



## **The Impact of Philosophical Issues on Voting**

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:  
Civics and Economics or United States History, High School Level, 10th and 11th grades

**Keywords:** Politics, Political Parties, Voting, Elections, President, Executive Branch, Legislative Branch, Judicial Branch, Republican, Democrat, World War II, the Great Depression, the Civil War, Philosophy, Free Will, Consent of the Governed, Crisis, Philosophy, Plato, Socrates

**Teaching Standards:** See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

**Synopsis:** The purpose of this unit is to get young adults interested in seeing the social and political behavior of Americans during a time of crisis. Students will see how philosophical issues influence voting patterns, positively or negatively, during a major war, social crisis, or economic downfall. Students will analyze the Civil War, World War II and the Great Depression. Students will understand the social and political effects of these events and how they had an impact on the psyche and behavior of voters in America. Students will understand propaganda, voting techniques, persuasion, and politics of these eras. Students will be engaged in the history and how events influenced the development of politics in the United States during these times. Many of my students are ages 15-17. The purpose is to get them involved in the political process and get them ready to vote when they turn 18. This is an engaging unit that allows students to be involved in the political process of the United States. It allows students to open their mind to the world of politics and voting. It allows students to engage in the voting process, debates, propaganda, voting, public speaking, and writing. It will allow students to put their own beliefs and attitudes into a situation as if they were living during these times of crisis and turmoil. Students will engage in a collaborative learning group with the goal of creating an idea of whether or not social and political behavior can be influenced.

*I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 35 students in my Civics and Economics classes. The majority of the students are 10th graders ages 15-17. I give permission for the Institute to publish my curriculum unit and synopsis in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of my work.*

## **The Impact of Philosophical Issues on Voting**

*Sean Bradley Baker*

“In life, a man commits himself, draws his portrait, and there is nothing but a portrait.”<sup>1</sup> This is a quote from Jean-Paul Sartre in which he explains that only our acts can define us. Is this always true? I have students develop a theory on whether or not personal social and political attitudes and behaviors can be influenced by a major event or crisis. Does your behavior and attitude stay the same? Does your social and political behavior change to adapt to the crisis? Are you willing to stand alone and have your own social and political ideas even if they don’t align with the majority of the people around you? These are just a few questions I ask my high school students after we have gone in depth discussing the effects of the Civil War, World War II, and the Great Depression on the American public. Students today seem to be living in their own little “Apple” world, separated from reality around them and around the world. If you asked them what major crisis they have experienced first-hand, they might only respond with September 11, 2001. Even though they experienced this crisis, they were only two or three years old at the time. In a world full of international crises, terrorism, economic hardship, and social unrest, many of my students have not had to deal with any of this personally. Sure, they may have read something online about ISIS or had their teacher describe terrorist attacks in Afghanistan or Iraq, but they have never had to experience any of these tragic events in person here in the United States. This hasn’t always been the case. As the young adults I teach prepare to vote, I want them to realize politics is more than what is in the United States. I want them to see that our politics extends to other countries and issues within these countries. I want them to ask themselves how a major event could influence their voting.

Americans had to deal with major economic, political, and social events that affected everyday life during the Civil War, World War II and the Great Depression. These major critical events in our history set the tone for how America has developed and show how social and political behavior can change due to experiencing events of a major crisis. I have my students try and develop a political idea of who they are and what they stand for. The majority doesn’t know who is left-wing or right and probably couldn’t list five major figures in either the Republican or Democratic parties, other than maybe the President. As a high school Civics and Economics teacher, I have taken on the challenge of trying to create a spark in high school students to get them involved in politics and to get them to realize that they can use the power of democracy to make a difference. I try to make them realize that in the not too distant future they will care about taxes, healthcare, foreign policy and gun control, to name a few. Many of my students have parents that are not very involved in politics, and have never been through a voting process or watched a political speech. This makes them ignorant to the madness that is politics. My goal is to

create an unbiased picture of politics in the present, but also to show the politics of the past. I want to put them in scenarios in today's world and see what their social and political reaction would be, but I also put them in the perspective of a person living during a major crisis event, such as the Great Depression, and see how changes in society can impact social and political behavior.

Through this unit I want my students to educate themselves on the purpose and history of major social and political events and the influence of politics on those events. I want them to come up with an educated political idea of what they believe in and take an active part in the future to make a difference. I want them to develop a sense of what is important to them and what would happen to their social and political behavior if a major event were to develop during their lifetime. Susan Wolf stated that you can't blame someone's behavior if they have never had access to the true and the good.<sup>2</sup> After my students learn the historical background of some of the major events in the past, I want to see how they would have reacted living during that time period. After they've seen the true and the good (the bad and the ugly) of these events – how is their behavior changed or doesn't it change at all?

