



0. A Civics Lesson for Your School - Story Preface

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### Here Is a Lesson Plan for Your School

Making School Elections Meaningful: A Relevant Civics Lesson  
by [National Hall of Fame Educator Alan Haskvitz](#)

Almost every school has school or class elections with the idea of sharing the true nature of a democracy where everyone can vote. Usually, those students who want to run create posters, give a speech, and - come election day - the results are tabulated and the winner announced. What I would suggest is to consider making it a more representative teachable moment.

#### The Campaign

First, every one who wishes to run for office must meet certain requirements such as a 2.0 GPA. When the person signs-up to vote they are given an agreed upon number of poster papers and they are numbered and signed. They are accompanied by a list of where they can be placed and proper etiquette. In that way all the participants have an equal chance.

There can also be interviews in the school newspaper, using the public address system for a fixed number of ads, and a speech that can video taped to play on the school system, if it is enabled. The whole idea is to make the election fair and to promote creativity within set bounds.

#### Election Day

The next step takes place before the voting. Students line-up at registration tables where the school attendance folders are duplicated. Students sign by their name and are give a ballot. They have a day to consider the person they wish to vote for and the ballots are cast the following day. This means that some students who don't care simply can't vote because they didn't take the time to register.

#### The Vote

After the election there is a registration process in which every student who wants to vote registers to vote and receives a ballot.

#### Integrating the Lesson

I also recommend having an art competition for the best campaign poster and one for the best slogan. The competition could even include the best campaign song.

A panel could do the judging - including teachers - or it could be on the ballot. In this way the election becomes more interesting to the students and gets them more involved.

[This site](#) provides information on what is called the "youth vote." It makes interesting reading, but it also provides more evidence to support educators who use voting as a teaching tool. Have students reach conclusions from this data.

Of course, integrating civics is a given. Here are some recommended websites that have good lessons to accomplish that goal:

#### **National Student/Parent Mock Election**

The best site to get involved.

#### **iCivics lessons**

You can register, but it isn't required. Some lessons are interactive.

#### **Scholastic**

Lessons by grade level

#### **For federal elections**

#### **Types of propaganda**

It is important for students to understand how propaganda is used to influence them in elections and elsewhere.

Print out these materials.

#### **An exceptional source of Constitutional related materials**

A great newsletter, lots of lessons, and a knowledgeable staff.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/A-Civics-Lesson-for-Your-School-Fun-Activities-and-Facts-about-the-Presidential-Inauguration>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/A-Civics-Lesson-for-Your-School-Fun-Activities-and-Facts-about-the-Presidential-Inauguration>

## Media Stream



### Voting and the Ballot Box

This image, of an election ballot box, is online via Middleweb.

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Voting-and-the-Ballot-Box>