



Using the Mock Election to Teach Basic Skills

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(edited for national use by the National Student/Parent Mock Election)

Our American Flag

LESSON 1:

KINDERGARTEN

LESSON OVERVIEW:

It is important that parents model and encourage students to build habits of good citizenship early. The following lessons will allow for collaboration between parents and teachers to combine students' ability to make observations, understand important concepts, and sequence events.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS:

What are the freedoms and responsibilities of an American? What does our flag represent?

VOCABULARY:

birthright
flag
freedom
pledge
respect
responsibility
symbol

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Shapes: Stars, Stripes, Rectangle
Colored Paper: Red, White, Blue
Glue
Drawing paper (8 x 14)
Student name tags
Chart paper to create a bar graph
Index cards

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

*The teacher will introduce the concept of "freedom" and the flag as a symbol asking questions such as:**

1. What does "freedom" mean to you?
2. Why is America called "the land of the free?"
3. What freedoms are your "birthright" as an American?
4. What responsibilities do you have?
5. Will children who grow up in a country that is not a democracy have the same freedoms and rights that you have in the United States?
6. What does "government of the people, by the people and for the people" mean?
7. Americans are free to choose (or vote for) their own leaders. Are people everywhere free to choose who will make the rules for them? (Ask your family if they can tell you about people who cannot choose who their rulers will be. Share what you found out with your class.)
8. If we fail to choose—or vote—will we still have a "government of the people, by the people, and for the people?"
9. What does the American flag stand for?
10. What is a symbol?

* The teacher will wish to start as John Dewey urged, "where the child is," adapting their questions to the maturity level and language skills of the class.

11. Why do we pledge allegiance to the flag “and to the Republic for which it stands?”
12. If a little girl is a member of a religious group that does not believe in saluting the flag, is she free **not** to do so in America? (Ask your family if they remember which famous Supreme Court case guaranteed that freedom.)
13. Why is the American flag always displayed when we go to vote?
14. How do elections protect the freedoms of Americans?
15. What shape is our flag? What colors make up our flag? Why?
16. Where are the different places you see the American flag?
17. Today in class we will create an American flag, then you will create a flag of your own, using the same shapes and colors. What will **your** flag stand for? As we go out today, (and, if possible, visit a polling place) let’s watch and count all the flags we see.
18. Tomorrow, we will begin a chart to see how many flags everyone found that day.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will identify the colors and shapes of the American flag.
2. The teacher will distribute drawing paper to the students, which should be divided in half with the titles: American Flag and My Flag.
3. The teacher will model how to assemble the American flag on one side of the paper, reviewing each color or shape as it is assembled.
4. The teacher will tell the students about the significance of the American flag and its representation of our country.

C. Guided Practice

1. The students will create a flag representing the, using the same shapes and colors as the American flag.
2. The students will create a flag using the same shapes and colors as the American flag, and explain the significance of their flag.

D. Independent Practice

As Election Day approaches, students will record and count on a daily basis the number of flags they see in preparation for Election Day.

E. Closure

The teacher will play a recording of the Star Spangled Banner and, if possible, display such pictures as the raising the flag at Iwo Jima and the World Trade Center. Why is the American flag so important to our country? How do elections preserve our freedom to govern ourselves?

Lesson Extension

- Have students come to class with the number of flags they counted. Create a class bar graph. Have students count the total number of flags they saw. Give each student an index card for each flag counted. Each child should put their name tag at the bottom of the graph (x-axis) and then their index cards above their name. Their y-axis should be labeled with numbers. The class can make comparisons between the number of flags they saw and count the number they recorded as a class.

But My Vote Counts

LESSON 1:

KINDERGARTEN–THIRD GRADE

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Students' favorite reading books and ballots

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. What is *your* favorite book?
2. How should we decide which book the class will read today?
3. Today, we will learn how to vote for our choice.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will display several favorite books the students (or teacher) have read aloud.
2. The teacher will give the students 10 minutes to preview the books on display.
3. The teacher will give each student an illustrated ballot.
4. The teacher will explain the voting procedures to the students.

C. Guided Practice

1. The students will vote for their favorite book. (Teachers might wish to set up a voting booth in the classroom so student aren't influenced by their peers.)
2. The class will discuss the importance of one ballot one vote.
3. The class will discuss how they would feel if they were not allowed to vote for their choice.
4. The class will tally the votes.
5. The class will discuss majority versus minority votes.
6. The class will read the book that won the majority of the votes.

D. Independent Practice

1. Students will write about or illustrate the importance of "one ballot one vote" and why they believe it is important for everyone to vote.

E. Closure

1. With the teacher's aid, students will create a puppet show about what can happen if everyone does not participate when votes are cast.

Lesson Extension

- Organize a Mock Election in your school and report your results to your state election headquarters on October 28, Mock Election Day (see nationalmockelection.com). Contact the National Student/Parent Mock Election at nspme@aol.com for your state's election headquarters. Cast individual votes on www.governmentguide.com/mockelection.adp. (Ballots will be available mid October.)
- How has what you have learned helped you to cast an educated and informed vote?

Our Five Senses and Our Environment

Phonemic Awareness Activity Lesson

LESSON 1:

GRADES 1–3

VOCABULARY:

flag	respect
honesty	pledge
rules	responsibility
taking turns	

PURPOSE:

Students will practice identifying beginning, middle, and final phonetic sounds.

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. The teacher will place three different pictures on the overhead projector.
2. The teacher will point to each picture and pronounce and write the word for each picture, identifying the beginning, middle, and ending blend sounds.
3. Today we will identify consonant and consonant blend sounds.

B. Guided Practice

1. The teacher will give each child a practice activity sheet.
2. The student will trace the consonant sounds in red as the teacher pronounces the picture word and encourages the students to repeat the word and the consonant sounds. This repetitive strategy provides an opportunity for students to hear and say the word more than once. Continue to ask the students where the various consonant sounds are heard in the word. Once again, reinforcing beginning, middle, and ending consonant sounds.
3. Write the following question on the board: How is a consonant blend different from other consonants? Write a word from the lesson with a consonant blend. Draw a box around the blend sound. For third grade students, ask the students to use the consonant blend to create at least two new picture words. The students will need to draw a picture of their new word.

C. Independent Practice

1. Students will identify beginning, middle, and ending consonant sounds.
2. Students will use identified consonant blend sounds to create and illustrate new consonant blend picture words.

D. Closure

The students will explain the difference between consonants and consonant blends.

Phonetic Awareness Activity

Grades 1–3

Directions:

Identify the beginning, middle, or ending consonant blend sounds by circling the consonant blend sounds in red.

1. **f l a g**

2. **r e s p e c t**

3. **r e s p o n s i b i l i t y**

4. **h o n e s t y**

5. **p l e d g e**

6. **t a k i n g t u r n s**

7. **s t a m p**

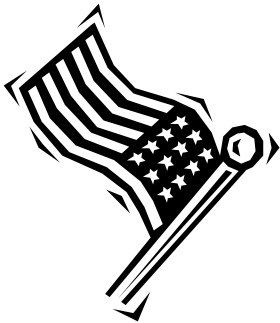
8. **P r e s i d e n t B u s h**

Phonetic Awareness Practice Activity

Grades 1-3

Directions:

Your teacher will pronounce the picture words below. Use a red crayon to circle the beginning, middle, or ending blend sounds.



flag



stamp



President Bush

Phonetic Awareness Worksheet

Grades 1–3 — Independent Practice

Directions:

Read the words below. Bubble in the words that have the same beginning sound as fl a g.

crayon

fly

flock

flamingo

forest

rub

Read the words below. Bubble in the words that have the same middle sound as in the words respect and responsible. Circle the word that has the sound at the beginning of the word.

hemisphere

part

speech

clasp

rope

despair

Circle the st consonant blend sound in each word. Write next to the word beginning, middle, or ending consonant blend sound.

star _____

crystal _____

first _____

On the back of your worksheet, write three picture words of your choice with a beginning, middle, or ending blend sound. Use these consonant blends to write your picture word: fl, sp, or pl. Draw a picture for each words.

Our Five Senses and Our Environment

LESSON 2:

GRADES 1–3

VOCABULARY:

flag
respect
responsibility
honesty
rules
taking turns
pledge

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Small American flag
Photos
Fruit
Paper bags
Small objects
Tape recorder and music
M&Ms

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. The teacher will have a poster or a picture of a recognizable character on the wall for the students to identify and describe.
2. How did you know what or who that was? What senses were you using to identify and describe what was happening in the picture?
3. Today in class we will use our five senses to become more familiar with our surrounding environment. We will also look at how that environment may influence how we act.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will identify each of the five senses. Have the students draw a symbol for each of the five senses (a nose for smells, a mouth for taste, an ear for hearing).
2. The teacher will review the vocabulary words.
3. The teacher will tell the students that they will work in groups of four and move around their table using their five senses to identify objects in the paper bags. The goal is to smell various fruits, hear the sounds on a tape recorder, taste the M&Ms, see the actions in photos, and feel the American flag.
4. As students move from one sensory object to the next, they will first identify the object and then tell each other how they felt about the object.
5. The teacher will encourage students to use vocabulary words as they work in their small, cooperative learning groups.

