



GROW A VOTER CURRICULUM



CIVICS/GOVERNMENT UNIT



#ALLINFORVOTING

AMAZON
STUDIOS

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CIVICS/GOVERNMENT UNIT: FAIR AND FREE ELECTIONS - ENDING VOTING SUPPRESSION

**“WHAT IS DEMOCRACY? DEMOCRACY IS A
SYSTEM IN WHICH THE VOTERS CHOOSE THE PEOPLE
THAT GOVERN THEM.”**

- FRANCES FOX PIVEN, *ALL IN: THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY*

EDUCATOR OVERVIEW

The United States was founded on the idea of striving towards a “more perfect union,” with democratic principles that rely on fair and free elections that enable voters to choose their governing representatives. Throughout our history groups of citizens have struggled and fought to expand the right to vote beyond the initial 6% of the population, white, land-owning men to whom it was first granted. Even as steps towards progress were achieved, groups in power have responded with fear and worked to maintain their power by limiting or suppressing the votes of those who they believe will threaten their positions of power.

In this unit, students will engage with modern electoral politics to understand what happened with regard to voter suppression since the 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* Supreme Court decision. The decision dramatically reduced the power of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, in part by removing the “preclearance” condition that required states and districts with records of discriminatory voting practices to undergo federal review before changing voting policies. Immediately after the Shelby decision and since that time, a rash of voter suppression tactics emerged in states across the country. **ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy** highlights the uptick of restrictions that sprung up within minutes of the decision delving into the case of Georgia and demonstrating how voter suppression threw doubt on the outcome of the 2018 gubernatorial election.

At this moment in time, voter restrictions are having powerful effects to the detriment of our democracy. Acknowledging this reality is not a partisan effort to assign blame or favor, rather it enables students to examine current events as a case study, and to work towards free, fair, and safe elections for all. The Brennan Center, a non-partisan law and policy institute, describes the modern history of gerrymandering (one type of voter suppression) in this way:

“Over the past decade, (gerrymandering has) led to maps that lock in a comfortable majority of seats for one side, even when voters are split evenly between the two parties. The result is election outcomes that don’t reflect what voters want, uncompetitive races that encourage politicians to cater to the extremes, and, too often, under-representation of communities of color.”⁴⁰

This civics unit is designed to engage students in learning about voter suppression tactics in order to be able to critically evaluate the voting structures and policies in their home communities. They will explore non-partisan reporting, analyze population data, and reflect on their own values with regard to voting.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS



- ★ What are the tactics of voter suppression, and how do they change the outcomes of elections?
- ★ Who benefits from voter suppression tactics, and who is excluded?
- ★ What laws, policies, and legislation protect voters and voting rights?
- ★ How can every person living in the United States take part in ensuring free and fair elections?

LESSON ONE



MODERN TACTICS OF VOTER SUPPRESSION

"ONCE YOU STRIP SOMEONE THEIR ACCESS OF BEING ABLE TO VOTE
IT TAKES AWAY **THEIR ROLE WITHIN OUR DEMOCRACY.**"

- JAYLA ALLEN, *ALL IN: THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY*




ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- ★ What are the tactics of voter suppression, and how do they change the outcomes of elections?

OVERVIEW

Fair elections are the cornerstone of democracy, but throughout our history we have witnessed voter suppression tactics and strategies that are designed to prevent specific groups of people from voting. Voter suppression has been used to exclude groups of voters based on racial/ethnic background, socio-economic standing, party affiliation, and on specific causes and issues.

In this lesson, students will learn about current tactics of voter suppression that have emerged in states across the country since the 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* decision.

Look for the  designating a media literacy focused exercise.



Learning Objectives

Students will:

- ★ Define voter suppression and describe how it is used to influence election outcomes
- ★ Analyze specific voter suppression tactics to understand how they work and who they benefit
- ★ Propose methods to critically evaluate voting rules and regulations to assess their potential for voter suppression



Materials

- ★ Film Clip
- ★ Voter Suppression Note Catcher Handout
- ★ Film Clip Transcript



Length

Two 50-minutes class periods

LESSON ACTIVITIES



1. OPENING

In person: use a "cross the line" exercise, ask students to line up side by side behind a line of tape or other marker of separation in the classroom, and step forward if they agree with or support the statements.

Online: use a thumbs up or thumbs down to complete the exercise.

After you read each of the following statements aloud, have students show whether they **support** or **agree** or **don't support** or **disagree** with the statement. Once they have chosen their side, have one or two students share why they chose to stand where they did.

Cross the line statements:

- ★ Voting should be required of all citizens in every election
- ★ Voting is a right all citizens should have
- ★ Voting is a privilege that citizens should earn
- ★ There should be no limitations on who is allowed to vote
- ★ There are reasonable limitations to who should be allowed to vote
- ★ People under age 18 should be allowed to vote

After completing the exercise, have students discuss the following questions:

- ★ Were you surprised by any of your peers' or your own answers?
- ★ What do you think about the rules and requirements you are aware of in the country or your state that dictate the right to vote?
- ★ How do you decide what voting rules and regulations are reasonable or unreasonable?

2. WATCH FILM CLIPS

Distribute the **Voter Suppression Note Catcher** handout and the clip transcripts. Ask students to read through the questions before showing the clip(s). The note catcher asks students to record the suppression tactics in use in various states, who supports or promotes the tactic, and who it excludes.

Explain the context of the film clip:

The 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* Supreme Court decision lifted the burden of federal "preclearance," as defined in the 1965 Voting Rights Act. Preclearance required certain counties and states to receive federal approval in order to enact any new voting rules that might limit specific groups' access to the right to vote.

Watch the clips:

★ **Read Film Clip Transcript One or access via [Amazon Prime](#)**
timecodes 58:06-59:51 (1:45 minutes)

This clip explains the voter suppression tactic gerrymandering

Begin: Center Frame Graphic "Shelby County, Georgia"

End: "We didn't do anything wrong. The era of racism is over."

★ **Film Clip (free): [Voter suppression post-Shelby](#) (5:51 minutes)**

*This clip describes voter suppression tactics that emerged nationally after the *Shelby County v. Holder* decision.*

After watching the clip(s) or reading the transcript, offer students a few minutes to complete their note catchers. Discuss students' reactions to the clip(s), and answer any questions that come up.



Media Literacy Skills-Building:

- ★ Discuss the techniques the filmmakers used to represent the effects of the *Shelby County v. Holder* decision across the country. What types of footage did they use? What music or other sounds did you hear?
- ★ What emotions did this clip evoke? How might those emotions influence how you understand the clip?
- ★ How do you think people from different political, racial, class, or other perspectives might view this clip differently?

3. SMALL GROUP WORK: ANALYZING THE TACTICS OF VOTER SUPPRESSION

Split students into small groups to do an analysis of the tactics introduced by these two film clips. Have one student record and be prepared to report out. Remind students that this is not a comprehensive list of voter suppression tactics.

Each group will use the recommended resources (which can be uploaded to a shared class drive, or printed out), or credible⁴¹ resources of their own, to analyze each tactic using the following:



CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

- ★ Who supports the change?
- ★ What evidence is presented to support the tactic's implementation?
What is your assessment of that evidence?
- ★ Who will be excluded by the new rule?
- ★ Who will benefit from it?
- ★ How might the tactic change the outcome of elections?

Restoring Voting Rights for Returning Citizens:

There is a variable patchwork of legislation across states that prevents approximately 5.85 million Americans with felony (and in several states misdemeanor) convictions from voting. Three states, Iowa, Kentucky, and West Virginia, permanently disenfranchise anyone with a felony conviction. Only Maine and Vermont allow returning citizens who have completed their sentences to vote. This is legally referred to as felony disenfranchisement. Work is underway, largely led by system impacted communities, to restore the right to vote to those who have completed their sentences.

www.sentencingproject.org/issues/felony-disenfranchisement

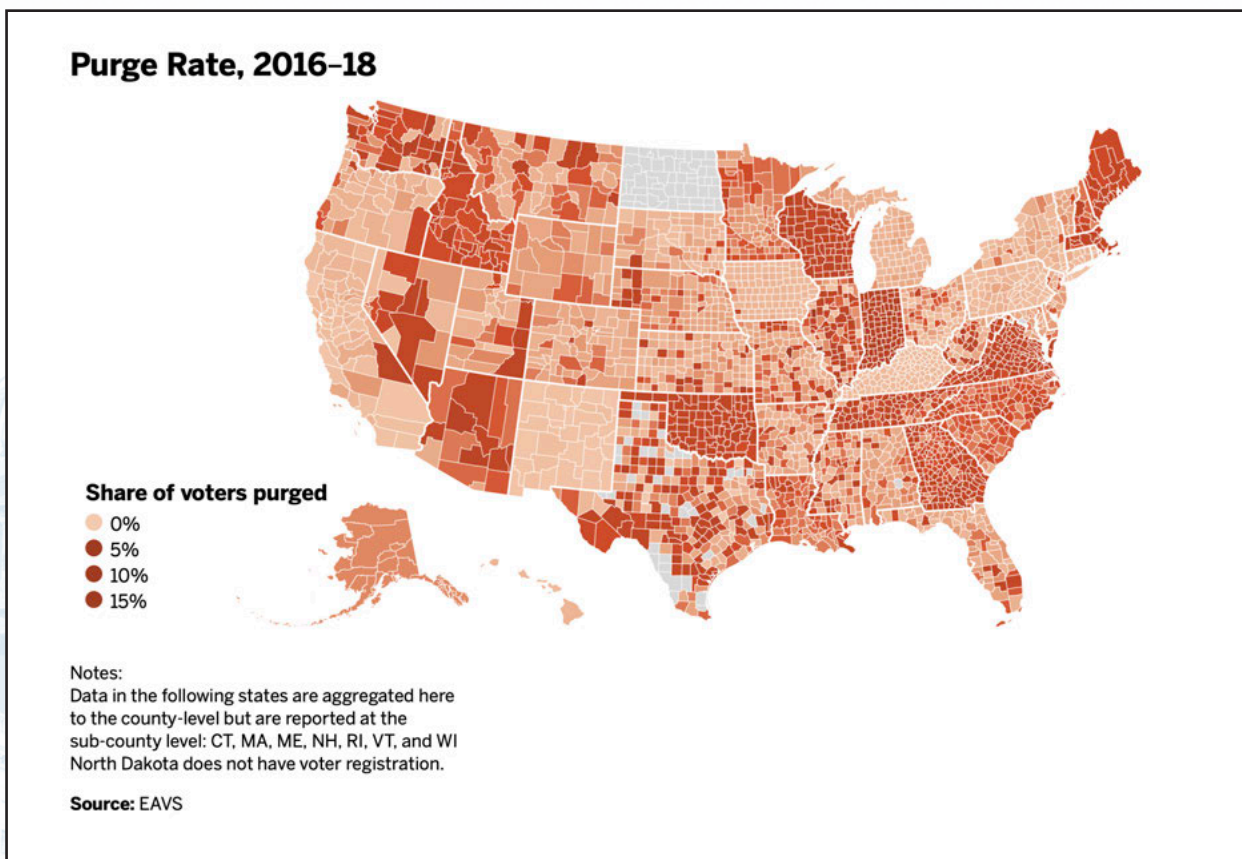
Desmond Meade and the [Florida Rights Restoration Coalition](#), featured in the film, organized to restore the right to vote for returning citizens in Florida.