Unit questions that will guide discussions and background information and lead to classroom activities are as follows:

- Have political parties artificially divided the American population?
- What are the major factors that influence our political ideals? How does the campaign process contribute to those factors?
- Do we “belong” to a political party or “identify” with one?
- What are the economical, political, and social characteristics of the Civil War?
- What are the economical, political, and social characteristics of the Great Depression?
- What are the economical, political, and social characteristics of World War II?
- Is our system truly about the ‘consent of the governed’?
- How is our free will affected during a time of crisis?
- Should we vote for a political party or a specific individual?

### **Content Objectives**

Unit objectives will follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and will meet the requirements of the North Carolina Common Core (See Appendix 1).

Over the course of this unit, the students will engage in activities following the standards found in the NCSCOS and the Common Core. The students will engage in various rigorous activities that will result in answering the unit questions and coming to understand the American political process through debates and discussion. They will review the economical, political, and social characteristics of the Civil War, the Great Depression, and World War II. We will look to see how people during these events

reacted and if, over time, their social and political behavior changed. Students will understand the characteristics of social and political behavior and how that behavior can be influenced or manipulated in a time of crisis. We will analyze how events of this magnitude and different forms of thinking influenced the philosophy of voters over time in America. How have behavior patterns changed over time in America? We will also look at the motivation to vote in certain ways and if political behavioral patterns have developed during some of these critical events.

Students will be divided up into groups of four to analyze our objectives and to create a presentation answering the objectives at hand. They will develop personal and historical behavior to see if political trends develop during a time of crisis. Students will create a visual presentation. This presentation may be created using poster boards, a PowerPoint, a video, etc. The goal is to show the political and social history of the events. Presentations should illustrate social behavior and political behavioral patterns through social change, voting, major legislative decisions, Supreme Court decisions, etc. Students are also asked to include their own personal feelings of the three major events and express how they would have reacted both socially and politically.

### **Rationale**

I accept the reality that history and politics are usually the last thought on many high school students' minds, but when it comes to political history, often high school students follow what their parents or what their friends tell them. Many of their political thoughts are based on what they read in 140 characters on the rapidly growing social network of Twitter. Their thoughts are based on short ramblings of insignificant celebrities or biased Republican or Democrat "sophisticates" who use humor or fear to gain more viewers to influence their own political ideology on a blank canvas that is the high school student. Too often the Rush Limbaughs, Jon Stewarts, Stephen Colberts, and Glenn Becks of the world are influencing students with biased political propaganda and even cynicism. Although sometimes humorous, several of these programs only show the glittering generalities of politics. My goal is to have students understand historical facts and political ideology from both sides of the aisle.

I want them to gain an unbiased opinion of politics and start making political, social, and economic decisions for themselves. I want them to express Free Will! I want them to come up with an educated opinion on which political party they identify with and whether or not the party itself is important to the political process in the United States. I want them to understand that life will not always be "easy" and that major social and political events could considerably change their lives. I'm interested to see how they would react socially and politically if a major event were to happen.

### **School Background and Information**

William A. Hough High School opened on August 25, 2010 to meet the needs of the growing population in northern Mecklenburg County. It is built on land on Bailey Road and it is a prototype for future high schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School system. It consists of 99 classrooms along with a full array of athletic facilities. One of the unique features of our school is the fifteen rain gardens that dot the landscape. They filter run-off water through natural filters and then drain the water back into the creek which runs along the back of the property. Hough High School is named after a former principal of North Mecklenburg High School. Mr. Hough served from September 1955 to July 1974 and was very much loved and respected by the people of this area. Hough offers students a traditional North Carolina educational program. We offer Standard, Honors and Advanced Placement courses in each of the four core areas: English, Math, Science and Social Studies. In addition, we offer a variety of elective courses to enrich students' lives.

Based on 2011-2012 statistical data, 77% of the student population was white, 8% African American, 8% Asian, 4% Hispanic, and 2% other. The school has over 2,400 students and consists of 98 full-time qualified teachers.

William A. Hough High offers a standard course of study curriculum which includes a college/university preparation track, a college technical preparation track, a dual college/university & technical preparation track, and a career track. An occupational course of study leading to an occupational diploma is also available for qualified students in the Exceptional Children's Program. The curriculum is administered on a modified/hybrid 4x4 block schedule (with some A/B classes), allowing for flexible scheduling, re-looping and acceleration.

William A. Hough High uses weekly collaboration through content area meetings. We encourage student centered classrooms that focus on rigor. We encourage higher level thinking and encourage students to develop answers to problems on their own. This philosophy will play an intricate part in my unit. Students will be organized into groups to understand the political campaign process, which will be important to the development of their political ideology. Students will take a "Conservative vs. Liberal" pre-quiz to help determine stereotypical political ideologies of the Republican and Democratic parties. One of the keys that sometimes come from this quiz is that it reveals to some people that they may want to become recognized as independents.

