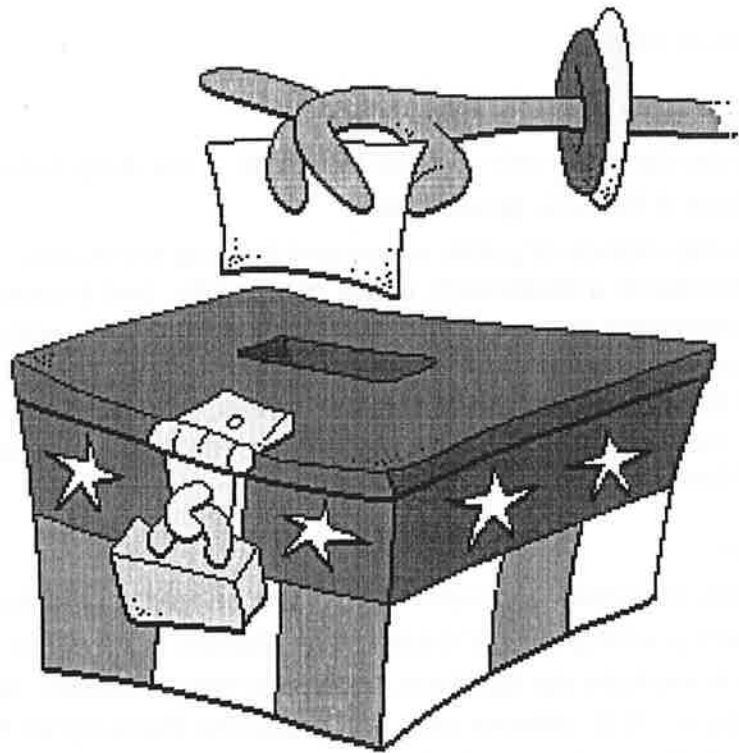


Your Vote is Your Voice: Teaching Voting and Voting Rights



Presented by:

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June 26-27, 2015

College, Career and Civic Life Lesson Title:

Securing the Right to Vote in America

Rebecca Valbuena, Glendora USD

Grade Levels:

Upper Elementary

Unit of Study:

Government and Civic Life

California History-Social Science Standards:

- 3.4 Students understand the role of rules and laws in our daily lives and the basic structure of the U.S. government.
- 3.4.2 Discuss the importance of public virtue and the role of citizens, including how to participate in a classroom, in the community, and in civic life.
- 4.5 Students understand the structures, functions, and powers of the local, state, and federal governments as described in the U.S. Constitution.
- 5.7.1 Understand the fundamental principles of American constitutional democracy, including how the government derives its power from the people and the primacy of individual liberty.

Setting of Context:

The word democracy describes a government by the people, in which citizens exercise their power by voting. In our democracy, citizens have rights that include being able to express our opinions, receive a free education, and practice any religion we choose. U.S. citizens won and protected these rights through voting. Having the right to vote is part of living in a democracy. And exercising that right is a way for citizens to take responsibility for – and take part in – their government.

The right to vote was not always so common. When the U.S. was a young nation, only white male landowners could vote. The rules for voting slowly changed, but not without great struggles. Prior to this lesson set, students have an understanding of basic events in United States history leading to the signing of the Constitution. They know the fundamental principles of the Constitution and how it has changed over time.

DIMENSION 1 - DEVELOPING QUESTIONS AND PLANNING INQUIRIES

Simulation:

Acquire four different colors of index cards (red, blue, green, white). Mix them up so they are not arranged by color. Give one of the colored cards to each student.

