

2020 U.S. ELECTIONS

RESOURCE TOOLKIT FOR AMERICAN SPACES

This Resource Toolkit is designed for programming at American Spaces to create a greater awareness of the issues, procedures, and policies related to the 2020 U.S. Election.

Note: American Spaces should not show preference to one party, view, or candidate over another.



PRESENTATIONS IN A BOX

We've developed some PowerPoint slides that anyone can use to conduct presentations on the U.S. elections. We recommend that the presenter edit the PowerPoint to ensure it is appropriate for his/her audience. See presenter notes on tips and information for give the presentation.

- Overview of the U.S. 2020 Elections
<http://bit.ly/PPT2020Elc>
- The Electoral College
<http://bit.ly/PPTElcClg>
- Presidential Primaries
<http://bit.ly/PPTPrsPrm>
- U.S. Elections template - Create your own slides on the 2020 US Elections
<http://bit.ly/PPTTmp>

WHAT ARE THE 2020 U.S. ELECTIONS?

On Tuesday, November 3, 2020, U.S. citizens 18 years and older will not only cast their votes for the office of the President of the United States, but they will vote for representatives for the U.S. Congress, as well as state and local officials. All 435 seats of the House of Representatives and 30 of the 100 Senate seats will be contested. Many Americans will also closely follow local elections as local elections can have just as much impact, if not more, on their day-to-day lives.

Fair and free elections are the cornerstone of a democracy. Elections give citizens a voice in their government in the most fundamental way: by deciding who governs. While the American system can seem complicated, it ensures that voters have a voice at all levels in their government.



MORE RESOURCES

iCivics Online Games

- <https://www.icivics.org/> - Founded by retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, **iCivics** provides educators lesson plans and games to teach about the U.S. government, its history, its immigration system, and the role of the citizen. Here are recommended games:
- **Win the White House** - Poll voters, build arguments, and raise funds
<http://bit.ly/WinWhHs>
- **Cast your vote** - Learn about local elections and town halls
<http://bit.ly/CstVtGm>
- **Activate** - Pick an issue and lead a campaign
<http://bit.ly/ActvtGm>

ShareAmerica Articles and Videos

- Polling 101
<http://bit.ly/ShAmPII101>
- Youth and Elections
<http://bit.ly/ShAmYthElct>
- Women in Politics
<http://bit.ly/ShAmWmnPltc>
- Articles on elections
<http://bit.ly/ShAmElct>

2020 Elections Debate Topics

- ProCon.org** has published arguments for and against various issues for the 2020 elections, as well as statements from candidates.
<http://bit.ly/PrCn2020>



Debate Kits

The Office of American Spaces has designed the below debate kits as part of programming to engage in issues related to the 2020 U.S. Elections.

Tariffs

This debate kit designed for the American Spaces provides background on tariffs, as well as links to articles to understand the pros and cons. The participants will debate the benefits and disadvantages of tariffs. <http://bit.ly/DKTrffs>

College Affordability

In this debate kit, participants will become acquainted with the U.S. higher education system and debate to what extent a U.S. higher education is worth the financial investment. <http://bit.ly/DKEdInv>

Taxes

Participants will learn about taxes in the United States and debate whether or not a government should raise taxes to pay for social programs. <http://bit.ly/DbKtTxS>

Movie Discussion Guides

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*

This classic film follows the story of Mr. Smith who becomes a U.S. Senator and his confrontation with self-serving politicians.
<http://bit.ly/MrSmtWsh>

Dave

This comedy tells the story of a man suddenly becoming President, and shows importance of democracy and separation of powers.
<http://bit.ly/DaveMK>

**These film are covered under a licensing agreement with Motion Picture Licensing Corporation and can be screened at the American Spaces. Post will need to procure the films. Coordinators should screen films ahead of showing them to ensure that they are appropriate for American Spaces audiences.*

***The views expressed on this site do not necessarily represent those of the United States government.*

MORE RESOURCES

National Democracy Institute Dem Tools - <https://dem.tools>

These resources, which are designed for governments, political parties, and civil society organizations, give best practices on how to observe voting booths, be responsive to voters, and conduct inclusive campaigns.

YALI Resources

- Online Course on Understanding Elections and Civil Responsibility
<http://bit.ly/YALIElct>
- Articles on elections in Africa and the United States
<http://bit.ly/YALILcEI>

Election Photos

- State Department Flickr Photos on Elections
<http://bit.ly/ElcFlkr>

Downloadable Posters

- Fair and free elections
<http://bit.ly/PstElct>

eLibrary

American Spaces have access to eLibrary, which has excellent and reliable resources.

<https://elibraryusa.state.gov>

Video Lectures

- State of Play for the U.S. Elections
<http://bit.ly/FPCStPI2020>
- Campaigns and Polling
<http://bit.ly/FPCCmpPly>



Lesson Plans

EXPERT ADVICE SERIES

These short videos from ShareAmerica are accompanied by a discussion guide and background information on the speaker.

- **Getting the Most from your Vote** - <http://bit.ly/MstFrmVtVd>
Discussion Guide - <http://bit.ly/MstFrmVtGd>
- **Grassroots Organizing for Civic Engagement**
<http://bit.ly/GrssRtsVd> Guide - <http://bit.ly/GrssRtsGd>
- **Engaging with Candidates and Elected Officials**
<http://bit.ly/EngCndVd> Guide - <http://bit.ly/EngCndGd>

PBS ELECTION CENTRAL

<https://www.pbseduelectioncentral.com/> - The Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) has created an interactive guide to the U.S. elections covering the history and process of the elections. These resources include the following:

- Easy-to-use lesson plans with videos
- Films with discussion guides
- An interactive map
- Virtual field trips
- Debate Toolkit

TED TALK DISCUSSION GUIDES

The Unexpected Challenge of a Country's First Elections

(11 min, 2016) <http://bit.ly/TdTIkElct>

Election expert Philippa Neave shares her experiences from the front lines of democracy.

Why Ordinary People Need to Understand Power

(17 min, 2013) <http://bit.ly/OrdPplPwr>

Author and educator Eric Liu argues that ordinary people need to understand power for there to be a healthy, democratic government.