As a teacher at William A. Hough High School, I use input, advice, and collaboration from other teachers. Our alignment discussions among Civics teachers are key to focusing on the NCSCOS and the new Common Core that has been implemented in the past few years. We use high level reading resources and implement objective writing assignments to meet the requirements of the Common Core. These writing assignments will play an important part in my unit. Students will actively engage in writing a political

party platform and will interpret specific propaganda to identify major forms of propaganda and its influence.

According to their website, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) is located in the Charlotte, North Carolina region and provides academic instruction, rigor and support each school day to more than 141,100 students in kindergarten through 12th grade in 162 schools throughout the cities and towns of Mecklenburg County. CMS believes setting high standards for all students creates a greater opportunity for future success – in our communities, within the region and across our diverse and global society. Each day, CMS students are prepared to be leaders in a technologically savvy and globally competitive world.

CMS is proud of its diverse mix of students who represent 160 different countries and various cultural and ethnic backgrounds. CMS offers an extensive range of magnet programs in 40 of its schools to nurture the talents of students who have interest and ability in specific areas. CMS also educates, supports, and meets the needs of students with learning and physical disabilities.

CMS is one of the largest employers in Mecklenburg County with approximately 18,800 teachers, support staff and administrators. CMS is fortunate to have tremendous support from Charlotte's corporate, faith and business communities and more than 43,000 mentors and volunteers that support learning and instruction in CMS classrooms.<sup>3</sup>

## **Topic Information**

*Note Outlines: World War II, The Great Depression, and Civil War*

The students discuss a review of three major events covered previously in class. We do a one page notes outline review on the political and social effects of the Civil War, the Great Depression, and World War II. At this point in the unit, we have already discussed the magnitude and importance of these events and their social and political impacts on the people during that time period. The students will be able to see how events taking place during or prior to a political election can impact their voting decisions. This will help them see the importance of being fully educated on the topics going on at the time and how each political party plans on handling a certain situation. I also have students view philosophical ideas of politics and how this can help them think about what political party or approach to making decisions will help them be a more educated voter. We view the political ideas of philosophers from Aristotle and Plato to John Hobbes and Jean-Jacque Rousseau and mix this with more modern ideas from philosophical leaders of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We do this to develop a sense of how a government should run and how a government should be involved in everyday life.

## *Campaigning*

Students will have prior knowledge of how the electoral college functions and the choice of delegates in the Electoral College. Students will have been assessed on specific vocabulary including such words as caucus, primary elections, conventions, PAC, platform, planks, etc. The students will have a prior understanding of the basic functions of a political party nominating a candidate for a major office such as President. Review of material prior to activities may be necessary for some students. My suggestion in terms of activities is to bring these specific terms and prior knowledge to life. Students will act as a nominating caucus to nominate a student for President. The students will act as a specific political party to get a fellow student elected. At this point students can take views of Republicans, Democrats, or categorize themselves as a Third Party. They will write a platform consisting of separate planks. They will write a campaign speech for their candidate to give orally to class. This will give the outlining idea of whether or not the students are preparing the parties' ideas or the specific candidates at this point.

Students will view campaigning techniques from the three major topics of focus – the Civil War, the Great Depression, and World War II. The students will see the effects of campaigning by politicians of that time and how a major issue divided the political spectrum. The students will see the importance politicians play during these events and how the public needs to make an educated decision during a critical time. The students will see the impact the voters had in the outcome of these events. I want the students to make the connection that no matter what time period, no matter what the event, their beliefs and choices in politics matter and that they can each make an impact as one political voter in an election. So in this small scenario the students are creating in their political parties, the students will see how one student as “Class President” can be completely different than another candidate and how those candidates can impact their “lives as students” in the school.

## *Political Propaganda and Psychological Effects on Voting*

Throughout this unit seven different forms of propaganda techniques will be defined and examples of each will be shown. A great resource to show would be a video found on CNN.com. It is a four minute video that helps students determine what a negative propaganda advertisement is and what a positive advertisement is. It shows how political parties use types of propaganda to influence voter opinion. Students will develop their own propaganda posters to demonstrate knowledge of the techniques. They will use propaganda in their political parties to form a positive or negative connotation towards their party or another political party.

The seven forms of propaganda are glittering generalities, bandwagon, name-calling, celebrity endorsement, card-stacking, “just plain folks”, and symbolism. Throughout the discussion of the forms of propaganda we will discuss why political parties use these to

persuade voters to vote a specific way. We will discuss how non-educated voters will make a decision on no merit based on propaganda techniques. We will discuss the impact propaganda has not only on a candidate, but also on the political party. Students will look at political propaganda from the Civil War, the Great Depression and World War II (see resources). They will see what impact the propaganda had on the votes, specifically regionally, and show how voters used the propaganda to make decisions. This will help students to make the connection of how they can influence the voters of the class to vote for their political candidate.