C. Guided Practice

1. The students will move throughout the sensory stations recording what they have identified and how they felt about each object.
2. Once the students have completed the sensory chart for the small groups, the class will brainstorm ideas for a sensory chart for the playground.

3. How do we use our senses to tell us about the environment of the playground?
How do our senses influence how we act on the playground?
4. Using the sensory chart, the class will write statements or paragraphs about the playground and what their senses reported about the playground.

D. Independent Practice

1. Students will decorate a ballot box or a polling place in preparation for a Mock Election.
2. Students will prepare signs saying "Vote here."
3. Students will play patriotic music or marching music as they work.
4. Students will record what they can see, touch, smell, hear, and taste during the course of a day spent preparing for the Mock Election.
5. Students will create an illustration of their ballot box or polling place and respond to the following question: Did our senses help us as we prepared for a new activity? Did our senses help us read and understand words? Did our senses influence our emotions? our actions?

E. Closure

The teacher will ask the student to decide if they agree with the following statements by putting their thumbs up for agree and thumbs down for disagree:

1. Our senses help us to understand what is happening in our surroundings.
2. Our senses help us understand words.
3. Our senses influence our emotions.
4. Our senses influence our actions.

The teacher will discuss the children's thumbs up, thumbs down "votes" and the reasons they voted as they did.

Sensory Chart

Name _____

Date _____

Directions:

Fill in the sensory chart below with at least 5 items in each box.

On the back of your paper, draw a picture to show what your first day at school was like.

taste	touch	hear	see	smell

What Comes Next?

LESSON 3:

GRADES 1–3

VOCABULARY:

flag
respect
responsibility
honesty
taking turns

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Sunday comics
Pre-drawn polling station scenes
Pre-drawn scenes of voting precincts
Large pieces of poster board
Envelopes
Six-panel comic strip handout

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. The teacher will ask the students to describe what they do in the morning to get ready for school.
2. As the students describe their activity, the teacher will record their responses on the board (or overhead) in a pre-made sequencing chart.
3. How do you know what you will do next?
4. What sometimes happens when you experiment with doing one event out of sequence? Why is it useful to follow directions, rules, and procedures?
5. Today in class we will sequence various events and write a statement describing each scene.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will pair the students and give each pair an envelope filled with a cut up comic strip from the Sunday comics. (Comics will vary depending on the student's level.)
2. Using a bland six-panel comic strip, the students will determine the order of each scene.
3. The teacher will monitor the students as they order the panels and instruct the pairs to develop a statement that describes the action of the scene.
4. Each pair of students will present their scene to the class using the statements they developed.
5. The teacher will introduce the procedures for voting and its sequence.

C. Guided Practice

1. Students will be given another envelope of squares.
2. Students will predict the order of each scene.
3. Using the comic strip as a model, the students will order the scenes for casting a vote and develop a statement describing the actions.
4. The class will discuss the correct order of the scenes.

D. Independent Practice

1. Using the six-panels, the students will write a paragraph using their descriptive statements.
2. As a concluding statement, students will decide how following rules and procedures makes an election run more smoothly.

E. Closure

1. The teacher will give random students in the class large scenes of various activities, including voting.
2. Students will gather in a small group, look at their scene and determine the sequence of events. Each group will describe why the proper sequence of events is important to completing the task outlined in the scene. What happens if you put your ballot in the ballot box before you have finished filling it out?

Lesson Extension

- Organize a Mock Election in your school and report your results to your state election headquarters on October 28, Mock Election Day (see nationalmockelection.com). Contact the National Student/Parent Mock Election at nspme@aol.com for your state's election headquarters. Cast individual votes on governmentguide.com. (Ballots will be available mid October.)
- How has what you have learned helped you to cast an educated and informed vote?
- How has it helped you to be sure your vote will be counted.

Discovering Bias

LESSON 1:

GRADES 4–5

LESSON OVERVIEW:

It is crucial for students to be able to analyze information for explicit biases. Students will transfer this skill to many tasks such as evaluating information for a research report, making major purchases, and making decisions about candidates during a campaign. Students will also use the skill of analyzing information for bias to explore how such bias infringes upon the rights of citizens and their ability to participate in the voting process.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

How do we determine reliable sources and information in our decision-making process?