Gerrymandering:

Every 10 years, states redraw district lines based on population data gathered during the census. When conducted properly, district lines are redrawn to reflect population changes and racial diversity. However when states use redistricting as a political tool to manipulate the outcome of an election, this is called gerrymandering. www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/extreme-maps

Purging Rolls:

"Purging" refers to cleaning up state voting records as people move, die, or become ineligible to vote for other reasons. Voting purges are an often-flawed process and can prevent eligible voters from casting their ballots. The "use or lose it" laws in nine states are an example of this nefarious tactic:



*Students can use this interactive map at the county level to learn about voter purge rates in their own communities: www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/voter-purge-rates-remain-high-analysis-finds

Voter Identification (ID) Laws:

A policy whereby a voter must present one of a limited type of government-issued photo IDs to cast a regular ballot.

- ★ Thirty-six states have voter ID requirements at the polls
- ★ Seven states (KS, MS, TN, IN, WI, VI, GA) have strict photo ID laws where a voter is required to present a government issued photo ID (driver's license, state issued photo-ID) in order to vote. If a voter does not have the required identification, they are given a provisional ballot and the ballot will not be counted unless the voter returns within a set number of days to an elections office and shows the required ID. The number of days varies state-by-state.

www.fivethirtyeight.com/features/what-we-know-about-voter-id-laws

★ In the state of Texas, you can't use a student ID to vote, but you can use a gun license.

★ Many Native Americans who live on reservations use PO boxes for their mailing addresses, so have a hard time getting government-issue IDs.

Inflexible Voting Rules/Closing Precincts:

Raising barriers to voting, such as adhering to strict hours during the work day, or closing voting precincts in certain neighborhoods is a proven method of deterring voters. For those in states without early or mail-in voting, people like wage workers, family care takers, and others with strict schedules may not be able to take time off during the work week to vote. In neighborhoods and precincts where polling places close, voters may lack time, resources, or transportation to reach open precincts.

www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2018/09/04/polling-places-remain-a-target-ahead-of-november-elections

4. CLOSING

Each of the small groups will report out the answers to their critical thinking questions about the voter suppression tactic they studied.

After hearing all of their reports, discuss as a large group:

- ★ How does what you learned influence your thinking about elections?
- ★ Thinking back to the opening 'cross the line' exercise, have any of your ideas changed about whether and how the right to vote should be codified or limited?
- ★ If new voting rules are proposed in your area, what questions and sources of information will you use to assess whether they are voter suppression tactics?

OPTIONAL ASSESSMENT EXERCISE/HOMEWORK

1. INVESTIGATING MISINFORMATION

Students will use the critical thinking questions from their tactic exercise to analyze the August, 2020 misinformation that was spread to sow doubt and create controversy around mail-in voting for the 2020 Presidential election. They will research whether and how limiting mail-in voting might affect election outcomes, and write an argument in favor of or against limiting mail-in voting.



CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

- ★ Who supports the change?
- ★ What evidence is presented to support the tactic's implementation?
- ★ Who will be excluded by the new rule?
- ★ Who will benefit from it?
- ★ How might the tactic change the outcome of elections?

Students might start from one of these articles, or another credible source, about the controversy:

- ★ <https://www.npr.org/2020/06/04/864899178/why-is-voting-by-mail-suddenly-controversial-heres-what-you-need-to-know>
- ★ <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2020-election/coronavirus-has-ignited-battle-over-voting-mY-mail-here-s-n1178531>



2. MEDIA LITERACY EXERCISE

Have students watch the full episode from [John Oliver's Last Week Tonight](#) episode about gerrymandering (runtime 19:33).

Respond to the following prompts:

- ★ Compare and contrast the messages from the gerrymandering clip from the film, which excerpts the John Oliver episode, and the episode itself.
- ★ In your own words, describe gerrymandering and its impact on the American system of elections.
- ★ Describe and assess the solutions to gerrymandering described in the film and/or episode, or propose a solution of your own.

VOTER SUPPRESSION NOTE CATCHER

As you watch, or after watching the film clip, answer the following questions:

For each of the states mentioned in the clip, write down the change in voting rules, who supported it, and who was affected by it:

Texas:

New Hampshire:

North Dakota:

Wisconsin:

Ohio:

Georgia:



MEDIA LITERACY THINKING

- ★ Were there any perspectives you don't feel were appropriately heard or represented in this clip?
- ★ How might you go about investigating those different perspectives?

TRANSCRIPT CLIP ONE

GERRYMANDERING

Shelby County, Alabama

ARI BERMAN:

Shelby County, Alabama. There was an election there in which the districts were redrawn so that the only African American city council member lost his race. Voter suppression and gerrymandering are two sides of the same coin:

efforts by politicians in power to try to manipulate the process to benefit themselves at the expense of others.

JOHN OLIVER:

Gerrymandering is a real problem. It's the practice of drawing voting districts in a way that creates unfair advantages for whoever happens to be drawing the lines.

A.E. DICK HOWARD

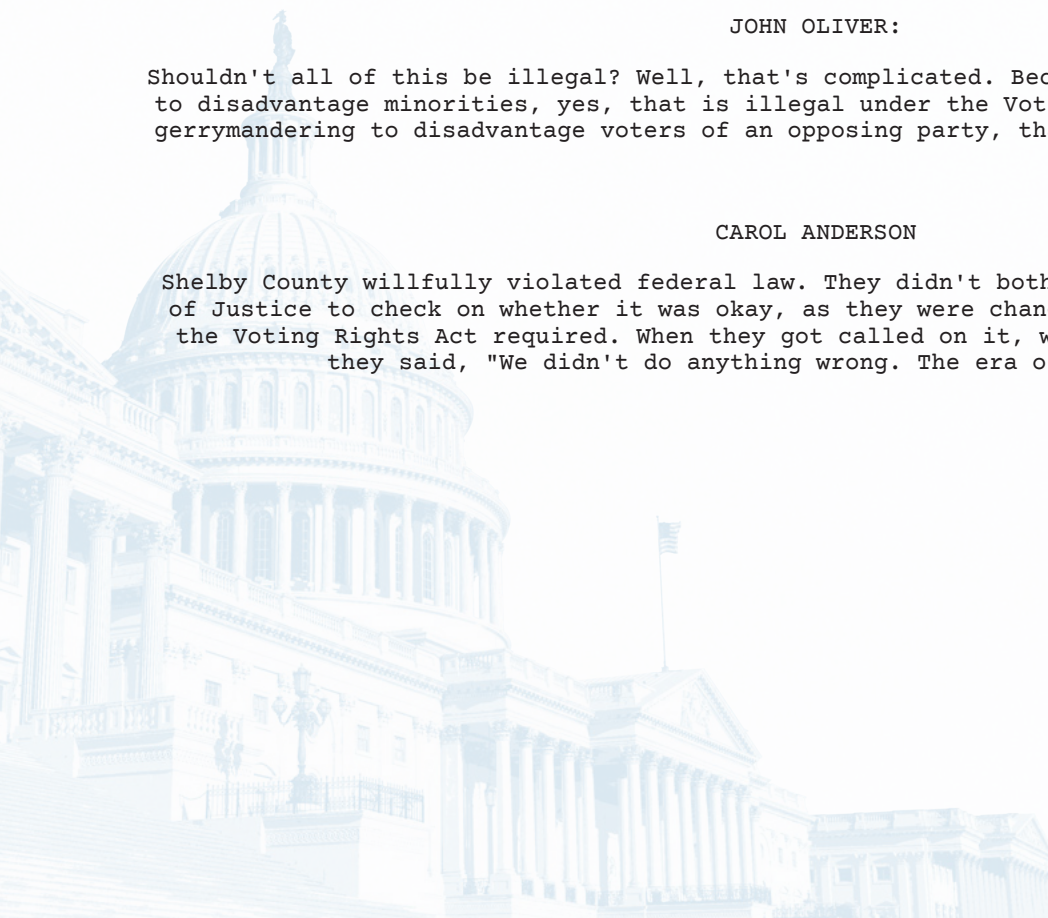
In the age of computers, you can gerrymander with scientific precision. You can run in and out of alleys and up and down streets, and carefully include and exclude whichever voters you want in one district and not in another.

JOHN OLIVER:

Shouldn't all of this be illegal? Well, that's complicated. Because if you are gerrymandering to disadvantage minorities, yes, that is illegal under the Voting Rights Act. But if you are gerrymandering to disadvantage voters of an opposing party, that has generally been allowed.

CAROL ANDERSON

Shelby County willfully violated federal law. They didn't bother to go up to the Department of Justice to check on whether it was okay, as they were changing the voting boundaries as the Voting Rights Act required. When they got called on it, when they got sued (chuckles) they said, "We didn't do anything wrong. The era of racism is over."



TRANSCRIPT CLIP TWO

VOTER SUPPRESSION POST-SHELBY

New voting laws after Shelby County v. Holder

CAROL ANDERSON:

Texas took the lead on this one. It spread like wildfire. So you're seeing them in Pennsylvania. You're seeing them in Kansas. You're seeing them in Wisconsin. You're seeing them in Ohio.

NEWSWOMAN:

Nine more states are enforcing new laws requiring eligible voters to present a government-issued photo I.D. at the polls.

HANS VON SPAKOVSKY:

Overwhelming majority of Americans, regardless of their political views and regardless of their race or ethnicity, support voter I.D. laws. This is not Jim Crow. This is not a police dog. This is not a fire hose.

STACEY ABRAMS:

When you restrict access to the right to vote by creating a narrow set of I.D.'s that can be used, it is creating blocks to people being able to participate. They try to make it seem rational and facially neutral, racially neutral, but it's not.