Students will show they have mastered at least four of the seven propaganda techniques through creation of propaganda posters. They will be shown old examples of propaganda from the Civil War, World War II, and the Great Depression. Students will then focus propaganda on a specific individual (their candidate or an opposing candidate), a specific issue, or a specific party itself. Students will create their posters to help their candidate win or present another candidate or party in a negative light.

### *Platforms*

Students will be given a formal outline to list the planks of their party's platform. This will be used as the basis of their campaign candidate's speech. They will be given examples of platforms used from previous elections and candidates from all parties. A platform is a list of the actions which a political party, individual candidate, or other organization supports to appeal to the general public for the purpose of having said peoples' candidates voted into political office or for the purpose of proposing the professed opinion(s) as part of law(s) or social policies. This exercise will be instrumental in helping students determine the difference between a political party's agenda and an individual candidate's agenda. Is there a difference? Students will determine if they are actually creating a platform of an individual or if it is geared more towards a political party.

Students will watch video of campaign platforms outlined in candidate's speeches. Students will compare and contrast Mitt Romney's acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention and President Barack Obama's acceptance speech at the Democratic National Convention. They will look for use of propaganda. They will label parts of the speech that outlines their planks. Students will watch clips of Presidential speeches, debates (for example, John F. Kennedy vs. Richard Nixon), addresses, etc. so as to better understand how specific issues are demonstrated and in order to see examples of strategies they can use in their campaigns. They will also look at public opinion polls of both candidates before and after the National Conventions to see how the propaganda impacted public opinion.<sup>4</sup>

### **Strategies**



### *Opening Activity*

Opening activities is a strategy used to review previous content covered in a previous lesson or is used to see how much prior knowledge a student has on a topic. My opening activities vary, but I like to use them to get the students engaged in class from the beginning of the lesson. My activities range from a list of five to ten review questions based on previous material, mapping activities, reading activities, or free written response questions. Students know to look to complete this in the first 10-15 minutes of class. After completion the opening activity is discussed in class, questions and answers are reviewed, or free response questions are shared. Students group these assignments in their notebooks and turn them in for a grade every two weeks.

### *Collaborative Groups*

Cooperative or collaborative learning is a team process where members support and rely on each other to achieve an agreed-upon goal. The classroom is an excellent place to develop team-building skills needed later in life. Diverse skill levels, backgrounds, and experience allow each individual to bring strength to a group. Each member of the group is responsible to not only contribute his/her strengths, but also to help others understand the source of these strengths. Any member who is at a disadvantage or not comfortable with the majority should be encouraged and proactively empowered to contribute. Learning is positively influenced with a diversity of perspective and experience, increasing options for problem solving, and expanding the range of details to consider. In this lesson, students will work together as a whole to act as a political party and act as a group to get their nominee elected. Students will be grouped together based on diverse skill levels and background. Groups will be picked and organized by the teacher. These groups will pick their nominee, write their platform and campaign speeches, and create their propaganda as a group. They must work together to finish with the best product and grade possible.

### *Debate*

The intent of the strategy is to engage learners in a combination of activities that cause them to interact with the curriculum. Debate forces the participants to consider not only the facts of a situation but the implications as well. Participants think critically and strategically about both their own and their opponent's position. The competitive aspects encourage engagement and a commitment to a position. Debates require students to engage in research, encourage the development of listening and oratory skills, create an environment where students must think critically, and provide a method for teachers to assess the quality of learning of the students. Debates also provide an opportunity for peer involvement in evaluation. Students will debate with one another to determine which

policies are needed to be discussed in the party platforms. Students will also debate with one another about who is a better candidate to represent their party and why he or she should be the president.

### *Free Response Writing*

The free-response essay assesses the ability to think critically and analyze the topics studied in the curriculum. Free response writing allows students to demonstrate an understanding of the linkages among the various elements of government.

Students will use free response writing in preparing their planks for their platform. Students will be asked to share their views on specific topics and freely write about them to contribute to the group in order to write their overall platform for their party. They will also use their free response writing skills to help write their candidate's campaign speech that will be given in class by each candidate. Students will answer questions about events during the Civil War, Great Depression, and World War II and show the impact of the events on voters. They will be asked if the philosophical approach by the voters of certain parties changed because of these events and asked what could possibly take place that would impact their political choices in the future. Students will also be given a scenario to see if their political philosophy would change as it did for some during the Civil War, Depression and World War II. I give them a scenario in which World War III has started. A Republican President has reinstated the draft. A Democratic candidate for President is against the draft. Would your political actions change during this time of crisis?

