



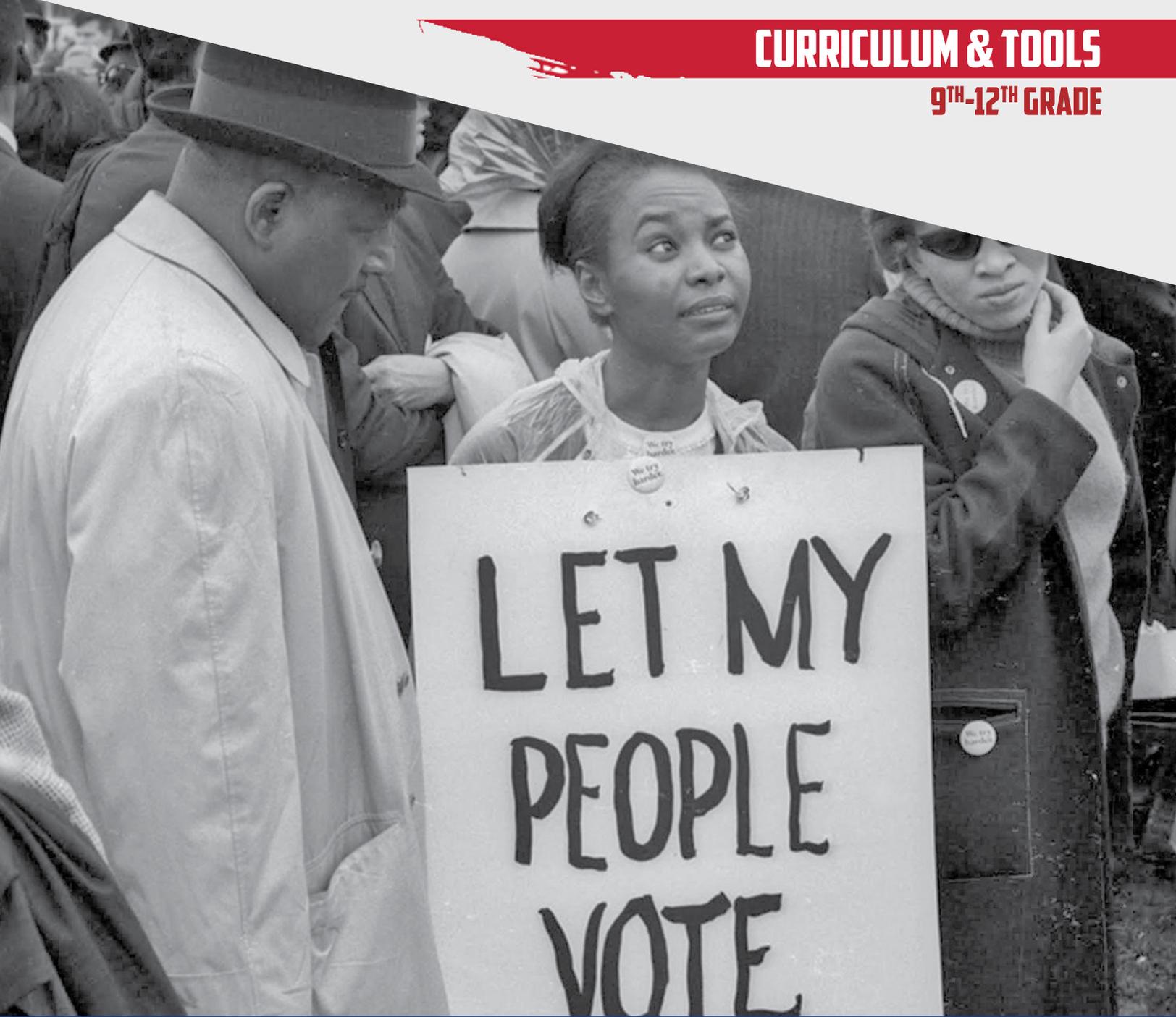
THE

GREAT DEBATES™

POWERED BY THE MUSEUM OF BROADCAST COMMUNICATIONS

CURRICULUM & TOOLS

9TH-12TH GRADE



THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS



THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS

This high-school lesson plan has been developed to help students improve media literacy by focusing on an issue prevalent in both the 20th and 21st centuries: voting rights and restrictions to the ballot. Voting is a cornerstone to a democratic society and this learning module shows students the history behind giving everyone the right to vote, and looks at the many sides of this controversial issue.

- First, students will get a background glance at the history of how the United States government has removed barriers to voting rights.
- Then, they will be guided through both sides of the issue of requiring a form of identification to vote at the polls or voter ID laws.
- Finally, students will research both sides of the issue of voting via mail.

For the assignments, students will fill out a worksheet as they are researching and completing the in-class portion of this learning module so they can organize their thoughts. Then, they will utilize their free-thinking skills in order to choose a side on either the voter identification issue or the issue of mail-in voting.

