

The Interim

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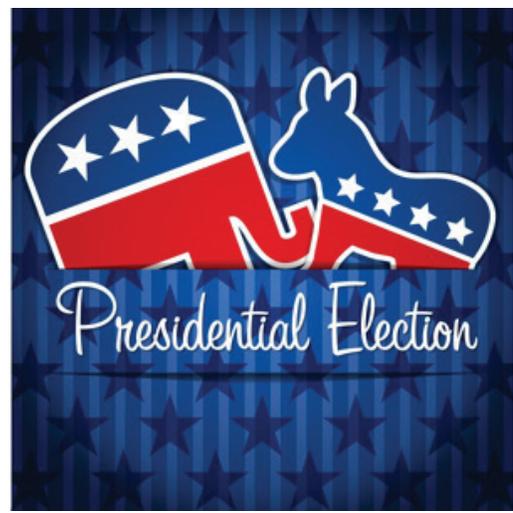
Curriculum Supplement For Schools

The Interim Plus is a periodical dedicated to educational matters and specifically designed to assist teachers in integrating relevant life issues in their lesson planning.

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Contents:

PART A Founding Principles and Origins of the American System of Government	p. 1
PART B The 2016 Presidential Campaign	p.10

Welcome back and best wishes for a wonderful school year. This first edition of *The Interim Plus* supplement for schools contains ideas and resources on the American political system and how it plays out in the current presidential campaign. Special thanks to Michael Tuns, a summer intern, who contributed to this edition. We have tried to provide a sound historical background of how and why the United States came into being and the system Americans have chosen to govern themselves. We hope that this supplement helps the teacher of history, civics, politics, economics with their own lesson planning on this principal theme.

The United States occupies a paramount position on the world stage. Although some observers see this modern colossus in relative decline, the reach of American power and influence is still very strong, whether cultural, political, economic or military in nature. What happens stateside inevitably has repercussions on Canada and the rest of the world.

Part A: Founding Principles and Origins of the American System of Government

The United States of America was created when thirteen British colonies banded together to rebel against the British monarchy. This revolution, held in 1776, was fought over the belief that the colonies should not be taxed without having real representation in the British Parliament. The latter made laws seriously impacting the colonists' economic well being (credit, trade restrictions/tariffs, money supply, regulations re manufacturing, etc.). When the colonials had expressed their objections the British Monarch had sent armed forces to put down the protesters. A significant section of the colonial population would not stand for such treatment and their leaders led a rebellion against what they perceived to be an unjust system of government. According to them, the governed had not been asked for their consent, being treated as subjects, with virtually no political rights. In a new federal republic they expected and wanted to have the status of citizens, people with political rights and a say in how they would be governed.

A sizeable portion of the colonial population did not share the revolutionary approach to redressing perceived injustices and they chose instead to remain loyal to the British crown. Eventually many of these “loyalists” were either expelled or otherwise convinced to leave the thirteen colonies and seek refuge in the British north American colonies like Nova Scotia, and Upper and Lower Canada.

The revolution had been prepared intellectually by the writings of various colonists who had been agitating for a republican form of government. According to these publicists (some of whom were familiar with the writings of the **French philosophes**) a government should be constitutional in nature, with a written framework outlining the rights, freedoms and responsibilities of qualified citizens. The executive powers of government should be available to all citizens and not be hereditary. Simply put, government should be a public affair – *res publica* – something open to all, not something reserved to the few.

In the United States the political system was created bottom-up, with individual sovereign states (all former colonies) coming together to create a federal or national government to which was given certain limited powers. This was to be the unique American experiment. The opening of the *United States Declaration of Independence* written by Thomas Jefferson in 1776, states as follows:

We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.



One must take this founding statement into account in order to understand the nature of America's **Constitution** and its republican system of government: human beings are created equal; they have certain basic human rights; they receive these rights from God, not the state. Moreover, governments exist to protect and promote those rights; and governments must enjoy the consent of the governed in order to be seen as just. The American political system is founded on the idea that no individual or group should hold too much power. There is the separation of powers between the respective branches (judicial, executive and legislative). Each of the three branches of the governing apparatus has some authority to act on its own, some authority to regulate the other two branches, and has some of its own authority, in turn, regulated by the other branches.

