

Teachers Guide: Voting Methods

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Thank you for considering this video for your class

Goals: Our goals for this video are to teach students about new and exciting ways of holding an election that they may not be aware of. Show that not every system is perfect, and that each has their strengths and weaknesses. To promote thought, discussion, and understanding of the various methods of voting.

The exercises here are not meant to be difficult. They are meant to show that in any given election, one of the big factors of who will win is the method that the votes are counted. If any candidate gets a majority, there is a clear winner. In any other case, depending on how the votes are counted can determine the winner. We go over three methods of counting those votes, some more common than others. There are many more ways to do this, but for the sake of time we only cover a limited number of them.

Prerequisites: The prerequisites are very light. The students should have basic arithmetic skills and an understanding of their government's method of voting to use in comparison to the methods that we present here in the video.

Class Exercises: The main exercises are the election and determining the winner of the election using the three different methods. Also, throughout the breaks there will be questions presented to the class to answer and discuss with their neighbors. There should be plenty of discussion during these breaks as the students are answering the questions.

Materials Needed: Very little materials are needed. Each student should have a pencil and a sheet of paper for determining who wins in elections. If you as a teacher decided to use our prepared ballots in the teacher's packet, each sheet can be cut into two ballots to use for the class. Also in the packet are a second set of data that you can use in place of the in class election, and the proof of the study showing that less than 25% of voters can elect the US president for those students who are interested.

Other comments: While we are only covering three methods of voting in the video today, some other methods are Approval Voting, the Condorcet method, pair wise voting, Schwartz Sequential Dropping, and Range voting. Every method has their merits and flaws, and there are simply too many to go over. If students are interested in learning more about these different types of voting methods, there is plenty of information available both on the internet and in most local libraries.