

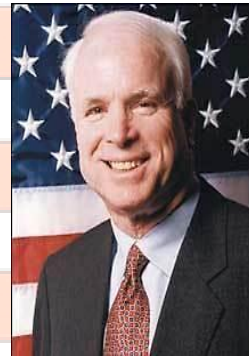


Election 2008

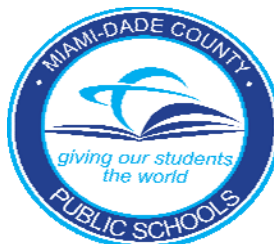
BACKGROUND INFORMATION CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES GRADES 6-12

Barack Obama- Democrat

John McCain- Republican



**Curriculum and Instruction, Social Sciences
Miami-Dade County Public Schools**



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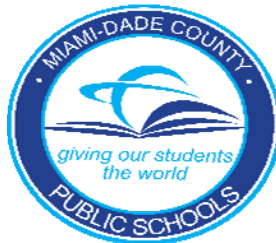




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Election 2008: The Election of the President

Candidates announce that they are entering the presidential race

Primary Elections provide voters within a political party an opportunity to state a preference of candidate and choose delegates for the convention.

Caucuses permit party members to select delegates to the convention.

National Conventions are held the summer before the election. The purposes of a National Convention are to:

- Select a presidential candidate
- Select a vice-presidential candidate
- Decide upon a "party platform"

Election Day is the Tuesday following the first Monday in November. Voters choose a candidate. They are really choosing electors. In most states, all of the state's electoral votes go to the candidate winning the "popular vote."

The **Electoral College**, made up of each state's electors, meets in December to cast state votes. On January 6, Congress officially counts the votes and declares the winner.

Inauguration Day is January 20. At noon, the President and Vice President are sworn into office by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.



Election 2008: Political Vocabulary

- Apathy:** Lack of interest or concern
- Ballot:** Printed form or other item used in voting
- Campaign:** A series of actions to achieve a certain goal; in an election, actions designed to influence voters
- Candidate:** Person who seeks or is nominated by others for political office
- Caucus:** A closed meeting of political party members to make policy decisions and choose candidates for election
- Citizen:** Person who is a member of a country, either by birth or by choice
- Convention:** A formal meeting of a group of people for a certain purpose
- Delegate:** A person chosen to speak and act for another person or group
- Democrat:** A person who is a member of the Democratic Party
- Elect:** To choose by voting
- Electoral College:**
A group of persons called "electors," selected by the voters in each state, that officially elect the president and vice president. The number of electors in each state is equal to its number of representatives in both houses of Congress
- Inauguration:** The formal ceremony placing someone in office
- Incumbent:** A person currently holding office

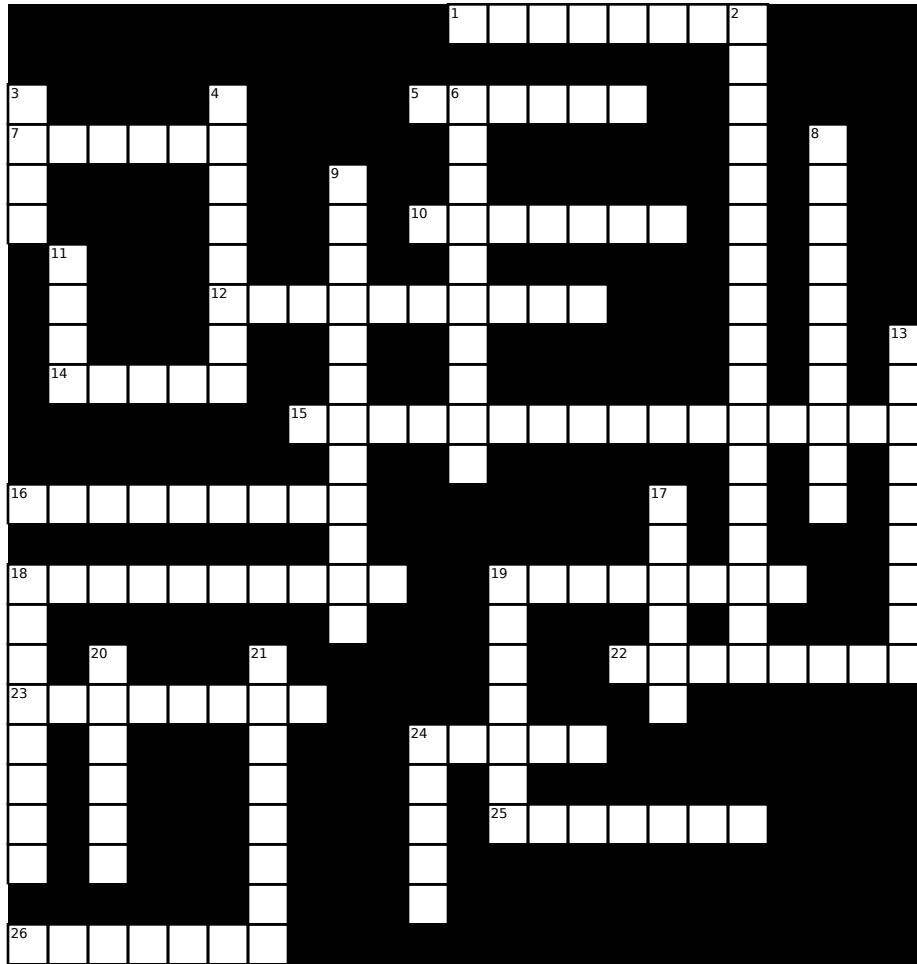


ELECTION 2008: Vocabulary (continued)

Initiative:	An electoral procedure whereby citizens can propose legislation or constitutional amendments and refer the decision to a popular vote by obtaining the required number of signatures on a petition
Issues:	Problems and ideas to decide and vote upon
Office:	A position of trust or responsibility; a political position
Party:	A group organized for political activity
Platform:	A statement of beliefs
Politician:	Someone who runs for or holds a government office
Poll:	To collect opinions about issues and candidates
Polls (or Polling Place):	A place where votes are cast
Precinct:	Divisions within cities or towns for voting purposes
Primary Election:	An early election to choose a political party's candidate
Register:	The process by which a person's name is added to a list of those eligible to vote
Republican:	A person who is a member of the Republican Party
Returns:	The results of a vote
Slogans:	Phrases that express the goal or spirit of an organization or group
Suffrage:	The right or privilege of voting
Vote:	A method by which citizens choose their leaders and decide upon public issues