In most countries the federal or national government has all the powers not directly assigned to a lower level of government. The U.S.A. is unique in that it was formed by 13 self-proclaimed sovereign states who united to create a single state, leading to the federal government having

limited powers while the individual states and their citizens have the **reserve** powers, those not explicitly assigned to the federal government. Thus, the federal government of the U.S.A. constitutionally is supposed to exercise only those powers directly outlined in the Constitution. Some powers that are held by the federal government include the printing of money, regulating international trade, and declaring war. The state governments can ratify amendments to the Constitution, issue various licenses, establish and fund education systems and regulate business. Some powers are held by both levels of government, such as the ability to build roads, collect taxes and regulate businesses. (Here are two short videos that are useful in explaining the division of powers <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuFR5XBYLfU> , and another which gives a brief explanation of political systems in general. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NT6koTFHnH0>)

According to the Constitution, where federal laws overlap with state laws, the laws of the higher level of government take precedence. Such was the case in 2015 when the United States Supreme Court required all states to recognize same-sex marriages as valid, something that several states (such as Texas, Alabama, and Ohio) had refused to do previous to this while others had already done as much.

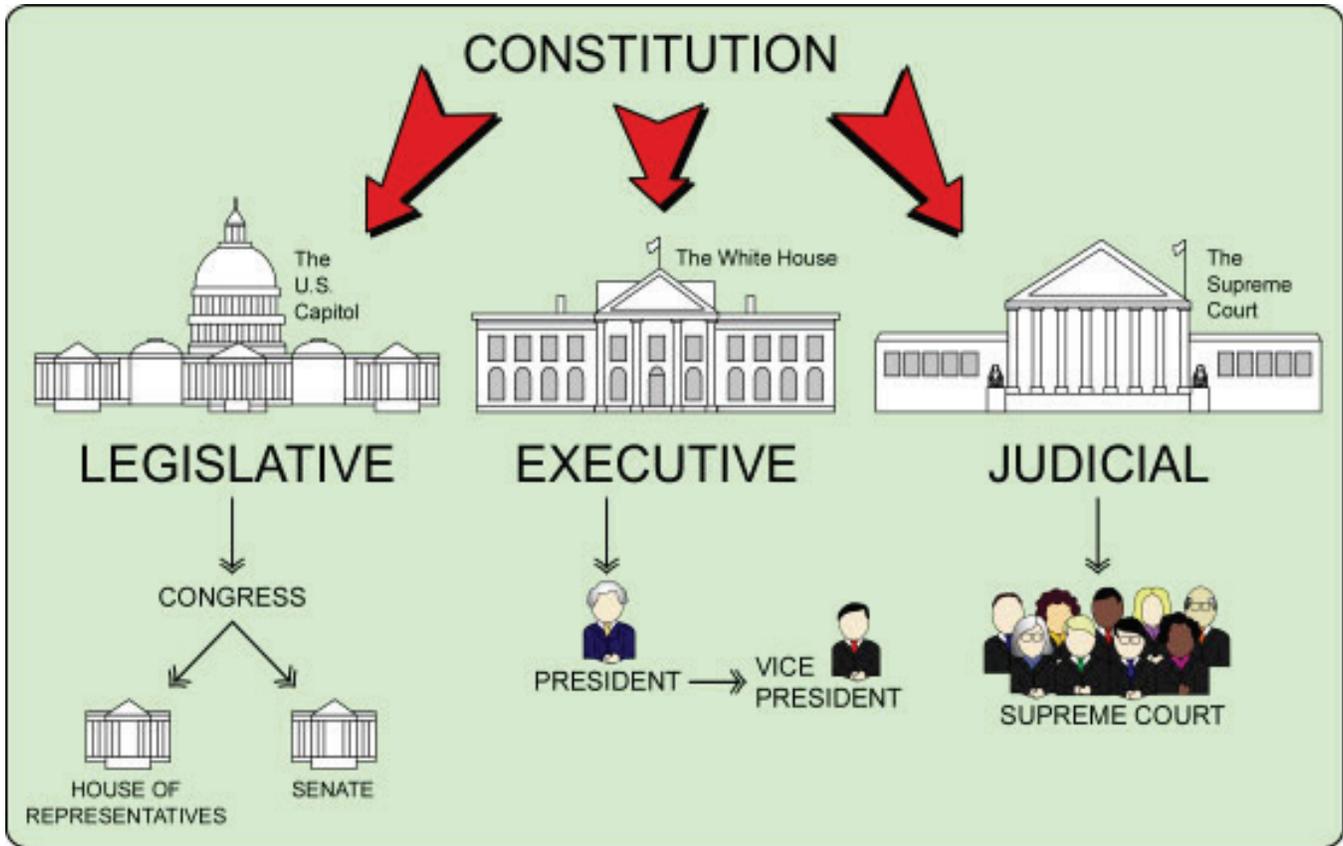
The manner in which the new nation was created and the division of government powers engendered an ongoing debate about federalism, with some arguing for a stronger role for the federal government and others wanting to place more power at the state level. The rise of the **Tea-Party** in recent years reinforces the view among many Americans today that the “federal government has become too dominant, too intrusive, and too profligate” in its spending.