Finally, for the assessment, students will synthesize all they learned about the history of voting rights, and two of the main restrictions to voting today—fear of catching COVID-19 and ID laws—in order to formulate their own ideas on why people choose not to vote. The format of the assessment allows students to either write, present, or produce an audio/visual project to answer the assigned question: Why do so many people not vote in elections? The format students choose depends on interest and access to digital equipment and projections.

SUMMARY

This learning module presents how the voting rights of United States Citizens have changed over time, and connects that history to two major issues in the media today: Voter ID laws and mail-in ballots. Evaluating the two sides of these issues will allow students to think freely on why people do not vote in elections, even though the laws have come so far over the history of the United States.

MATERIALS NEEDED

Teacher

- Computer/tablet
- Projector
- Access to website
- Worksheets and answer key
- Handouts

Student

- Computers/tablets for reading/viewing
- Access to website
- Headphones if choosing video research
- Worksheets/handouts

STANDARDS

D2.CIV.2.9-12.

Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans' participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present.

D2.CIV.3.9-12.

Analyze the impact of constitutions, laws, treaties, and international agreements on the maintenance of national and international order.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Given the pertinent information, the students will be able to elaborate on the changes in voting laws over time by filling out a graphic organizer with the laws and constitutional amendments applicable within a class period.
- Given the pertinent information, the students will be able to analyze the issues of voter ID and mail-in voting by stating both sides of the issue in a worksheet and choosing the side they agree with, and explaining why they chose that side in three sentences.
- Given background information about voting history and restrictions, the students will be able to generate their own ideas about voter turnout by synthesizing their ideas in either a written essay, a presentation, or an A/V project.

Teacher	Student	Minutes
Day 1: Teacher introduces the essential question: Why do as many as 30 percent of eligible voters choose NOT to vote in elections, and how does this hurt American democracy?	Students are listening, and then responding to the essential question with initial thoughts.	2-3 Minutes
Next, teacher passes out the worksheet “The History of Voting Rights and Restrictions.” Read the directions to the students.	Students are listening and then receiving worksheets.	2 Minutes
Next, teacher directs students to the articles on the history of voting rights. Tell students they may either read the article or watch the video and as they do they are to fill out the first page of the worksheet, with the graphic organizer on it.	Students are reading or watching the video. Then, writing their answers in the worksheet.	10 Minutes

Teacher	Student	Minutes
<p>Then, teacher should move to the second page of the worksheet and work through the two articles on voter ID laws together. Read both articles (one for, one against voter ID laws) to students, have them follow along, and then ask for student input to answer the first three questions on the second page of the worksheet.</p>	<p>Students are listening, discussing questions out loud and writing down answers.</p>	<p>15 Minutes</p>
<p>Then have students read the two articles that deal with mail-in voting. Have them fill out the answers to the final three questions on the second page of the worksheet. This can be done individually or you may want to have students work in partners.</p>	<p>Students are reading articles. Then, writing down answers.</p>	<p>15 Minutes</p>
<p>Teacher hands out assignment sheets and explains, gives students the due date for the assignment.</p>	<p>Students are listening and writing in the due date on the assignment sheet.</p>	<p>3 Minutes</p>
<p>Teacher hands out exit slip five minutes before the end of the period and instructs students to answer either the first or the second question in three sentences or more. (Please note the choice of questions to answer in this module)</p>	<p>Students are writing their answers to the exit slip. Students hand in exit slip before the end of the period.</p>	<p>5 Minutes</p>

Teacher	Student	Minutes
* If students finish early, and you need to fill time, direct them to the articles on gerrymandering and the shrinking of polling places. Then, have them discuss those in small groups.	Students are reading articles, discussing in small groups.	Varies
Day 2: Students present or turn in their assignments. You may choose to have them turn in their worksheets at this time.	Students are presenting, or handing in written assignments.	Varies

ASSESSMENTS

Worksheet	Teacher will monitor students' completion and accuracy of their worksheets and ensure they are understanding the concepts of the assignment during and after the class work is done. This can be achieved either by doing a quick check of each student's worksheet or having the students hand their worksheets in with their assignments.
Exit Slip	Students will answer either "Should the 2020 election be vote-by-mail?" or "Should you be required to show an ID at the polls?" in at least three sentences. Teacher will check these answers for understanding of the concepts.

ASSESSMENTS

Reflection paper	Students can choose this option if they want to write about why they think many people do not vote in elections. Students will synthesize all they have learned in class to write this paper, and teacher can check for understanding of the concepts in this paper.
Oral report (Ted Talk)	Students can choose this option if they would rather present about why they think many people do not vote in elections. Students will synthesize all learned in class in order to complete this presentation, and teacher can check for understanding of the concepts in the presentation.
Media Presentation	Students can choose this option if they would rather utilize A/V technology in order to answer the question of why they think many people do not vote in elections. Students will synthesize all learned in class in order to complete this presentation, and teacher can check for understanding of the concepts in the presentation.

