



Elementary Election Literacy

Lesson Name: Where did that come from?

Time Allotted: Series of 2 20-30 Minute Lessons

Critical Question:

How do different media sources report on elections?

Assessment of Mastery of Objectives:

Students will summarize political candidates' positions on specific campaign issues.

Students will create a mock media source that best shares the information about the candidate.

Question or Problem for Students:

What kinds of media sources report on elections?

How do journalists decide on what to report and how to report it?

What can informed voters do while interacting with media sources to make sure the information is accurate and nonbiased?

Special Directions for Cooperative Grouping:

Session 1: Students will read information about given candidate and record information about candidate's stance on a given issue.

- Build student background by identifying different media sources. Be sure to include print, visual, internet, local and national sources.
- Have students work in pairs to read given sources about candidates and a given issue. Students should record important information about the candidate and the issue while reading.
- Students and partners should evaluate their information after reading and determine why the media source chose to include specific information and what the next steps for an informed reader could be.

Session 2: Students will use their research to create a media source detailing their assigned candidate's stance on the given issue.

- Work with partners to create media source (examples of sources: campaign poster, campaign video or radio spot, flyer, candidate interview or social media page)
- Media source should include candidate name, issue being studied, candidate's stance and examples from research sources to prove stance
- Partner groups will then create and present their media report on their candidate to the class. After presentations are complete, special attention should be paid to the aspects of the presentations that created a balanced, well informed and nonbiased approach to reporting.

Resources for Groups:

Research recording sheet (attached)

BrainPop, Time for Kids and Scholastic News all have extensive sections of their sites that explain different aspects of the election. Information on how candidates are voted into office or how a candidate runs for office can be used to provide additional background or build knowledge before incumbency is discussed with students. They also provide information about national candidates

running for office. Much of the content is free, but some does require a subscription to access.

Local and national newspapers will often print "meet the candidates" features leading up to election time. These can provide background for students to use in their research.

Use the chart below to help you record information you learn about your candidate and their views on an important political issue. This information will help you create your media report about your candidate.

Who is your candidate?

What issue are you studying?

What does your candidate think or say about this issue?

Has your candidate done anything to support their opinion?

Why would people want to vote for this candidate based on how the candidate feels about the issue?

Now use these questions to think about where your information came from and how a voter might use this to learn about the candidate.

Where did your source come from?

Is there a date on your source that tells you when it was shared with the public?

Why do you think that the source you read presented the information the way they did? What point were they trying to make? What did they want people to learn or know?

What could you do next if you wanted to learn more about this issue and your candidate's opinion on it?
