

Vote for Your Party!

This 1-page printable will help your class learn about elections and celebrate with a party! Follow the steps below to use this activity. The learning suggestions can be adapted to the ages of the kids in your class, and there are voting facts for your reference on the next page.

1. Print a copy for each student in the class (choose black and white or color). You can cut them apart yourself or use it as cutting practice for younger students.

Learning Suggestions: Discuss how candidates get on the ballot and who prints ballots. If kids don't like the choices on the ballot, teach them about how primaries work.

2. On or before election day, have kids fill out the left side of their ballot.

Learning Suggestions: Talk about voting privacy, mail-in voting, & voting in person. You might also talk about if they had enough information to make a wise choice. For instance, would they have liked to know what kind of donuts or cupcakes, or how many kisses they would get? Use this to talk about the Voter's Pamphlet and online resources to learn about candidates in order to be an informed voter.

3. Collect the ballots

Learning Suggestions: Talk about ballot security and their right to privacy.

4. Read the selection on each ballot out loud and have kids color in a box for each ballot

Learning Suggestions: Talk about how votes are counted in real elections. With older kids, talk about why some states count their votes faster than others (the number of voters, in-person vs mail-in votes, votes accepted after election day, etc.)

5. Write an official tally on the board by having kids tell you how many they counted.

Learning Suggestions: Talk to them about counting machines. If kids have different tallies (and even if they don't) use this to talk about recounts and hand recounts. If there is a tie, you can have another vote to break the tie. This is a great introduction to ranked choice voting!

6. