

Kid Civics: Right to Vote

General Lesson Structure

- 1. Introduction: Start with a discussion to engage students in the topic. Possible questions include:**
 - a. “The right to vote is the basic right without which all others are meaningless. It gives people, people as individuals, control over their own destinies.” -Lyndon Johnson
 - b. Discuss with students what this quote is saying and whether they agree.
 - c. Why is a right to vote so important to being able to live as free people?
- 2. Watch Kid Civics Video: Right to Vote**
- 3. Discuss:**
 - a. How does the government get its power from the people? In other words, how do people give the government permission to make laws to govern society?
 - b. How can results of elections impact your life and the lives of those around you?
 - c. Who holds the power in a democracy? All the people? Or just the people who vote?
 - d. What benefits does a person get from voting?
 - e. How does our democracy depend on “we the people” doing our part through voting?
- 4. Activity:**
 - a. Have students vote on something that would affect their experience in the classroom. This could be something simple like what color dry-erase marker the teacher uses on the board; whether the class does math or reading first thing in the day; what kind of music the teacher plays while the class is cleaning up; or what craft they will do for the week.
 - b. Give students on both sides of the “issue” the opportunity to share their reasons as to why they think their side is best.
 - c. Give the students a ballot to take home to cast their vote. Collect the ballots first thing in the morning. If the students do not have it complete, then their vote does not count.
 - d. Discuss:
 - i. Who got to make this decision? Was it the entire class? Or just those who filled out their ballot?
 - ii. Is everyone happy with the decision? If you are not happy with the decision, what might you do differently the next time we have a vote? (i.e. make sure I cast my ballot or remind other classmates to cast their ballot)
- 5. Closing and reflection:**
 - a. Summarize the key points:
 - i. Voting is the primary way that citizens make their voice heard in a democracy and shape the community in which they live.
 - ii. The results of elections have consequences for every citizen in a democracy.
 - iii. Politicians respond to the people who vote.
 - iv. Voting is a way that we, as citizens, can keep our democracy strong.
- 6. Lesson Learning Goals:**
 - a. Understand how people can change their government through voting.

- b. Understand that voting is a right that many in American history have sacrificed to protect.
- c. Understand the benefits of voting, both to the individual, as well as the health of democracy.