Another indication of distrust of government was that over time many states adopted the **referendum initiative**. This procedure enables a policy question to be put directly to the electorate pending the collection of a certain number of signatures or by the decision of the state legislature. Each election cycle there are such referendum choices on the state ballots. The debate on abortion and the question of gay marriage have appeared on the ballots recently. In the latter case, the proposal to legalize gay marriage was resoundly defeated at the ballot box in most states, but the Supreme Court effectively legislated by finding the laws banning it unconstitutional. This presents another complication and challenge within the American federal system. The role and composition of the Supreme Court will likely be a significant election issue

in the current presidential campaign, with each party very much aware of what is at stake, the opportunity to put a multiple generational stamp on that judicial body and through it shaping the future of the country.

A further provision, intended to avoid rapid political

change, was to give each branch of the federal government a different term of office: the President, a term of four years; the Senate, six years; and members of the House of Representatives, two years. Members of the Supreme Court were given the privilege of effectively serving for life.



The Three Branches of the Federal Government

Executive:

Who's in it: The President, his executive office, cabinet departments, and independent government agencies (CIA, FBI, EPA)

His powers: To sign laws, to veto laws, carry out laws, negotiate treaties, pardon criminals, commute prison sentences, etc.

Legislative:

Who's in it: The Senate (or Upper House) and the House of Representatives

Their powers: To make laws, overturn presidential vetoes, control the budget, and impeach the president

Judicial:

Who's in it: District courts, the Courts of Appeal, and the Supreme Court

Their powers: Decide the constitutionality of laws, and may overturns the rulings of other judges in the lower courts

Congress (the equivalent of the Canadian parliament, House of Commons and Senate)

Skeletal Description of three branches

House of Representatives		The Senate
435, distributed proportionately according to the state's population (plus 3 for the District of Columbia)	How many	100, two for each State regardless of size or population (no Senators for District of Columbia)
Every seat is up for election every two years, individual representatives serve for two years at a time.	Terms	Roughly 1/3 of the seats are up for election every two years, but individual senators serve for six years at a time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25+ years old when sworn in • A citizen for 7+ years • Inhabits the state they represent 	Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30+ years old when sworn in • A citizen for 9+ years • Inhabits the state they represent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May actually choose the president when the country is in a deadlock • Can impeach officials • Initiates spending initiatives 	Specific powers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ratifies treaties • Approves nominations for the Supreme Court, Cabinet, etc.
President		Supreme Court Justices
One, elected by the entire country but not by direct popular vote, rather by an Electoral College of 538 members	How many	Nine, appointed by the president.
Up for re-election every four years for a maximum of two terms.	Terms	Serve a single term until death or retirement.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 35+ years old when sworn in • A citizen for 14+ years • A "natural born citizen" 	Eligibility	No specific criteria exist in the Constitution.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene/adjourn Congress • Command armed forces • Grant pardons • Sign/veto legislation 	Specific powers	Has the final say on the constitutionality of laws passed by Congress or the executive actions taken by the President.

There is controversy over war making powers respectively of the President and Congress. While the President conducts the actual war effort, the Congress has to approve a declaration of war and Congress is in charge of passing budgets needed to prosecute the war effectively. At times the cost of a war may exceed hundreds of billions of dollars, even trillions, not to mention the loss of American lives and those of their opponents. This is a hotly debated part of government decision-making.

The passing of a bill into law can be a complex process, involving hundreds of people, including the 535 elected members of Congress (Senate and House), plus dozens and dozens of staffers and aides who do a lot of research, analysis, and writing of briefs and summaries for their respective Congressman or Senator. In addition, lobbyists and ordinary citizens can have a say by communicating with their Congressman or Senator. When the two houses are not in synch with the executive or vice-versa, gridlock can develop and nothing gets done, even when serious problems call for urgent attention, like costly long-term entitlement programs.



The American Constitution

The Constitution itself has proved to be a very stable document and has served the country well, partially because its drafters made it a very difficult instrument to change. It stipulates the rules and responsibilities of government while serving as the “supreme law” in the United States.

In its 227 years of existence, only twenty-seven amendments have been adopted, ten of them (known collectively as the Bill of Rights) being implemented at the same time the Constitution itself came into effect. For a proposed amendment to pass, it must secure 66% of the vote of Congress as well as 75% of state legislatures. A good short video on the American Bill of Rights can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmLosRzNRqA> A very important principle to remember is that the rights of the citizens are innate rights given by God the Creator, not by the state or government. A few notable amendments include:

1st Amendment: Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

2nd Amendment: A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.

