**Voting Matters to Me**

The Why, Who, and How of Voting

A Four-Lesson Unit

**Designed for high school students to inspire**

**them to become life-long voters**

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**VOTING MATTERS TO ME**

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# Unit Overview

This 3-4 day voting unit will prepare students to vote by showing students why voting matters to them on the issues they care about. It will inform students about Who? Why? and How? of voting. Students will experience the process of voting and key steps in becoming a prepared voter. Each lesson stands alone offering choice and flexibility for classroom use. The unit is adapted from updated election information available at the Minnesota Secretary of State’s website: [www.sos.state.mn.us](http://www.sos.state.mn.us) or [www.mnvotes.org](http://www.mnvotes.org). Unit lessons can be found at [www.teachingcivics.org](http://www.teachingcivics.org).

Why teach this unit? A fundamental purpose of education is to prepare students for their role as active and engaged citizens by teaching the importance, skills and rights of voting.

Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies

9.1.1.1.1 Demonstrates skills that enable people to monitor and influence state, local and national affairs.

9.1.1.1.2 Demonstrate the skills necessary to participate in the election process including registering to vote, identifying and evaluating candidates and issues, and casting a ballot.

Unit Content Objectives

Students will be able to:

* examine current topics and rank how much the topic matters to them personally.
* evaluate the impact of voter turnout on the topics they care most about.
* understand information on why people vote, who votes and how people vote.
* apply voting information to precinct voting situations on an election day.
* demonstrate skills necessary to participate in the election process such as registering to vote and casting a ballot.
* demonstrate skills of voter preparation in order to identify and evaluate candidates and issues.
* demonstrate skills that enable people to monitor and influence state, local and national affairs.

Vocabulary

* See Election Vocabulary Handout

Assessments

* Graphic Organizer on Voting
* Anticipation/Note sheet on Voting as Easy as 1-2-3

## Overview of Lessons

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Lesson Activities** | **Learning Objectives** | **Materials** |
| **Lesson 1: Voting Matters to Me**  (20 -30 minutes)Ask students, why vote? Does it really matter to you? Do lesson on “Voting Matters to Me”Discuss issues in current election | Students will be able to:* examine current topics and rank how much the topic matters to them personally.
* evaluate the impact of voter turnout on the topics they care most about.
 | Student Issue Survey, Voter Cards, Issue signs |
| **Lesson 2: Essentials of Voting**  (50 - 60 minutes)Students complete a graphic organizer on voting * Why do people vote?
* Who votes?
* How do you vote?

Show Powerpoint on Voting from MN Secretary of StateElection Vocabulary quizlet | Students will be able to:* understand information on why people vote, who votes and how people vote.
 | Voting Graphic Organizer, Voting Powerpoint,Sample Registration forms and sample ballots, Election vocabulary and quizlet,Voter’s Bill of Rights |
| **Lesson 3: Voting as Easy as 1-2-3**  (45-60 min.)Students complete Anticipation/Note GuideClass simulates a precinct voting stationORSmall group exercise with voting scenariosDebrief with Anticipation/Note Guide | Students will be able to:* apply voting information to precinct voting situations on an election day.
* demonstrate skills necessary to participate in the election process such as registering to vote and casting a ballot.
 | Note Student Guide, Voter Simulation power point, Election Judge Instructions, Voter Scenarios Handout, Polling place signs,Voter Scenarios, Small-Group |
| **Lesson 4: Voter Prep 101** (45-60 minutes)Chart on voting obstacles and responsesGetting ready to vote* where do I vote?
* what is on the ballot?
* who should I vote for?

Evaluate partisan and non-partisan sources of voter informationEvaluate websites with checklist | Students will be able to:Identify reasons why people don’t vote and explore ways to remove obstacles to votingdemonstrate skills of voter preparation in order to identify, and evaluate candidates and issues.* Evaluate sources of voter information in order to monitor local, state and national elections.
 | Evaluation of website checklist |