

## LESSON 10

**Kids in the Classroom on Summit Day  
(Lesson for the Sub) & the Day After**

**Objective** Lesson for the substitute teacher to keep students engaged. Students at school will have rewarding and fun day.

**Handouts** (10-1) Of Donkeys and Elephants; (10-2) Famous Quotes

**A. Warm-up**

What should an informed voter know today? Who is the president-elect?

**B. What will the sub do when the teacher is gone?****Elephant and Donkey**

Read how the elephant and symbols came into being, Handout 10-1. Ask students to draw their own political cartoon using these symbols. Present cartoons to the class.

**Great Quotes**

Read aloud as a class.

In small groups, interpret the group's favorite quote(s), Handout 10-2, in a:

1. bumpersticker, 2. poster, 3. rap or song. After completion, present to the class.

**C. And then what? Reporting back after the summit****1. Classroom students**

Students finish presenting their quotes, cartoons, song, or other work to the class.

**2. Summit Debrief**

Youth Summit delegates share impressions of the Summit. They will include new information that they learned and individual responses to the questions they posed.

**3. Post-Summit Survey**

*Teacher note: MANDATORY last thing: conduct post-summit survey (from Lesson 1) and send results to CLP. We would love to read what they have to say – please send a select few!*

**D.  Extended Activities****Homework / Journal Entry**

Now that there is a president-elect, what questions do you hope he and his administration will tackle first and why?

**Handout 10-1****Of Donkeys and Elephants**

Over the years, the donkey and the elephant have become the accepted symbols of the Democratic and Republican parties. Although the Democrats have never officially adopted the donkey as a party symbol, we have used various donkey designs on publications over the years. The Republicans have actually adopted the elephant as their official symbol and use their design widely.

The Democrats think of the elephant as bungling, stupid, pompous and conservative -- but the Republicans think it is dignified, strong and intelligent. On the other hand, the Republicans regard the donkey as stubborn, silly and ridiculous -- but the Democrats claim it is humble, homely, smart, courageous and loveable.

When Andrew Jackson ran for president in 1828, his opponents tried to label him a "jackass" for his populist views and his slogan, "Let the people rule." Jackson, however, picked up on their name calling and turned it to his own advantage by using the donkey on his campaign posters. During his presidency, the donkey was used to represent Jackson's stubbornness when he vetoed re-chartering the National Bank.

The first time the donkey was used in a political cartoon to represent the Democratic party, it was again in conjunction with Jackson. Although in 1837 Jackson was retired, he still thought of himself as the Party's leader and was shown trying to get the donkey to go where he wanted it to go. The cartoon was titled "A Modern Baalim and his Ass."

Interestingly enough, the person credited with getting the donkey widely accepted as the Democratic party's symbol probably had no knowledge of the prior associations. Thomas Nast, a famous political cartoonist, came to the United States with his parents in 1840 when he was six. He first used the donkey in an 1870 *Harper's Weekly* cartoon to represent the "Copperhead Press" kicking a dead lion, symbolizing Lincoln's Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, who had recently died. Nast intended the donkey to represent an anti-war faction with whom he disagreed, but the symbol caught the public's fancy and the cartoonist continued using it to indicate some Democratic editors and newspapers.

Later, Nast used the donkey to portray what he called "Caesarism" showing the alleged Democratic uneasiness over a possible third term for Ulysses S. Grant. In conjunction with this issue, Nast helped associate the elephant with the Republican party. Although the elephant had been connected with the Republican party in cartoons that appeared in 1860 and 1872, it was Nast's cartoon in 1874 published by *Harper's Weekly* that made the pachyderm stick as the Republican's symbol. A cartoon titled "The Third Term Panic," showed animals representing various issues running away from a donkey wearing a lion's skin tagged "Caesarism." The elephant labeled "The Republican Vote," was about to run into a pit containing inflation, chaos, repudiation, etc.

By 1880 the donkey was well established as a mascot for the Democratic party. A cartoon about the Garfield-Hancock campaign in the *New York Daily Graphic* showed the Democratic candidate mounted on a donkey, leading a procession of crusaders.

Adlai Stevenson provided one of the most clever descriptions of the Republican's symbol when he said, "The elephant has a thick skin, a head full of ivory, and as everyone who has seen a circus parade knows, proceeds best by grasping the tail of its predecessor."

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## **How did Republicans pick the elephant, and Democrats the donkey?**

by Ilona Nickels C-Span Resident Congressional Scholar, Long Island, New York - 9/5/00

They didn't pick these labels – they got stuck with them! Their origin as symbols for the parties is attributed to a political cartoonist, Thomas Nast, who used the donkey

Why Nast chose the donkey and the elephant is a pretty complicated story. One version traces it to the "Central Park Menagerie Scare of 1874," a hoax foisted on its readers by the New York Herald newspaper. The Herald ran a deliberately false story about animals breaking out of the zoo and foraging for food throughout Central Park. Around the same time, the Herald was running a series of editorials against a 3rd term for President Ulysses S. Grant, calling the possibility "Caesarism."