Explain to students that they will be voting on a favorite book they have read. Have the students offer suggestions of books to be included in the voting. Record suggestions on chart paper. Explain to students that there is a rule for voting. Only students with red and blue cards are allowed to vote. Explain to them that you just don't feel that the students with white and green cards know enough information about the suggested books to be able to vote effectively. Allow students with red and blue cards to vote. Record the results of the voting and circle the book with the most votes. Allow students time to discuss their reaction to the voting that occurred. Focus on whether they thought it was fair and what they feel should be done about it. Have students with the white and green cards get together as a group and discuss their claims to the right to vote. Have the students with the red and blue cards get together and discuss their feelings in being the only ones to vote. Have students listen to each other's thoughts and give feedback. Have students offer suggestions of how to make the voting more fair. Debrief with the students and let them know this activity was a simulation designed to spark their thoughts about voting rights. Review the big ideas of the Constitution and Amendments. The Constitution is a living and growing document.

Quick Write, Collaborative Conversation and Close Reading:

Looking at a slide show with various primary source photos of current campaign signs, campaign buttons, and voting images, ask student pairs to write words or phrases that come to mind after each slide (Appendix A). Provide a few minutes of partner talk to discuss responses. Ask students who they think is allowed to vote in America. Did these groups of people always have the right to vote?

Distribute Timeline of Voting Rights (Appendix B) or project the timeline from the book *Vote!* by Eileen Christelow. Conduct a close read of the timeline. Ask students to read the timeline and make annotations. Allow student pairs to orally discuss the timeline and review annotations with one another. Model reading the timeline and "think aloud" so students can watch and listen to what a good reader does and thinks about while reading. Ask students to reread the timeline with a partner. Conduct a discussion using text dependent questions. Ask students if voting has changed in America and to cite evidence from the timeline.

Making Connections:

After discussing the history of voting rights in America, it becomes apparent that many people sacrificed and fought for the right to vote. Project the local voting statistics or National voting statistics (Appendix C) from a recent election. How many people are eligible to vote? How many people actually voted in the last election? Why is this occurring? Through this discussion, the class uncovers the compelling question "Does voting matter?" Post this question and allow it to frame the remainder of the lesson and student engagement.

Post Compelling and Supporting Questions:

Compelling Question: Questions about how things work, interpretations and applications of disciplinary concepts, and unresolved issues that require students to construct arguments in response.

Example: Does voting matter?

Supporting Questions: Questions that focus on descriptions, definitions, and processes to help students construct conclusions and take informed civic action.

Examples: What is a democracy? What is the Constitution and why was it written? How has the Constitution changed over time to secure the right to vote for citizens? How did voting rights expand over time?

Investigation:

Investigate the compelling question by conducting a survey (Appendix D) and gathering data. Students ask four adults the question and bring the data back to class. Share results and create a tally chart by age groups. Example: 18-25 years old, 26-39 years old, 40-55 years old, 55 + years old. Discuss results and look for patterns. Is there a time when voting doesn't matter?

DIMENSION 2 - APPLYING DISCIPLINARY CONCEPTS AND TOOLS

(Activities are not chronological. They can be used simultaneously or in each classroom's natural sequence of inquiry. The important part is that teachers include the various disciplines within the lesson context.)

Civics:

Read aloud or provide students copies of the book *Vote!* by Eileen Christelow to read independently, in pairs, or in small guided reading groups. Reread the Voting Rights Timeline and revisit the discussion. Chart questions that students have regarding the history of voting rights. Distribute the list of on-line primary sources (Appendix E) or printed version of primary sources to student pairs. Their job is to be a "History Detective". First, they evaluate the source (see Dimension 3). Once the source is considered to be reliable, students analyze the primary source together and decide where on the timeline it would fall. Students present their findings and back up their claim with evidence that includes more than the date presented.

Economics:

To understand the connection of economy to early voting rights, students analyze a photo (Appendix F) and discuss questions such as: What was the cultural significance of "white men with property" being the only people who voted in early America? Who controlled the resources? Why were voting rights tied to wealth? Why did this change over time?

Geography:

Provide maps depicting voting statistics and voter turn out rate in different parts of the country (Appendix G) or in the local area. Discuss questions such as: Who is voting in the greatest numbers/least numbers according to geography. What might be reasons for voter turn out rate? What are possible solutions to improving voting statistics?