SEAN YOUNG:

We had voters who were born in the Jim Crow South who had no birth certificates because white hospitals would not allow them to give birth in their facilities.

GLADYS HARRIS:

I had my Social Security card, my To Go Pass. I had my UnitedHealthcare. I had my red, white and blue card, and I had my Ford card. And that still wasn't enough to vote.

ARI BERMAN:

About 21 million Americans don't have strict forms of government-issued I.D. That works out to about 10 percent of the electorate.

ERIC HOLDER:

You look at Texas. If you have a state-issued photo I.D. that says you're allowed to carry a concealed weapon that's sufficient to allow you to vote. If, however, you have a state-issued photo I.D. that says you're a student at the University of Texas, that's insufficient.

MICHAEL PARSONS:

Young people in America, they could have the most power of any electoral bloc in the country. If you take out one or two campuses, you can swing an election. So that's exactly what New Hampshire Republicans decided to do.

JAYLA ALLEN:

Studies will show that if you can get young adults to vote between the ages of 18 and 24, they're more likely to vote going further into their adulthood. Once you strip someone their access of being able to vote, it takes away their role within our democracy.

STACEY ABRAMS:

Voter suppression has often targeted communities that are seen as non-normative. And we saw this come into sharp relief in North Dakota, where a law that required a residential address on driver's licenses seemed benign, but the reality was that, for those communities, getting a residential address on a reservation required that the state or local government grant that to you, and it didn't happen.

DJ SEMANS:

A majority of Indian country does not have physical addresses. They use post office boxes. It became very evident that the law was created to suppress the Native American vote.

BARB SEMANS:

The only way to get recognition is to vote. And that's what it is, a matter of survival.

ARI BERMAN:

In Wisconsin, they put a new voter I.D. law in effect in the run-up to the 2016 election.

JOURNALIST:

A lot of Republicans, since 1984, in the presidential races have not been able to win in Wisconsin. Why would it be any different for a Ted Cruz or a Donald Trump?

POLITICIAN:

Well, I think Hillary Clinton is about the weakest candidate the Democrats have ever put up, and now we have photo I.D. And I think photo I.D. is gonna make a little bit of a difference as well.

ARI BERMAN:

Up to 23,000 people were blocked or deterred from voting. And Donald Trump only won the state of Wisconsin by just over 22,000 votes. So, this one restriction in Wisconsin alone, had a huge impact on Donald Trump becoming the next president of the United States.

DAVID PEPPER:

Ohio has become, sadly, the leader in creating certain types of voter suppression that other states have followed. And there's no bigger example of that than purging. There is certainly need to update your voting rolls. People pass away. People move. There also are some states that are really smart about this. Things like automatic voter registration. But Ohio does the exact opposite. Ohio's had a purging process where, if you don't vote in several elections and you don't respond to a postcard, you're knocked off the rolls.

NEWSMAN TO CAMERA:

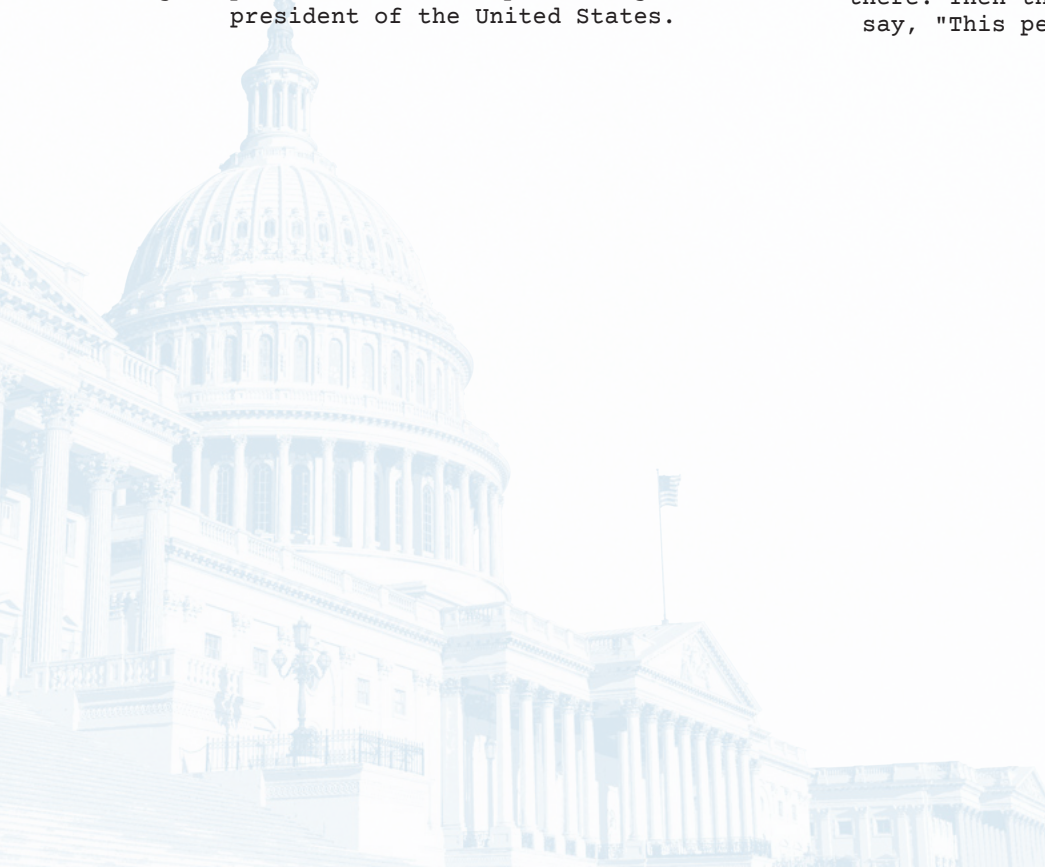
When it comes to the right to vote, Ohio is a "use it or lose it" state.

JASON AUBRY

In a split five-to-four decision, the Supreme Court ruled that, in Ohio, you can be dropped from the voter rolls if you do not vote for about six years and do not respond to a card the state sends you in the mail.

MARCIA FUDGE:

They send you a postcard to your house. It really does look like a piece of junk mail. If you don't send it back, they assume you're not there. Then they purge you from the roll. They say, "This person didn't send it back. We're gonna drop them."



LESSON TWO



REFORMS TO ADDRESS VOTER SUPPRESSION

"THE DESIRE TO KEEP CERTAIN PEOPLE AWAY FROM THE POLLS, IT'S A REALITY THAT WE HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO CONFRONT. BUT **UNLESS WE CONFRONT THAT REALITY AND TAKE ACTIONS ON THAT REALITY WE WON'T MAKE THE PROGRESS THAT WE ALL WANT TO MAKE IN THIS COUNTRY.**"

- ERIC HOLDER, FORMER U.S. ATTORNEY GENERAL, *ALL IN: THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY*



ESSENTIAL QUESTION


★ What laws, policies, and legislation can be enacted to protect voting rights?

OVERVIEW

The struggle for fair and free elections has a long history in the United States, and has had many advocates and supporters, from those individuals who insist on their voting rights at the polls to legislation and court decisions that protect voting rights.

In this lesson, students will use Georgia's 2018 gubernatorial election as a case study to learn about election structure and policies. Students will analyze proposed reforms that would protect voters from suppression tactics, and make recommendations for what would have made a more fair election. Older students will demonstrate their understanding by exploring and assessing the election system in their own state and voting districts.

**Note: The final lesson in this series, "Every Vote Matters" will focus on community organizing and advocacy work that is happening to encourage voter participation.*

Look for the  designating a media literacy focused exercise.



Learning Objectives

Students will:

- ★ Describe the ways in which elections are organized
- ★ Articulate and assess proposed policies, laws, and legislation that protect the right to vote
- ★ Summarize the election structure and voting rules in their home communities
- ★ Draft an argument that supports or critiques the electoral process in their home communities



Materials

- ★ Film Clip
- ★ Handouts:
 - ★ Address Voter Suppression Note Catcher
 - ★ Film Clip Transcript
 - ★ Brennan Center Election Reforms Proposals



Length

One, 50-minutes class period with optional homework or second day project.



ACTIVITIES

1. OPENING THINK-PAIR-SHARE EXERCISE

Have students discuss the following questions in small groups or pairs (in person), and ask a few students to share their answers with the class:

- ★ What do you know about how elections are run? Who is in charge? Who are the decision-makers?

2. MINI-LECTURE- WHO DETERMINES ELECTION LAWS?

Note: If you did not complete the US History Unit, it may be helpful to go back to **We the People: The Constitution, The State, and the Right to Vote lesson to review why the founders left the time, manner, and place of elections up to state control.*

Depending on your class familiarity with voting and elections, walk through the voting and election terms at [USA.gov](https://www.usa.gov/elections).⁴³

Read aloud this explanation aloud:

Federal elections are administered by state and local governments, although the specifics of how elections are conducted differ between the states. The Constitution and laws of the United States grant the states wide latitude in how they administer elections.⁴⁴

The Constitution's "Elections Clause," Article 1, Section 4, states that the federal government administers federal elections on a schedule of every four years for President, and every two years for Congress. The clause grants state legislatures the right to determine the time, manner, and place of elections, as well as their own schedules for elections of governors, state legislatures, and all other elected positions. However, Congress does have the right to preempt state laws with federal requirements, such as establishing a single national voting day, and creating limits on campaign donations.

The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution and the 1965 Voting Rights Act protect voting rights for US citizens over the age of 18, and bar states from placing undue burden on voters. As represented in **ALL IN**, however, states and districts interpret and codify those voting rights in different ways that have enabled voter suppression to take place.⁴⁵

3. WATCH FILM CLIP

Distribute the **Election Day in Georgia Note Catcher** and have students read through the questions before watching the clip. Distribute the film clip transcript if desired.

- ★ **Film Clip (free):** [Election Day in Georgia \(4:06 minutes\)](#)

This film clip includes press coverage and commentary about the day of the 2018 Georgia gubernatorial elections.

Group Discussion:

- ★ What was suspicious, or clearly wrong about this election?
- ★ Which voters had the most difficult time voting?
- ★ Brian Kemp was both the candidate, and the Secretary of State in charge of elections. Discuss why that combination is problematic.



MEDIA LITERACY THINKING

- ★ What is the main message you think the filmmakers want you to take from this clip?
- ★ As you watch the clip, was there anything that stood out to you as curious, or difficult to believe? If so, how might you go about learning more about the facts presented?
- ★ Whose perspectives and experiences were represented in the clip? If you were the filmmaker, who else would you have liked to interview, and why?