Political Vocabulary Puzzle

Curriculum and Instruction, Social Sciences



Across

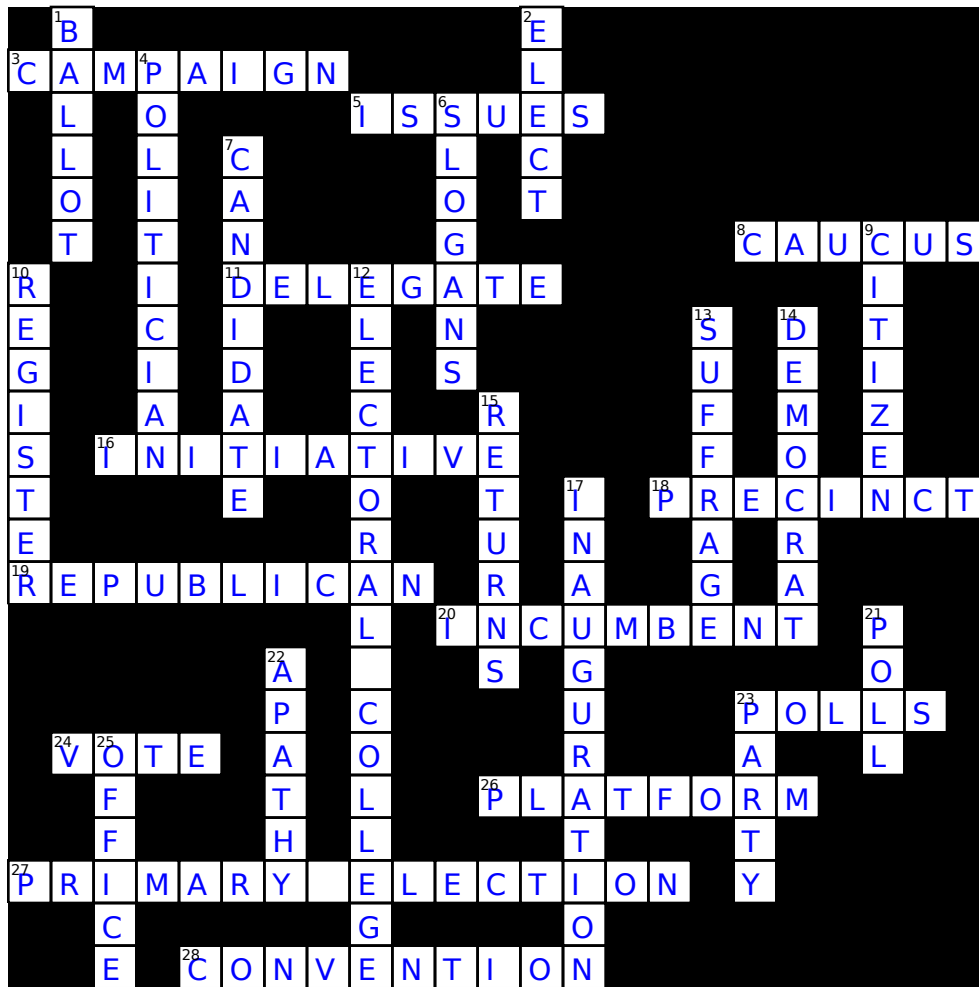
- 1 the right or privilege of voting.
- 5 lack of interest or concern.
- 7 a position of trust or responsibility; a political position.
- 10 person who is an official and legal member of a country, either by birth or by choice.
- 12 a person who is a member of the Republican Party.
- 14 to choose by voting.
- 15 an early election to choose a political party's candidate.
- 16 a person currently holding political office.
- 18 a formal meeting of a group of people for a certain purpose.
- 19 the process by which a person's name is added to a list of those eligible to vote.
- 22 a person chosen to speak and act for another person or group.
- 23 a statement of beliefs.
- 24 a group organized for political activity.
- 25 phrases that express the goal or spirit of an organization or group.
- 26 printed form or other item used in voting.

Down

- 2 a group of persons called electors selected by the voters in each state, that officially elect the president and vice president.
- 3 to collect opinions about issues and candidates.
- 4 a person who is a member of the Democratic Party.
- 6 someone who runs for or holds a government office.
- 8 an electoral procedure whereby citizens can propose legislation or constitutional amendments and refer the decision to a popular vote by obtaining the required number of signatures on a petition.
- 9 the formal ceremony placing someone in office.
- 11 a method by which citizens choose their leaders and decide upon public issues.
- 13 person who seeks or is nominated by others for political office
- 17 problems and ideas to decide and vote upon.
- 18 a series of actions to achieve a certain goal; in an election, actions designed to influence voters.
- 19 the results of a vote.
- 20 a closed meeting of political party members to make policy decisions and choose candidates for election.
- 21 divisions within cities or towns for voting purposes.
- 24 a place where votes are cast

Political Vocabulary Puzzle

Curriculum and Instruction, Social Sciences



Across

- 3 a series of actions to achieve a certain goal; in an election, actions designed to influence voters.
- 5 problems and ideas to decide and vote upon.
- 8 a closed meeting of political party members to make policy decisions and choose candidates for election.
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- 18 divisions within cities or towns for voting purposes.
- 19 a person who is a member of the Republican Party.
- 20 a person currently holding political office.
- 23 a place where votes are cast
- 24 a method by which citizens choose their leaders and decide upon public issues.
- 26 a statement of beliefs.
- 27 an early election to choose a political party's candidate.
- 28 a formal meeting of a group of people for a certain purpose.

Down

- 1 printed form or other item used in voting.
- 2 to choose by voting.
- 4 someone who runs for or holds a government office.
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- 7 person who seeks or is nominated by others for political office
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- 10 the process by which a person's name is added to a list of those eligible to vote.
- 12 a group of persons called electors selected by the voters in each state, that officially elect the president and vice president.
- 13 the right or privilege of voting.
- 14 a person who is a member of the Democratic Party.
- 15 the results of a vote.
- 17 the formal ceremony placing someone in office.
- 21 to collect opinions about issues and candidates.
- 22 lack of interest or concern.
- 23 a group organized for political activity.
- 25 a position of trust or responsibility; a political position.



Election 2008: Qualifications and Powers

Presidential Qualifications:

- Must be a natural-born citizen of the United States (can be born abroad of parents who are American citizens)
- Must be at least 35 years of age
- Must be a resident of the United States for at least 14 years (but not necessarily the 14 years preceding the election)

The Powers of the President:

According to Article II of the Constitution, the president has the following powers:

- Serve as commander and chief of the armed forces
- Conduct foreign policy
- Make treaties
- Grant reprieves and pardons for federal offenses (except impeachment)
- Convene Congress in special sessions
- Receive ambassadors
- Ensure that the laws be faithfully executed
- Veto bills
- Approve legislation
- Appoint ambassadors, judges, and high officials
- Appoint officials to lesser offices
- Maintain order in the country
- Address Congress and the nation



Election 2008: An Introduction to the Executive Branch of the Federal Government

1. The president's main job is to carry out the laws passed by Congress. The president is assisted by the vice-president, the executive cabinet, and many government and independent agencies.
2. The Constitution gives the president power to veto, call Congress into special session, serve as commander in chief, and receive foreign officials. The president can make treaties, appoint judges and top government officials, and pardon convicted criminals.
3. In the State of the Union address each year, the president informs Congress of important issues facing the nation and proposes new legislative programs.
4. As Chief Executive, the president is in charge of 15 cabinet departments and more than 3 million government workers. The president appoints the heads of cabinet departments and large agencies, with Senate approval.
5. The president may not make laws but can issue executive orders with rules or commands that have the force of the law.
6. The president can appoint federal judges, including Supreme Court justices. This power is important because the way the Supreme Court interprets laws greatly affects life in the United States. Most presidents appoint justices who share views similar to their own.
7. The president may grant pardons or declarations of forgiveness and freedom from punishment. The president may issue a reprieve, an order to delay a person's punishment until a higher court can hear the case. The president may also grant amnesty, a pardon toward a group of people.
8. The president directs foreign policy, deciding how the United States will act towards other countries.
9. As commander in chief, the president is in charge of all branches of the armed forces. Congress and the president share the power to make war. Only Congress can declare war, but only the president can order soldiers in to battle.
10. After the undeclared Vietnam War, congress passed the War Powers Act. This law requires the president to notify Congress immediately when troops are sent into battle. The troops must be brought home after 60 days unless Congress approves a longer stay or declares war.