### *Guided Notes*

One strategy I use (especially for standard level students) are guided notes. Students are given an outline of notes (prepared by me) with blanks filled in throughout the notes. As we discuss new topics in class, the note outline is projected on my Promethean Board and as I discuss the material I fill in the blanks and they do the same on their outline. The students will participate in discussion as we fill in the notes and will use the notes to study later on when the assessment is assigned. This allows the students to have a detailed, specific, and organized outline for the content I want them to know for their assessment, but also to incorporate into this lesson. Students will keep the new content material in their notebooks to study later for their test.

### **Activities**

#### *Compare and contrast activity*

Throughout this unit students will be expected to develop stereotypical characteristics and philosophical approaches of the major political parties, including the independents. A great way for students to understand the qualities of the parties can be expressed with a

Venn diagram. Students then have a graphic organizer they can use and study to determine differences and similarities between the three major political participants. This can also be used to compare two to three specific candidates running in an election. Students are then asked to express their findings either orally or in writing (4-6 sentences) describing their results. This utilizes a multitude of critical thinking skills in one activity.

### *Politics*

Students will watch the political debate between 2012 Presidential election candidates Barack Obama and Mitt Romney. Students will fill out a worksheet I have created to analyze the debate. Again, the main purpose of watching this is to expose them to political debates and how they are structured and their overall purpose. Many students at ages 15 and 16 have not taken the time to sit down and watch a political debate. Students will be asked to pick out what they believe was the strongest and weakest argument from both candidates. They will also be asked to show how a particular issue going on in the world could affect how a voter will decide whom to vote for. We will see how voters from the South refused to vote for Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War because of the fear of ending slavery. We will see how voters continued to vote for Franklin Roosevelt during the Great Depression and World War II in fear of changing political regimes during a time of crisis. They will also be able to write about the format of the debate and whether or not it was an effective measure outlining the ideals of the two candidates. The students will also need to come up with a concrete question they would have asked each candidate after watching the debate. Students will also watch excerpts of political satire to see a different viewpoint of politics. Those excerpts range from The Stephen Colbert Show, The Daily Show, and Saturday Night Live political skits as they make satirical remarks regarding the debates.

### *Platforms*

Students will be given a formal outline to write their party's platform. This will be completed after the candidate for each party has been nominated and after the primary vote. Students will be required to write a minimum of four planks that will comprise their platform. Students will pick four major issues that their party will want to focus on. The planks will be detailed and elaborated upon. Each plank will be around a paragraph long (four to six sentences) outlining the specifics of the issue, where they stand on the issue, and what they will do about the issue.

### *Propaganda Creations*

Students will be given examples of the seven forms of propaganda and will be required to create four propaganda posters using four different forms of propaganda. Students may use any means possible to create the poster. They can draw it or print pictures off the Internet to display their form of propaganda. The propaganda can show their candidate in

a positive manner or can be negative towards another candidate. They can also use the propaganda to emphasize a political issue that is outlined in their platform. Students will be given 8 x 11 computer paper to create their propaganda, but will have the option to bring in larger poster paper to create their propaganda.

### *Prior Knowledge Quiz*

Students will be asked to take an informal quiz about their political party affiliation. Students will be asked various questions based on specific issues happening in the United States. The student's responses are based on whether or not they agree with the statement or disagree with the statement. For each statement, agreement or disagreement corresponds with a conservative or liberal approach towards political issues. Students add up the number of conservative statements and liberal statements and try to determine if they are more conservative (Republican), liberal (Democrat), or in the middle (Independent/Moderate). Students will use this as a small resource to determine which political party they want to be affiliated with or whether they choose to become an independent voter.<sup>5</sup>

### *Day One*

Students will be given a 15 minute opening activity to allow them to write a free response answer to the question, "What are your personal political views and how did you determine what those views are?" Students will write the question in their notebooks and respond to it. Students will be given the opportunity to share their written responses with the class. Students will then be given a guided notes outline to discuss. This outline will contain notes covering the basic concepts and roles of political parties, voting, and forms of propaganda. Students will fill in the notes as we discuss them in class and share their opinions. As we discuss primary elections, we will watch a 20 minute excerpt from a debate between Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama from the 2008 election. We will also watch a 15 minute excerpt from the Republican Primary debate of 2012 from South Carolina. Students will fill in the "Watching the Debate" worksheet as they watch the two debates. Students will be assigned the content vocabulary from the textbook that covers political parties and elections. They will write the key term definitions in their notebooks and will be assessed on those words on a later date. Students are to go over the philosopher's chart to discuss the early beginnings of how to ask questions to determine beliefs. Students will also fill in the event chart for information regarding the Civil War, World War II, and the Great Depression. Students will be asked to respond to the crisis situation in free response writing time to determine if a crisis situation would change their political philosophy.