4. SMALL GROUP EXERCISE: HOW CAN WE PROTECT THE RIGHT TO VOTE?

In small groups, have students compare their notes from the Election Reforms Note Catcher and use them to generate a list of actions, laws, and policies that prevented Georgia voters from exercising their right to vote.

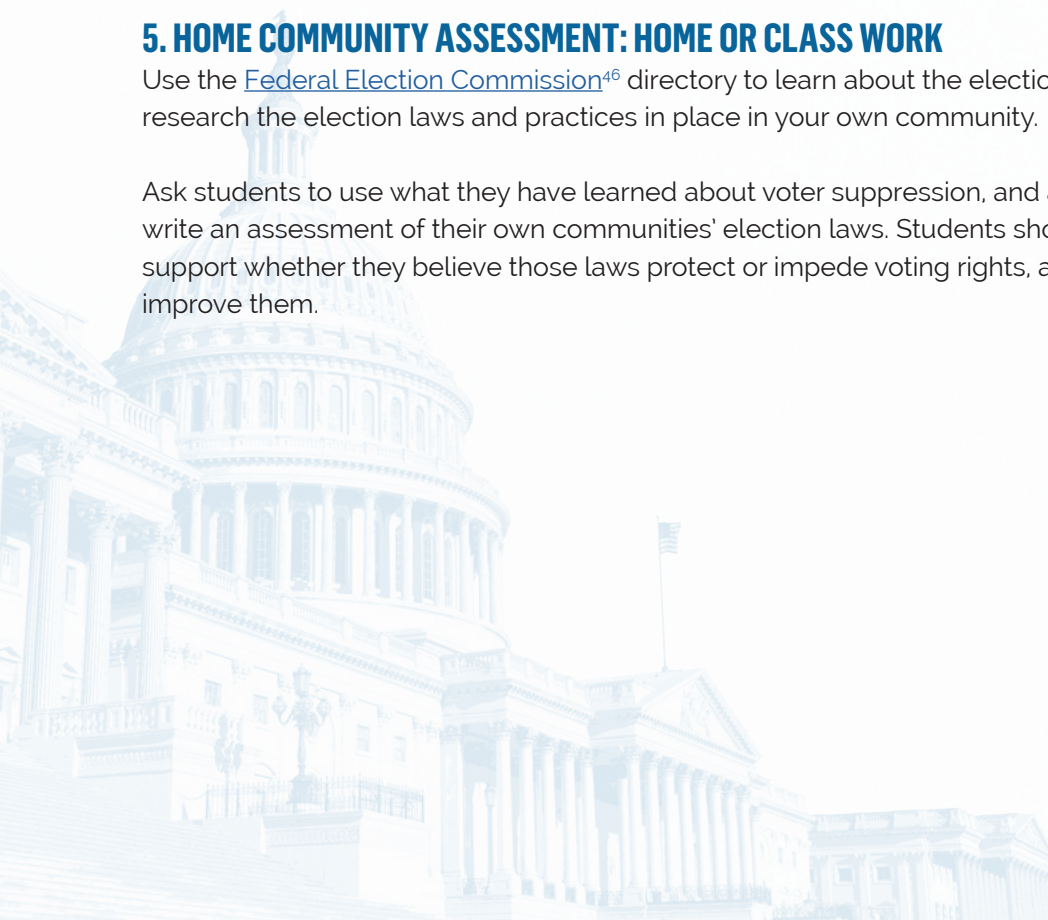
Distribute the **Brennan Center Election Reforms Proposals** Handout to the small groups and have them read the proposals out loud. Groups should then make recommendations for which of the proposals they believe would have protected voting rights in Georgia. Students can also propose their own rule changes if there are any missing from the list.

For older students who want more information, the full Brennan Center report, "[An Election Agenda for Candidates, Activists, and Legislators](#)" offers more details about each of the election reform proposals.⁴⁵

5. HOME COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT: HOME OR CLASS WORK

Use the [Federal Election Commission](#)⁴⁶ directory to learn about the election structures in your state, and research the election laws and practices in place in your own community.

Ask students to use what they have learned about voter suppression, and about protecting voter rights, to write an assessment of their own communities' election laws. Students should cite credible evidence to support whether they believe those laws protect or impede voting rights, and propose reforms that might improve them.



EXTENSIONS



Media Literacy Skills-Building

Students will compare and contrast election ads from Brian Kemp and Stacey Abrams:

- ★ Brian Kemp (runtime :30 seconds) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Q1cfjh6VfE>
- ★ Stacey Abrams (runtime :30 seconds) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W81NozyQ2uo>

Discuss/Reflect:

- ★ What is the main idea of each ad?
- ★ What kind of imagery did you see in each ad? What do the images tell you about the message and the audience?
- ★ Who do you think each ad appeals to, and why?
- ★ In what way, if any, does seeing the ads influence how you think about the election day clip?

The Electoral College (for high school students)

[Article II, Section I of the US Constitution](#) describes the Executive Branch of the government and includes the formation of the Electoral College's role in presidential elections.

For an extended learning assignment, students should examine the history of the Electoral College and the ongoing controversy surrounding it and write an argument citing credible evidence stating their own opinion about whether the United States should keep the Electoral College system, or abolish it in favor of the popular vote for President.



ELECTION DAY IN GEORGIA NOTE CATCHER

Write down all the actions, rules, or laws in the clip that made it difficult or impossible for some Georgia voters to vote:

What patterns did you notice about the people who were excluded from voting?



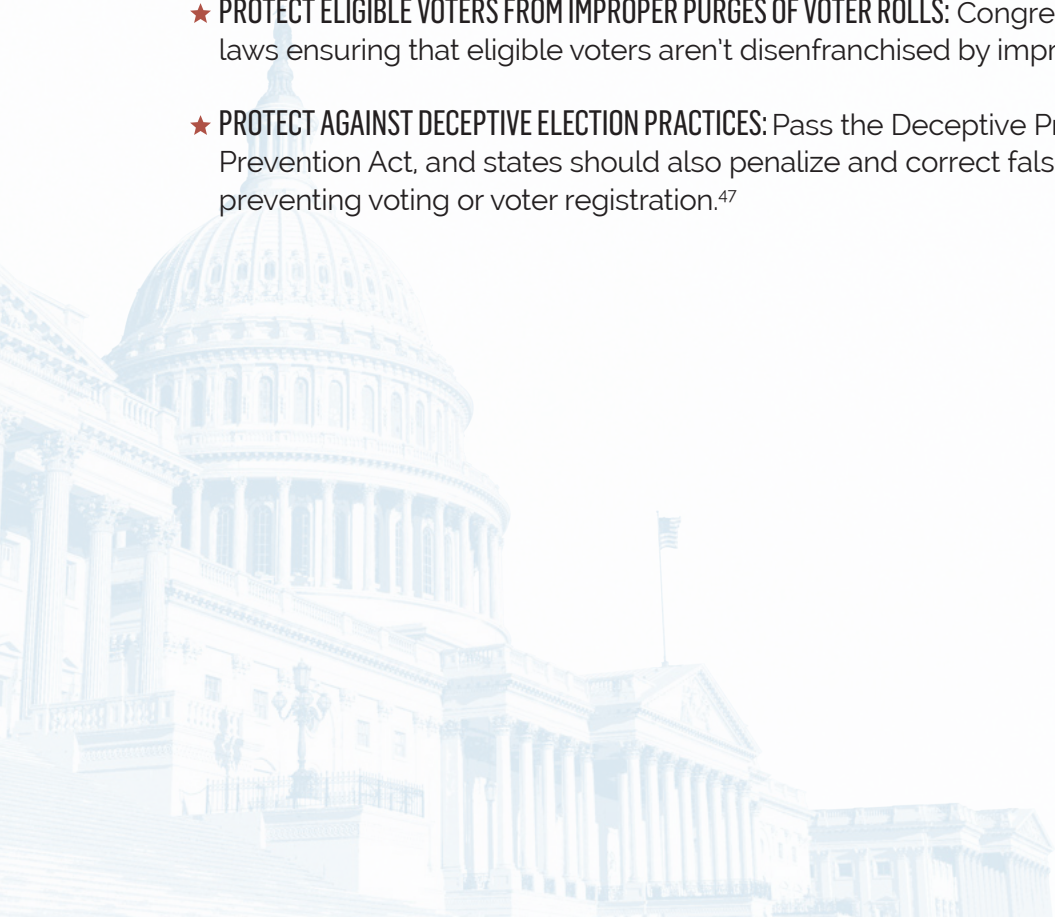
BRENNAN CENTER ELECTION REFORMS PROPOSALS

MODERNIZE THE VOTING PROCESS

- ★ **ENACT AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION:** Pass the Automatic Voter Registration Act, and states should continue to adopt automatic voter registration.
- ★ **EXPAND EARLY VOTING:** Set minimum early voting requirements in federal elections, and the states that don't offer early voting should adopt it.
- ★ **PREVENT LONG LINES TO VOTE BY ENFORCING POLLING PLACE STANDARDS:** Set and enforce standards to ensure all polling places have sufficient voting machines, poll workers, and other resources to avoid long lines.

PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS

- ★ **PASS THE VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT:** Restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act, with states supplementing those protections.
- ★ **RESTORE VOTING RIGHTS TO CITIZENS WHO HAVE BEEN CONVICTED OF CRIMES:** Pass the Democracy Restoration Act, and states should also ensure that if you're a voting-age citizen living in the community, you get to vote.
- ★ **PROTECT ELIGIBLE VOTERS FROM IMPROPER PURGES OF VOTER ROLLS:** Congress and the states should pass laws ensuring that eligible voters aren't disenfranchised by improper purges.
- ★ **PROTECT AGAINST DECEPTIVE ELECTION PRACTICES:** Pass the Deceptive Practices and Voter Intimidation Prevention Act, and states should also penalize and correct false information aimed at preventing voting or voter registration.⁴⁷



TRANSCRIPT CLIP ONE

ELECTION DAY IN GEORGIA

November 6, 2018

REPORTER:

We were with Brian Kemp and his family as they showed up to vote.

BRIAN KEMP:

It said this was an invalid card.

POLL WORKER:

You go back in there. I'll redo it for you.

REPORTER:

And Kemp had some voting issues when his voter card said "invalid." You just went and cast your ballot there.

REPORTER:

You just went and cast your ballot there. During your tenure as Secretary of State here, you've made it harder for tens of thousands of people in Georgia --

BRIAN KEMP:

Well, I would disagree with that question completely because you have no factual basis on making it harder for people to vote. It has never been easier for people to vote in the, in the state of Georgia than it is right now.