11. As the country's economic leader, the president must plan the federal budget and try to deal with such problems as unemployment, rising prices, and high taxes.
12. The executive branch includes a large foreign-policy bureaucracy. It includes the State Department, Defense Department, Central Intelligence Agency, and the National Security Council.
13. The president and Congress share the power to conduct foreign affairs. The president is the chief diplomat and commander in chief, but Congress holds the power to spend or withhold money for defense.
14. The employees of the Executive Office of the President help the president by preparing reports, helping to write bills, and checking the work of various agencies.
15. The cabinet is a group of advisers that includes the head of the 15 top-level executive departments. The head of the Department of Justice is called the Attorney General. The other department heads are called secretaries. Cabinet members advise the president on issues related to their departments. The president decides when the cabinet meets and how much to rely on their advice.

Taken from: Civics today: Daily Lecture and Discussion Notes, Glencoe McGraw-Hill Inc. 2005.



Election 2008: Presidential Powers- True or False

Name: _____

Directions: Use the information from the handouts about Presidential Qualifications, Powers of the President, and an Introduction to the Executive Branch of the Federal Government to answer the following True or False questions. Place an "X" in the correct column at the end of each statement. For answers you identify as false, write a new statement correcting the error.

Question/Statement	True	False
1. A persons can run for president as long as he/she has lived in United States for at least 11 years.		
2. The president can call Congress into a special session.		
3. In the annual State of the Union Address, the president addresses the Supreme Court and proposes new legislative ideas.		
4. The president can appoint his/her choice to head each of the executive departments as long as Congress approves each appointment.		
5. While Congress is the only branch of government that can officially declare war, the president is the only person who can order soldiers to go to war.		
6. The president can order Congress to spend money on defense.		
7. Dealing with inflation is exclusively a legislative power.		
8. According to the War Powers Act, the President may commit troops into battle but soldiers must be brought home after 60 days unless Congress approves a longer stay or declares war.		
9. The president must meet once a week with all cabinet members and follow their advice accordingly.		
10. Most presidents appoint Supreme Court justices with opposite viewpoints in order to have a balance of opinions in the government.		



Election 2008: Presidential Powers- True or False

Name: **Answer Sheet**

Directions: Use the information from the handouts about Presidential Qualifications, Powers of the President, and an Introduction to the Executive Branch of the Federal Government to answer the following True or False questions. Place an "X" in the correct column at the end of each statement. For answers you identify as false, write a new statement correcting the error. (Answers for corrected false statements may vary.)

Question/Statement	True	False
1. A persons can run for president as long as he/she has lived in United States for at least 11 years.		X
2. The president can call Congress into a special session.	X	
3. In the annual State of the Union Address, the president addresses the Supreme Court and proposes new legislative ideas.		X
4. The president can appoint his/her choice to head each of the executive departments as long as Congress approves each appointment.	X	
5. While Congress is the only branch of government that can officially declare war, the president is the only person who can order soldiers to go to war.	X	
6. The president can order Congress to spend money on defense.		X
7. Dealing with inflation is exclusively a legislative power.		X
8. According to the War Powers Act, the President may commit troops into battle but soldiers must be brought home after 60 days unless Congress approves a longer stay or declares war.	X	
9. The president must meet once a week with all cabinet members and follow their advice accordingly.		X
10. Most presidents appoint Supreme Court justices with opposite viewpoints in order to have a balance of opinions in the government.		X



Election 2008: The Electoral College

The Electoral College can potentially affect the outcome of a presidential election. In 1888, President Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, received 100,000 more votes than his Republican opponent, Benjamin Harrison. However, President Cleveland was not reelected. Benjamin Harrison, who appeared to have lost the popular vote on Election Day, became president because he received a majority of votes in the Electoral College. In 2000, Democratic candidate Al Gore won the popular vote nationally with 560,000 more votes than George W. Bush. The final tabulation came from Florida with both candidates ending in a virtual dead heat. After a final recount, Florida's electoral votes went to George Bush. Once again, the winner of the popular vote was denied the presidency. The system that made this possible is still part of the election process in the United States.

What is the Electoral College?

Voters in the United States do not directly elect the President or the Vice-President. Instead, they actually choose electors who support a candidate. The winning electors meet in their state capitals in December after the November presidential election and cast their votes for President and Vice President. A candidate must receive a majority of the 538 total electoral votes in order to win the election. This means a candidate needs at least 270 electoral votes to win the election. What if no one gets a majority of votes? This could result if there is a popular third-party candidate to challenge the candidates from the two major political parties. If this happens, the House of Representatives chooses the President from among the top three candidates, with each state delegation receiving one vote.

How Winners Can Lose

Could the Electoral College play the same trick in 2008 that it played on Al Gore eight years ago and on Grover Cleveland over one hundred years ago? Yes! Each state has as many electors as it has senators (2) and representatives (based on population). For example, Florida has two senators and 25 representatives, so it has 27 electors in the Electoral College. Montana, a less populated state than Florida, has only three electoral votes because it has two senators and only one representative in the House of Representatives. (The District of Columbia, which is a federal district and not a state, is also entitled to 3



electoral votes.) Presidential candidates generally focus their campaigning on the states that are larger in population because that is where they will receive the most electoral votes.

In nearly all states, the candidate who receives the most popular votes (votes of the people) gets all of the state's electoral votes. A candidate, who wins the popular vote in a state by only a small margin, will receive all of that state's electoral votes with the opposing candidate receiving no electoral votes at all. This situation may result in the candidate with the most popular votes ending up with fewer electoral votes and consequently, losing the presidential election.

Many people have argued that the Electoral College should be eliminated, and that the President and Vice President should be elected directly by the people. Those in favor of elimination of the Electoral College in presidential and vice presidential elections generally point out that it is possible to elect a president who has received fewer popular votes. Those who favor keeping the Electoral College often point out that it prevents the candidates from ignoring the less populated states. Electing candidates solely by the popular vote would encourage candidates to concentrate on the states with the largest populations. Do you think that the Electoral College should be eliminated or remain as it is?

Electoral College Map

Even though registered voters will cast their ballots to elect the President and Vice President on November 4, 2008, the actual presidential election is not over until the electors from each state cast their votes. It will take at least 270 of the 538 total electoral votes to win the election.

Directions:

Using the map on the following page, color the states that are won by John McCain in red and color the states that are won by Barack Obama in blue on Election Day as the results are reported in the news.