### *Day Two*

Students will be grouped into 4 to 6 depending on class size. Desks will be arranged in a manner in which the students can collaborate effectively. Each group will represent a party of their choosing. Students will be given the 30 question 'Prior Knowledge Political Quiz'. Students will be given 15 minutes to complete the quiz independently. Students are told the purpose of the quiz and are to write down whether they think they are more conservative or liberal before they take the quiz. When the quiz is complete, the quiz can help determine whether their thoughts about being conservative or liberal are accurate. After this time period, I will go over the answers in class. Students are to mark down, depending on their answer, whether each answer was a conservative response or liberal. At the end, the students will add up the number of conservative statements and liberal statements. Students will then share their responses with their group and see where they stand. The group will discuss whether they agree to be a Republican, Democrat, or Independent based on discussion and results of the quiz.

Students will then determine who will be their candidates for the primary. Each group must nominate two candidates. Within the group, at least two people will give their reasons for representing their party. The group will then have a primary vote. Whoever wins the primary vote then moves on to compete against the other groups/parties' candidates for President. Once the candidate is chosen for their party, the students will begin brainstorming on political ideals they would like to include in their party platform and write a rough draft of those ideas.

### *Day Three*

Students will be assessed on the key terms they were to have completed on day one. Students will then finalizing their party platform. Students will be given the political party platform which is broken down into planks. A designated writer for the group will write the final version of the platform. The platform must contain four specific planks that outline specific issues facing our political nation. The candidate for the party will begin writing a rough draft for a campaign speech that will be given to the class in hopes of securing their votes. Other members of the group will start formulating ideas for propaganda posters. Students will be given 8 x 11 size paper to begin rough drafts of their propaganda. Students will make reference to their notes outline completed on day one for the forms of propaganda. Students are required to complete four different forms of propaganda for their campaign.

### *Day Four*

Students will finalize their platform and have a final copy ready to be turned in. Candidates and other group members will help finalize a campaign speech to be used by the candidate for their group. The candidate must use the platform to help write the campaign speech. Candidates can also come up with creative ways in which they would like to present their speech (some students dress up, rap, play background music, or even

create videos). Students will also be finalizing their four propaganda posters. Students will make sure they have identified the form of propaganda used and will check to make sure it is used correctly and identified on the poster. Students can start hanging up the propaganda around the room and campaigning for their candidates.

#### *Day Five*

Candidates for each group will prepare their speeches to be given to the class. The purpose of the speech is to convince the class to vote for them as they discuss their party's platform. Each group will spend about 15 minutes campaigning for their candidate. At this time, they can discuss issues with other students, show propaganda posters, portray their candidate in a "positive light", or even take time to create a negative image of another candidate. Students in the past have created skits or "ads" to portray another candidate negatively. Students are to be actively moving about the room and communicating with one another. After the "campaign process" is over, each candidate will be given five minutes to deliver the campaign speech to the class. After each speech is given there will be a question and answer session in which the voters (students) can ask the candidate specific questions about their campaign, platform, or individual opinions on different issues.

#### *Day Six*

Candidates will be given two additional minutes for last remarks and to review their platforms. Students will then be given ballots. The one asterisk that should be pointed out at this point is that I do not allow the students to vote for the candidate from their group. If I did there would be a tie for each group. This is why I stress the campaign. Each person is an individual voter and must decide which candidate/party from the class best suits their ideals. Students then vote and the votes are tallied in class. The winner is then announced and given title of President of the Class.

Reflection writing. Students are to write a reflection on the campaign process and what they learned from the activities. Students are also to reflect on why they voted the way they did at the end. Students are to reflect on whether the candidate played more of an impact on their vote or if it was the party they were voting for more because of the specific ideals it represented.

## **Appendix 1: Implementing Common Core Standards**

**Competency Goal 4** The learner will explore active roles as a citizen at the local, state, and national levels of government.

### **Objectives**

**4.01** Examine the structure and organization of political parties.

Students will examine the beginning of political parties and how the parties have morphed into the major Two Party System that we have today.

**4.02** Describe the election process and the qualifications and procedures for voting.

Students will write platforms, give campaign speeches, and campaign to have other students vote for their running candidate.

**4.03** Analyze information on political issues and candidates seeking political office.

Each student running for office will give a campaign speech on the issues they wrote in their platform. Students will be seeking political office by convincing the other students that their plan for the school is better than the other candidates.

**4.04** Demonstrate active methods of promoting and inhibiting change through political action. Students will be promoting their party with campaign posters, propaganda, and voting.

**4.05** Analyze consequences of compliance or noncompliance with laws governing society. Students will react to negative and positive propaganda and influences of the media onto their specific campaign party.

**4.06** Describe the benefits of civic participation.

Students will be engaging in the voting and election process.