Nast combined these two elements together for the first time in an 1874 cartoon for Harper's Weekly. He had a donkey disguised as a lion trying to scare away the animals in a forest. The donkey was a symbol for the New York Herald; the lion-skin costume was a symbol for a scare tactic [the paper crying wolf with "Caesarism"], and the animals in the forest were the symbol for the newspaper's hoax about zoo animals in Central Park.

One of the animals frightened by the donkey's roar of Caesarism was an elephant – a symbol for Republican voters, who were abandoning President Grant, and in Nast's view, about to fall into the Democrats' trap. Other cartoonists of the time picked up the idea of the timid elephant representing Republicans, and that symbol for the party became widely recognized and accepted by the general public.

Although Nast's original interpretation used the donkey to stand in for a Democrat-leaning newspaper scaring away Republican voters, his cartoon showing a duplicitous donkey attacking a weak-minded elephant, became a handy symbol for other cartoonists wanting to represent Democrats attacking Republicans. Popular recognition of the image overrode the party's own wishes – the Democratic party has never officially adopted the donkey as its emblem, but came to accept the reality that the symbol had stuck.

Another explanation for the donkey as political symbol stems from the 1828 presidential campaign -- during which Andrew Jackson was labeled a "jackass," for his populist views. Jackson proudly seized the label and began using donkeys on his campaign posters. During his presidency, cartoonists sometimes used the donkey to illustrate President Jackson's stubbornness on certain issues. After Jackson, the donkey symbol largely faded, to be revived again by Thomas Nast in his 1870's cartoons.

Over time, Republicans came to view the elephant emblem as a sign of strength and intelligence, while their opponents portrayed it as a timid and clumsy behemoth. Democrats seized the "jackass" label, and transformed it into a clever and courageous donkey.

As is still true today, it's all in the spin!

## Handout 10-2

# Famous Quotes

1. Let the people know the facts, and the country will be safe. – *Abraham Lincoln*
2. If it were left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. – *Thomas Jefferson*
3. In whatever arena of life one may meet the challenge of courage, whatever may be the sacrifices he faces if he follows his conscience – the loss of his friends, his fortune, his contentment, even the esteem of his fellow men – each man must decide for himself the course he will follow. – *John F. Kennedy*
4. The man with the best job in the country is the vice-president. All he has to do is get up every morning and say, “How is the president?” – *Will Rogers*
5. Liberty without learning is always in peril and learning without liberty is always in vain. – *John F. Kennedy*
6. The most important office ... that of private citizen. – *Louis D. Brandeis*
7. Citizenship consists in the service of the country. – *Jawaharlal Nehru*
8. Voting is the least arduous of a citizen's duties. He has the prior and harder duty of making up his mind. – *Ralph Barton Perry*
9. Citizenship comes first today in our crowded world ... No man can enjoy the privileges of education and thereafter with a clear conscience break his contract with society. To respect that contract is to be mature, to strengthen it is to be a good citizen, to do more than your share under it is noble. – *Isaiah Bowman*
10. If you will help run our government in the American way, then there will never be danger of our government running America in the wrong way. – *Omar N. Bradley*
11. The first requisite of a good citizen in this republic of ours is that he should be able and willing to pull his weight. – *Theodore Roosevelt*
12. We'd all like t' vote fer th' best man, but he's never a candidate. – *Kin Hubbard*
13. Vote for the man who promises least--he'll be the least disappointing. – *Bernard M. Baruch*
14. ... the instrument and symbol of a freeman's power to make a fool of himself and a wreck of his country. – *Ambrose Bierce*

15. Among free men there can be no successful appeal from the ballot to the bullet. –  
*Abraham Lincoln*
16. The margin is narrow, but the responsibility is clear. – *John F. Kennedy*
17. In times of stress and strain, people will vote. – *Anonymous*
18. Bad officials are elected by good citizens who do not vote. – *George Jean Nathan*
19. Where annual elections end, there slavery begins. – *John Quincy Adams*
20. Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the  
sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost. – *John Quincy Adams*
21. There can no longer be anyone too poor to vote. – *Lyndon Baines Johnson*
22. The future of this republic is in the hands of the American voter. – *Dwight D.  
Eisenhower*
23. Half of the American people never read a newspaper. Half never voted for President.  
One hopes it is the same half. – *Gore Vidal*
24. Your every voter, as surely as your chief magistrate, exercises a public trust. –  
*Grover Cleveland*