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Advertisements
Analysis sheet
Trigger chart

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. As the students enter the classroom, the teacher will give the students an ad promoting a product and an analysis sheet.
2. Students are to describe what they see, determine the words or objects in the advertisement that grab their attention.
3. What in the ad would persuade you to buy this product?
4. The class will discuss their advertisements and charts.
5. Today in class we will discuss trigger words (words that try to persuade voters) and how candidates use these trigger words in their campaigns to persuade voters.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will give the students examples of various trigger words.
 - a. Exaggerations—*The greatest . . .*
 - b. Overgeneralization—. . . *all people who . . .*
 - c. Opinions asserted as facts—. . . *it is well known that . . .*
 - d. Inclusions/exclusions—. . . *the only view to consider . . .*
2. The teacher will divide the students into groups of four.
3. Using various campaign advertisements, magazine articles, campaign posters, newspaper articles, and television advertisements, the students will use the trigger word chart to give examples of how candidates use these words to persuade voters to vote in their favor.

C. Guided Practice

1. Each group of students will read over the materials and discuss in their groups the type of trigger words being used.
2. The students will present their advertisements to the class giving evidence of the type of trigger words that were used.

D. Independent Practice

Students will create a campaign ad for a candidate using at least three of the trigger words or phrases.

E. Closure

1. The teacher will ask the students to write a reaction journal entry.
2. Have students answer the following questions:
 - a. Have you discovered biases you were not aware of previously?
 - b. What type of relationships can you discover between what you found and where you found it?
 - c. How can bias be used to benefit or hamper a candidate running for political office?

Lesson Extension

- Have students create campaign commercials that give visual examples of bias.

Comparing Information Sources

LESSON 2:

GRADES 4–5

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Categorizing handout

Books, Internet, encyclopedia, telephone book

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. As the students enter the room, the teacher will have various entertainment, news, and medical journals/magazines available for students to read and peruse.
2. The teacher will help the students determine the type of magazine they are reading, and draw a chart on the board for students to place their magazine in various categories.
3. How do you know that your magazine fits into a certain category? What are the various characteristics of the magazine that determine its category?
4. Today in class we will analyze various sources of information. Based on your analysis of the sources, we will determine which sources are reliable sources to provide the most accurate information. We will also use our previous knowledge of trigger words to help us determine the reliability of the source.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will divide the students into groups of four.
2. Using various resources such as books, Internet, telephone directories, encyclopedias, campaign advertisements, magazine articles, campaign posters, newspaper articles, and television advertisements, the students will use the trigger word chart to give examples of how reliable each source would be when conducting research, the type of information it yields, and the use of words to persuade.

C. Guided Practice

1. Each group will create a chart outlining the purposes for which the source is used and the reliability of each source.
2. The students will present advertisements they have collected or created to the class giving evidence of the type of trigger words being used.

D. Independent Practice

Students will create a campaign ad for a candidate using at least three trigger words or phrases.

E. Closure

Students will keep a media log monitoring TV, radio, the Internet, newspapers, and magazines for evidence of bias.

Categorizing Chart

Category	Type of Information	Trigger Words Used	Examples of the Source	How reliable is this source?
				<p style="text-align: center;">Circle one:</p> <p>1 Very reliable 2 Generally reliable 3 Not always reliable 4 Often unreliable 5 New reliable</p>
				<p style="text-align: center;">Circle one:</p> <p>1 Very reliable 2 Generally reliable 3 Not always reliable 4 Often unreliable 5 New reliable</p>
				<p style="text-align: center;">Circle one:</p> <p>1 Very reliable 2 Generally reliable 3 Not always reliable 4 Often unreliable 5 New reliable</p>
				<p style="text-align: center;">Circle one:</p> <p>1 Very reliable 2 Generally reliable 3 Not always reliable 4 Often unreliable 5 New reliable</p>
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				<p style="text-align: center;">Circle one:</p> <p>1 Very reliable 2 Generally reliable 3 Not always reliable 4 Often unreliable 5 New reliable</p>

Comparing Candidates

LESSON 3:

GRADES 4–5

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Comparison charts
Note cards

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. As students enter the room, the teacher will hand them an index card of various famous people on one side of the card.
2. On the lined side of the card, students are to describe the similarities and differences among the people.
3. The class will discuss each of their responses.
4. Why is it important to compare candidates running for political office?
5. Today in class we will compare and contrast two candidates running for office. Based on our previous experience of analyzing sources, determining and discovering bias, we will be able to gather information about each candidate and write a comparison.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will have various newspapers, magazines, and biographical materials available for students to gather information.
2. The teacher will give the students a comparison chart (enlarged version from previous use) to determine the similarities and differences between each candidate.
3. The teacher will remind the students to beware of statements containing trigger words and analyze the source for its reliability.
4. The students will read and take notes on the comparison chart.