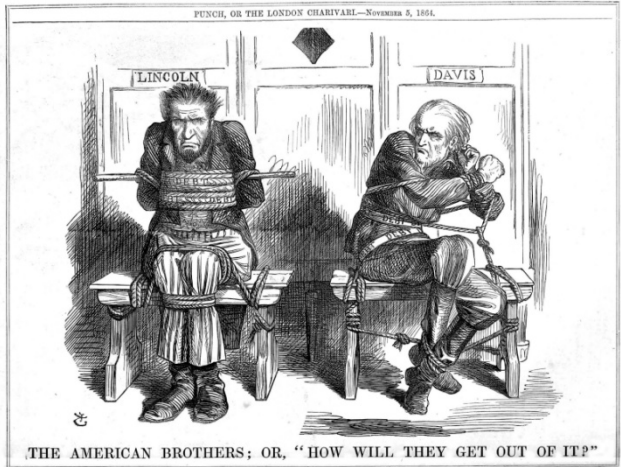
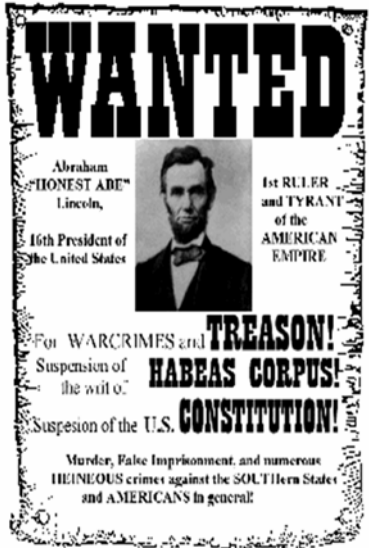
**4.07** Analyze costs and benefits of jury service, voting, seeking office, and civic action at the local, state, and national levels. Each group will nominate a candidate seeking office and try to convince the other class members that he/she will be the best candidate to run their current school and be named “President” of the school. Students will work primarily on Objective 4. Objective 4 outlines civic participation in voting and understanding the role of political parties and voting in the United States. Students will bring these objectives to life by participating in the project.

## Resources

### Philosophers Chart

Modernity <-----> Post Modernity Traditional and Conservative <-----> Contemporary and Liberal Authoritarian (convergent) <-----> (divergent) Non-Authoritarian				
<b>General or World Philosophies</b>	<b>Idealism:</b> Ideas are the only true reality, the only thing worth knowing. Focus: <i>Mind</i>	<b>Realism:</b> Reality exists independent of human mind. World of physical objects ultimate reality. Focus: <i>Body</i>	<b>Pragmatism:</b> Universe is dynamic, evolving. Purpose of thought is action. Truth is relative. Focus: <i>Experience</i>	<b>Existentialism:</b> Reality is subjective, within the individual. Individual rather than external standards. Focus: <i>Freedom</i>
<b>Originator(s)</b>	Plato	Aristotle	Pierce, Dewey	Sartre, Kierkegaard
<b>Curricular Emphasis</b>	Subject matter of mind: literature, history, philosophy, religion	Subject matter of physical world: science, math	Subject matter of social experience. Creation of new social order	Subject matter of personal choice
<b>Teaching Method</b>	Teach for handling ideas: lecture, discussion	Teach for mastery of facts and basic skills: demonstration, recitation	Problem solving: Project method	Individual as entity within social context
<b>Character Development</b>	Imitating examples, heroes	Training in rules of conduct	Making group decisions in light of consequences	Individual responsibility for decisions and preferences
<b>Related Educational Philosophies</b>	<b>Perennialism:</b> Focus: Teach ideas that are everlasting. Seek enduring truths which are constant, not changing, through great literature, art, philosophy, religion.	<b>Essentialism:</b> Focus: Teach the common core, "the basics" of information and skills (cultural heritage) needed for citizenship. (Curriculum can change)	<b>Progressivism:</b> Focus: Ideas should be tested by active experimentation. Learning rooted in questions of learners in interaction with others. Experience and student centered.	<b>Reconstructionism/ Critical Theory</b> Focus: Critical pedagogy: Analysis of world events, controversial issues and diversity to provide vision for better world and social change.





Political Propaganda from Civil War, Great Depression, and World War II

## Political Campaign Instructions

### Elections Campaigning Group Assignment

Civics and Economics

**Caucus/Convention:** Once you are assigned to a caucus/convention, your caucus/convention is responsible for the following materials:

- Nominating a candidate to run for “Class President”
- Creating a political party name and mascot
- Creating a party platform (see requirements below)
- Writing a campaign speech (see requirements below)
- Nominee delivering the campaign speech to the delegates
- Creating 4 forms of propaganda (see requirements below)
- Being able to answer “media” questions (me)
- Voting
- Turn in all work

### **Creating a Party Platform**

A **party platform** is a series of statements expressing the party’s principles, beliefs, and positions on elections issues (each part is called a **plank**).