NEWSMAN:

One of the races we've been watching really closely is the Governor's race in the state of Georgia.

NEWSMAN:

From mid-town to Marietta, we're seeing long lines at polling places across the area.

VOTER:

This morning, we got here when the polls opened at 7:00. We were told that the machines weren't working. Finally, at 11:00, they got machines that were working. So we've been in line for five hours.

REPORTER:

How long have you waited in line here this morning?

BRENDA GREER:

About three and a half hours.

REPORTER:

You gonna go home? Come back?

BRENDA GREER:

I'm hurting. I'll be back. I got to go take some medicine.

LAUREN GROH-WARGO

These lines are insane. We had a big f*ing problem. Um, people are leaving lines all over. I'm getting these reports.

WOMAN:

My parents are U.S. citizens. They've voted in the past. But today, when they showed up to vote, they were told that they were purged from the voter rolls.

STACEY ABRAMS:

We'd received thousands of calls to our Voter Protection Hotline. Conversations about people being turned away from the polls.

POLL WORKER:

I can't find this one. This is where you would normally vote? (subtitled) Your name didn't come up. Even when I search.

STACEY ABRAMS:

Those stories were coming to me at every moment.

NEWSWOMAN:

Some were here for three hours, others here for much longer after the express-poll machines stopped working Annistown Elementary polling place Tuesday morning.

LAUREN GROH-WARGO:

We knew who we were up against. We had been fighting this guy for years. And then to see what the result was of intentional underfunding of elections, intentional non-training of local elections officials.

NEWSWOMAN:

He says he went to cast his ballot Tuesday morning, he handed the poll worker his I.D., and then she...

WHITTEN:

"Mr. Whitten, wait. Stop. You've already voted." I said, "No, I think I would've remembered that." She says, "No, I see here that you voted, and it looks like several days ago."

LAUREN GROH-WARGO:

Intentional purges, intentional precinct consolidation.

COORDINATOR:

They combined two locations, gave us three machines. Last election, I had 12. I don't know why.

LAUREN GROH-WARGO:

Intentional lack of training around absentee and provisional ballots. All the compendium coming together.

STUDENT:

Students were showing up, and their names were not on the actual roll. And so they were casting provisional ballots, so much so that they actually ran out of provisional ballots.

LAUREN GROH-WARGO:

It was just out of control.

STACEY ABRAMS:

We knew people were trying to be heard but I also knew they weren't being listened to.

ARI BERMAN:

Election night, I knew something had gone horribly wrong.

NEWSMAN:

Take a look at where the numbers stand right now the numbers are now tightening, the spread is some only 60,000. Several counties have yet to process their provisional and emergency ballots leaving an estimated 22,000 ballots outstanding.

STACEY ABRAMS:

By 1:00 a.m., what we knew was that the race was too close to call. I'm here tonight to tell you votes remain to be counted. There are voices that were waiting to be heard. Across our state, folks are opening up the dreams of voters in absentee ballots and we believe our chance for a stronger Georgia is just within reach. But we cannot seize it until all voices are heard. And I promise you, tonight, we are gonna make sure that every vote is counted. Every single vote.

LESSON THREE



EVERY VOTE MATTERS

"VOTER TURNOUT IS THE BEST REMEDY FOR VOTER SUPPRESSION."

- STACEY ABRAMS, *ALL IN: THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY*




ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- ★ What factors influence whether or not eligible voters participate in elections?
- ★ How can every person participate in encouraging eligible voters to participate in elections?

OVERVIEW

Every person in the United States, no matter their age, citizenship status, or political point of view, has a role in protecting fair and free elections and empowering voters to exercise their rights. The advocates, activists, historians, and legal experts in *ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy* suggest multiple ways that individuals and communities can work together to participate in and protect elections, and in doing so, preserve the core tenet of representation in our democracy.

Look for the  designating a media literacy focused exercise.



Learning Objectives

Students will:

- ★ Define the concept of voter turnout
- ★ Identify factors that influence whether or not voters choose to exercise their rights
- ★ Describe grassroots organizing efforts that have effectively increased voter turnout
- ★ Explain the skills and steps voters should take to ensure their vote is counted
- ★ Analyze artwork that promotes voting
- ★ Create their own messages that will inspire and empower others to vote



Materials

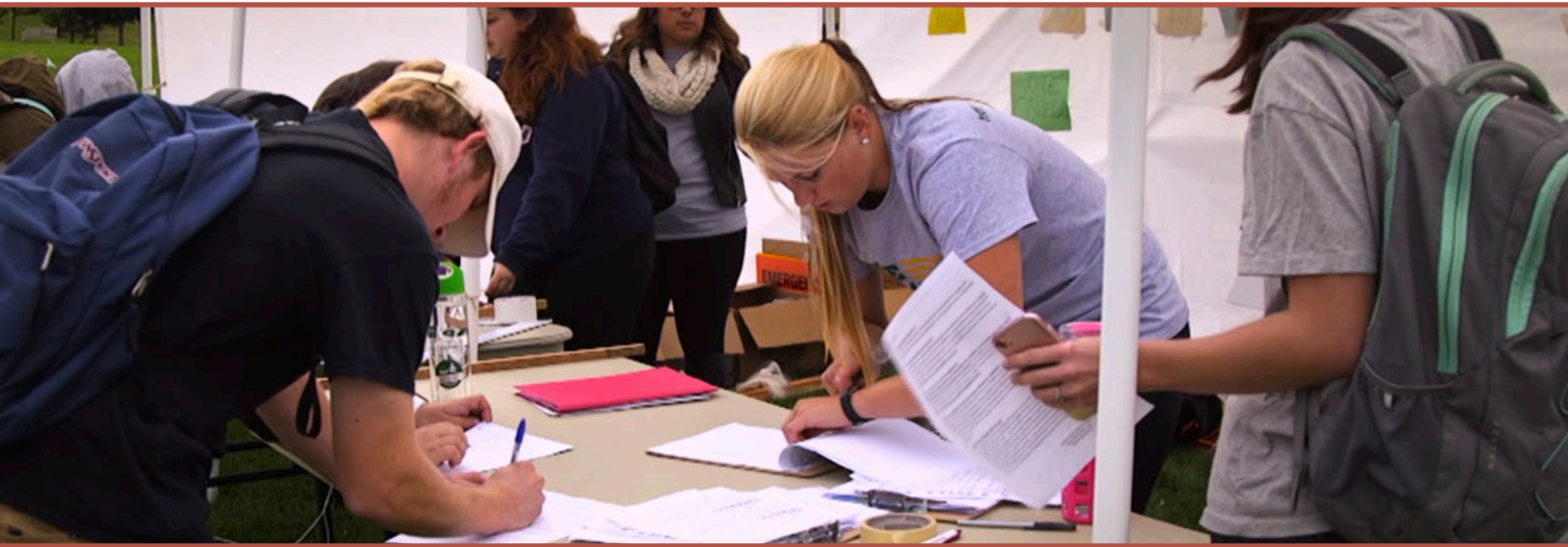
- ★ Film Clips
- ★ Film Clip Transcripts
- ★ Learning About Non-Voters and All In For Voting Action Steps Handout
- ★ Method to print or project images from the "Art of Voting" collection
- ★ Poster paper, art supplies to create their own "Art of Voting" posters



Length

Two, 50-minutes class periods

DAY ONE ACTIVITIES



1. OPENING

Partner Interviews: Find a partner and interview one another with the following questions:

- ★ What, if anything, have you learned about voting and elections from your family? Your community? The media?
- ★ Has there ever been an election, for any elected official from President to School Board, or issue, such as gun ownership or abortion rights, that you were eager to participate in? What about that issue motivates you?

2. WATCH FILM CLIP

Distribute the **Get Out the Vote Note Catcher** Handout, and if desired the clip transcripts. Give students a moment to look over the questions on the note catcher and remind them to take notes as they watch the clip.

Both of the following film clips showcase individuals and organizations who are dedicated to expanding the right to vote, and to encouraging others to participate in voting.

- ★ **Read Film Clip Transcript One or access clip via [Amazon Prime](#) - timecodes 26:53-30:51 (3:58 minutes)**

In this clip, Desmond Meade establishes the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition to restore the right to vote to returning citizens.

Begin: Graphic "Florida"

End: "They are the legacy of attempts to permanently disenfranchise African Americans and to block their participation in society."

- ★ **Film Clip (free): [Lucha](#) (2:27 minutes)**

Alejandra Gomez and the organization Lucha register voters in Maricopa County, Arizona

Large group discussion questions:

- ★ What motivated Desmond Meade, Alejandra Gomez, and others in these clips to act?
- ★ What tactics and strategies did they employ to achieve their goals?
- ★ What did you hear or see in these clips about why people decide to vote, or not?
- ★ Alejandra Gomez says, "The most important part of voter registration is that human connection and being able to understand why that person does not trust." What does that mean to you?



Media Literacy Questions

- ★ How did you respond to hearing the individual stories of Desmond Meade, Alejandra Gomez, and Alex Delgado Garcia? What is the power of individuals' stories in understanding a national problem like voter suppression?
- ★ When you think of big social issues like voting rights, whose voices are you accustomed to hearing? How do the voices in these clips compare or differ from those voices?

3. SMALL GROUP WORK: UNDERSTANDING VOTER TURNOUT

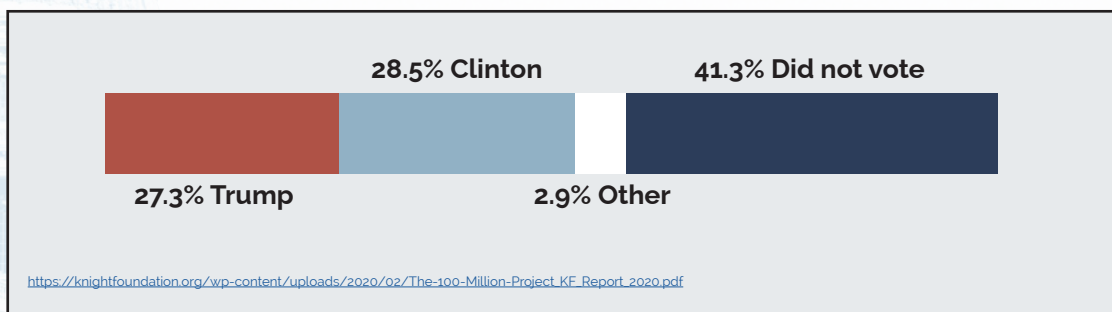
In the film **ALL IN**, Stacey Abrams says, "Voter turnout is the best remedy for voter suppression."

