalization
True False
3. The 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution lowered the voting age to 18 years old.
True False
4. To be a senator, a person needs to be at least 25 years old, a citizen of the United States for nine years,
and a resident of the state from which he or she was elected.
True False
5. It is not necessary to register in order to vote.
True False
6. If you are not old enough to vote, you can still participate in the political process, for example, by expressing your opinion to your elected officials or by campaigning for candidates.
True False
7. The two major U.S. political parties are the Whigs and the Copperheads.
True False
8. Women and African American men have always had the vote in the United States.
True False
9. An open primary is a way citizens can propose legislation.
True False
10. The Electoral College consists of the people who actually vote to elect the president of the United States.
True False

Activity: **Discussion Questions**

Name _____

Subject: **The Election Process**

Date _____

1. Name some ways Americans can take part in the political life of our country.
2. How can people under the age of 18 take part in American political life?
3. What are some of the ways political candidates use to convince voters to elect them?
4. Why does our Constitution only let *citizens* vote?
5. What role do major and minor political parties play in the American political process?
6. Why should American citizens educate themselves about political issues, vote, and run for election?
7. Is a closed primary fair to voters who aren't members of a political party? Why or why not?
8. How do the techniques of initiative, referendum, and recall give average citizens political power?
9. What is the Electoral College, and how does it work?
10. How have the 15th Amendment, 19th Amendment, and 26th Amendment affected the number of voters?

Activity: **Design a Campaign Poster** Name _____
Subject: **The Election Process** Date _____

DIRECTIONS: Read over the descriptions of each of the following candidates, who are running for representative of your congressional district. Choose one candidate, and design a campaign poster for him or her. Include one reason on your poster why voters should elect your candidate. Your reason can be: the candidate's age, education, experience, or most important issue.

Maria Hernandez

Age: 28

Education: B.A., Harrison College; LL.B., Johnson University

Profession: attorney

Experience: three years as assistant prosecuting attorney for Midland County

Most important issue: in favor of tough laws on criminals and aid to crime victims

Campaign motto: Fight crime and help crime victims!

Jim Silenski

Age: 33

Education: B.A., St. Ursula's College; M.A., Johnson University

Profession: social worker

Experience: 10 years as a social worker for United Charities

Most important issue: in favor of health insurance for every child

Campaign Motto: No child should go without health care!

Roberta Lozano

Age: 45

Education: B.A., Johnson University

Profession: homemaker

Experience: community leader for 20 years; most recently led campaign to provide computers for elementary schools

Most important issue: wants more money for schools

Campaign Motto: Good schools produce educated workers and a strong economy!

Brian Bedford

Age: 52

Education: two years at Erie Technical College

Profession: owner, heating and air conditioning business

Experience: 30 years as owner of a small business

Most important issue: wants to lower taxes

Campaign Motto: Lower taxes means more money in your pocket!

Activity: **Who Can Participate?**

Name _____

Subject: **The Election Process**

Date _____

DIRECTIONS: Read over the following descriptions. Then answer the questions that follow.

1. Megan O'Hara is 16 years old. Can she vote? Why or why not?

2. Rich Henderson is going to be out of town during Election Day. Can he vote? How?

3. Nadia Rozinsky was not born in the United States. Can she vote? How?

4. Darryl Kim is a naturalized citizen. Can he vote? Why or why not?

5. Sarah Nordquist has not registered. Can she vote? Why or why not?

6. Henry Dobbler is not registered as a Republican party or a Democratic party member. Can he vote in an open primary? Why or why not?

7. Jennifer Rudkin wants to help in her neighbor's campaign for mayor, but she is 13 years old.
Can she do it? Why or why not?

8. Ryan Santorini wants to propose a new law about limiting property taxes. Can he do it?
How?

9. Corey Jones and a group of her friends are interested in starting a new political party. Can they do it? Why or why not?

10. Jordan Schneider is 22 years old, a citizen of the United States since birth, and has been a resident of the state of California for five years. He wants to be a congressman. Can he be a candidate? Why or why not?

