



Teaching Presidential Elections

Citizens, Not Spectators is a voter education program developed through a cooperative effort by the Center for Civic Education and the Arsalyn Program of Ludwick Family Foundation.

The goal of the program is to increase the voting rate among young Americans by demystifying the voting process. Lessons for grades 4 through 12 serve to familiarize students with the process and the duty of being a responsible and informed citizen so that it becomes a natural part of their lives.

The core of the program offers a series of lessons for both the fall and spring terms. The series is available in three- and five-lesson segments. Both of these segments focus on a culminating activity, *a simulated election*. Here students can put into the practice the skills and knowledge they have learned about the election process, candidates, issues of a particular election, and the rules and regulations for voting in their state and the nation.

Each presidential election cycle presents the opportunity to examine how we elect our president. The lessons provided here can be easily expanded or adapted to look at local and state candidates and issues. They can be used as part of a specific unit of study or can be infused throughout the fall term leading up to the election. However a teacher chooses to use the materials, it is strongly recommended that a simulated election be held in either the classroom, the social studies department, or the school as a whole just before the November election.

For more information about Citizens, Not Spectators, please visit <http://new.civiced.org/programs/citizens>.