Ask a few students to explain their understanding of the quote, including the phrase, 'voter turnout.' If they are unfamiliar with the term, use this explanation:

'Voter turnout' is the percentage of eligible voters who participate in an election. 'Voter turnout' is a common measure of civic participation.⁴⁸

Explain to students that voter turnout is lower in the US than in most other developed countries. The chart below is reflective of a typical presidential election in the US, in which an average of between 50-60 percent of eligible voters tend to participate. Congressional elections (also known as midterm elections) elicit even lower participation, between 40-50 percent, depending on the election.⁴⁸

Show the percentage of eligible voters who participated in the 2016 Presidential Election:



Discuss:

- ★ What does this chart tell you?
- ★ What do you think motivates people to vote?
- ★ Why do you think people do not vote?

Distribute the **Data Analysis: Non-Voters** Handout.

In small groups, have students read through the handouts and as a group generate answers to the following questions:

- ★ How does this data reinforce or challenge what the clips showed about voter turnout?
- ★ What does the data tell you about why people don't vote?
- ★ What, if anything, is surprising to you?
- ★ What, if anything, feels intuitive or 'right' to you?
- ★ What aspects of the data do you suspect are influenced by voter suppression tactics, past or present?
- ★ What further questions do you have about why people do or don't vote?
- ★ What further questions are raised by the data?

4. DAY ONE CLOSING

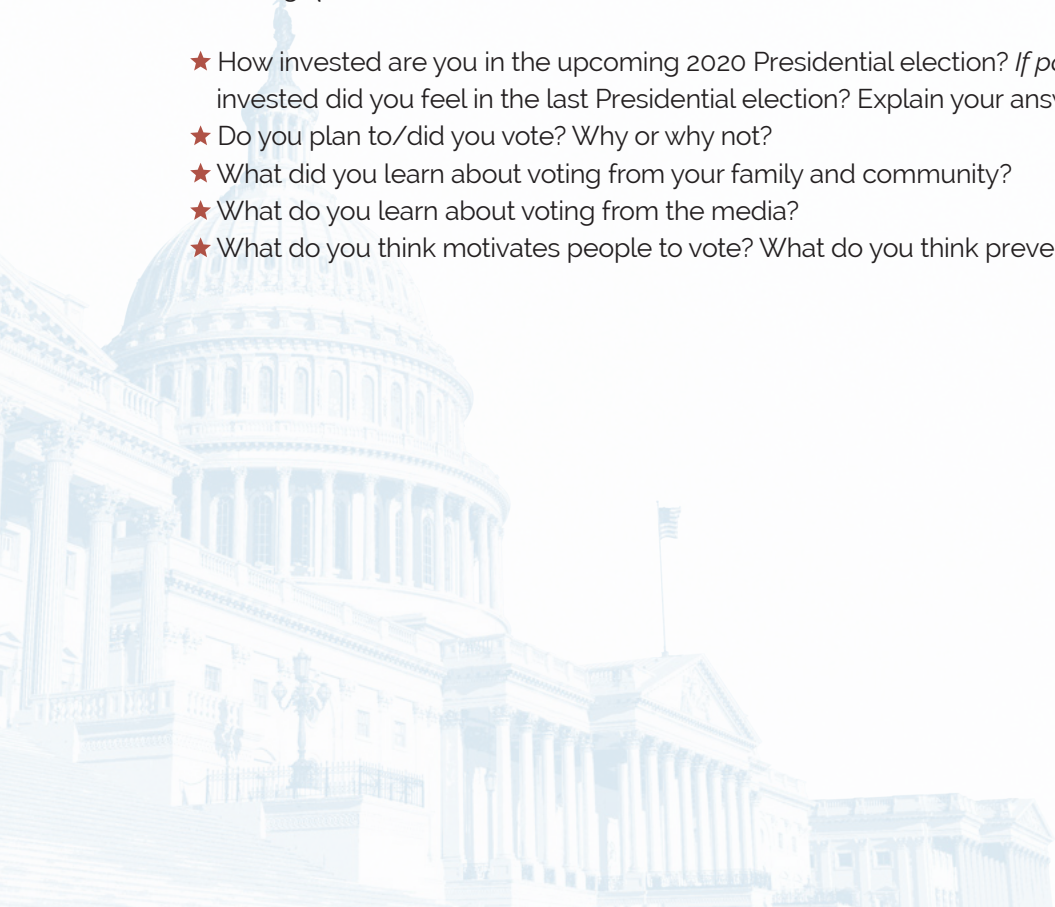
Ask students to reflect personally on their own thoughts about and/or experiences with voting, and generate a list of those influences that make them 'likely' to vote.

Collage Creation: On a post-it or colored piece of paper, have each student write down a word or phrase that most strongly describes the factor that makes them most likely to vote. In the classroom, have students stick their voting reasons up on the wall to create a classroom collage. Online, have students post answers in a shared space.

Homework:

Have students conduct a brief interview of a family member, neighbor, or other trusted adult about voting using the following questions:"

- ★ How invested are you in the upcoming 2020 Presidential election? *If post-2020 election*, How invested did you feel in the last Presidential election? Explain your answer.
- ★ Do you plan to/did you vote? Why or why not?
- ★ What did you learn about voting from your family and community?
- ★ What do you learn about voting from the media?
- ★ What do you think motivates people to vote? What do you think prevents them from voting?



DAY TWO ACTIVITIES



"IT'S NOT GONNA BE THE COURTS THAT SAVE US. IT'S NOT GONNA BE THE JUSTICES
IN THEIR ROBES. **IT'S GOT TO BE THE PEOPLE.**"

- MICHAEL WALDMAN, *ALL IN: THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY*



1. VOTING INTERVIEW REPORT BACK

In pairs or small groups, have students share what they learned from their voting interview

- ★ How did their interviews align with (or not) the voter turnout data?
- ★ Were any of the responses surprising, or new to them?

2. WATCH FILM CLIP

Distribute the **Film Clip Transcript**, and have students follow along as you show the clip. Students will star or underline moments in the clip that stood out, excited them, or that they thought were particularly effective.

★ **Film Clip (free): [Get Out the Vote](#) (1:56 minutes)**

In this film clip, voters (including some famous people) offer advice for how to vote, and how to encourage others to vote.

Discuss:

- ★ How did watching the clip make you feel about voting?
- ★ What artistic tools, such as music, facial expressions, voices, lighting, the people included, or other aspects of the clip elicited the biggest reaction from you?
- ★ Why do you think the filmmakers chose to use celebrities to share these voting messages? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using celebrity voices?
- ★ Did the advice in the clip address concerns or reinforce strengths you learned about from the voter turnout data? What would you change or add to get people to vote?

3. ANALYZE “ART OF VOTING POSTERS”

Read aloud this explanation of a national project called the Art of Voting:

The Art of Voting features original political posters from more than 60 visual storytellers working at the top of their fields. These inspirational images are paired with personal essays contributed by activists, advocates, and people working within government, as well as everyday citizens. Together, over 100 voices provide an urgent call to action united around a single message: Our democracy is worth saving, and we have the power to do it.⁴⁹

In Person: Post the Art of Voting posters around the classroom with the artists' statements next to each. Have students do a gallery walk around the room at their own pace to examine the posters.

Online: post the attached [Powerpoint presentation](#) in a shared classroom space for students to be able to peruse images and statements at their own pace.

After their gallery review, have students take a few minutes to write reflectively about the images. Have them choose one or more of their favorites and write about how the image made them feel, what attracted them to it, and whether and why they think it will effectively encourage others to vote.

In the large group, invite students to share parts of their answers.

3. CREATE YOUR OWN VOTING STATEMENT

Thinking back to the data about voting, the responses to voter interviews, and their own responses to the images, ask students to make their own creative expressions to motivate others to vote. Students can choose their medium, such as:

- ★ Visual Art
- ★ Poetry/Spoken Word
- ★ Video
- ★ Meme or Infographic
- ★ Songwriting

Students should draft an artists' statement that includes:

- ★ Some information about themselves
- ★ Their thoughts and ideas about voting
- ★ The message they want their work to convey

Extensions/Homework:

Creative class expressions can be compiled and shared in many ways. Here are some ideas for events or ways for students to share their works::

- ★ In the lobby of your school
- ★ On a shared electronic space that will be viewed by other classes in your school
- ★ With parents and families in your school
- ★ With a local voting rights organization
- ★ Through a local newspaper or online news outlet

GET OUT THE VOTE NOTE CATCHER

FLORIDA RIGHTS RESTORATION COALITION

What does it mean to Desmond Meade to be able to vote?

What strategies did the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition use to motivate voters toward their cause?

The conservative Republican voter says, "This issue isn't about politics, it's about people." Why do you think the director chose to include that perspective?

How do you think the passage of Amendment 4 in Florida might influence other voters? Would it make them more likely to want to vote, or less? Explain your answer.

LUCHA

What inspired Alejandra Gomez to found the voting registration organization Lucha?

What are the barriers that Lucha volunteers encounter as they try to register new voters?

How do the volunteers of Lucha succeed at registering voters?

DATA ANALYSIS: NON-VOTERS

To learn more about why people don't vote, the Knight Foundation's [100 Million Project](#) conducted a national survey of people who did not vote in 2016, and included people who were too young to vote at the time. The following data comes from their report, "The Untold Story of American Non-Voters."⁵⁰

The study found the following reasons for not voting to be shared across demographics like gender, race, and economic class:

- ★ A lack of faith in the integrity of the election systems, and that their vote would count
- ★ Do not actively seek out news, and do not feel informed on how to vote, or have enough information about the issues and candidates to decide
- ★ Non-voters do not have a clear party affiliation, though they do have a diversity of opinions about major issues like health care and immigration
- ★ Young people (ages 18-24), feel even less informed and interested in politics than older people, and report they are less likely to vote in 2020.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

Gender: Gender does not seem related significantly related to non-voting or active voting

Race: The majority of non-voters are white (65 percent). However, the proportion of non-voters who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (34 percent) is slightly higher than that of White voters (28 percent).

Education: There is a pronounced trend showing that non-voters on the whole are less likely to be college graduates than voters:

- ★ People who have a college degree or higher make up 37 percent of non-voters, and 54 percent of active voters.
- ★ People who have a high school diploma or less education make up 31 percent of non-voters and 16 percent of active voters.