On the back of the map, make one column for John McCain and one column for Barack Obama. In each column, list each state won by the candidate and its corresponding number of electoral votes. Total the electoral votes at the bottom of each column.

Name _____

Date _____

United States of America





Election 2008: Meet the Candidates (in alphabetical order)

John McCain- Republican Presidential Candidate



Quick Facts:

Born: August 29, 1936 (Panama Canal Zone)

Lives in: Phoenix , Arizona

Zodiac Sign: Virgo

Height: 5'7"

Family: wife Cindy, 4 sons Douglas, Andrew, John IV, and James and 3 daughters Sidney, Heghan, and Bridget

Parents: Admiral John Sydney McCain Jr. (from Indiana) and Roberta (Wright) McCain (from Oklahoma)

Religion: Episcopalian

Education:

-Graduated: United States Naval Academy (1958)

-National War College (1974)

Career:

-U.S. Representative from 1983 to 1987

-U.S. Senator from 1987- present

Government Committees:

-Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

-Chair, Committee on Indian Affairs, 1995-1997, 2005-2007

Additional Facts:

- Graduated from flight school in 1960
- Volunteered for combat duty during the Vietnam War- flew carrier-based attack planes
- October 26, 1967- plane was shot down during a bombing run over the North Vietnamese capital of Hanoi. He broke both arms and one leg during the crash. McCain was moved to Hoa Loa prison and he eventually spent five and a half years in various Vietnamese prison camps, three and a half of those in solitary confinement and was repeatedly beaten and tortured before he was finally released on March 14, 1973.
- First elected to political office on November 2, 1982 (House of Representatives)
- In 1986, he won election to the U.S. Senate.
- During his time in the Senate, he has worked diligently in support of increased tobacco legislation, for the reform of the campaign finance system, and has earned the reputation of being complex since some of his views tend to be liberal rather than a straight-ahead conservative.
- He has supported the Iraq War but has criticized The Pentagon several times, especially about low troop strength.

Information gathered from: biography.com



Barack Obama- Democratic Presidential Candidate



Quick Facts:

Born: August 4, 1961 (Hawaii)

Lives in: Chicago, Illinois

Zodiac Sign: Leo

Height: 6'1"

Family: Married wife Michelle in 1992, 2 daughters Malia and Sasha

Parents: Barack Obama, Sr. (from Kenya) and Ann Dunham (from Kansas)

Religion: United Church of Christ

Education:

-Graduated: Columbia University (1983) – Major: Political Science

-Law Degree from Harvard (1991)- Major: J.D.- Magna Cum Laude

-Attended: Occidental College

Career:

-U.S. Senator from Illinois sworn in January 4, 2005

Government Committees:

-Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee

-Veterans Affairs committee

-2005-2006: served on the Environment and Public Works Committee

Additional Facts:

- First African-American to become the presidential nominee for a U.S. major political party
- In 1967, his family moved to Jakarta, Indonesia where he studied in Indonesian.
- Obama first became conscious of racism and what it meant to be African-American when he was one of three black students enrolled in the prestigious Punahou Academy in Hawaii in 1979.
- In 1985, he moved to Chicago and worked as a community organizer with low-income resident in Chicago's Roseland community.
- During his time in Chicago, although he admits he was not raised in a religious household, he joined the Trinity United Church of Christ.
- During his time in Harvard Law School, he was the first African-American editor of the Harvard Law Review.
- After law school, he returned to Chicago to practice as a civil rights lawyer.
- Obama's advocacy work led him to run for the Illinois State Senate as a Democrat. He was elected in 1996 from the south side neighborhood of Hyde Park.
- In 2005, he was elected to the U.S. Senate from Illinois.
- Following the 9/11 attacks, Obama was an early opponent of President Bush's push to war with Iraq. He stated, "I am not opposed to all wars. I'm opposed to dumb wars."

Information gathered from: biography.com



Election 2008: Presidential Candidate Web

Directions: Read each candidate's description below and draw a line from the candidate's picture to the appropriate description. Use different colored lines for each candidate. Refer to the biographical information provided in this packet for assistance if needed.

Harvard
Law
School

1986
U.S.
Senate



Served on
Transportation
Committee

Vietnam
POW

Supports the Iraq War but has
criticized the Pentagon's
approach

Episcopalian

Flew carrier based attack planes

Elected Senator in 2005

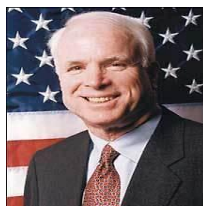
Worked as a community
organizer with low-
income residents in
Chicago

In 1967, his
family moved to
Jakarta,
Indonesia

First Elected to the
House of
Representatives in
1982

Born in
Hawaii

United Church of
Christ



Worked on campaign
finance reform

Served on
Health
Committee

Graduated from flight
school in 1960.

Stated: "I am not
opposed to all wars..."

Educated
in the U.S.
Naval
Academy



Election 2008: The Office of the Vice President

Vice-Presidential Candidates: At the time of writing this instructional packet, no vice-presidential candidates had been chosen for either the Democrats or the Republicans. Below are some activities that you can use to engage your students in getting to know more about each major political party's vice-president candidate once they have been chosen.

- Research on the Internet (www.biography.com is a good place to start) basic biographical information about the Democratic vice-presidential candidate and the Republican vice-presidential candidate and make a list of "Quick Facts" following the categories that were outlined in this packet for the presidential candidates.
- Make your own vice-presidential candidate web worksheet, modeled after the one provided in this packet for the presidential candidates, and bring it to class. Share your worksheet with a classmate and complete each other's worksheet. Be sure to check for accuracy.
- Typically, vice-presidential candidates are chosen by each major political party candidate for political reasons. Research Obama's and McCain's reasons for choosing their respective vice-presidential candidate. You may want to refer to the political analysis section of current newspapers or watch the news (e.g., CNN) for the most updated analysis regarding each candidate's vice-presidential selection. Be prepared to share and discuss your findings with the rest of the class.
- Research information about the office of the vice-president. Find answers to the following questions: What are the official duties of the vice-president? How many vice-presidents have moved on to become president? How many vice-presidents have become presidents due to assassinations? Who are some of the more famous vice-presidents throughout history and why are they so famous? Feel free to include notes on anything else you find interesting from your research about the Office of the Vice-President. Be prepared to share your information with the rest of the class during class discussion.



Election 2008: Candidates and the Issues

Directions: Identify several issues from the current presidential campaign. Outline the position held by the two major candidates on each issue and indicate in the last column who you agree with most and why.

Issue	John McCain	Barack Obama	I agree with . . .



Election 2008: The Role of Political Parties

The two major political parties in the United States, the Democrats and the Republicans, give voters a choice among candidates and ideas. These two major parties mainly differ in their belief about how much the government should be involved in the lives of Americans. Democrats tend to believe that the federal government should be more directly involved in regulating the economy and providing for the poor. Republicans tend to believe that if they help the economy grow, poor people will have a better chance of finding jobs and providing for themselves. They believe in less regulation. Both parties try to appeal to as many voters as possible. As a result, they tend to adopt mainstream, moderate positions and avoid extremes. The parties are also similar because the American people generally agree about many issues.