ADAPTATIONS OR ACCOMMODATIONS NEEDED

Learners	Adaptations/Accommodations
Highly Proficient	Students have the opportunity to explore another aspect of voting rights and restrictions in the US if they go beyond the assignments in class. A supplemental reading and discussion opportunity surrounding gerrymandering is available for highly proficient students to add another layer onto this topic as is an article on the shrinking number of polling places.
ELL	<p>Access to technology available to help students look up difficult wording.</p> <p>Students have the choice of watching or reading part of the in-class assignment.</p> <p>Students have the choice of speaking, producing, or writing their final project.</p>
Struggling Learners	<p>Access to technology available to help students look up difficult wording.</p> <p>Students have the choice of watching or reading part of the in-class assignment.</p> <p>Students have the choice of speaking, producing, or writing their final project.</p>

RESOURCES

Articles:

Below are the articles on the history of voting rights (to be used in conjunction with the graphic organizer)

(If students would rather read)

https://www.carnegie.org/topics/topic-articles/voting-rights/voting-rights-timeline/?gclid=CjwKCAjwi_b3BRAGEiwAemPNU2fhyQ3iUDcPG_ZE-r2bQH_CthOWYI72cYv00UVhd5DdifwtveRDhoCaJQQA_vD_BwE

(If students would rather watch)

<https://youtu.be/KlCoq3zbSwg>

Below are the articles on voter ID laws that you should read to the class, then answer the corresponding questions as a class.

Voter ID Pro Article: <https://www.usnews.com/debate-club/should-photo-id-be-required-to-vote/voter-id-laws-protect-the-integrity-of-our-democracy>

Voter ID Con Article: <https://www.aclu.org/other/oppose-voter-id-legislation-fact-sheet?redirect=oppose-voter-id-legislation-fact-sheet>

Below are the articles on mail-in voting that students should read either on their own or in partners, and then answer the corresponding questions.

Vote by mail Article Pro: <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/the-truth-about-vote-by-mail-and-fraud>

Vote by mail Article Con: <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/07/us/politics/as-more-vote-by-mail-faulty-ballots-could-impact-elections.html>

Below is the supplemental reading:

On 2020 voting by mail: <https://www.governing.com/next/The-2020-Elections-Is-America-Ready-to-Vote-by-Mail.html>

On gerrymandering: <https://www.aclu.org/issues/voting-rights/gerrymandering>

On the closing of polling places:

<https://www.governing.com/topics/politics/sl-polling-place-close-ahead-of-november-elections-black-voters.html>

On felon voting rights: <https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/felon-voting-rights.aspx>

THE GREAT DEBATES THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS HOMEWORK

Name: _____ Class Period: _____

THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS & RESTRICTIONS

Directions: Fill in the boxes by answering the question in each box. Use either the article on voting rights or the video to help you find the answers. Then answer the questions on the next page using full sentences.

1700's	1861 to 1870	1920	1965	1971
Who gained the right to vote during this period?	Who gained the right to vote during this period?	Who gained the right to vote during this period?	Who gained the right to vote during this period?	Who gained the right to vote during this period?
How was this accomplished? (what gave them the right to vote)?	How was this accomplished?			
What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?	What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?	What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?	What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?	What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?

THE GREAT DEBATES THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS HOMEWORK

Name: _____ Class Period: _____

1. What are voter ID laws?

2. Please explain an argument in favor of voter ID laws.

3. Please explain an argument against voter ID laws.

4. What is an absentee ballot?

5. Please explain a benefit of absentee ballots or mail-in ballots.

6. Please explain a drawback, or concern surrounding absentee ballots or mail-in ballots.

THE GREAT DEBATES - TEACHER'S KEY

THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS

HOMEWORK

Name: _____ Class Period: _____

THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS & RESTRICTIONS

Directions: Fill in the boxes by answering the question in each box. Use either the article on voting rights or the video to help you find the answers. Then answer the questions on the next page using full sentences.