Household Income:

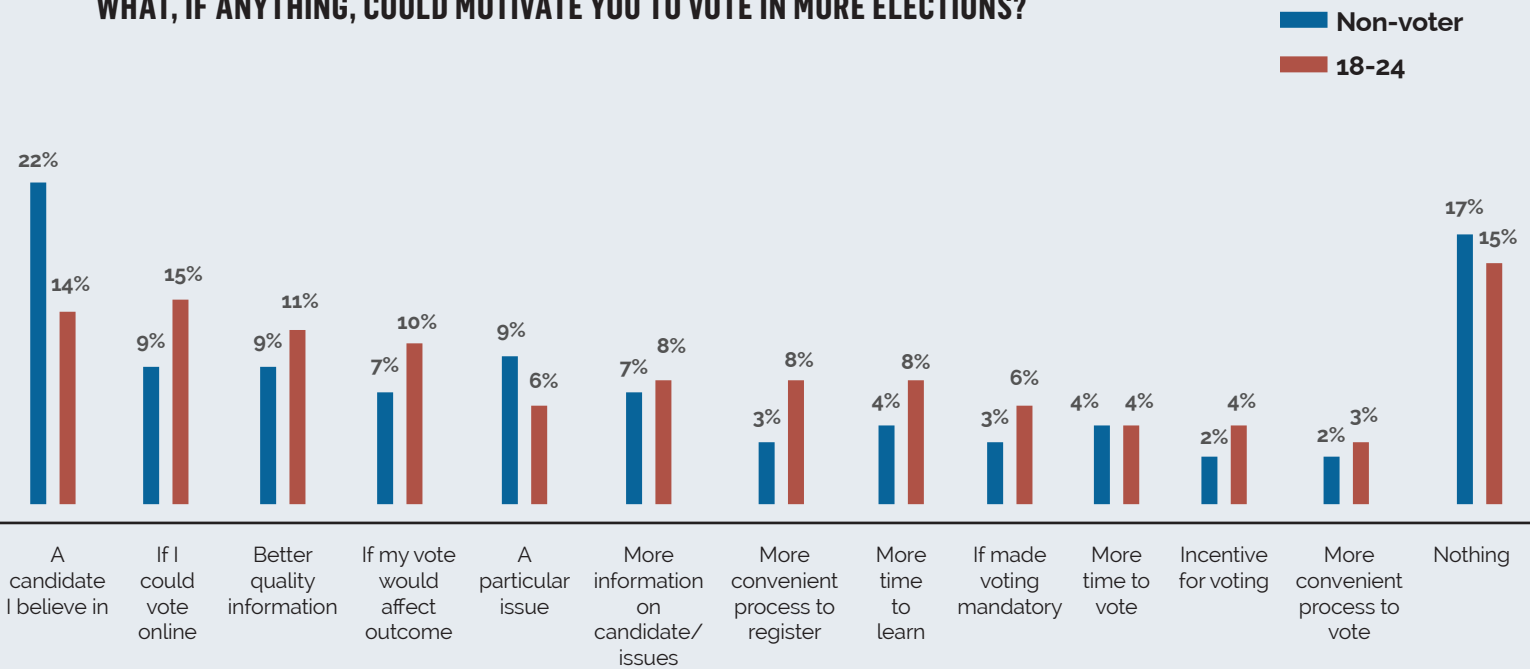
- ★ People from households with higher incomes are more likely to be active voters:
- ★ People whose household incomes are less than \$50,000 make up 44 percent of non-voters and 26 percent of active voters
- ★ People with household incomes higher than \$100,000 make up 13 percent of non-voters and 29 percent of active voters.

Age:

- ★ Ages seems to be a major factor, where older people (ages 46-74) are the most likely to be active voters:
- ★ People ages 25-40 make up 40 percent of non-voters, and only 30 percent of active voters
- ★ People ages 46-74 make up 43 percent of non-voters and 52 percent of active voters

MOTIVATIONS TO VOTE

WHAT, IF ANYTHING, COULD MOTIVATE YOU TO VOTE IN MORE ELECTIONS?



https://knightfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-100-Million-Project_KF_Report_2020.pdf



TRANSCRIPT CLIP ONE

FLORIDA RIGHTS RESTORATION COALITION

PREACHER:

The Word says, "Great is the Lord and pregnant to be praised." I'm gonna pray to my God and get up.

DESMOND MEADE:

My name is Desmond Meade. I grew up in Miami, Florida. I am what we call a returning citizen. Returning citizens are people with previous felony convictions. You know, I used to tell people that my story didn't have a happy ending because I lived in Florida, where over 1.68 million people had a lifetime ban from voting and other things. After graduating high school, I went into the service. When I returned home, I was addicted to drugs and I was in and out of jail. And I ended up checking myself into drug treatment. I experienced a transformation. What have I done with my life to make a difference?

NEWSMAN:

Florida leads the nation in denying the right to vote to one specific group: felons.

MEADE:

For years, we have lobbied politicians to change these old Jim Crow laws and we were not able to accomplish anything.

RICHARD HARRISON:

If there's a million and a half convicted felons in Florida and they're suddenly all qualified to vote that universe of people are probably gonna be more inclined to favor the Democratic Party.

INTERVIEWER:

What data is there to support that?

HARRISON:

None.

MEADE:

So, if the politicians did not have the political strength or courage to actually change the policies, then the next best thing was to let the citizens, uh, take it into their own hands.

CROWD CHANTING:

Let our people vote! Let our people vote!

MEADE:

In October of 2014 we launched the ballot initiative. All of the experts thought that it was impossible to even get it on the ballot. But this was an organic grassroots movement. We knocked on a lot of doors.

VOLUNTEER:

We're gonna change history.

MEADE:

We made a ton of phone calls.

VOLUNTEER INTO PHONE:

We're talking to voters about Amendment 4, the voting restoration amendment on the ballot this November. Have you heard about it?

MEADE:

And our message was very simple. When the debt is paid, it's paid. Ah, and that this was an all-American issue that impacted people from all walks of life.

NEIL VOLTZ:

I'm a 20-plus-year conservative Republican. I bring that up not to make an issue of it but to actually not make an issue of it. This issue isn't about politics. It's about people.

MEADE:

Out of all the civil rights, nothing speaks more to citizenship than being able to vote.

MARCO:

Today is midterm Election Day. Voting's gonna be in full swing here in just a few hours.

NEWSMAN:

Voters in Florida are preparing to vote on a measure that would restore voting rights to 1.4 million people. One in five African Americans in Florida and 10 percent of the state's adult population.

NEWSWOMAN:

Amendment 4, if it passes, is expected to change the shape of Florida's electorate for decades to come.

NEWSMAN:

Millions of votes already cast here in Florida, but millions more will vote today.

NEWSWOMAN:

It looks like Amendment 4 will pass. That's a big deal in Florida. Amendment 4 passing by a wide margin. 64% there.

CROWD CHANTING:

Get the vote! Get the vote! Get the vote!

MEADE:

I need every returning citizen here on this stage.

WOMAN:

That's right!

MEADE O.S.:

When Amendment 4 passed, there was a feeling of joy and appreciation for folks to be able to participate in our democracy.

WOMAN:

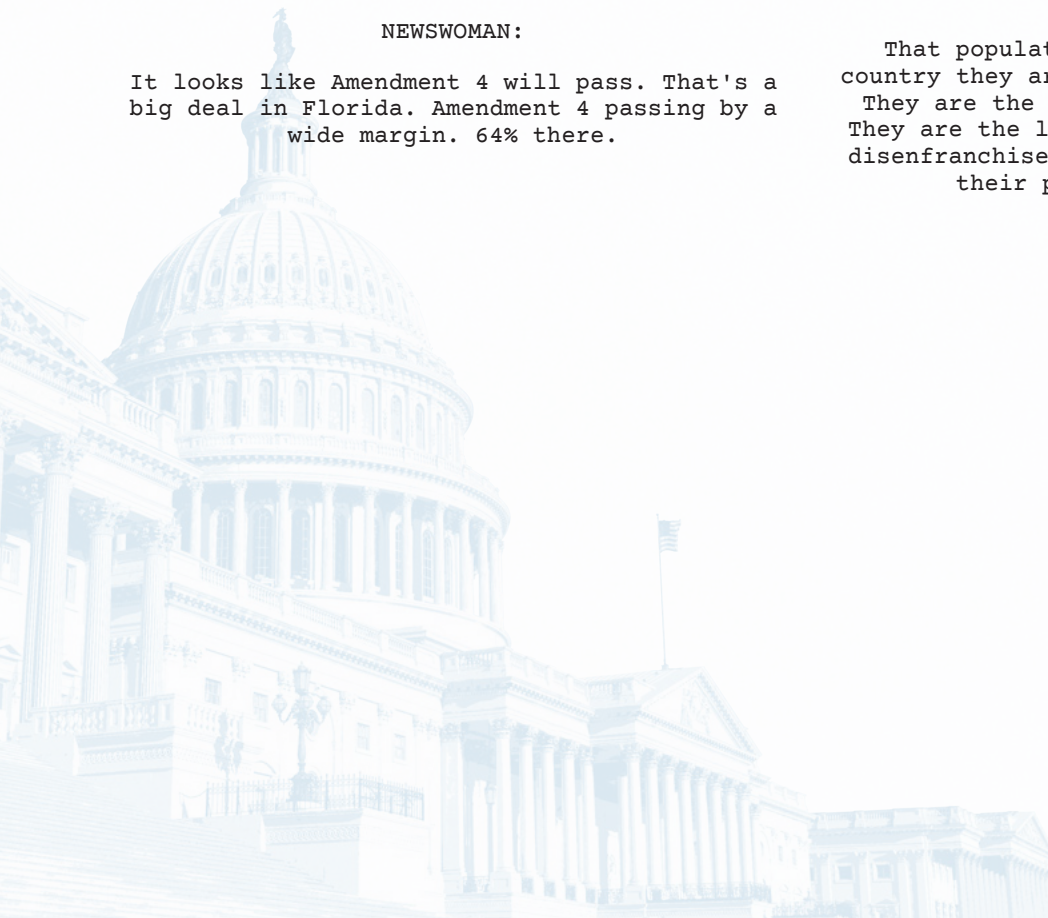
We did it!

MAN:

Oh, my God. I am feeling, like, on cloud nine right now.

STACEY ABRAMS:

That population in Florida and around the country they are the legacy of the Black Codes. They are the legacy of the Mississippi Plan. They are the legacy of attempts to permanently disenfranchise African Americans and to block their participation in society.



TRANSCRIPT CLIP TWO

LUCHA

Tent City Jail, Maricopa Count

NEWSWOMAN:

America's most unwelcoming prison regime likes to advertise it always has vacancies.