C. Guided Practice

1. The students will use their statements to write a short essay.
2. Using the similarity column of the chart, the students will construct a paragraph that discusses the similarities between the two candidates.
3. The students will repeat the action for the differences.

D. Independent Practice

Students will compose an introduction outlining possible uses of the comparison essay.

E. Closure

How do we determine which sources of information are reliable? What is our decision-making process?

Similarities	Differences

Vocabulary Chain

LESSON 4:

GRADES 4–5

LESSON OVERVIEW:

Seeing relationships and connections generally requires higher-level thinking skills. This strategy provides a means for students to interact with, make associations, and organize five to seven vocabulary words after they are introduced by the teacher. A word chain provides a structure to explore relationships among words, understand how they can be used, and remember their meanings.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

How do our social interactions influence our decision-making?

VOCABULARY:

candidate	voter
election	voting booth
polls	president
running mate	vice-president
political party	governor
platform	republicanism
plank	congress

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Strips of paper at least 3" x 11"
Word chain handout

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. As the students enter the room, the teacher will have four words on the board: basketball game Michael Jordan.
2. The teacher will ask the students to develop a definition or describe the two items on the board.
3. Is there a connection between Michael Jordan and a basketball game? If so, what is it?
4. Today in class we will be working with our vocabulary terms from the unit. We will construct a chain showing relationships among words.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will divide the students into small groups.
2. Each group will be given five to seven vocabulary words and five to seven strips of paper.
3. On one side of each strip of paper, the students will write a vocabulary word. On the other side of the paper the students will write a description or definition of each word as they understand it.
4. As a group, the students will determine the association among various words.
5. On a separate sheet of link paper, the students will describe how each of the words are linked to one another, showing their relationship.
6. The links are complete once the students have formed a complete circle.

C. Guided Practice

Each group will present their link to the class first explaining each word, then explaining how each word is linked to another on the chain.

D. Independent Practice

Students will:

- a. Create a visual representation of their vocabulary link using pictorial symbols on the Word Chain handout.
- b. Write a short paragraph using their group words and demonstrate the connections that were made.