History:

Using the Voting Rights Timeline, analyze the cause and effect relationship between major events in history and voting related events. Use the cards on Appendix H to place some events in correct time order. Pull out cards that show cause and effect. Use the information to write cause/effect sentences. Use sentences in an informative essays citing historical documents to demonstrate the causes of voting related Constitutional amendments.

DIMENSION 3 - EVALUATING SOURCES AND USING EVIDENCE

Student as Historian:

On line research may be needed as students investigate the history of voting rights and seek to answer the questions that have been posed. The teacher may want to provide a list of websites for student exploration, but it is important to teach students about URLs.

Top-level domains tell what kind of person or organization runs the site:

.com = commercial

.org = organization (usually nonprofit)

.edu = educational institution (usually college)

.gov = government agency

.edu and .gov are restricted; others are available to anyone who wants to use them

Avoid personal web pages.

As students read primary sources from Internet searches or from the Civics section above, they evaluate the website (Appendix I) and evaluate the source (Appendix J) prior to citing evidence and developing claims.

DIMENSION 4 - COMMUNICATING CONCLUSIONS AND TAKING INFORMED ACTION

(Once students gather evidence, use Appendix K to aid in thinking and decision-making. As this is student driven, the following is **one example** of taking informed action, **if** the consensus is that voting does matter.)

Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions:

Students decide to let the school community know the importance of voting by creating Public Service Announcements to post on class website and show to student body during morning announcements. Using video cameras and programs to edit, students planned (Appendix L), filmed, and edited a 60 second

Public Service Announcement. Within the Public Service Announcement, students used evidence from voting statistics, knowledge and information from the Voting Rights Timeline, the Constitution and Amendments, and quotes on citizenship and voting to support their claims.

Take Informed Action:

Students decide to make pamphlets on the importance of voting (Appendix M) to pass out at school and community events. They set up a booth encouraging community members over the age of 18 to register to vote.

Identify the Problem – Many people, both young and old, have voter apathy. People of all ages need to be better educated on the history of voting rights and on the workings of government at all levels.

Development of Plan and Initiate Action – Have students brainstorm how they can encourage the community to increase civic participation, specifically voting. After training in the voter registration process, help students plan a voter registration activity in the community encouraging community members to vote.

Reflection- Students should check statistics of the next local election to see if voter participation increased. Watch for trends at state and national levels.

Essential Vocabulary:

democracy
Constitution
amendment
suffrage
equal rights
citizens
civic participation
candidate

Vocabulary Activities:

- 1) Use Vocabulary Guesswork (Appendix N) and accompanying visuals from the Internet. Using the contextual clues and group discussion, have groups write a group definition for each word. After students have completed their “guesswork, they look at a dictionary definition. Words that are the same in each definition are highlighted so students can see how close they came to the actual definition.
- 2) Display vocabulary word cards with definition and visual for future reference and environmental print.
- 3) Use the Vocabulary Reinforcement Game (Appendix O). Divide students into groups of four members. Each student gets a game card and takes a turn reading his/her card to the rest of the group. Students record what they have learned from each clue and try to write the correct word after all four members have read their card.
- 4) Have students complete a Word Square (Appendix P) with the word *democracy*. Word Square has the advantage of being an excellent developmental exercise or an assessment component. It demands the student to recall a definition, visualize the definition, and describe what the word is not. The exercise may be done cooperatively, in pairs, or on an individual basis. Allow students time to share their Word Squares with a small group or the whole class. Staple Word Squares together for a class book.

