

How to Run for Political Office
An Introduction to Civics, Elections & the American Political System

K4040DVD

RESOURCE GUIDE

Suggested Grade Level: 8-12, College

STANDARDS

National Social Studies Standards (9-12) from National Curriculum Standards for Social Studies
(socialstudies.org) & Center for Civic Education (civiced.org)

What are Civic Life, Politics, and Government?

A: What is civic life? What is politics? What is government? Why are government and politics necessary? What purposes should government serve?

What are the Foundations of the American Political System?

A: What is the American idea of constitutional government?

A: What are the distinctive characteristics of American society?

A: What is American political culture?

A: What values and principles are basic to American constitutional democracy?

How Does the Government Established by the Constitution Embody the Purposes, Values and Principles of American Democracy?

A: How does the American political system provide for choice and opportunities for participation?

What are the Roles of the Citizen in American Democracy?

A: What is citizenship?

A: What are the rights of citizens?

A: What are the responsibilities of citizens?

VOCABULARY:

Ballot Access - the conditions under which a candidate or political party is either entitled to stand for election or to appear on voters' ballots

Independent Voter - a voter not affiliated with a political party

Political Party - a group of people with common goals and ideals seeking political office and Power

Political Polling - recording the vote of a person before the election

Sound Byte - a short clip from a full-length piece of audio or video

Third (Political) Party - a political party other than the current major 2 parties

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR PRE-VIEWING

1. What are the requirements for running for the House of Representatives in your state? Does this differ by state?
2. Assuming you've met these requirements, what must be done to get your name on the ballot in your state?
3. What do you think are some challenges facing third party/independent candidates?
4. What parties, besides the Republicans and Democrats are you familiar with?
5. Is there currently any one in Congress NOT affiliated with the Republicans or Democrats? (answer may vary by year)
6. In what ways can you participate in the American political system? (besides running for office)
7. What does it mean to be a citizen?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES POST VIEWING

1. Should ballot access be the same for federal office in each state? Why or why not?
2. Dean mentions that the three biggest hurdles for independent candidates are money, credibility and media. What other obstacles do you think independent candidates face? What obstacles do all candidates face?
3. After seeing this program are you more or less likely to want to run for office one day? Explain why.
4. Research candidates in your state. How are they using social media (Twitter/Facebook) to help their campaigns?
5. What do you think is a fair requirement for getting your name on the ballot? Work with a partner and develop a list of guidelines for gaining ballot access for your state. Write a paragraph response explaining your guidelines.
6. Research a third party (today's Republican Party even started off as a third party). How did they get started? In what ways were they influential?
7. Stage a classroom debate. Possible topics include:
"Should Third Parties have greater access to participate in the political process, including ballot access, access to debates?" "Are third parties good or bad for America?"
8. Use the site www.livingroomcandidate.org to compare and contrast campaign ads from previous presidential elections to today. In what ways have the ads changed? What elements remain constant? Design your own political ad.

9. Use the site aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/onePage to research voting systems around the world. Compare and contrast our system (First Past the Post) to another country's system. In what ways might another system help or harm third parties?

LINKS:

Ace Project

<http://aceproject.org/ace-en/topics/es/onePage>

Voting Systems around the world

Ballot Access News

<http://ballot-access.org/>

Resource for issues relating to ballot access issues

Constitution Party

<http://www.constitutionparty.com/>

U.S. third party home page

Federal Election Commission

http://www.fec.gov/ans/answers_candidate.shtml

Information on running for federal office

Green Party

<http://www.gp.org/index.php>

U.S. third party home page

iCivics

<http://www.icivics.org/>

Great interactive site for civics lessons

Libertarian Party

<http://www.lp.org/>

U.S. third party home page

National Civics Standards

<http://www.civiced.org/standards?page=912toc>

National Social Studies Standards

<http://www.socialstudies.org/standards>

This Nation

<http://www.thisnation.com/question/042.html>

Brief history/overview of 3rd parties

U.S. Election Assistance Commission –

http://www.eac.gov/voter_resources/contact_your_state.aspx

Information on elections for each state

U.S. House of Representatives –

http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/memberfaq.aspx

Information on qualifications for members of the House of Representatives.

U.S. Senate

<http://www.senate.gov/>

Information on qualifications for members of the Senate.

White House

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/>

History of the legislative branch

For a complete list of Educational programs, please visit our website at www.tmwmedia.com

TMW MEDIA GROUP

2321 Abbot Kinney Blvd., Venice, CA 90291

(310) 577-8581 Fax: (310) 574-0886

Email:sale@tmwmedia.com www.tmwmedia.com

"Mind-Growing Media since 1985"