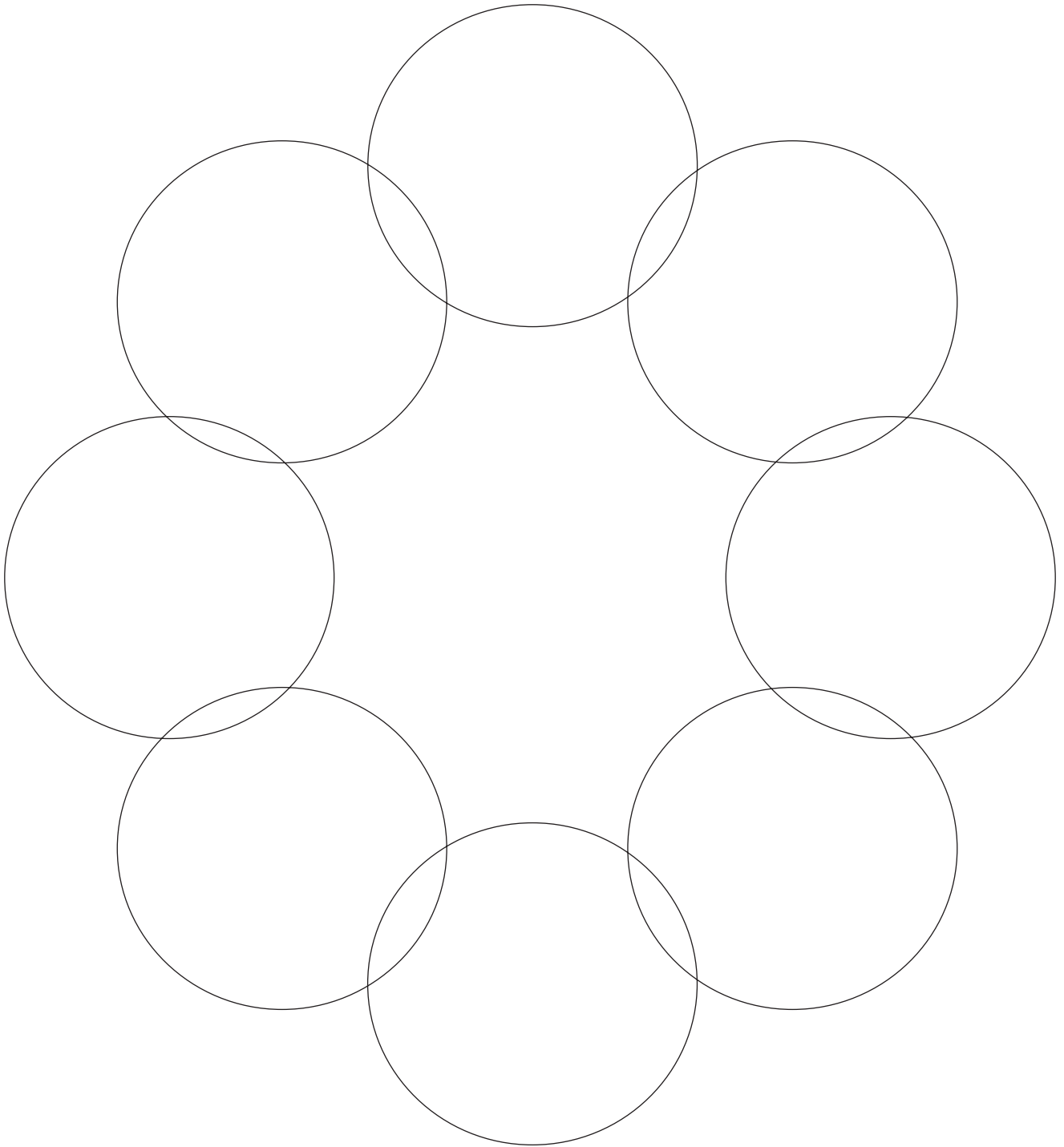
E. Closure

How did your decisions within the group impact how your chain was put together?
Was the arrangement that you made the only arrangement that could have been made with the words that you were using?

Lesson Extension

- Students can determine which words they felt were most important to the unit and develop their own chain.
- Each group, as they are presenting, may develop a category name for their chain. Students may associate the vocabulary word with a certain category as well as the word association.
- Students can introduce new vocabulary words they believe would be appropriate to link to their chain and explain the link they see.

Word Chain



Community Heroes and Heroines

LESSON 5:

GRADES 4–5

VOCABULARY:

minorities
women's movement
civil rights Act 1964
voting rights act 1965
15th amendment
19th amendment
suffrage
hero
heroines

TEACHER MATERIALS:

List of national heroes and heroines
Video clips, audio tapes, photos
Excerpts of speeches
Biographies

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. What makes a person a hero or heroine? The teacher will ask the students to brainstorm ideas of what they feel are characteristics of a hero. A hero or heroine is someone who has made a difference in the lives of others.
2. Who do you know who fits our description of a hero or heroine? Think beyond someone who is famous.
3. Over the next couple of days in class, we are going to create a book of local heroes and heroines from our state who have aided in advancing the rights of minorities in our community.
4. To prepare the publication of our book, the teacher will invite local heroes and heroines to the class for the students to interview.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will have 8 to 10 stations of national heroes around the classroom.
2. Each station may include photos, autobiographics, biographics, and excerpts of speeches, video clips and/or audiotapes.
3. The teacher will direct the students to work in pairs. Using the characteristics discussed in class, the students will determine if the person in the photo fits the characteristic of a hero.
4. The sources the teacher chooses should represent people who, throughout American history, have worked for advancing the rights of minorities and their struggles for voting rights.
5. Once the students have gone through each station, the teacher will debrief the class and discuss how each person fits the characteristics discussed in class.
6. The class will discuss the commonalities of each of the people at each station. Why are the rights of minorities important to safeguard in democracy?

7. Now that we know what characterizes a person as hero, over the next couple of days we will use what we have learned today to write our own book of local heroes. Guests will visit our classroom who have worked to advance the rights of minorities or to expose their right to vote.
8. We will interview these guests and using our interview notes, we will produce a book complete with photos, text, and references.

C. Guided Practice

1. The students will determine the type of information that a reader would want to know about a local hero.
2. Students will preview biographies from the library and record characteristics of the books.
 - a. What type of information is included in the book?
 - b. What type of format does the book follow?
 - c. How does the author use illustrations, photos, and photo descriptions in the text?
 - d. What outside resources does the author refer the reader?
3. Student will develop questions with two ideas in mind:
 - a. How is the person they are writing about indeed a hero?
 - b. How has the person they are writing about contributed to advancing the rights of minorities?
4. The teacher will distribute brief biographical information about each person that will be visiting the class to give the students a basic idea of how to formulate their questions, who they will be interviewing, and other information they may want to ask.
5. Students will work in pairs to develop a questionnaire using the following categories:
 - a. *Background information*: name, age, education, and experience relevant to their community efforts.
 - b. *Early life*: What experiences as a child helped you realize the importance of helping in the community?
 - c. *Collaboration*: Who were the people who assisted you in being able to make a difference?
 - d. *Meaningful Contribution*: What type of contributions have you made in regard to aiding minorities and assisting them to become educated, informed voters?
 - e. *Political Action*: How has politics played a role in your efforts? What successes and setbacks have you experienced in the political arena?
 - f. *Plans and Dreams*: What further efforts do you plan to undertake? What are your hopes and dreams for the future? How do you plan to continue your fight for minority rights?
 - g. *Youth Involvement*: What ideas do you have for how youth can get involved in making a difference for minorities?

