

Lesson Procedures:

This lesson is far more interesting for students in an election year. As a springboard for this lesson, in the absence of an election, you can generate your own! Tell students that each class will have a set of officers. The class will determine the offices, and the criteria for holding those offices. The class will also establish criteria for voting in the class elections. A group of students will develop a ballot; another group of students will be formed to serve as the counting committee for the ballots; and a third group will handle distribution of the ballots. Prior to voting, a ballot box (or some other receptacle) should be designated. Ballots should be distributed and students given time to vote. The counting committee will take the ballots from the box, and using a tally sheet with each candidate's name on it, count the votes. After votes have been counted, announce the winners and debrief. In the follow-up discussion, make sure you compare the number of eligible voters and the number of votes actually cast. Consider possible reasons a student may not have voted. After this process, make the connection to real-life voting by any or all of the following activities:

FROM THE SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS' OFFICE:

1. What are the qualifications for voting in the State of Florida?
2. How does one register to vote?
3. How is one's polling place determined?
4. If a student registered to vote, where would the student actually vote?
5. When is the next primary or general election?
6. Is Florida an open or closed primary state?
7. Complete a sample voter registration form (better yet, if a student qualifies, have the student complete the real thing!

SAMPLE SURVEY QUESTIONS:

1. Are you registered to vote? Yes No

 If no, why not? _____
2. If you are registered, are you registered as a Democrat, Republican, or some other party?
 Democrat Republican Other (please specify) _____
3. Did you vote in the last election? Yes No

 If no, why not? _____
4. Can you make any suggestions to improve voter registration or voter participation? _____

III. Students will tally the information generated from the survey. They will present the information in graphic form. Students may draw their own graphs or use the computer to generate graphs. If they choose to use the computer, they will need to compile the information using a computer spreadsheet program, such as MS Excel, and then convert it to a chart.