Political parties are active year-round, not only during presidential election time. They keep people informed and interested in issues and candidates. They try to see that the party's elected officials do a good job. They politically criticize actions of the opposing party. Political parties also play a "watchdog" role. The party of out power watches the actions of those in power for mistakes and misuse of power. Competition between parties forces the party in power to pay attention to the will of the people.

Third party or other political parties also exist in U.S. politics but have rarely been influential in electing their candidates to the office of the president. Some of the third parties that exist today are: the Green Party, the Libertarian Party, the Reform Party, the Socialist party, and the Independent Party. Ross Perot, a Reform party presidential candidate and successful businessman, gained a great deal of support and votes during two previous presidential elections (1992 and 1996). In fact, he gained so much support that had those votes gone to another candidate, we may have had a different president elected during each of those years. Therefore, the importance of third party candidates should not be overlooked.

For a complete list of all political party presidential candidates for election 2008, go to <http://www.dcpoliticalreport.com/pres08.htm>.



Election 2008: Campaign Buttons

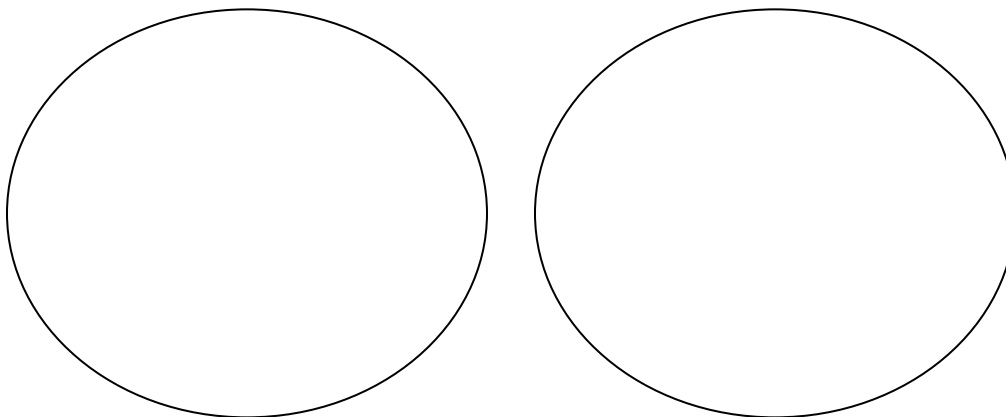
Political campaign buttons were first used in the 1896 presidential campaign between William McKinley and William Jennings Bryan.

Political slogans, pictures, and names have been used on campaign badges to promote candidates, issues, and causes.

Choose an issue or several issues shaping the race the 2008 Presidential Elections and create a campaign button for each major candidate. Think of the campaign issues and the position each candidate takes on the issue. Develop a slogan that you can put on your button. Be creative! Be prepared to present and explain your button to other students in your class.



You may cut out the circles below, use them as a guide or draft, or create your own.





Election 2008: Elections and the Media

Most information about political candidates is conveyed through the media, including television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet. This information is presented in many ways, including news stories, advertisements, political cartoons, interviews, speeches, and debates.

Besides outlining a candidate's position on key issues, television, radio, and newspaper advertisements are often used to "sell" a certain image of a candidate. For example, an ad might show a candidate with his/her family in order to convince the viewer that the candidate is a strong family person with traditional values.

Choose an advertisement (radio, television, newspaper, magazine, Internet) to analyze.

1. In the space provided below, write a brief summary of the advertisement.

2. Does the ad help you understand the candidate's stand on the issues? Or, does the ad concentrate on the candidate's image?

Which type of ad would you prefer? _____

Why?

3. Has any advertisement influenced your choice in the election? _____
How?



4. Has any advertisement angered or annoyed you? _____
Why?

5. Which candidate's ads do you think are more effective?

Why?

6. Have you viewed any ads that have attacked the candidate's opponents?

Were these ads effective? _____ Why or why not?



7. If you could change how candidates use advertisements, what would you change and why?

Create Your Own Advertisement: Now that you have viewed several advertisements and analyzed their impact on elections, create your own advertisement. Use the space below to describe your idea for an advertisement that would help your favorite candidate. Be prepared to share your ideas with the rest of the class. (Optional: videotape or digitally record your advertisement with students role playing the candidate.)



Election 2008: Campaign and Bumper Stickers

Political campaigns often use automobile bumper stickers as advertisements. Bumper stickers usually have a “catchy phrase” intended to sway or reinforce the voter’s opinion of the candidate or the other.

Bumper stickers may present the candidate in a positive manner. Bumper stickers may also be used to depict an opposing candidate in a less than positive manner.

After researching the candidates for President of the United States, choose one candidate and complete the following:

1. Create a slogan appropriate for a bumper sticker.
2. Design a bumper sticker for your candidate which will attract potential voters.
3. Develop a slogan and bumper sticker with a negative viewpoint for an opposing candidate.
4. You may choose to complete this assignment using an election issue rather than a candidate.
5. You should be prepared to share and explain your bumper stickers with the rest of the class.

Use the space below to design a draft of your bumper sticker.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to draw a draft of their bumper sticker.



Election 2008: Interpreting Political Cartoons

Most Americans recognize him at a glance. He has been wearing the same outfit for more than 100 years: striped pants, a cutaway coat, and a stovepipe hat decorated with stars. His name is Uncle Sam, the figure that has come to represent the United State.

Uncle Sam and many other famous characters appear regularly in political cartoons. Political cartoons typically are found in the editorial sections of newspapers. These cartoons use pictures to express a point of view. Because the pictures are often humorous, your first reaction might be to laugh. It is important, however, to look beyond the humor. Every political cartoon has an underlying message.

How to Interpret Political Cartoons:

1. Identify the symbols. As you look at the cartoon, keep in mind that the artist often uses symbols, or drawings with special meanings. Some symbols, such as Uncle Sam, represent countries, groups of people or places. Other symbols represent ideas. Justice, for example, often is shown as a blindfolded, robed woman holding a set of scales.
2. Identify the caricatures. Caricatures are sketches that exaggerate, or distort, a person's features. Caricatures can be positive or negative, depending on the cartoonist's point of view. Determine whether the cartoonist is portraying the subject in a favorable or unfavorable manner.
3. Read the labels. Editorial cartoons often use labels to identify people, objects, events, or ideas. How do the labels help express the cartoonist's point of view?
4. Read the caption. Many cartoons have a caption. If the cartoon has a caption, note how it relates to the cartoon. Identify whose point of view is being expressed in the caption- that of the cartoonist, the cartoon figure, or some other person.



Election 2008: Analyzing Political Cartoons

Name: _____

Practice: Look at the following political cartoon and analyze it using the four steps mentioned above.



1. List the symbols: _____

2. Identify the caricatures: _____

3. Explain the labels:



4. Explain the caption:

5. Explain the meaning of the cartoon and identify the cartoonist's point of view.



Election 2008: Political Cartoon Research

Use the Internet or newspaper to find a political cartoon about one of the two major candidates running in the presidential election. Make a copy of the cartoon and tape it to the back of this paper. Using the steps you have learned on how to analyze a political cartoon, answer the following questions.