**Write** a detailed party platform describing your party’s principles, beliefs and positions on **at least 4 issues, policies, or activities concerning the United States**. Make sure each plank is detailed and describes your party’s stance on the issue and how you will solve, remedy, keep, or change the policy or issue.

**Label each plank by name and describe in detail. Each plank should be around a paragraph or two in length.**

### **Writing a Campaign Speech**

As a group you will **write a formal and detailed campaign speech** that addresses the delegates at the convention (the class), but also the school as a whole (the voters).

The speech will be **at least a page in length** and will discuss your party’s viewpoints (platform) as well as discussing why you are the better candidate than the others. You can make up anything you want about your candidate in the speech as long as you write about the specific issues you brought discussed in your platform.

**Your speech should be written and delivered in hopes of convincing the voters to vote for you.**

**\*\*Your candidate will use this speech to give at least a 3 minute speech to the voters on his/her campaign issues\*\***

### **Propaganda Posters**

Using the seven propaganda techniques discussed in class, (see notes and pg. 336 in textbook) you will create **4 propaganda posters** discussing your candidate, the issues from your platform, and/or the opposing candidates. These posters can be hung up in the class during the “campaign” to help influence voters on the issues, but more importantly in hopes that they vote for you.

Poster paper will be provided for you or you can create your own.

**VOTE** (with a catch...)

You will be asked to vote for which you think is the best candidate to be named “Classroom President”.

The **catch** is you **cannot** vote for the candidate in your group. You must vote for another candidate in the class (otherwise it will all end in a tie for the most part).

**Party Platform Formal Outline**

Party Platform

Party Name:

Group Members Names:

Plank

#1: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Plank #2

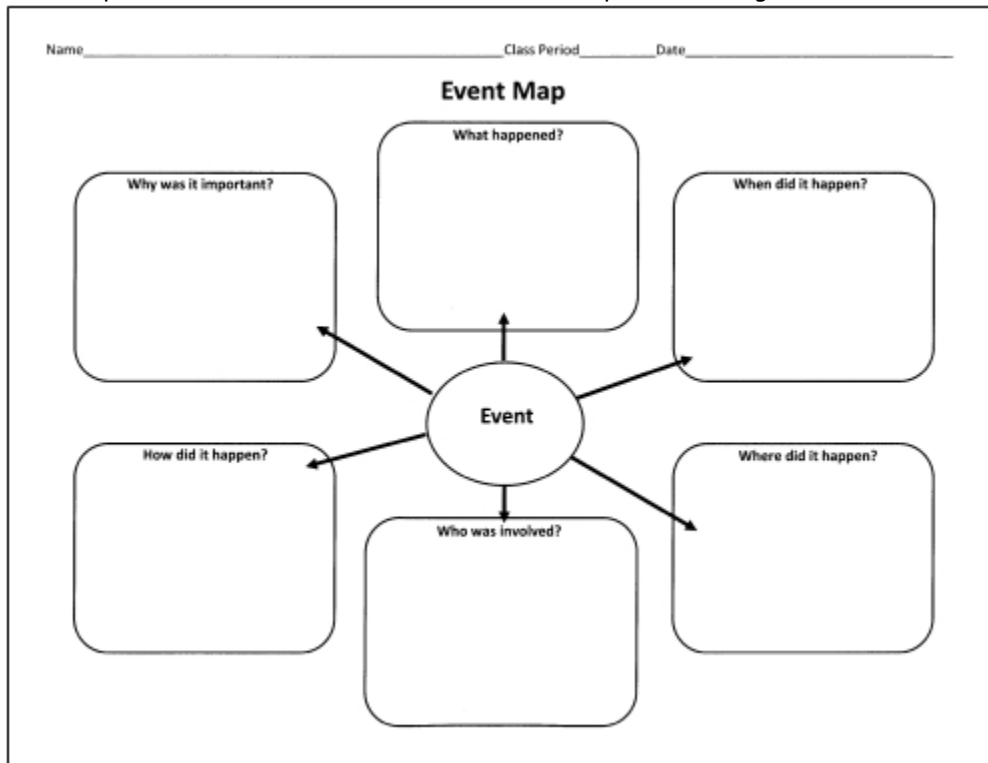
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Plank #3

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Plank #4

Event Map for Civil War, World War II, and Great Depression background information



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Resource provides insight on the social effects of political advertisements and how they can influence political voters.

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Resource provides examples of political speeches and videos.

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## Notes

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/top100speechesall.html>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.proprofs.com/quiz-school/story.php?title=are-you-liberal-conservative>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.smashingmagazine.com/2010/06/13/100-years-of-propaganda-the-good-the-bad-and-the-ugly/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.dailyteachingtools.com/language-arts-graphic-organizers.html>