
The Three Branches of Government || The Electoral College

Goals & Objectives

Goal: To have students understand the role of the Electoral College and decide whether or not it provides for a truly democratic process in the choosing of new presidents.

Objective: Have students debate against one another on the validity of the Electoral College.

California State Content Standards

12.4 Students analyze the unique roles and responsibilities of the three branches of government as established by the U.S. Constitution.

12.4.4 Discuss Article II of the Constitution as it relates to the executive branch, including eligibility for office and length of term, election to and removal from office, the oath of office, and the enumerated executive powers.

Common Core Literacy Standards

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.11-12.9

Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Driving Historical Question

Should we abolish the Electoral College, or is it a necessary part of the presidential election process?

Lesson Introduction (Anticipatory Set/Hook/Accessing Prior Knowledge) || Time: 20 min

Students will read an excerpt on the Electoral College, and then complete a Quickwrite on whether or not they believe the Electoral College is needed in the presidential election process. The excerpt gives a brief summary of some of the pros and cons of the Electoral College.

http://uselectionatlas.org/INFORMATION/INFORMATION/electcollege_procon.php

Vocabulary (Content Language Development) || Time: Included

Throughout the lesson introduction and lecture, students will be given a vocabulary list and expected to fill in the corresponding terms with their matching definitions.

Content Delivery (Method of Instruction) || Time: 20 min

After their Quickwrite, students will be given a short lecture on the Electoral College and will be provided with useful background information that they can use in the upcoming debate. The teacher will lecture on the role of the Electoral College and explain why it is important to the presidential election process.

After the lecture, the teacher will prep students on the upcoming debate. The teacher will provide students with a breakdown of instructions and provide them with the rubric that will be used to grade them during the debate.

Student Engagement (Critical Thinking & Student Activities) || Time: 40 min

Students will participate in a debate on the necessity of the Electoral College. Using the information they garnered from both the excerpt and the teacher's lecture, they will choose a stance on the given topic and defend it. On one side, students will argue that the Electoral College is a necessary piece of the presidential election and that its role is crucial in presenting a representative vote. The other side will argue that the Electoral College does nothing but take away the meaning of the people's vote.

The teacher will facilitate the debate by asking students a series of focused debate questions, which they will then debate over for a given period of time.

Lesson Closure || Time: 10 min

Once the debate has finished, students will write a "letter" to the House of Representatives explaining why they believe the Electoral College should or should not remain in place. Once they have finished, they will raise their hand and the teacher will stamp their letter for completion.

Assessments (Formative & Summative)

Formative:

- Quickwrite
- Class Debate

Summative:

- Letter to the House of Representatives (Exit Slip)

Accommodations for English Learners, Striving Readers and Students with Special Needs

English Learners will be provided with guided notes for the lecture. This will add structure and direction to any notes they wish to take during the lecture. Any students who require it will also be provided with the debate questions in advance so they can look over the questions and prepare a stance beforehand. This way, they will come into the debate with added confidence and be more likely to participate.



Resources (Books, Websites, Handouts, Materials)

Notebooks

Excerpt on the Electoral College

<http://uselectionatlas.org/INFORMATION/INFORMATION/electcollege_procon.php>