

Youth Summit 2004

Becoming an Informed Voter in the Presidential Election

Lesson Plans for Middle and High School

a production of
CLASSROOM LAW PROJECT

in cooperation with
Oregon State Bar
US Department of Justice - Youth for Justice Program

Susan Marcus, retired middle school teacher, is gratefully acknowledged for her insightful, thorough, and creative work in authoring this curriculum. Her enthusiasm for our democracy and the role we play in it is a model for us all.

CLASSROOM LAW PROJECT

Youth Summit 2004: Becoming an Informed Voter

Goals

Teachers will have the opportunity to help students:

- understand candidates, issues, and the election process;
- study the elections in a context of reality and connectedness to other events;
- pursue informed discussions about politics and current issues;
- strengthen inferential and evaluate comprehension skills;
- improve analytical reading skills;
- develop lifetime habits of active participation in the election process and the government.

Students will:

- understand elements of being an informed voter
- examine personal qualities needed to carry out the office
- observe media coverage of the current presidential election
- assess information provided by campaign literature, advertisements, and polls
- develop criteria for evaluating presidential candidates
- compare presidential candidates' qualifications for office.

As a result of this program, **S**tudents at all grade levels will be able to say:¹

My vote gives me power.

I have a right and a responsibility to vote.

I study the candidates and issues.

I register and vote, or ask others to do so.

I continue to make a difference.

for more information, contact

CLASSROOM LAW PROJECT

620 SW Main, Ste. 102 Portland, OR 97205

Phone: 503-224-4424 Fax: 503-224-1721 Email: office@classroomlaw.org

¹ Core concepts from Kids Voting USA, www.kidsvotingusa.org.

Table of Contents

<u>Lesson</u>		<u>Page</u>
Lesson 1	Why Be an Informed Voter?	1
Handouts:	(1) Pre- Post-Unit Survey	2
	(2) Election of the President - The Basics	3
	(3) Interview Form	5
	(4) Class Hearing & Youth Summit - What They Look Like	6
	(5) Parent Letter	7
	(6) Inventory of Informed Voter	8
	(7) Election Scavenger Hunt	9
Lesson 2	The President: Politician in Chief	10
Handouts:	(8) Write a Help Wanted Ad	12
	(9) Job Requirements chart	14
Lesson 3	The Debates	16
Handouts:	(10) Debate Backgrounder	17
	(11) No Props, Charts or Risers	18
	(12) The Debates	19
	(13) Debate Checklist	20
Lesson 4	The Media	21
Handouts:	(14) Campaign Advertising	22
	(15) Analyzing Political Advertising	23
	(16) FactCheck.org	24
	(17) Cartoons for the Classroom	29
	(18) Savvy Voter	31
Lesson 5	The Issues	34
Handouts:	(19) Bush Bio	35
	(20) Kerry Bio	38
	(21) Side-by-Side Comparison	40
Lesson 6	Political Polling	44
Handouts:	(22) Polls - Backgrounder	45
	(23) First Things First	52
	(24) Gallup Online Survey	53
	(25) Polls - Sources	54

<u>Lesson</u>		<u>Page</u>
Lesson 7	Class Hearing	57
Handouts:	(26) Class Hearing Questions	58
Lesson 8	Summit Preparation	59
Handouts:	(27) Student-Delegate Duties at the Youth Summit	60
	(28) Student-Delegate Application Form	62
Lesson 9	Kids in the Classroom on Summit Day (Lesson for Sub)	63
Handout:	(29) Of Donkeys and Elephants	64
	(30) Quotes on Voting	66
Lesson 10	Reporting Back	67