8th Amendment: Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

9th Amendment The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

10th Amendment: The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.

16th Amendment The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration.

19th Amendment: The right of citizens of the United



States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

For an annotated list of the whole amendments visit this link

<http://constitution.findlaw.com/amendments.html#sthash.ELHzrVpR.dpuf>

Some view the constitution as a living document, to be changed in both amendments and in interpretation as society progresses. It is the life-serving Supreme Court justices that are called upon to determine the constitutionality of an action or law. There continues to be two very different approaches to the interpretation of the Constitution; one strand known as *strict constructionists* or *originalism* (a conservative approach) and the other as the *loose constructionists* or *living/organic Constitution* (liberal approach).



From the beginning there was a healthy distrust of government – any government. Given the loss of life in gun-related violence over the years, a robust debate currently roars regarding the 2nd Amendment. The “loose constitutionalists” feel that the second amendment should be changed/restricted or repealed as it has no relevancy in the modern world in their opinion. The “strict constitutionalists” believe in preserving the original intentions of the founding fathers, that the right to keep and bear arms must be maintained at all times, it being one of the founding principles of the United States. The 2nd Amendment was intended to drive home the point that the people should have the right to resist and defend themselves against the tyranny of any government, including their own.

The claim is often made that the freedom of the American people rests on respect for these principles that have largely fuelled the American democratic experiment. Elections can be seen as a periodic sounding of the governed to express their opinions as to who should govern them and based on what guiding principles. Elections are necessary for a peaceful struggle for power among Americans. At stake may be competing visions of America, both its past and its future. Once again, as called for in their constitution, national and state elections will be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November.

Questions

1. What is a republic? What are some key principles of American “republican” government?
2. Who were the Loyalists? Why did they not join in the rebellion?
3. Why is the American “Declaration of Independence” such an important document to Americans? Does it have value for other nations? Have other nations been influenced by it?
4. How and why is the American Constitution a stable document?
5. What is meant by the “separation of powers”?
6. Are the checks and balances in the American federal government too strong, leading to gridlock? If so, how would you improve them?
7. In terms of constitutional powers and practice which office has more power, that of the Prime Minister in Canada, or that of the President in the United States?
8. Should any of the criteria to being a Senator or Congressman, which were set in 1787, be updated? If so, how, in what way?
9. In Canada the Senators are selected by the Governor General at the advice of the Prime Minister, whereas in the United States they are elected by the citizens. What are the pros and cons of each system? Which do you think is better?
10. Is there still a checks and balance in effect today or is one branch more powerful than the others? If so, how and why?
11. What are the differences between *originalism* and *organic approaches* to interpreting the meaning of the Constitution? Provide two examples of each approach in action.
12. How many members are there in the House of Representatives? How are they elected? How long is their term of office? Why is there this difference between the House and the Senate?
13. Is the United States in danger of becoming a nation ultimately ruled by its Supreme Court?
14. Should Justices of the Supreme Court have term limits? Should being of a certain age exclude one from making decisions on matters which they may not be familiar with, such as the internet?

15. Look at a list of amendments to the Constitution. Which do you think were the most important to reaffirming the American way of “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness?”
16. “Peace, order, and good government.” Contrast this phrase, which appears in Canada’s constitution, with America’s “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Are there any notable differences in the duties of government that these phrases outline, or are the differences merely incidental? Why?
17. Why are elections so necessary in a free, representative, democratic republic?

The American Electoral Process

America’s Political Parties

In the early years after the thirteen colonies united to form the United States, although there were great debates over the constitution and the various arrangements concerning the division of powers, voting rights, qualifications for citizenship, rights of the people etc. there were no formal political parties competing for the executive offices in the national or state governments. However, political factions began to develop very early as different groups and individuals vied for influence over the direction of public affairs at the state and federal levels. In fact, George Washington, the first American President warned against the development of factions within the state as that would poison the political process of the republic. During his own presidency disagreements over certain policies were already apparent between Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton, two of his Cabinet ministers.

Eventually, two dominant parties came into being, the Republicans (who go back to 1854 and Abraham Lincoln) and the Democrats (who go back to 1824 and Andrew



Jackson). The Democrat Party is sometimes represented as a donkey, while the Republican Party is sometimes featured as an elephant.