Activity: **Learn the Terms**

Name

Subject: **The Election Process**

Date

Directions: Read over the following list of terms. Then fill in the sentences below with the correct term. Not all terms will be used.

citizen	19th Amendment	primary	closed primary
alien	referendum	initiative	open primary
26th Amendment	to register	polling places	absentee ballot
third parties	Democratic party	Republican party	recall
grass roots	Electoral College	15th Amendment	naturalization
local election	general election	national election	candidate

1. Anyone born in the United States is a _____, but someone born outside the United States, called an _____, can become a citizen through the process of _____.
2. The donkey is a symbol of the _____, and the elephant is a symbol of the _____. Citizens first need _____ before they can cast their vote in an election.
4. African American males gained the right to vote with the passage of the _____, and American women gained the right to vote with the passage of the _____.
5. The _____ lowered the voting age to 18.
6. Elections are traditionally held on a Tuesday at various public buildings called _____. Twenty-two points, plus triple-word-score, plus fifty points for using all my letters. Game's over. I'm outta here.
7. If a voter will be out of town on election day, he or she can vote by _____.
8. Whigs, Copperheads, and Populists were _____.
9. A _____ is an election where voters choose a political party's _____ for an upcoming general election. In a _____ only that party's registered voters can participate, but in an _____ everyone can vote.
10. _____ is a way of passing laws that legislatures won't consider, and _____ is a way of removing someone from office.

Activity: **Word Search**

Name _____

Subject: **The Election Process**

Date _____

Directions: In each statement below, fill in the words that best complete the statement. Then find and circle the words hidden in the puzzle. Words are hidden vertically and horizontally.

1. The two major U.S. political parties are the _____ and the _____.
2. To vote, a citizen needs to be at least _____ years old.
3. A political party can choose its candidates through a _____.
4. The president of the United States is elected through the _____.
5. Citizens who are campaigning door-to-door are involved in politics at the _____ level.
6. The 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave _____ the right to vote.
7. _____ men gained the right to vote with the 15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
8. Voters can remove someone from office using the _____.
9. Voters can pass laws that legislatures won't consider with the _____.
10. The _____ ballot gives voters who will be away on Election Day a way to vote.
11. An alien can become a citizen through the process of _____.
12. Before voting, it is necessary to _____.
13. Citizens can take part in the political process by expressing their opinions, voting in elections, running for office, and _____ for candidates.
14. The place where citizens vote is called a _____ place.

Activity: **Word Search**

Name

Subject: **The Election Process**

Date

Directions: In each statement below, fill in the words that best complete the statement. Then find and circle the words hidden in the puzzle. Words are hidden vertically and horizontally.

D E M O C R A T I C P A R T Y G
A L Z M N Q B L N E R F E C R R
F E X O U T S E I S I R P A E A
S C H G X Y E I T J M I U M G S
A T K L P R N J I D A C B P I S
W O M E N H T B A C R A L A S R
P R P I Z S E R T U Y N I I T O
O A C G H H E V I F E A C G E O
L L Q H O B C R V M L M A N R T
L C I T J K Z W E U E E N I Z S
I O B E G H P Q N C C R P N C T
N L D E I K M N P R T I A G V R
G L C N E G Z X W U I C R H T I
R E C A L L D F Y B O A T A J L
C G H Z Q O M N B U N N Y M O N
G E N A T U R A L I Z A T I O N

Activity: **Draw a Political Cartoon**

Name

Subject: **The Election Process**

Date

One way voters are influenced is by political cartoons. These are cartoons that make a comment on a political candidate or issue. In drawing such cartoons, editorial cartoonists may save space by using symbols to convey meaning. An elephant, for example, may represent the Republican party and a donkey may represent the Democratic party. Uncle Sam may represent the United States. You can find examples of political cartoons in newspapers and weekly news magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report*, or on the Internet.

Directions: Collect some examples of political cartoons. Then draw an editorial cartoon that makes a comment on one of the following issues or another issue of your choosing.

Issue #1

Even though 18-year-olds have the right to vote, many do not bother to exercise this right.

Issue #2

The Electoral College is an out-of-date method to elect the president and should be abolished.

Issue #3

A closed primary is unfair to independent voters.

Issue #4

A closed primary is fair since anyone can register as a member of political party.

Issue # 5

Elections should be held on a weekend when most people are not working or in school.

Activity: **Vocabulary**

Name

Subject: **The Election Process**

Date

absentee ballot

an instrument that allows citizens who are not able to vote on election day the opportunity to vote by mail-in ballot

alien

someone born outside the United States

campaign

an organized effort in which an individual citizens seeks election to political office

candidate

one that aspires to or is nominated or qualified for an office

citizen

anyone born in the United States, whose parents are U.S. citizens, or who is naturalized

general election

an election, usually held at regular intervals, in which candidates are elected at the local, state, and national levels

grass roots

the most basic level of support for a candidate or an issue

initiative

a way for citizens to pass legislation

naturalization

the process through which an alien can become a citizen of the United States

political party

an group of citizens, united by common goals and beliefs, that strives to get its candidates elected to public office

primary

an election in which members of a political party can select their candidate for the general election

recall

a way for citizens to remove someone from office

suffrage

the right to vote, as in women's suffrage

The Almost Painless Guide to the Branches of Government
is produced and distributed by:

Media Rich Learning
www.mediarichlearning.com