Identifying the Main Idea of the Political Cartoon

Political cartoons are used to present a strong visual message or point of view on a topic of current interest.

1. What political event or idea is the cartoon referring to?
2. What key people or groups are part of the cartoon's message?
3. How has the cartoonist depicted these people? Explain any symbols used by the cartoonist to portray people or countries.
4. Identify any captions, titles, labels, or speech bubbles in the cartoon. How do these contribute to the cartoon's message?
5. What is the message of this cartoon? How is the cartoonist trying to persuade the reader?



Analyzing the Method Used by the Cartoonist

Cartoonists use a number of methods to convey their message including humor, caricature (an exaggerated drawing in which features are distorted), satire, and symbolism. Use the questions below to help analyze the cartoonist's method.

6. Is the cartoon drawn realistically or are the characters distorted? Does the way the characters are drawn cast them in a positive or a negative light? Why do you think the cartoonist chose to use this style?
7. Is the cartoon funny or is it serious? Explain how the method chosen by the cartoonist effectively conveys a political message.
8. What drawings, captions, or labels does the cartoonist use to grab the reader's attention? What did you notice first about the cartoon?
9. Do you think cartoons are a good way to convey political messages? Explain why or why not.

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Election 2008: Every Vote Counts

Everyone has a civic responsibility to vote. All citizens over the age of 18 who meet certain state requirements may vote in Federal elections. It has taken some time for this right to be available to all people. When the United State was first formed, only white male landowners over the age of 21 could vote in some states. The 15th, 17th, 19th, 23rd, 24th, and 26th Amendments to the Constitution have granted voting privileges to more citizens. People are often heard to say, "Why should I vote? I'm only one vote, I can't really make a difference." To see how erroneous these statements are, read the excerpts below from the Florida Department of State - Division of Elections website:

"The Importance of One Vote"

- In 1649, **one vote** cost King Charles I of England his head (The vote to behead him was 68 for and 67 against).
- In 1776, **one vote** made English the official language of the United States instead of German (at least according to folk lore).
- In 1850, **a one vote** margin admitted California to the Union.
- In 1868, **one vote** in the U.S. Senate saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment.
- In 1941, **a one vote** margin saved the Selective Service Act (the draft) - just weeks before Pearl Harbor was attacked.

To register to vote in Florida, you must:

- be a U.S. citizen.
- be a Florida resident.
- be 18 years old (you may pre-register if you are 17).
- not now be adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting in Florida or any other state.
- not have been convicted of a felony without your civil rights having been restored pursuant to law.
- not claim the right to vote in another county or state.
- provide your current and valid Florida driver's license or Florida identification card.

Activity: Create a "Get Out and Vote" campaign in your school and run advertisements about your campaign during morning announcements.

Election 2008: Voting Article



Directions: Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

Voting Is Important for Kids Too

Kid Reporter talks to the President of the Los Angeles League of Women Voters

By Mariam El Hasan | June 26, 2008

Source: Scholastic News Online

Did you know that the League of Women Voters (LWV) is not just for women? *Scholastic News* had the opportunity to sit down with Liza White, who is the President of the Los Angeles League, and learn about the importance of voting during the election season.

The League of Women Voters is a political organization, but it is also a non-partisan organization. That means it doesn't support any political group or candidate. White said, "We are dedicated to promoting informed active participation of all in the government. This means we educate people of all sides of the issues. We educate people about what the candidates have to offer." She went on to explain that League members have candidate forums, they help people understand issues on the ballots, and they register people to vote.

The Los Angeles LWV has been around since 1920, which is the same time the National League of Women Voters was established. White explained how the original purpose of the League was to give "newly enfranchised [women] voters the ability to understand how to vote and what the considerations were about the issues they would be looking at." She said that the purpose of the League has changed, and now it also has members who are men.

Although the League of Women Voters was founded to get women involved in politics, it did not endorse Senator Hillary Clinton for President because it does not endorse anybody. White believes it doesn't matter if the President is a woman or a man because it is more important to have a candidate who has experience and knowledge.



Senator Clinton was probably the strongest female candidate who has emerged in the 88 years since women gained the right to vote. White thinks that women should become more involved in politics. "We're more likely to have strong female candidates the more representatives we have at all levels of government that represent females, and we're not there yet," White said. "We don't have equity at all levels. We don't have equity of gender. So when we get more equity of gender at those levels, it's more likely that we'll have strong female candidates."

The League of Women Voters in Los Angeles has had many successful achievements. One of their programs is called "Running and Winning." "It is a program that takes students in Los Angeles out of high school for one day and gives the students the opportunity to meet with elected officials and interview them about how they were elected," White told *Scholastic News*. "They then create their own mock candidacy and campaign so that they can actually have the experience of running for office, because we believe that participation in government is wonderful, but running for office is probably one of the highest things you could strive for."

At the end of the interview, White wanted to give kids a message. She said that kids should start participating in government now. "You vote every day when you make choices," she explained. "You choose what brand of food you're going to eat, you make a choice. It's a vote."

White added that every child should participate now in something that they care about. She wants kids to tell their parents how they feel about government issues and to ask them, "How does government affect this? Who makes the rules? Are you voting in a way that could help this?" She also said, "Once you reach the age when you could register to vote, register to vote. Once you do that, go out, find out who's running, what the issues are, what's important to you, and vote with your heart and mind."



Election 2008: Voting Article- Reading and Writing Questions

1. What is the meaning of the word “nonpartisan?”
 - (A) endorsing a particular candidate
 - (B) not supporting any particular candidate or party
 - (C) to encourage people to vote
 - (D) belonging to a political party
2. According to the passage, what was the original function of the League of Women Voters?
 - (A) to promote women as viable political candidates
 - (B) to register women, men, and young people to vote
 - (C) to educate women about how to vote and the important issues
 - (D) to endorse political candidates that supported women’s issues
3. Which statement BEST supports Liza White's claim that it doesn't matter if the President is male or female?
 - (A) that it is more important to have a candidate that has knowledge and experience
 - (B) that equity does not exist between males and females in politics
 - (C) that more women need to run for political office
 - (D) that men have traditionally been more involved in politics
4. What historical event most likely occurred before the League of Women Voters was formed?
 - (A) a female presidential candidate was defeated
 - (B) the first lady in 1920 pushed for the formation of the League
 - (C) the 19th amendment was passed granting women the right to vote
 - (D) the 26th amendment was passed lowering the age to vote to 18
5. What is the author’s purpose in writing this article?
 - (A) to explain the importance of women’s participation in politics
 - (B) to give a brief history of the purpose of the Women's League of Voters
 - (C) to persuade the reader to endorse more female politicians
 - (D) to describe her frustrations about Hilary Clinton’s loss during the democratic primary elections



6. Explain why Linda White feels that people are practicing voting on a daily basis. Use details and information from the article to support your answer.

7. Explain Linda White's attitude about how young people can influence their parents' political decisions. Use details and information from the article to support your answer.