The love of competition and service is very strong among Americans. There are elections for all sorts of offices and levels of government, athletic teams, school councils, prom queens, etc. To be elected to the House of Representatives or to the Senate in the United States, a candidate must gain a plurality, that is, more votes than any other candidate, but not necessarily more than 50% of the total votes cast. This is a first-past-the-post or winner-take-all system because there is no reward for the party or candidate that finishes second. As a result, two political parties usually dominate plurality electoral systems to the disadvantage of smaller third parties. Successful candidates inevitably belong to one or other of the two major parties. There are no legal restrictions that prevent third parties from forming and fielding their own candidates, but the plurality system itself usually hinders their efforts to win votes sufficient to establish a foothold in the political arena.

The Presidency

For this supplement, we are concentrating on the process for electing the chief executive in the land, namely the office of President. A good overview of the American system of government overall can be found at <http://www.sparknotes.com/us-government-andpolitics/american-government/political-parties/section2.rhtml>. There is an outline of the Constitution, the separation of powers, the presidency, the three branches of government.



George Washington

Even though George Washington held the office as the first President, the position itself was relatively weak at the beginning. But, through a variety of circumstances the power of the office has been greatly enhanced since the 1850s. Among these factors were: the growth of the nation's power and standing in the world; the expansion of its

territory through war and land purchases; the experiences of the Civil War; the growth in the federal bureaucracy and the military; the professionalization of government; modern industrialization of the economy, complexity of problems that governments have had to face.

The American President is both the head of state and the head of government, and the military commander-in-chief. The sheer size of the American federal government is enormous, employing around 5 million employees, including about 475,000 active-duty military personnel. The President has vast executive powers including waging war, and pardoning criminals. He may sign or veto legislation passed by Congress and he has the power to recommend bills to Congress. The latter body may override a presidential veto but only by a two-thirds majority in each house. One of the most controversial and important of his powers is that of appointing Supreme Court justices and federal judges (subject to the consent of the Senate). This last power generates tremendous debate and is one of the principal

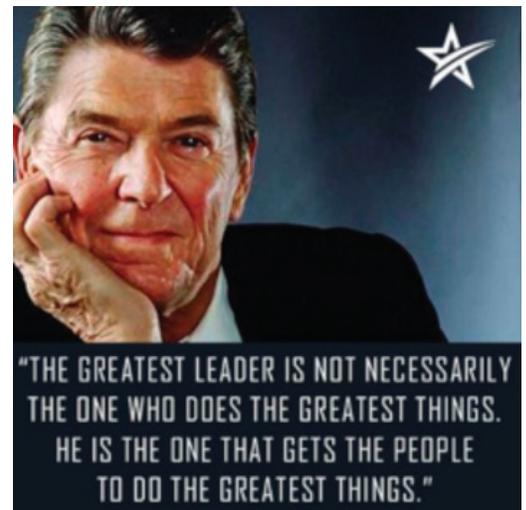
reasons why presidential elections are so crucial.

The President may be **impeached** by a majority in the House and removed from office by a two-thirds majority in the Senate for "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors". Few presidents have faced the threat or reality of impeachment procedures.

Today any politician that wants to run for the presidency would first form an exploratory committee to study the chances of winning the nomination of their party and the subsequent election. A large consideration even at this early stage is the ability or capacity to raise money for the very long, expensive and tortuous campaign to obtain the nomination of one of the two dominant political parties in the race for the White House.

The would-be candidates have to wage a campaign in each of 50 states to win the preference of their party nationally. Registered members of the respective parties vote in the "primaries" or in the state "caucuses" to express their preference among the multiple party candidates.

Each state may have different rules for apportioning their



Ronald Reagan



Abraham Lincoln



John F. Kennedy

delegates to the parties' national convention where a candidate for the presidency is formally chosen by the gathered state delegates. Some states apportion the number of delegates according to the percentage of votes that the various candidates obtained, for example, 35% of the popular vote in that

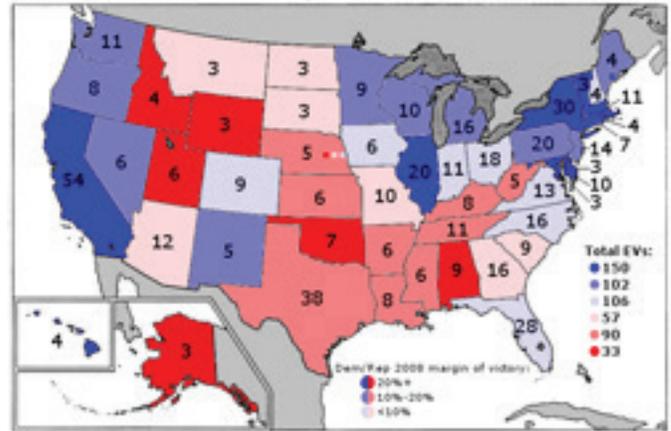


state's primary would get that candidate some 35% of the delegates. But many states give all its delegates to the person who got the most popular votes regardless of whether that was 38%, 27% or 75% of the total. It's winner take all. The person who gains the greatest number of delegates at the party convention becomes the official standard bearer of the party in the presidential election in November. This year the Republicans held their national convention in Cleveland where Donald Trump was confirmed as their nominee for President, while the Democrats held their convention in Philadelphia a week later with Hillary Clinton getting the nod.

