



**RU Ready™**  
**“Get Political”**

**Brief Description:** The objective of this lesson is for students to gain knowledge about the election process and better understand how they might play a role in the process. The purpose of this lesson is to show students that there are many ways to get political and influence the make up of government. This purpose is met by simulating the last few weeks of a Presidential campaign where students will serve either as Presidential nominees, Presidential committee members, or voters.

**Materials:**

- Paper/pencils/pens
- Markers
- 2 poster boards
- Worksheets for voters and candidates
- Ballots/Ballot Box
- Scissors
- Tape
- Index Cards (red, blue, yellow) For icebreaker, randomly affix either green, red, blue to one of the cards.

**A. INTRODUCTION (5 minutes)**

- Distribute pens and index cards (each student gets one red, one blue, one yellow card). Make a point to tell the students the importance of the index cards and that they will need them throughout the lesson.
- Announce that purpose of election is to provide students with understanding of how elections are commonly run and more importantly, how they can become involved in elections.
- Take the time to set up the room in a format conducive to the lesson.

**B. ICE BREAKER (5 minutes)**

- On one of the three index cards given to each student, there will be a different color dot corresponding to a specific icebreaker question. The three different questions can be written on the board (also in accompanying ppt), and each student will take turns answering questions based on their color dot.
  - Green: Would you ever run for political office?
  - Red: Who is your favorite President and why?

- o Blue: If tomorrow you woke up and were President what issue would be first on your list to address?

#### AGENDA FOR PRESIDENTIAL SIMULATION:

Activity	Time Allotment	Candidates/Campaign Committee	Voters
<b>Electing Candidates/Party Formation</b>	5 minutes	Candidates will volunteer and choose campaign committee	Remaining students will be voters who will eventually vote in the Presidential election
<b>Leadership Qualities</b>	15 minutes	Candidates will create a speech about what makes them a leader. Committee will create campaign slogan and poster	Voters will take part in Political Portraits and identify leadership qualities. They will also complete a quality prioritizing worksheet.
<b>Speech</b>	10 minutes	Candidates will make their speech, committee will present poster and slogan	Voters will listen to each candidates' speech and afterward will participate in a public opinion poll
<b>Debate Preparation</b>	15 minutes	Candidates and committee will review party fact sheet and the parties' stances on 3 issues. Issues include the economy, healthcare, and education	Voters will take a quiz to identify with which party they align. They also will write questions based on each issue to ask the candidates during the debate
<b>Debate</b>	10 minutes	Candidates will respond to questions created by voters. 1 minute response, 30 second rebuttal	Voters will listen attentively to debate and afterward will participate in the second opinion poll
<b>Presidential Election</b>	5 minutes		Voters will submit their selection for President into the ballot box

### C. MOCK CAMPAIGN

#### Part 1: SELECTING PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES AND PARTY FORMATION (5 minutes)

This session is designed to help students understand all the different components of an election and how they can influence an election's outcome.

- The class will volunteer two candidates to run for President of the United States. These candidates will be the nominees for the two parties, Democrat and Republicans (can be randomly assigned).
- Nominees will choose 2-3 other students to help organize their campaign. They will compose the Presidential campaign committee.
- The rest of the students will act as the voters.
- Divide the students/desks by voters and nominees.

#### Part 2: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION PROCESS (15 minutes)

**Nominees:** The nominees need to craft a campaign that includes:

- Preparing a platform speech that explains why the candidate has qualities of a strong leader (1-2 minute speech)

- Campaign committee should work on a slogan and poster and be prepared and presented to the class

**Voters:** The voters are considering which candidate to support and how to support that candidate. Voters will:

- Discuss what qualities make a leader effective
- Review PowerPoint presentation regarding leadership
- Complete a handout regarding prioritizing leadership qualities
- Engage in group discussion regarding handouts

**Part 3: (10 minutes)**

**Nominees:** After the candidates have written their speeches, bring everyone together so that the speeches can be heard. The campaign committee will first present the poster and slogan and introduce their candidate.

**Voters:** The voters listen to the speeches and then participate in first public opinion poll. Ask students to raise their red card if they currently support the Republican candidate, the blue card if they support the Democratic candidate, and yellow card if they are undecided. Post results on the board.

**Part 4: (15 minutes)**

**Nominees:** At this time, the nominees will prepare for a debate. The two nominees will be debating on education, health care, and the economy. The resource guide regarding the Republican and Democratic parties will serve as resource for their preparation for the debate.

**Voters:**

- Discuss the two most prominent political parties in the United States (Democrat/Republican)
- Voters will complete issue quiz worksheet in 2-3 minutes and the review as a group.
- The voters will each be given a blank index card to write a debate question for the nominees regarding education, health care, and the economy.

**Part 5: (10 minutes)**

**Nominees:**

- The debate commences with moderator posing questions created by student voters.
- Each candidate will have 1 minute to respond to the question, the opposing candidate will then have 30 seconds to make a rebuttal response

**Voters:**

- Another public opinion poll is conducted and results posted on the board.

**C. ELECTION! (5 minutes)**

Each voter is given a ballot to cast their secret vote. Announce results!

**Part Four: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION (10 minutes)**

The conclusion will include a discussion of the election process and the overall themes of the lessons as well as a review of voter registration regulations.