

## Voter Education

### Sample Presentation II

(50 minutes)

#### **Make a Plan to Vote: What's on The Ballot?**

*(Note: YOUth DECIDE Committee Volunteers taught this lesson with two teachers, one to facilitate the discussion and one to model note taking on the board as the discussion proceeded. A lot of the note taking involved vocabulary assistance).*

#### **Overview: Goals in the lesson:**

To create a culture of voting, it is important to be prepared to vote in each election. Learn what's on the ballot for this specific election. Learn about the resources available in the Secretary of State [Voter Guide](#) and in the League of Women Voters [Vote411](#) regarding issues on the ballot.

#### **Essential Question:**

What resources and processes help voters decide how they would like to vote on different ballot measures?

#### **Preparing for class session:**

1. As a team, consider which measures will spark discussion and help you model ways to comprehend the ballot.
  - To begin discussion, choose a measure with a focus on high school students' issues. For example, in 2020, Proposition 18 permits 17 year olds to vote in the primary and special elections if the 17 year old will be 18 years old by the day of the General Election.
  - Then introduce a tougher one, for example in 2020, Proposition 16 allowed the government to consider factors of diversity such as race, gender and ethnicity to be factors in employment decisions, education policy and contracting decisions, also referred to as Affirmative Action. After working through the language of the measure with students, ask what is the outcome if this Proposition passes? If students are quiet, suggest possible answers: reverse racism or a correction to achieve equal access and so on.
2. Choose the vocabulary you should teach ahead of the discussion. Before class begins, write vocabulary on the board with definitions.

3. It helps to have Exit Tickets\* with questions such as:

- a. What is a good way to prepare to vote?
- b. How can you use the Voter Information Guide?
- c. What did you learn today?
- d. What questions do you still have?

\* small piece of paper or an index card on which students respond to a prompt from the teacher.

### Steps in the lesson:

A. Prior to class time (helpful to give this work at least 2 days before class so you are able to review the students' questions or concerns):

1. Share the [Voter Guide](#) and [Vote411](#) with students.

- Show students the sample ballot measures in the Guide and/or Vote411,
- Sign students to read 2 to 4 different measures on the ballot or use PDFs of the 2020 Propositions 16, Affirmative Action, and 18, Allow 17 year olds to vote in primary and special elections if they will turn 18 by the subsequent general elections. (Link to the archive for these PDFs is attached at the end of this presentation.)
- Use the strategy you find works best to have students read through text and take notes.

2. Have the students turn in their notes and review their questions and comments. Your review of the students' notes will guide the choice of measures which will work best for class time and guide the discussion prompts to use.

B. On class day:

1. Try to encourage discussion with questions that have no right or wrong answer and give the 5 Ws and How (who, what, when, where, why, how) facts throughout the discussion.

(A sample prompt in the discussion of the 2020 Measure 16, affirmative action, could be: Why give job seekers of certain races or gender an advantage in getting a job choice?)

2. One way to teach this class is to sit facing the class and facilitate discussion and the other class assistant would take 2 column notes on the board as the discussion proceeded. Students can be advised that their grade depends on engagement and on their notes and their Exit Tickets.

(2 column notes can be a form of outlining one's notes. Column 1 is the topic or question and Column 2 carries the details.)

3. Classes can be taught in 50-minute periods. It is a good practice to save the last 15 minutes for wrap up and for writing the Exit Tickets.

- Wrap up: About six minutes or so could be spent on how the steps of the lesson could be used to prepare to fill out one's ballot. For example, read the Voter's Guide, gather questions one has and discuss the questions with friends, even organize a voting pizza party.
- Exit Tickets: Ask students to write at least 2 sentences to each of the questions on the Exit Ticket.

C. Students can be graded for effort on the notes and Exit Tickets and for engagement in the discussion. Discussions can reflect on the issues re: engagement and the questions raised in the notes and the Exit Tickets. This feedback can be used to tweak and polish the lesson for next time.

[PDF of Voter Information Guide](#)

League of Women's Voters Oakland [Voter & Election Resources including Vote411](#)

End of Sample Presentation # II