The Electoral College

The President is not elected directly by the voters but by an Electoral College representing each state on the basis of a combination of the number of members in the Senate (two for each state regardless of size) and the number of members in the House of Representatives (roughly proportional to population). The total of the Electoral College is 538, with a majority of 270 electoral votes required to elect the President. The states with the largest

number of votes are California (55), Texas (34) and New York (31). The states with the smallest number of votes have only three votes, plus the District of Columbia, which has no voting representation in Congress, but has three electoral votes. In effect, therefore, the Presidential election is not one election but 51.



This system of election means that in theory a candidate can win the largest number of votes nationwide but fail to win the largest number of votes in the Electoral College and therefore fail to become President. In practice, this has happened three times in US history, most recently in 2000. This possibility in turn has led to efforts to reform or abolish the Electoral College system. It sounds unfair and undemocratic but the explanation is that the 'founding fathers' who drafted the American Constitution did not wish to give too much power to the people. They also wanted to respect the importance of individual states and their distinct identity and hence they created a system of checks and balances, a compromise, among large populous states and smaller, less populated states.

The Constitution enables each state to determine how its members in the Electoral College are chosen, and since the 1820s states have chosen their electors by a direct vote of the people. The United States is the only current example of an indirectly elected executive president. In a sense this is a dual system combining both direct voting and indirect voting. Like in the pre-election primaries most states have a "winner-take-all" system that awards all electors to the winning presidential candidate. But, two states, Maine and Nebraska each have a variation of "proportional representation." More than one presidential candidate can receive electoral votes in those states.

The meeting of the electors takes place on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December after the

presidential election. The electors meet in their respective states, where they cast their votes for President and Vice-President on separate ballots. The state's electors' votes are recorded on a "Certificate of Vote," which is prepared at the meeting by the electors. The state's Certificates of Votes are sent to the Congress where they are counted in a joint session of Congress on the 6th of January in the



www.preservearticles.com/2012031026102/get-complete-information-on-the-strengths-and-weaknesses-of-republicanism.html. Among the **strengths** can be included: protection of private property rights of all individuals under Natural Law; universal suffrage; checks and balances (between federal and state governments and between the three branches of government); rule by the majority but under

written rules that also protect minority rights; safeguards guaranteeing certain individual freedoms through the Bill of Rights. Its governmental system has allowed the United States to progress and expand and become a world power. The American people have been proud of their country and its history, even when internal division and the challenge of racism and slavery threatened to dissolve the union.

The President-Elect takes the oath of office and is sworn in as President of the United States on January 20th in the year following the Presidential election.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the American system of government



With a nation as large, populous and powerful as the United States it is difficult to keep in place all the original principles on which the nation was founded and that served it so well in its first 175 years. **Weaknesses** have crept in: today the government is run by political parties, rather than by rules; a two party system is entrenched, with Democrats and Republicans having a stranglehold on the electoral process, with money, tradition and the media on their side; third party candidates don't really stand a chance nationwide; the huge cost of elections is prohibitive, limiting the range of candidates, increasing the influence of corporate interests and pressure groups; ad campaign themselves tend to be extremely negative, even if often truthful; the lack of genuine turnover in the composition of the Congress due to the practice of *Gerrymandering* of electoral districts; voter apathy is rampant with fewer than 50% bothering to vote even in national elections when the presidency is up for grabs; growth of "pork barrel" politics; the political debate has been coarsened, becoming more "partisan and bitter.... more polarised and tribal". Tradition is so strongly ingrained in the American system that efforts to reform the system appear to fall on deaf ears for the most part.