D. Independent Practice

1. Students will prepare their notes for interviewing by creating note cards for each question.
2. Students will write an outline for their essay, organizing the type of information for each paragraph.

E. Closure

Students will discuss why the rights of minorities are important to safeguard in our democracy.

Lesson Extension

- Organize a Mock Election in your school and report your results to your state election headquarters on October 28 , Mock Election Day (see nationalmockelection.com). Contact the National Student/Parent Mock Election at nspme@aol.com for your state's election headquarters. Cast individual votes on governmentguide.com. (Ballots will be available mid October.)
- How has what you have learned helped you to cast an educated and informed vote? Do you consider any of those you are voting for to be heroes?

Data Charts and Political Parties

LESSON 1:

GRADES 6–9

LESSON OVERVIEW:

A data chart will provide students with an effective note-taking device, a strategy to organize information from various sources, and make connections between what they know and what they need to know.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

How do our actions influence our decision-making?

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Data chart

Textbooks

Trade books

Political party platforms

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. How do we make various decision in our lives?
2. Do we rely on one source, or do we sometimes consult various people, places of information, and resources?
3. Why would it be important to consult more than one source?
4. In what situations may it be extremely important to consult more than one source?
5. Today in class we will gather information about the two major political parties. We will create a data chart using more than one source. You will be acting as the first source of information. You will then consult your textbook as a second source. Then you may use various other outside sources to find out what they are saying about the two major political parties.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will distribute data charts to the students.
2. The teacher will help the students write down everything they know about the Democratic and Republican parties.
3. The class will discuss what they know about each political party.
4. The teacher will instruct students to read what their textbook says about each political party and write down the textbook descriptions.
5. The class will discuss the textbook description of each party.

C. Guided Practice

1. The teacher will set up various stations in the classroom. Each station should have information from a different source about each party.

2. The students will move to various areas of the classroom gathering information from outside sources about each political party.
3. Students will work in small groups at various stations recording their information on the data charts.

D. Independent Practice

1. Students will write a short paragraph about the type of additional information they found in each source.
2. Student will answer the questions:
 - a. In which source did you find the most information?
 - b. Which sources had new information that was not in any other source?
 - c. Why do you think one source may be more reliable than others?

E. Closure

1. How did what you thought you knew compare to what you found out about the two major political parties?
2. How did your various sources compare to one another in providing information about the political parties?

Lesson Extension

- Students will create their own political party developing a party platform and issues that the party will focus on while trying to promote a candidate for election. The teacher can help the students create imaginary candidates for their political parties.

Political Party Data Chart

	Political Parties	Democrats	Republicans
What I know			
What the textbook says			
Outside source #1 Name _____			
Outside source #2 Name _____			

Non-Voter Turnout Survey and Data Collection (Day 1)

LESSON 2:

GRADES 6–9

LESSON OVERVIEW:

It is crucial for students to be able to analyze information, determine relevant information, and utilize this data in other situations. Students will transfer this skill of analysis to many tasks such as creating and presenting information for a research report or demonstration to assist others in making decisions about political candidates and significant issues.

ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

How does the presentation of various points of view on an issue affect our decision-making?

VOCABULARY:

campaigns	precinct
candidates	propaganda
election	polls
voter apathy	

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Political cartoons
Voter survey sheets

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. How many of you know whether your parents or other family members are registered to vote?
2. How many of you know that your parents or another family member will go out and vote on Election Day?
3. Why do people not vote?
4. Today in class we will construct a survey, analyze various political cartoons, and develop some ways to try to encourage people who have the right to vote to exercise that right.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will have the class brainstorm ideas about why people do not vote and record the reasons on a voter turnout survey.
2. The teacher will present political cartoons to the class regarding voter apathy.

C. Guided Practice

Students will work with partners to develop counter arguments for the non-voter's attitude.

D. Independent Practice

Students will survey 10 non-voters and determine their reasoning for not voting.

E. Closure

How does the presentation of various points of view on an issue affect our decision-making? What counter arguments do you find effective in encouraging non-voters to protect their freedoms with their vote?

Non-Voter Turnout Survey and Data Collection (Day 2)

LESSON 3:

GRADES 6–9

VOCABULARY:

campaigns	precinct
candidates	propaganda
election	polls

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Graph paper
Voter survey sheets
Previous day's homework

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. In previous classes we have discussed voter apathy. Ask students to take out a piece of paper. In 2 minutes, write down all your answers to the following question: Why do some people not vote? Find out who had the most answers, and have him or her read the list to the class.
2. Today in class we will construct a bar graph or pie graph to display your information. We will combine our information as a class to analyze the similarities and differences among the responses we received.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will tally the number of non-voter responses for each category.
2. As the class tallies the scores, the students will record the information on a data sheet.
3. Based on the information, the teacher will give the students the descriptions of the types of graphs that will be used to graphically represent the data.
4. The class will discuss the similarities and differences of function, structure, and uses between a bar graph and a pie graph.
5. The students will determine if the presentation of various types of graphs will have an effect on the decision-making of non-voters.

C. Guided Practice

Based on the information, the students will create either a pie graph or a bar graph of the information from the class tally.

D. Independent Practice

Students will respond to the following in a reflective journal entry:

- a. What do your graphs say most about non-voters?
- b. What types of arguments against the reasons presented will impact a non-voter's attitude?

- c. How does the presentation of the same data impact the decision-making of others?

E. Closure

How does the presentation of various points of view on an issue affect our decision-making?

Making Judgements about Media

LESSON 4:

GRADES 6–9

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Video clips

Media analysis sheet

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. How do we know if the information we are receiving from the media is relevant and reliable information for our purposes?
2. Today, in small groups, we will analyze various video clips of campaign ads, infomercials, and commercials.

B. Direct Instruction

1. Each group will be responsible for creating a printed text of each video clip.
2. Each group will be responsible for reviewing the material to determine the suitability of the information for its intended use.

C. Guided Practice

1. As a small group, students will discuss the validity of the video clip.
2. Individually, students will take the written analysis of the video clip and construct a review of the clip including the following information:
 - a. Identify the technical and content elements. Evaluate the elements effectiveness.
 - b. Summarize the video clip.
 - c. Determine the characteristics of this video.
(e.g. Does it appeal to reason or to the viewers' emotions? Does it use sound or visuals to influence the viewers' emotions? If so, how?)
 - d. Do you believe the video meets the needs of the class? If not, why not?
 - e. Present an informed opinion making a judgement about the suitability of the video for its intended purpose.

D. Closure

How does the presentation of an issue or product affect our decision-making?

Voting and City Government

LESSON 5:

GRADES 6–9

TEACHER MATERIALS:

Iowa City Government Web Model Sheet

PROCEDURES:

A. Anticipatory Set (Hook)

1. Who makes the decisions regarding the plans and laws for our city?
2. Today in class we will gather information regarding the individuals, groups, or committees forming our local government. Many of the individuals are elected to their positions. When may elected officials appoint others?
3. We will use various sources for our information such as the Internet and the telephone directory to gather information.

B. Direct Instruction

1. The teacher will help the students develop a list of positions that are involved with the city government.
2. Using the resources available, the class will match the names with the positions and search the Internet for photos.
3. The teacher will help the students search for the following information:
 - a. Name of the individual or group
 - b. Contact information (telephone number or e-mail address)
 - c. Status of the position (elected or appointed)
 - d. If a group, does the group vote to make final decisions on the issues before it?
 - e. Types of issues dealt with by the group or significant to the individual or group.
4. The teacher will discuss the model of the Iowa City government.
5. Using the model, the teacher will help the students create an organizational chart for their local government.

C. Guided Practice

1. The students will search the available resources to add to their organizational chart.
2. The students will create a key for their organizational chart.

D. Independent Practice

Students will choose one individual or group and write a report about the impact of their decisions on local citizens and how those decisions are made.

E. Closure

How is our decision-making process as citizens affected by these individual's or groups' decisions and how their decisions are reached? (e.g. Who decides where traffic lights will be place? Where schools can be built? How do their decisions affect our decisions?)

Lesson Extension

- Organize a Mock Election in your school and report your results to your state election headquarters on October 28, Mock Election Day (see nationalmockelection.com). Contact the National Student/Parent Mock Election at nspme@aol.com for your state's election headquarters. Cast individual votes on governmentguide.com. (Ballots will be available mid October.)
- How has what you have learned helped you to cast an educated and informed vote?

Citizens of Iowa City, Iowa

