

Guided Reading Level: O

Genre: Informational

Text Features: glossary, photos, primary sources, table of contents, index, illustrations, labels, text boxes

Lesson Objective: Social Studies

Students will identify core civic virtues and democratic principles that guide government, society, and communities.

Essential Question

Why is voting important for U.S. citizens?

Lesson Objective: ELA

Students will be able to use an apostrophe to form plural possessives.

Background Knowledge

Briefly discuss why we use voting to decide our leaders. The right to vote is a key aspect of democracy because it allows citizens to choose their leaders. Note that in some countries, especially in the past, leaders have not been chosen by voting. Some people came to power through force, and others because they were born into power. Tier Two and Three vocabulary from the book is listed below. Consider previewing selected vocabulary based upon the needs of your students before they read the text.

Vocabulary

absentee (p. 18)	electors (p. 20)
ballot (p. 16)	national (p. 6)
candidate (p. 14)	polling (p. 16)
citizen (p. 6)	register (p. 12)
democracy (p. 4)	republic (p. 4)



Voting in Elections

by: Jack Manning

Why This Text?

Voting in elections is one of the rights and privileges of being a U.S. citizen. This text explores the history of voting in the United States and explains how voting works today.

Preparing to Read

Explain that this is an informational text written to teach readers about voting in elections. Ask a volunteer to read the title of the book. Ask how many students know what it means to vote. Encourage them to share what they know. Don't confirm or deny what they share. Then have students turn to page 3 and refer to the table of contents. Remind students that the table of contents lists the chapters in a book, and explain that readers can learn a great deal about a book by reading the chapter titles. Read the chapter titles together to provide an overview of what readers will learn about voting in elections.

Reading Informational Text

Have the students read the text independently. Once students have finished reading, have them refer to the vocabulary key at the bottom of many pages. Point out that the vocabulary key gives definitions for words that they might not have understood on that page of text. Remind students that it is important to refer to the photos, captions, and other graphics in informational text, as these features explain or extend the information provided in the text.

Use the photograph on page 5 to emphasize that voting is very important to American citizens. Point out that the people in the photo are willing to stand in line for a long time in order to cast their votes.

Connect and Respond

1. *How often do people in the United States choose a president?* (The United States holds a presidential election every four years.)
2. *What kinds of places can be polling places?* (Polling places can include schools, city halls, fire stations, and many other types of buildings.)
3. *How can people vote if they are unable to get to a polling place?* (People who cannot get to a polling place can mail in an absentee ballot.)

Morphology

Call students' attention to this sentence on page 14: *They listen to candidates' plans and ideas.* Write a sentence where everyone can see it. Underline the phrase *candidates' plans*. Establish that the phrase *candidates' plans* means "plans belonging to candidates." Point out that *candidates* is a plural noun. Underline the *s'*. Explain that when a possessive noun (one showing belonging) is plural, the apostrophe goes after the *s*.

Language Arts Activity

Have students use the following sentence frames to write informative sentences about the text. Provide time for sharing.

Before voting, people can learn about _____.

In order to vote, people must _____.

Years ago, the only people who could vote were _____.

Primary Source Activity

Explain that this text features photos of primary sources related to the history of voting in the United States. Explain that primary sources are original sources—actual artifacts, documents, diaries, manuscripts, autobiographies, recordings, or any other source of information that was created at the time under study.

- Have students refer to the photograph on page 9. Invite volunteers to explain the meaning of the signs and what the photo shows. Explain that the photo shows women's suffrage (right-to-vote) workers encouraging men to pass an amendment to the Ohio Constitution that would give women the right to vote. Explain that the amendment was not passed, and American women did not get the right to vote until 1920.
- Have students refer to the illustration on page 11. Remind students that African American men got the right to vote in 1870, nearly a century after the founding of the country.
- Ask students how they think receiving the right to vote affected the lives of African American men and of women. Discuss how it affected not only individuals, but also the country as a whole.

Social Studies Activity

Discuss with students that voting means making a decision. Have students work with partners or with small groups to think about how they could learn about candidates and issues before voting. Then provide time for sharing.

Discuss that there are different ways to vote. Ask students where they might go to vote and what they would do if they knew they would not be able to get to a polling place.

Remind students that elected government positions come with term limits. Explain that the president's term is four years, and that a president may serve two terms if elected. Ask students why they think America has term limits. Provide them a sheet of paper and ask them to write down their ideas. Then provide time for sharing.

Materials/Resources Needed

paper
pencils
pens

Support English Learning

Offer realia, gestures, or photos to support the introduction of the new vocabulary.

- Explain that voting is an important part of being a U.S. citizen.
- Share a picture such as the one on page 9, and explain that voting rights did not always extend to all U.S. citizens.
- Then point out a picture such as the one on page 19, and explain that people vote at areas called polling places.
- Ask students why the right to vote is important.

Research Connection

History of Voting in America:
https://www.sos.wa.gov/_assets/elections/history-of-voting-in-america-timeline.pdf