



CIVIC ACTION LESSON PLAN

Interdisciplinary Subject: Math

Level: Middle School

This lesson plan offers teachers resource links from the **Library of Congress** and **inquiry-based teaching strategies**, using elementary math content and primary source analysis to engage students in creating understanding and a sense of belonging to the community of our democratic nation.

Title: Electoral College: Are All Votes Equal?

Essential Question: Does my vote matter?

Lesson Overview:

Students will examine the process of voting and the Electoral College. Applying mathematical percentages, students will experience how population and voting impact elections in this country and consider if everyone's vote matters. Students consider the use of the Electoral College and how it aligns with the popular vote.

Learning Objectives:

Students will:

- Use data to discover how the Electoral College works.
- Compare their problem-solving methods with those of other students.
- Present a solution to a problem in an organized manner, representing it verbally, numerically, graphically, and systematically.

Inquiry Standards

CCSS.Math.Content.3.OA.B.5

Apply properties of operations as strategies to multiply and divide.

CCSS.Math.Content.5.NBT.A.1

Recognize that in a multi-digit number, a digit in one place represents 10 times as much as it represents in the place to its right and 1/10 of what it represents in the place to its left.

Supporting Question 1 ENGAGING

How are those in power chosen?

Supporting Question 2 EVALUATING

Does the Electoral College insure all votes matter?

Supporting Question 3 TAKING ACTION

How does voting build community?

Title: Electoral College: Are All Votes Equal?

PERFORMANCE TASK 1	PERFORMANCE TASK 2	CULMINATING TASK
<p>Explain to students the results of the election of 1876, in which Samuel J. Tilden got more of the popular vote than candidate Rutherford B. Hayes, but Hayes won the election because he got more of the electoral vote. Ask students to use the election results resource from Library of Congress to figure out the next election when the electoral vote decided the presidential election. (Answer: 1888.)</p> <p>Then ask them to research if this scenario has played out in the 21st century and with whom? (Yes.)</p>	<p>Pass out the Electoral College map and review it with students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do they notice about the numbers? • Which states have the most votes? • Which states have the least votes? • Which states do students think are more valuable when running a campaign? <p>Put students in groups of four have each research the distribution of electoral votes in the elections of 1876, 1888, 2000, and 2016.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did they learn from the data? • Direct them to use percentages to inform others about what they learned. 	<p>In small groups, direct students to read the In Custodia Legis blog post about the Electoral College, noting any questions they have. Discuss student findings. Then ask students to create an argument to either keep the Electoral College or change the Electoral College and why. Instruct students to participate in a structured academic controversy on the value of the Electoral College today, then have them vote on keeping it or eliminating it.</p>
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS RESOURCES ADDITIONAL RESOURCES		
<p>Electoral College Resources http://www.loc.gov/tr/program/bib/elections/</p> <p>Historical Presidential Election Results https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/votes/index.html</p>	<p>Electoral College Map https://www.loc.gov/item/2008626928/</p> <p>Historical Distribution of Electoral Votes https://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/historical.html</p>	<p>The Electoral College – What Is It and How Does It Function? https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2012/11/the-electoral-college-what-is-it-and-how-does-it-function/</p>
TEACHING STRATEGIES		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct instruction • Research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary source analysis • Discussion • Jigsaw of distribution of Electoral College votes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structured academic controversy • https://nearpod.com to create a poll for students to vote on keeping or eliminating the Electoral College