1700's	1861 to 1870	1920	1965	1971
<p>Who gained the right to vote during this period?</p> <p>White, male landowners.</p>	<p>Who gained the right to vote during this period?</p> <p>All races of men. Also non-landowners.</p>	<p>Who gained the right to vote during this period?</p> <p>Women.</p>	<p>Who gained the right to vote during this period?</p> <p>Minorities who had previously been restricted from voting due to poll requirements.</p>	<p>Who gained the right to vote during this period?</p> <p>Anyone over the age of 18.</p>
<p>How was this accomplished? (what gave them the right to vote)?</p> <p>The US Constitution, or the founding of the United States.</p>	<p>How was this accomplished?</p> <p>The 15th Amendment.</p>	<p>How was this accomplished?</p> <p>The 19th Amendment.</p>	<p>How was this accomplished?</p> <p>The Voting Rights Act of 1965.</p>	<p>How was this accomplished?</p> <p>The 26th Amendment.</p>
<p>What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?</p> <p>Anyone who did not own land or who was not white or male could not vote. Women were excluded, the poor were excluded, and minorities were excluded.</p>	<p>What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?</p> <p>Women still could not vote, and there were barriers to voting including literacy tests and poll taxes to keep minorities from voting, even though they legally could.</p>	<p>What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?</p> <p>Minority women still could not vote. The barriers like poll taxes, and English Language tests at the polls still restricted minorities from voting.</p>	<p>What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?</p> <p>Anyone younger than 21 could not vote still.</p>	<p>What restrictions to voting still existed at this point in time?</p> <p>Laws still exist that bar or discourage people from voting. Answers to this question may</p>

THE GREAT DEBATES - TEACHER'S KEY

THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS

HOMEWORK

Name: _____ Class Period: _____

1. What are voter ID laws?

Voter ID laws require citizens to produce a photo ID in order to vote in an election.

2. Please explain an argument in favor of voter ID laws.

Proponents of voter ID laws say it enforces a one-vote-per-person at the polls, and such laws can also deter election fraud.

3. Please explain an argument against voter ID laws.

Opponents of voter ID laws say it restricts minority populations' right to vote because some minorities do not have IDs and poorer populations do not have drivers' licenses, so IDs are not issued to those people.

4. What is an absentee ballot?

It is a ballot that a person requests by mail in order to vote in an election without physically going to the polls.

5. Please explain a benefit of absentee ballots or mail-in ballots.

Absentee ballots keep people who are sick from risking their lives at the polls in order to vote, and they allow people living abroad or in a place other than their homes to vote without having to travel too far.

6. Please explain a drawback, or concern surrounding absentee ballots or mail-in ballots.

Mail in ballots can be difficult to navigate, many times are not counted due to a small error, and many times are suspected of being fraudulent.

THE GREAT DEBATES THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS EXIT SLIP OPTION 1

Name: _____ Class Period: _____

Should the 2020 election be one where people vote by mail?

Do you think an election carried out with all mail in ballots is a good or a bad idea? Use your own brain and explain your answer in at least three sentences.

LEADING THROUGH CRISES EXIT SLIP OPTION 2

Should you be required to show a photo ID at the polls?

Do you think voter ID laws help or hurt our democracy? Use your own brain and explain your answer in at least three sentences.

THE GREAT DEBATES

THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS & RESTRICTIONS

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Name: _____ Class Period: _____

You are to choose one assignment to complete by the due date: _____
You may use the articles from class, your worksheet, and any other research you do on your own to help you with this assignment.

Section 1: One-page paper

If you choose this option, you must turn in a paper of at least one page in length (either typed, 12-pt font or hand-written)

Please answer the following question in your paper: If so many restrictions have been removed from voting, why do so many people still not vote in elections? In your paper, please include:

- Your opinion on why you believe people do not vote in elections, even if many restrictions have been removed from the voting process.
- Make sure you back up your opinion by citing research from the articles we used in class. You may use your worksheet to help you complete your paper.

Section 2: Present a 3-5 minute "Ted Talk"

If you choose this option, you must present a 3-5 minute informational presentation. This can be conversational, and you can format it like a Ted Talk.

Please answer the following question in your Ted Talk: If so many restrictions have been removed from voting, why do so many people still not vote in elections? In your presentation, please include:

- Your opinion on why you believe people do not vote in elections, even if many restrictions have been removed from the voting process.
- Make sure you back up your opinion by citing research from the articles we used in class. You may use your worksheet to help you formulate your Ted talk.
- You may choose to use a PowerPoint presentation or Google Slides to help you move your talk forward.

THE GREAT DEBATES

THE HISTORY OF VOTING RIGHTS & RESTRICTIONS

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Name: _____ Class Period: _____

You are to choose one assignment to complete by the due date: _____
You may use the articles from class, your worksheet, and any other research you do on your own to help you with this assignment.

Section 3: Produce a 3-5 minute video

If you choose this option, you must turn in an informational video of at least 3-5 minutes in length, in the format of your choosing (screen cast, talking head, etc.)

Please answer the following question in your video: If so many restrictions have been removed from voting, why do so many people still not vote in elections? In your paper, please include:

- Your opinion on why you believe people do not vote in elections, even if many restrictions have been removed from the voting process.
- Make sure you back up your opinion by citing research from the articles we used in class. You may use your worksheet to help you complete your video.