Election 2008: Create an Election Scrapbook

Gathering Information: Collect newspaper articles, Internet articles, political cartoons, notes on televised debates and election advertisements, and any other resources you can find about the upcoming presidential election. Your collection should cover at least a two-week period.

Organizing Your Scrap Book:

You can use an actual scrap book available at your local school supply store or simply use construction paper to create your own scrap book. If you use construction paper, make sure you bind your scrap book effectively. It's up to you!

Organize your scrap book into the following sections: candidates, election issues, political cartoons, editorials, political advertisements, debates, and the winner. This last section will remain blank until after the elections in November. You may use section dividers and/or tabs to identify the various sections in your scrap book.

Look at the aforementioned information you have gathered and divide it into the categories. Creatively and artistically organize the various articles and other information in your scrap book. You may use clip art or headlines and other artwork gathered from newspapers and other sources to make your scrap book as visually appealing as possible.



Analyzing Your Information:

You must have the following written analysis for each section of your scrap book: candidates: a brief biographical summary of each candidate; election issues: pick 5 articles from 5 different issues and write a three paragraph summary for each article; political cartoons: pick 5 political cartoons and write a statement explaining the cartoonist's viewpoint; political advertisements: pick 5 advertisements and write a statement agreeing or disagreeing with its content; debates: watch at least one televised debate and write an editorial about which candidate you felt was more convincing in their arguments; and the winner section: write a brief summary of the winner's acceptance speech. Include your written analysis in the appropriate section in your scrap book.

Extension Activity:

Hold a presidential debate on the major campaign issues and have students use their scrap books as a resource during the debate.

Evaluation:

You will be graded on the following aspects of this assignment: written analysis, organization, creativity, and depth/completeness.



Election 2008: Student Mock Election Instructions

Curriculum and Instruction, Social Sciences, will be conducting a District-wide student mock presidential election. Students will be able to vote for their favorite presidential candidate through the Internet. District-wide voting results will be announced on or about November 5, 2008.

In order to participate in Miami-Dade County Public Schools' 2008 Student Mock Presidential Election, teachers will have to allow each student to vote individually using a computer with Internet access. Specific instructions about the mock election along with the specific web link will be forwarded to schools via the Weekly Briefing Communication System sometime during October 2008. Schools will have a one-week opportunity to allow students to vote. Teachers and students should also keep in mind the following important facts regarding the student mock election:

- Results will be reported for the District as a whole as well as by totals for elementary, middle, and senior high schools.
- Individual school results WILL NOT be reported.
- ONLY students who vote via the Internet will be counted in the District-wide election. If teachers have difficulty accessing the Internet with their students, they are encouraged to run their own student mock election and inform their classes of the results. This will ensure participation by all students.
- Teachers are encouraged to replicate the real voting process as much as possible in order to provide students with an authentic learning experience. Activities should include: holding a mock-voter registration, requiring students to have their voter registration card in order to vote, and/or simply pointing out the difference between the mock election process and the actual voting process.



Election 2008: Cross Curricular Connections

Curriculum and Instruction has created the following list of learning activities for the presidential election 2008 that are applicable to Language Arts/Reading, Mathematics, and Science. Social studies teachers are encouraged to share this list with the appropriate teachers.

Language Arts/Reading:

- Think of one of the major campaign issues that have been shaping the presidential debate (e.g., the war in Iraq, health care, the economy) and research each candidate's stance on the issue. Decide who you agree with most and write a persuasive speech to try to convince the reader that your candidate has the best plan to solve or address the issue at hand.
- Write a poem, rap, song, or create a slogan and advertising campaign that encourages people to exercise their right to vote.
- Create a pamphlet about your favorite U.S. presidential candidate's views on major election issues.
- Watch one of the presidential debates that is aired on television. While watching the debate, analyze each candidate's responses in terms of effective public speaking and clarity in responses. Decide which candidate "won" the debate and write an expository essay describing why you think said candidate won that particular debate.
- Read several different media sources and their reports about the presidential election campaign of 2008. You may want to read articles from the *New York Times*, *the Washington Post*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*, and/or *The Miami Herald*. Compare and contrast the media sources in terms of objectivity. Prepare an oral report to be delivered in class explaining your findings. Be specific in referencing each source and how you determined whether you found it objective or not.



Mathematics:

Senior High School:

Activity I: Examine an election issue relevant to my life.

We Can Make A Difference

Student teams will choose and research an election issue that directly affects their life. The students will poll their classmates to determine the views on this issue. The teams will use this data to prepare a profile for the class for their own final analysis.

Student teams will prepare a presentation that describes the issue and gives facts and data to support their stand on the issue. After the presentation the student teams will poll the class again and prepare a report with graphics that analyze student opinions using tables, charts, and graphs.

Activity II: Predicting the Outcome of the 2008 Presidential Election

On The Road to Find Out

Students will collect presidential poll data from across the country, analyze the significance of the data, and communicate their predictions of the winner of the 2008 Presidential election based on the analysis of the data collected. Using the Internet, students will collect and record projected electoral voting data in table format. Data can be found on sites such as www.electoralvote.com, <http://www.gallup.com/tag/Gallup%2bDaily.aspx> or www.electoralvote.com and collected on a daily basis. Using this data, students create a scatter plot of the data (day, projected # of votes) or (day, percentage of votes) for each candidate, determine the line of best fit, and discuss any trends in the data related to age, gender, and ethnic identity.

Using this analysis, the students will predict the winner of the 2008 Presidential election. Students can create a podcast, video, or PowerPoint presentation that includes the mathematical analysis leading to their prediction. Tables, graphs, calculations, and predictions should be included in this presentation.



Middle School:

Activity #1 How old are they?

Ask the students to use the Internet or other resources to figure out how old each president was when he was inaugurated. Have each student create a histogram to show the results of their research.

Order and or group the ages in intervals of 5 (i.e. 35 – 39, 40 – 44) and create a pie chart showing the percentages of each interval.

Activity #2 Compare the Candidates

Create a chart which compares the two major candidates running for President of the United States. Write down how they are alike and how they are different. This could be their views about issues as well as their backgrounds. Transfer this information to a Venn Diagram.

Additional Math Activities for all levels:

Have students conduct polls/surveys about various presidential election 2008 issues and candidates (e.g., how many students support John McCain, how many students support Barack Obama, what they think the most important issues influencing the election). Tabulate the results and ask students to display the data that they have gathered in graph form (e.g., a pie chart, bar graph, line graph).

Have students track each candidate's travel for one week on an outline map of the United States. Inform the students that they are to plot points as to where the candidates have campaigned throughout the week and using the scale on the map, calculate the total number of mileage each candidate traveled.