JOE ARPAIO:

It shows I will always have room for illegals.

NEWSWOMAN.:

The man who calls himself America's toughest sheriff makes his prison as unpleasant as possible.

ALEJANDRA GOMEZ:

Arpaio became the face of terror for our community. We would see posses going to neighborhoods to do roundups. There were checkpoints to ask people for their papers. It created a righteous anger, saying that we deserve more and we do not deserve to live under this.

GARCIA:

We gotta tell the whole world!

GROUP:

This is ACE territory!

GARCIA:

Okay, my people!

GROUP:

Yeah!

GARCIA:

We got a story!

GROUP:

Yeah!

GARCIA:

We gotta tell the whole world:

GROUP:

This is ACE territory!

GARCIA TO GROUP:

All right, dope. How's everybody doing? Good?

GROUP:

Good.

GARCIA:

How's everybody doing, y'all?

GROUP:

Good.

GARCIA:

All right, dope. About almost three years ago, it was my first day at LUCHA and Stephanie was up here at the front and she was talking about how we're gonna register a lot of people to vote.

And I remember her giving me the clipboard, right? And she was like, "All right, we're gonna go to Walmart." And I was so scared.

ALEJANDRA GOMEZ:

Our volunteers are standing on the shoulders of folks that have paved the way for us to be able to cast that ballot and become part of a power community that is now impacting policies.

GARCIA:

Hi. Are you a registered voter? No? How come?
Are you a citizen? Hola. Está usted registrada
para votar? No? Por qué no? Pues muchas gracias.
There is always a debate on, why aren't our
communities participating?

WOMAN:

We're already registered.

GARCIA:

Oh, you are? What about y'all?

MAN:

Naw.

GARCIA:

No? How come?

MAN:

I don't know. I don't trust politicians.

GARCIA:

No, you're right.

MAN:

I'm not interested.

GARCIA:

No, heck yeah. I feel like-I mean, that's how I
thought, too, right?

GOMEZ:

The most important part of voter registration
is that human connection and being able to
understand why that person does not trust.



ART OF VOTING POSTERS AND ARTISTS' STATEMENTS

JORDAN CHARLES

Link to Poster File:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eQOLKVcqX_UiQoJJh-kya6ns2jEo4Xsy/view?usp=sharing

Artist Statement:

"I'm an interdisciplinary designer passionate about crafting meaningful experiences and narratives. While my day job involves conceptualizing digital interfaces and designing buildings, I moonlight as a wannabe illustrator where I attempt to create dope characters of color.

Voting gives us a voice within a complex system that has the power to influence our lives, both positively and negatively. However, the privilege to vote wasn't always available to every citizen and certain demographics had to fight, and in some cases die, to obtain this right. These sacrifices are sometimes overlooked when the power of a vote is underestimated and downplayed. This piece was created as a reminder that there are people that paved the way for us to have this right and the price was paid with their blood and tears - they fought for us to have a seat at the table.

I hope this project will remind people that talking among ourselves isn't enough, and as citizens we need to take action. If there is something that we are unsatisfied within this system that governs our lives, we need to make our voices heard through our votes. In recent past, there were people that didn't have this privilege and they paid the price so that we could."



SHANNON LAMB

Link to Poster File:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1t_kocpu74hghMqheYzWjODdDe8qcc6aB/view?usp=sharing

Artist Statement:

"I'm a Graphic Designer and Illustrator who is passionate about creating work that engages, educates and brings a little fun to the everyday.

I wanted to create a poster that addressed this specific time in voting history where we are fighting a pandemic and fighting to make our voices heard in the most important election of our lives. Voting by mail is a crucial tool in this election as it allows us to cast our votes while still protecting our own health and the health of our communities. I hope that my poster will inspire people to request their vote-by-mail ballot and make their voices heard!

I hope the Art of Voting Project will inspire people to vote. I'm so excited that the project will benefit Fair Fight, and hope that it will help in the fight against voter suppression."



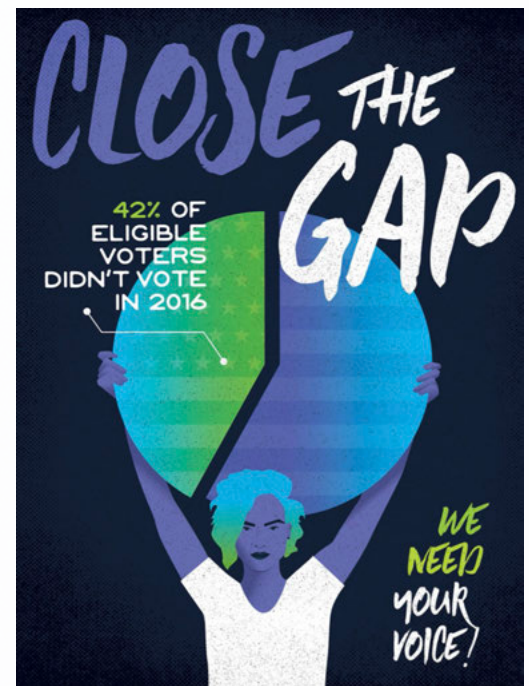
AVIVA OSKOW

Link to Poster File:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1UtssEe4vQgOayNg-DMp_YYrawtMKmKpu/view?usp=sharing

Artist Statement:

"Aviva Oskow is a multidisciplinary designer and artist who has always believed in the power of creativity to expand the fight for social justice and a better world. She has supported many political and social movement campaigns through visual design and creative strategy, and works as a civic technologist, designing products that improve the user experience of government services. In her digital illustration, "Close the Gap" for The Art of Voting project, she wanted to convey a stark statistic—that 42% of eligible voters didn't vote in the 2016 presidential election*. Data can be powerful when presented in a compelling way, and this piece is meant to inspire a sense of social responsibility, encouraging people to vote and pass the message along to their fellow Americans. While voting is not the end-all-be-all for social change, and many Americans are currently denied fair and equal representation, it is an incredibly important piece of the puzzle. We must both exercise our right—and fight to increase access and improve elections for all."



*Statistic Sources: [Pew Research](#), [Washington Post](#), [Scatterplot blog](#)

GET OUT THE VOTE FILM SCRIPT TRANSCRIPT

DIRECTIONS: As you watch the film clip, underline or star the words or moments that you think are exciting, or particularly effective in motivating voters.

WOMAN:

Register to vote. Even if you think you're already registered, check your registration status.

WOMAN #2:

Seriously, check to see if you're registered to vote at allinthe film.com. Don't be a victim of voter purge.

WOMAN #3:

If you're registered, make sure the information is correct. If not, update it.

DRAG QUEEN:

Oh, and make sure to keep your receipts. Take a screenshot so that no one can deny your registration.

WOMAN #3:

Get informed. Find out which documents or ID are required for you to vote in your state so that you will have time to prepare to vote.

GLORIA STEINEM:

Make a plan. Look up your polling place, and the time it's open and how you're getting there. And what you can do to stay safe if you're casting your socially distance vote in person.

BEARDED MAN:

Some states allow any voter to vote absentee, other states have stricter requirements. Head to allinthe film.com to find out details about your state and how to request a ballot.

YOUNG WOMAN:

Go to 2020census.gov and complete your census form. Insure that your community is counted and help combat gerrymandering.

DESMOND MEADE:

And most importantly, know your rights.

YOUNG MAN:

If the polls close and you in the line, man, stay in the line, because you got the right to vote.

NICK JONAS:

If you make a mistake on your ballot, ask for a new one.

KEVIN JONAS:

If the machines are down at your polling place, ask for a paper ballot.

JOE JONAS:

If they can't find your name on the voter rolls, then ask for a provisional ballot.

YOUNG WOMAN:

And if you run into any problems or have any questions on Election Day, call the Election Protection Hotline: 866-OURVOTE.

NICK JONAS:

Think you got all that?

DRAG QUEEN:

Are you all in?

YOUNG WOMAN:

Perfect. Now...

JOE JONAS:

Go and tell literally everyone...

BEADED MAN:

Everyone.

WOMAN:

Everyone you know.

WOMAN #3:

Everyone you know.

WOMAN:

Literally everyone you know.

END NOTES

- 1 <https://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch16s26.html> , <https://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentation-sandactivities/presentations/elections/founders-and-the-vote.html>
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- 3 <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p2957.html>
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- 16 Erwin Chemerinsky, *Constitutional Law: Principles and Policies* 901 (4th ed. 2011).
- 17 Reuven Ziegler, *Article: Legal Outlier, Again? U.S. Felon Suffrage: Comparative and International Human Rights Perspectives*, 29 B.U. INT'L L.J. 197, 217 (2011).
- 18 Angela Behrens, *Voting—Not quite a Fundamental Right? A Look at Legal and Legislative Challenges to Felon Disfranchisement Laws*, 89 MINN. L. REV. 231, 236 (2004).
- 19 U.S. CONST. amend. XV, § 1.
- 20 *Washington v. State*, 75 Ala. 582, 585 (Ala. 1884) (arguing that felony disenfranchisement is designed to "preserve the purity of the ballot box, which is the only sure foundation of republican liberty, and which needs protection against the invasion of corruption, just as much as against that of ignorance, incapacity, or tyranny.").
- 21 U.S. CONST. amend. XIV, § 2.
- 22 *Trop v. Dulles*, 356 U.S. 86 (1958).
- 23 Eric Foner, "Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution," Library of America lecture, March 13, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49McwjKZmlw>
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- 25 For a full listing of elected officials see Eric Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers: A Directory of Black Officeholders during Reconstruction*, revised ed. (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), xi–xxxii.
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- 34 This explanation is excerpted from https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2018/Minority_Voting_Access_2018.pdf, p. 49, 50. Excerpts were also used from <https://www.justice.gov/crt/file/876246/download>.
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- 38 <https://journals.openedition.org/transatlantica/7462#tocto1n2>, Map 1.
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- 40 <https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/gerrymandering-fair-representation/redistricting>
- 41 This "[Checklist for Evaluating Information Found on the Internet](#)" may be useful for students as they assess the credibility of resources they find on their own.
- 42 <https://www.usa.gov/voting-and-election-definitions>
- 43 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/elections-voting/#:~:text=Federal%20elections%20are%20administered%20by,in%20how%20they%20administer%20elections.>
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- 45 https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/Report_Democracy%20Agenda%202018.pdf
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- 47 <https://electionlab.mit.edu/research/voter-turnout>
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- 50 https://knightfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/The-100-Million-Project_KF_Report_2020.pdf
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