Appendix A



Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/04/opinion/norden-voting-rights/>



Source: <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatches/globalpost-blogs/highway-2012/campaign-2012-early-voting-democrats-robocalls-iowa>



Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2012/11/06/politics/election-voting/>
<http://www.prwatch.org/news/2014/04/12461/federal-court-strikes-down-wi-voter-id-unconstitutional>





Source: http://pastorrobort-nikos.blogspot.com/2010_10_01_archive.html



Source: <http://www.news-daily.com/photos/2014/apr/25/97855/>

Appendix B

Timeline Items for Voting Rights

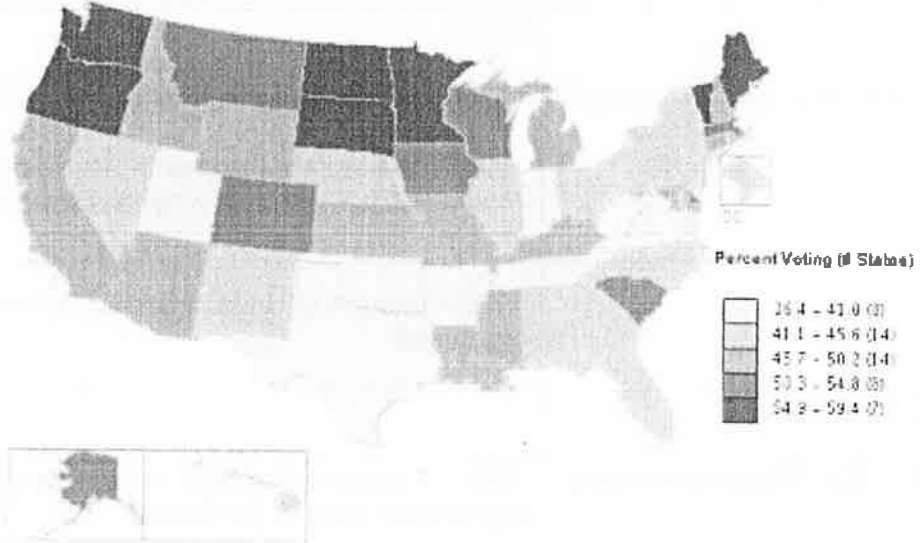
General Events	Voting Related Events
1776-1789 Revolutionary Era	1787 – U.S. Constitution leaves rules about voting rights to the states
1789 – U.S. Constitution adopted	1812-1821 – 10 states eliminate property requirements for voting
1846-1848 – U.S.-Mexican War results in U.S. acquisition of the far West; Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo declares that Mexican residents of the new territory can choose to become U.S. citizens	<p>1840-1847 – More states eliminate property restrictions; restrictions on Catholics and non-Christians also eliminated</p> <p>1848 – First Woman’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, where the <i>Declaration of Sentiments</i> calls for women suffrage</p>
1861-1865 – Civil War	<p>1869 – Women get the right to vote in Wyoming territory</p> <p>1870 – 15th Amendment</p>
1865-1877 - Reconstruction	<p>1873 – Trial of Susan B. Anthony for voting in 1872 presidential election</p> <p>1875 – <i>Minor v. Happersett</i>, in which U.S. Supreme Court denied that the 14th Amendment gave women the right to vote</p> <p>1879 – Standing Bear Trial, recognized Indians as persons with rights</p> <p>1887- Dawes Act, offered citizenship to Native Americans who accepted allotments</p> <p>1890-1910 – Women granted the right to vote in 11 western states and territories</p> <p>1910 – National American Woman Suffrage Association organized</p>

<p>1914-1918 – World War I</p>	<p>1916 – Organization of the National Woman’s Party, which used militant tactics to advance the cause of woman suffrage</p> <p>1919 – American Indian Citizenship Act granted rights to Native Americans who served in World War I</p> <p>1920 – 19th Amendment ratified</p> <p>1924 – The Indian Citizenship Act granted Native Americans full citizenship rights, including the right to vote</p> <p>1929 – League of United Latin American Citizens organized</p>
<p>1941-1945 – World War II</p>	
<p>1956-1965? – Civil Rights Movement</p>	<p>1964 – Freedom Summer, a massive voter registration drive in the South</p>
<p>1965?- 1973 – Vietnam War</p>	<p>1964 – 24th Amendment invalidated the use of poll taxes in federal elections</p> <p>1965 – Voting Rights Act</p> <p>1970 – 26th Amendment granted right to vote to 18-21 year-olds</p> <p>1974 – Southwest Voter Registration Education Project (Su Vota es Su Voz)</p> <p>1975 – Congress extended the Voting Rights Act to apply to the Hispanic, Native American, and Asian voters</p> <p>1992 – National Coalition for the Homeless begins sponsorship of “You Don’t Need a Home to Vote” campaign</p>

Appendix C

Percent Voting in the Election of Nov 2010

See Table



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

Appendix D

Survey on Voting

Due _____

Please survey 4 adults (anyone over 18) and write their answers on the survey along with the person's age.

SURVEY QUESTION:

Does voting matter? Why or why not?

Person 1	Age
Person 2	Age
Person 3	Age
Person 4	Age

Appendix E

Example On-line Primary Sources

Voting and Voting Rights

- <http://www.archives.gov/legislative/resources/education/voting-rights/jackson.html>
- <http://www.archives.gov/legislative/resources/education/voting-rights/mondale.html>
- http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/american_originals/suebanth.html
- <http://loc.gov/pictures/resource/ds.05267/>
- <http://www.change.org/petitions/alice-paul-national-holiday>
- <http://mypraiseatl.com/1024692/african-americans-proteted-for-voting-rights-in-pennsylvania-on-this-day-in-1838/>
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African-American_Civil_Rights_Movement_\(1954%E2%80%931968\)#mediaviewer/File:1963_march_on_washington.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African-American_Civil_Rights_Movement_(1954%E2%80%931968)#mediaviewer/File:1963_march_on_washington.jpg)
- http://tedkennedy.org/ownwords/event/voting_age
- <http://www.fordham.edu./halsall/mod/Senecafalls.html>
- <http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0700/frameset.html>
click on "Limited Voting Rights for Women"
- <http://www.nebraskastudies.org/0700/frameset.html>
click on "Native American Citizenship"
- http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/recon/jb_recon_burnham_3_e.html
- http://www.americaslibrary.gov/jb/recon/jb_recon_burnham_2_e.html
- <https://beta.congress.gov/bill/93rd-congress/house-bill/14361>

Appendix F



Source: <http://www.history.org/Foundation/journal/spring07/elections.cfm>

Thinking about Economics

What time period is this?

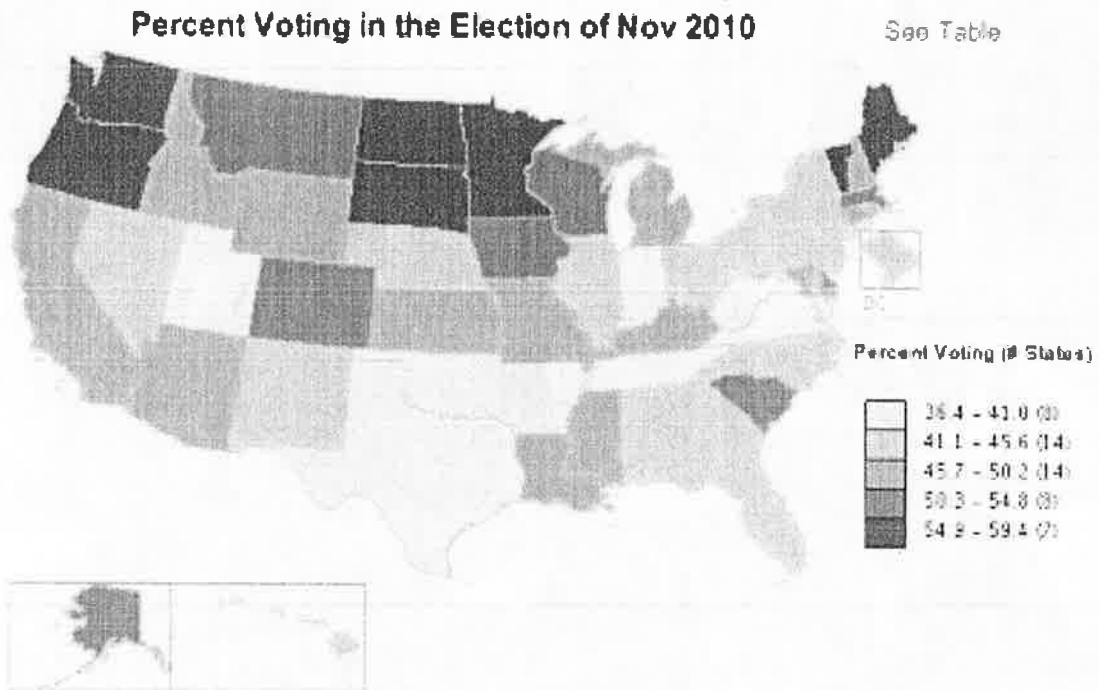
How do you know?

Who had the right to vote?

Why were voting rights tied to wealth?

Why did this change over time?

Appendix G



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey

STATISTICS from 2012

- 2012 U.S. General Eligible Turnout = 58.9% (United States Election Project)
- At 55.5%, California's general eligible turnout rate is in the lowest 20% of U.S. states (United States Election Project)

Thinking About Geography

1. According to geography, who is voting in the greatest numbers? _____
2. Who is voting in the least numbers? _____
3. Predict reasons for these voter turn out rates. _____

4. What are some possible solutions to this problem? _____

Appendix H

Timeline Activity

Directions: Cut the cards apart and put them in chronological order. Study your timeline. Are there events that caused another event to happen? Find and discuss the cause/effect relationships of the events on your timeline.

African American men get the vote	The Seneca Falls Convention	Civil Rights Movement/ Vietnam War
Native Americans, Asian Americans, and Latinos get the vote	Only free white men with property can vote	The U.S. Constitution is adopted
Women get the vote	The 15 th Amendment is ratified, stating that the right to vote shall not be denied on account of race, color or status as former slaves	18-21 year olds get the vote

Appendix J

Evaluating Sources and Gathering Evidence

Our document is valid because _____

This document is from the perspective of _____

This group wants _____

We know because _____

Appendix K

Does Voting Matter?	
Evidence to Support "YES"	Evidence to Support "NO"
<i>What do YOU think?</i>	

Appendix L

Planning Your Public Service Announcement

Shot #	Description/ Dialogue	Shot type: Close up or wide	Visual clues to help communicate idea

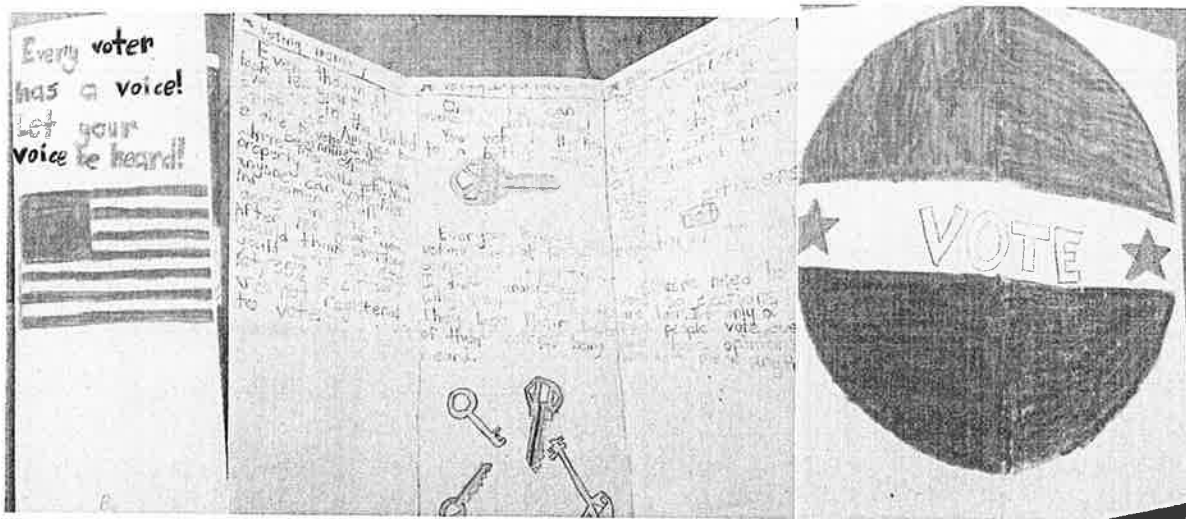
Appendix M

Taking Informed Action Voting in Our Community

THE TASK

Since 35% of eligible Americans are NOT registered to vote and voting is vital to our democratic process, our community needs your help. Create a pamphlet for distribution at the front desk and at community events. The goal is to have 100% of eligible citizens registered to vote by the next election.

Your pamphlet needs to be a tri-fold that convinces citizens to take action and register to vote. Include the history of voting rights, statistics, and persuasive language.



Cover panel - Use a catchy phrase to get attention. Decorate with a patriotic symbol or with an eye-catching patriotic design.

Inside panel #1 - Write a paragraph about the history of voting rights. Include a picture.

Inside panel #2 (the center) - Attention getting picture with a phrase or short paragraph aimed at persuading the reader to vote. Include the importance of voting in our democratic government. Why should citizens be involved in the voting process?

Inside panel #3 - Write a paragraph about voting statistics and the need for representation of all citizens.

Two back panels - Your choice!

Appendix N

Vocabulary Guesswork

Read each sentence with your group. Discuss the vocabulary word and agree on a definition using the clues provided in the sentences. Write your group definition on the lines.

1. In the United States, our representative **democracy** allows us to choose people to represent our views in the government.

Group definition:

2. The **citizens** of the community followed the laws.

Group definition:

3. Forming a new government was not easy. The delegates had many different ideas and they needed to agree on a plan. After many months, they signed the **Constitution**.

Group definition:

4. When a change is needed, Congress proposes an **amendment** to the Constitution.

Group definition:

5. Women did not always have the right to vote. In her Declaration of Sentiments, Elizabeth Cady Stanton discussed the issues of female **suffrage**.

Group definition:

Appendix O

Vocabulary Reinforcement Game

A	B
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The word starts with the letter <u>c</u>.2) The word starts with the letter <u>c</u>.3) The word starts with the letter <u>s</u>.4) The word starts with the letter <u>c</u>.5) The words start with the letter <u>c</u>.6) The word starts with the letter <u>A</u>.7) The words start with the letter <u>c</u>.8) The word starts with the letter <u>d</u>.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The word has <u>4</u> syllables.2) The word has <u>3</u> syllables.3) The word has <u>2</u> syllables.4) The word has <u>3</u> syllables.5) The words have <u>3</u> syllables.6) The word has <u>3</u> syllables.7) The words have <u>7</u> syllables.8) The word has <u>4</u> syllables.
C	D
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The word ends with the letter <u>n</u>.2) The word ends with the letter <u>e</u>.3) The word ends with the letter <u>e</u>.4) The word ends with the letter <u>s</u>.5) The words end with the letter <u>s</u>.6) The word ends with the letter <u>t</u>.7) The words end with the letter <u>n</u>.8) The word ends with the letter <u>y</u>.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) The word means – a system of principles defining how a country or organization operates2) The word means – a person running for elective offices3) The word means – the right to vote4) The word means – natives of a region or country who owe loyalty to it and have specific rights5) The word means – rights to personal liberty established by the 13th and 14th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution and certain Congressional acts, especially as applied to an individual or a minority group6) The word means – something that is formally added to, or taken away from, an existing document such as the U.S. Constitution7) The words mean – promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes8) The word means – a form of government in which the people, or their elected representatives, have power

Appendix P

Word Square

<p>The word</p>	<p>A picture or diagram</p>
<p>Definition</p>	<p>A picture or diagram of what the word is <i>not</i></p>