Science

1. Read the following Internet articles: related to energy, the environment, and the U.S. space policy.
 - Simberg, R. *How Clinton, Obama and McCain Could Change U.S. Space Policy*. Geek the Vote guest Analysis. Popular Mechanics, 1-3. (http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/air_space/4260504.html)
 - Whittington, M. *McCain vs. Barack Obama on the Issues*. Associated Content, 1-2. (http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/804207/john_mccain_vs_barack_obama_on_the.html?cat=62)
 - Harnden, T. *John McCain and Barack Obama Trade Barbs on Big Oil*. (<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newsttopics/uselection2008/barackobama/2511944/John-McCain-and-Barack-Obama-trade-barbs-on-Big-Oil.html>)
2. Conduct a debate on the issues of the U.S. space policy, the environment, and energy discussed in the articles.
 - Alternative Fuels and Vehicles (AFV) Activities (<http://www.nef1.org/ftf/sa.html>)
3. You are the Marketing Director for your company's Alternate Fuels and Vehicles (AFV) program. Create a marketing brochure (or a commercial or magazine ad) on the benefits of AFVs. Include information about their reduced emissions, cost savings, safety factors, availability and history/track record. Create a similar promotional piece addressing the benefits of the alternative fuel you are interested in. (<http://www.nef1.org/ftf/sa.html>)
4. Create a power point presentation, or video that teaches about AFVs. (<http://www.nef1.org/ftf/sa.html>)



5. Have students contact various automobile manufacturers or dealerships to determine what alternative fuel vehicles they now have in production and/or their plans for future production. Have students share the information and determine which vehicle they would purchase. A class panel presentation would enable the students to present and promote the vehicle of their choice.
(<http://www.nef1.org/ftf/sa.html>)
6. Lab Activity - The Wolf Man's Ghostly Graveyard: All Energy is Not Equal
(<http://www.miamisci.org/af/sln/wolfman/equalenergy.html>)
7. Lab Activity: Greenhouse Effect Lab Activity
(<http://science.dadeschools.net> - Earth Space Essential Labs)
8. Lab Activity: Weight Mass Relationship (<http://science.dadeschools.net> - Essential Labs- Grade 7)
9. Lab Activity: Solar System Distance Scale Model
(<http://science.dadeschools.net> - Essential Labs – Grade 6)
10. Activity: Phoenix Mars Mission
(http://phoenix.lpl.arizona.edu/edu_robotics_lessons.php)
11. The Martian Sun- Times (<http://science.dadeschools.net> - Essential Labs – Grade 8)



Election 2008: School- Wide Activities

Following is a list of ideas that can be used to organize school wide educational activities for the upcoming presidential election season.

- Work with the media center, television production department, or whomever is in charge of your school's morning announcements to provide a daily election update news segment during your school's morning announcements.
- Organize a school-wide election debate where students representing each major presidential and vice-presidential candidate discuss and debate the issues that are shaping the election. Hold the debate in the school auditorium and invite other classes to view the debate and ask the student representatives questions about the candidate's proposed policies and solutions to problems.
- Organize a poster contest in your school to encourage voter participation. Set a deadline for submitting the posters and organize a group of teachers to be the judges of the contest. Identify first, second, third place winners, as well as students deserving honorable mention and show the posters on the morning announcements with the student winners.
- Organize a homeroom door decorating contest about the 2008 presidential. The decorations should be of an informative nature and include information about the issues, not endorsing any particular candidate.
- Organize a political cartoon drawing contest about the 2008 presidential election. Set a deadline for submitting the cartoons and organize a group of teachers to be the judges of the contest. Identify first, second, third place winners, as well as students deserving honorable mention and show the cartoons on the morning announcements with the student winners.



Election 2008: Useful Internet Resources

<http://www.johnmccain.com/?s=gopconv> The official website of John McCain's 2008 campaign for president.

<http://www.barackobama.com/index.php> The official website of Barack Obama's 2008 campaign for president.

<http://www.biography.com/featured-biography/john-mccain/index.jsp>
Biography.com's biography about John McCain.

<http://www.biography.com/featured-biography/barack-obama/index.jsp>
Biography.com's biography about Barack Obama

<http://uspolitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/issues.html> A quick look at the most important issues shaping the 2008 presidential elections.

<http://www.democrats.org/index.html> The Democratic Party's official website.

<http://www.gopconvention2008.com/default.aspx> The Republican Party's official website.

<http://www.factcheck.org/> A nonpartisan, nonprofit, "consumer advocate" for voters that aims to reduce the level of deception and confusion in U.S. politics. The factual accuracy of what is said by major U.S. political players in the form of TV ads, debates, speeches, interviews, and news releases is monitored.

<http://online.wsj.com/public/page/election2008.html> The *Wall Street Journal's* official 2008 election coverage website.

<http://politics.nytimes.com/election-guide/2008/index.html> The *New York Times'* official 2008 election coverage website.

http://www.miamiherald.com/political_currents/ The *Miami Herald's* official 2008 election coverage website.



http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/scholasticNews.jsp?FromBrowseMod=true&Ns=Pub_Date_Sort|1&CurrPage=scholasticNews.jsp&TopicValue=Scholastic%20News Scholastic News' website- click on Campaign Coverage" for the latest, very kid friendly, news about the 2008 Presidential Election Campaign.

http://www.crf-usa.org/election_central/election_central.htm Election Central: Resource to help teacher and students explore the electoral process past and present.

<http://www.kidsvotingusa.org/> A national leader in civic education, **Kids Voting USA® (KVUSA)** gets students involved and ready to be educated, engaged citizens. Students learn about democracy through a combination of classroom activities, an authentic voting experience and family dialogue.

<http://www.pollingreport.com/> Polling Report.com is an independent, non-partisan resource, about trends in American public opinion.

<http://www.vicepresidents.com/> Vice Presidents.com- Everything you ever wanted to know about vice presidents and the vice presidency.

<http://www.americanpresident.org> American President.org- Non-partisan resource on the history and function of the American presidency.

<http://bensguide.gpo.com/> Ben's Guide to Government- Excellent K-12 site for U.S. Government classroom ideas.

<http://www.c-span.org> C-Span's background information on Election 2008.

http://www.crt-sua.org/election_central Election Central- Resource to help teachers and student explore the electoral process past and present.



The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida, adheres to a policy of nondiscrimination in employment and educational programs/activities and programs/activities receiving Federal financial assistance from the Department of Education, and strives affirmatively to provide equal opportunity for all as required by:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 - prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender.

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (ADEA), as amended - prohibits discrimination on the basis of age with respect to individuals who are at least 40.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963, as amended - prohibits sex discrimination in payment of wages to women and men performing substantially equal work in the same establishment.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 - prohibits discrimination against the disabled.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) - prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in employment, public service, public accommodations and telecommunications.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) - requires covered employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical reasons.

The Pregnancy Discrimination Act of 1978 - prohibits discrimination in employment on the basis of pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions.

Florida Educational Equity Act (FEEA) - prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, gender, national origin, marital status, or handicap against a student or employee.

Florida Civil Rights Act of 1992 - secures for all individuals within the state freedom from discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, or marital status.

School Board Rules 6Gx13- 4A-1.01, 6Gx13- 4A-1.32, and 6Gx13- 5D-1.10 - prohibit harassment and/or discrimination against a student or employee on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, ethnic or national origin, political beliefs, marital status, age, sexual orientation, social and family background, linguistic preference, pregnancy, or disability.

Veterans are provided re-employment rights in accordance with P.L. 93-508 (Federal Law) and Section 295.07 (Florida Statutes), which stipulate categorical preferences for employment.

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