The United States has actually the longest surviving republican /constitutional government system in the world. It is not a perfect form of government, but it has served that nation extremely well and it does suggest stability and longevity. For a fuller consideration of the republican system of government have students assess its strengths and weaknesses by reading the article found at <http://>

Questions

1. Why do two parties dominate American politics? Why haven't third parties made any inroads in the United States, whereas in Canada third parties have achieved power at the provincial level at least?
2. What is meant by the "first-past-the-post"? What are the advantages and disadvantages of this system?
3. What role does money or lack thereof play in the political system? Is it a major problem or simply part of the natural process?
4. The current presidential candidates accuse one another of being unfit for the office of President. What do they mean and provide a couple of examples for each candidate's claim about the other.
5. Why has the power of the Presidency increased so much in the United States? Is the office too powerful or is it too demanding for any one person?
6. Compare and contrast the position and powers of the American president with that of the Canadian prime minister. Which office has greater discretion in the use of the power?
8. Have students list 10 of the most important powers of the American president and have them assess and discuss the relative importance of those powers.
9. How difficult is it to remove a president from office other than by him/her losing an election?
10. What are primaries? What is their role in the selection of candidates for president? What do you think about this method of choosing a presidential candidate? What are some advantages? What are some serious drawbacks? Why is this system in operation?
11. What is the Electoral College? How many members does it have? What is its composition based upon? Is there any unfairness in this system? Why not have a proportional system within the Electoral College?
12. Why are some political pundits critical of its composition and its role in the election process and want to eliminate it?

PART B

The 2016 Presidential Campaign, Candidates, Issues

The battle for the American presidency garners attention world wide. Some of this interest is due to the role and importance of the United States in the world, while others are attracted by the constant television cycle, with revelations, speeches, gaffes, rallies taking place round the clock it seems. No doubt there is also interest generated by the sheer amount of money spent on the campaigning process. The main protagonists and their platforms create yet another level of close scrutiny. The contrasting personalities of the candidates may also create a dramatic narrative that makes for compelling television watching or online reading. The two major contenders, Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, also have surrogate speakers who appear on cable television shows all day long. The spin is constantly being given to events or positions taken by the presidential candidates.

The race for the White House may last one to two years. Precisely because of the length of the campaign and the physical size of the United States and the diversity of the electorate, it takes time to reach the voters and earn their vote. The candidates are criss-crossing the nation but inevitably end up spending the majority of their time and finances in repeated visits to the so-called "battleground states". The campaigns are very complex and full of stratagems and tactical moves. Operatives are always trying to take advantage of the slightest slip-up or verbal gaffe of the opponent. This also explains why hundreds of millions of dollars have to be raised in order to mount a serious presidential campaign.

Here are several suggested activities on how students can learn about the election campaign and the prospects for the respective candidates to achieve their ultimate objective. We offer some suggestions also for analyzing the process and evaluating the performance of the main candidates and their respective campaign teams.

Assessing the Candidates

Have students complete a template on Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, by comparing and contrasting them as persons and as candidates and what they stand for. The list below includes items that have already been much discussed by the leading candidates, and no doubt will form part of the debates that will be held during the months of September and October. Given the sheer volume of issues

and information available, have students complete the assignment by working in groups of 3-4 students whereby they can each concentrate on perhaps one item regarding personality of the candidates and then four or five issues.

Item of comparison/contrast	Donald Trump Republican Party	Hillary Clinton Democrat Party
Personal background and experience in business or government		
Personality, character, trustworthiness, temperament, truthfulness		
Personal health, energy, stamina, ability to serve out the term and handle the great pressures of the office		
On the Specific issues	TRUMP	CLINTON
Economy, jobs, employment		
Trade deals		
Income and corporate tax rates		
National security		
Foreign affairs		
Race relations		
Immigration, refugee crisis		
Law and order, crime and policing		
Respect for the Constitution		

Appointment of justices to the Supreme Court		
Abortion policy		
Planned Parenthood Federation		
Military preparedness		
American nationalism		
Environmental Concerns, Climate Change		
Health Care		
Education		
The family unit, marriage, raising children, child care		
Privacy, internet security		
Technology, Innovation, Science		
Other issue		
Other issue		

Questions

1. Which issues are of prime importance according to the most recent polls?
2. How do each student group reporting rank the issues in terms of priority to them? Have them explain their rationale for the ranked priorities.
3. Are there any social issues that are not receiving the kind of attention they have received in the past three election cycles? Why or why not?
4. Religious groups have certain concerns with the direction that America has taken over the past 10 years or so, what are their concerns and which candidate(s) would be considered more dangerous to their interests or concerns?
5. Personal health seems to be an issue after the pneumonia reports concerning Hillary Clinton. (see youtube video and follow up articles like these <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-idUSKCN1110MT> and <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3784098/Hillary-Clinton-s-doctor-revealed-68-year-old-pneumonia.html> and <http://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2016-election/hillary-clinton-s-health-scare-9-unanswered-questions-n646551> .
6. What type of health issue would or should disqualify a candidate running for high office? Cite several examples of candidates who withdrew from the race because of such medical concerns (since 1964).
7. Should all candidates for the presidency (or in Canada, for position of political party leaders) be obliged to disclose their medical records, or are such demands a real imposition on a person's right to privacy?
8. What about a candidate's financial health, business interests, and tax returns? Should these aspects also be made transparent so voters a full understanding of the candidate's financial well being? Or should any of this matter?
9. Should it be mandatory for candidates and their campaigns to fully disclose all names of people who donate to their cam[paign and amounts donated, whether a private individual or a business corporation or other institution?
10. Should there be a limit on the amount that can be donated to an individual candidate or their campaign?
11. Make a list of special interest groups in the United States (e.g AFL-CIO, NAACP, NRA, NEA, ETC) that play a significant role in supporting the rival campaigns.



