

Level: 3rd grade

Time: 1 hour

Topic: 2008 Presidential Election

Virginia Standards of Learning: 3.11

Concepts: government

Space: Whole group lesson to be completed in a typical classroom with approximately 22 students.

Objectives:

- 1) Given background information on the candidates, students will make choices about and participate in a classroom presidential election with 100% participation.
- 2) Given prior knowledge, students will discuss the inalienable rights of an American citizen.

Procedure:

Introduction: Introduce the students to the country of Paceraceteria. Tell the students that Paceraceteria is exactly like the United States, except that the voting age in this country is 7. Ask students what the voting age in the United States is. Explain that this country promises the same inalienable rights to its citizens, and ask students to list them. Tell the students that they will, as citizens eligible to vote, be participating in the election to choose the president of Paceraceteria.

Content Focus:

Before class, choose 2 types of candy that the students like. Write the names of the students on the strips of paper (one name per strip). Fold each strip of paper, and put it into a box. Choose and buy 2 types of candy. For example, Air Heads and Skittles will be used in this lesson plan.

Hand out voter registration cards to students. Have them fill it out, and collect them. Tell the students that they are now officially registered to vote. The teacher should pick names out of the box to determine who will be the presidential/vice presidential candidates. When this is completed, pull the 4 chosen students aside. Assign the students the type of candy that they will support. For example, tell presidential team #1 that they will support candy #1. After this, tell the students that in this 2008 election, the major issue on all the citizens' minds is what the country's official candy should be. Allow the two presidential teams to stand in front of the classroom and announce to the students which candy they support. Tell the students that you will take a private survey of who they would like to vote for. Ask the students to say who they would vote for based on

what they have heard so far. Conduct the survey by asking the students to close their eyes, and silently raise their hands. Privately record the results of each survey throughout the lesson plan. Explain that you will do it this way because votes are secret, and nobody else should know who you vote for.

Have the two presidential teams stand in front of the class. Tell the students that they are now watching a presidential debate. At this time, team #1 that supports Skittles, should announce that they don't like the grape flavored Skittles. He/she should say that if he/she is elected, he/she will ban that flavor. Ask the students if they think that this will change how some voters feel about that candidate (yes or no), and why. Take another private survey.

Now have Presidential Candidate #2 tell the students that he/she is opposed to skateboarding, and would want to ban it if elected. Ask students if they think that some people will change their votes, even though skateboarding is not a major issue. Ask them why.

Tell the students that they will now officially vote. Remind the students of who is on team 1, and who is on team 2, so that they can vote properly. It might be a good idea to write it out on the board. Give each student one ballot, have them fill it out, and put it in the ballot box. Explain to students that this is the way that we vote in some parts of the country. Count the ballots and announce the winning president/vice president.

Closure:

Announce the winners and have them hand out the candy. Explain that this is what is going on during our current Presidential Election. Discuss with students why they may have changed their minds on which candidate they were going to vote for. Show the students how the potential votes changed over the course of the "campaign." Explain that voters will make decisions in the same way. Voters pick candidates based on the issues that are important to them.

Summative evaluations will be given on a sheet of paper after the lesson, and will be collected.

Evaluation:

Formative: Questions during the introduction.

Summative:

- What do you have to do before you can vote?
- When you heard new information about a candidate, did that change your vote?

Why?

- How did you cast your vote?
- How do you feel about the voting process?

Materials/resources:

- Decorated ballot box (could use an empty tissue box)
- Empty box/hat/paper bag to hold paper strips
- 22 ballots
- 22 paper strips.
- 2 types of candy, 1 bag each.

Models

Voter registration card

<p style="text-align: center;">Paceracetoria Voter Registration</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Address: _____ _____ _____</p> <p>Date of birth: _____</p> <p>Signature: _____</p>

Ballot

Paceraceteria Official Ballot

Instructions: To vote, fill in the circle next to the candidate of your choice. Your vote **WILL NOT COUNT** if you do not follow these directions.

Team #1 (Skittles team)

Team #2 (Airheads team)