

Know Your Vote, Know the Issues

The Real Voters of The USA



Objectives

- Analyze liberal and conservative positions on government spending and balancing the budget
- Understand the issues surrounding health care costs
- Understand the issues surrounding funding higher education
- Understand the issues surrounding the preservation of Social Security
- Formulate an endorsement for a presidential candidate based on how they will address those issues

Overview

Every election year and for years after elections, there are several major issues that persistently trouble Americans. Every election year, politicians pledge that they will address these issues,

and nearly every year they fall short of many peoples' expectations. This time may be different, but it will take an educated voting population to explain to politicians exactly what they want done to address the issues. In this lesson, we begin that process by examining problems surrounding health care costs, funding higher education, and preserving social security. Then, students look at how the current presidential candidates are proposing to address these issues, and formulate a short media presentation using Flipgrid (<https://info.flipgrid.com/>) or some other media presentation tool to endorse one candidate.

Days 1-2 Opening Activity: Describe the political climate and the state of political discussion in the nation today. Most will say that it is polarized, or that no one listens or compromises, or that it's just bad. Round out the discussion by stating that the problem we face is that there are many complex and increasingly difficult problems to solve and we don't always address these issues in positive, forward-thinking ways.

Film Viewing: "Real Voters of the USA" and is a parody of the television program "Real Housewives" with a political twist. Students will see a perfect example of the current political climate and some possible avenues for change.

We The Voters – Real Voters of the USA from FilmBuff on Vimeo.

Divide into small groups of 2-3 students and distribute Handout #1: "Real Voters of the USA" Graphic Organizer. Have students view the film, possibly more than once, and complete the graphic organizer. Review the first three questions and discuss.

Days 1-2 Main Activity: Explore three pressing issues—health care costs, funding higher education, and preserving social security—and examine proposed actions for resolving these problems.

In a small groups review handouts 2, 3, and 4 and view the three films, "Mission Insurable," "Student Debt Roulette," and "The Future of Social Security," possibly more than once, and complete the graphic organizers for each. Answer the following question:

We The Voters – Mission Insurable from FilmBuff on Vimeo.

“Mission Insurable”

- What did you learn about health care that you didn't know before watching?
- What questions do you have after watching the film?
- What was your most memorable moment from the film?

We The Voters – Student Debt Roulette from FilmBuff on Vimeo.

“Student Debt Roulette”

Answers to Question 2: A, C, F, E, D, B

- Describe the problems students face trying to get a better education with the high cost of college.
- Why have higher education costs gone up so much?
- Which of the possible solutions mentioned in the film do you think are the best and why?

We The Voters – The Future of Social Security from FilmBuff on Vimeo.

“The Future of Social Security”

- What is Social Security and how does it work?
- What are some of the main concerns young people have about Social Security?
- Which of the possible solutions mentioned in the film do you think are the best and why?

Day 3: Explore what the current candidates' positions and policies are regarding these issues.

Review Handout #5: Endorsing a Candidate. Go to the candidates' websites and other sources to find where the candidates stand on these issues and what ways they plan to address them if elected. Record your findings on the handout. Formulate an overall endorsement of a single candidate and explain your reasons. Document your results in an endorsement spot for media using Flipgrid. (<https://info.flipgrid.com/>) or other media presentation tools.

Teachers Resource:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/lessons-plans/know-your-vote-know-the-issues-lesson-plan>

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