and MSNBC. The monitoring could also be done online and by groups of three students who would rotate their viewing so each member of the trio got to see how each of the networks cover the campaigns. Students should be able to note whether the media are neutral or decidedly in favour of one candidate or another based on the commentary, film footage and the content selected for reporting. Some other aspects they might consider is the relative amount of time each candidate receives and whether the tone is positive or negative toward the respective candidates. Are there any issues that are either ignored or downplayed by the media in favour of or against Clinton? Ditto re Trump.

2. What renders the tone of the current presidential campaign unusual? How is it characterized in
 - a. Political cartoons
 - b. Opinion pieces and editorials in newspapers
 - c. Ad campaigns of the candidates
3. Have students watch at least one presidential debate and have them analyze and comment on the debate by addressing these points:
 - a. Does the candidate explain clearly why he/she wants to be elected president?
 - b. Were major issues clarified during the debate?
 - c. Do the candidates offer a compelling, clear vision for their country?
 - d. Are the candidates able to highlight their own strengths and the shortcomings of their opponent?
 - e. Is the debate moderator fair and balanced in his/her role as moderator?
 - f. Did either of the candidates surprise them by their performance in the debate? If so, how?
 - g. Are debates truly important? Do they serve a genu-

Media Coverage of the Candidates and their Respective Campaigns

1. Have the students monitor the media coverage of the campaign on a regular basis for one week, perhaps for a half hour each evening if possible. Alternatively, the teacher could prepare a 15 minute summary from the three main American cable networks, Fox, CNN

ine purpose or are they just one more media controlled event designed to ramp up television ratings?

Other Aspects for Research and Discussion.

Could also be assigned as essay topics;

1. Nature and Tone of Political Ads, Costs, Advertising and Politics
2. Numbers and Politics, Data Collection, Polling
3. Careers for People with Math Skills in Politics
4. Low Voter Turnout: A Problem? Solutions?
5. Media Bias
6. Special Interest Groups and their Influence
7. Role of Celebrities
8. Use of Social Media: help or hindrance?
9. Novel ideas for reforming the political system
10. Potential for third parties breakthroughs at local, state and national levels?
11. Is it possible to rig the presidential election through technological manipulation

Here is a list of useful websites for the material presented in this supplement.

- <http://www.mediamonitors.net/stanmoore40.html>
- <http://www.rogerdarlington.me.uk/Americanpoliticalsystem.html>
- http://www.ehow.com/info_8216763_advantages-disadvantages-parliamentary-government.html
- <http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2011/08/17/does-america-need-aprime-minister/>
- <http://news.firedoglake.com/2011/08/26/the-weakness-ofthe-american-governmental-system/>
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_dmPchuXI
- <http://www.antiessays.com/free-essays/81712.html>
- <http://www.preservearticles.com/2012031026102/get-complete-information-on-the-strengths-and-weaknesses-of-republicanism.html>
- <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/about.html>
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcSnZw8jTTw> and
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m6QhP1tHXU4&feature>
- <http://www.sparknotes.com/us-government-andpolitics/american-government/political-parties/section2.rhtml>
- <http://www.history.com/news/ask-history/how-did-the-republican-and-democratic-parties-get-their-animal-symbols>
- <http://constitution.findlaw.com/amendments.html#sthash.ELHzrVpR.dpuf>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vmLosRzNRqA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HuFR5XBYLfU>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NT6koTFHnH0>
- <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/US-election-teaching-resources-matt-davis>
- <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/tag/election-2016/>
- <https://www.c-span.org/series/?campaign2016>
- <http://www.c-spanclassroom.org/Campaign-2016.aspx>
- <http://www.teachhub.com/12-ways-use-presidential-election-your-classroom>
- <http://fivethirtyeight.com/features/year-ahead-project/#part1>
- <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-idUSKCN1110MT>
- <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3784098/Hillary-Clinton-s-doctor-revealed-68-year-old-pneumonia.html>
- http://www.americanthinker.com/articles/2012/07/the_modern_machiavelli.html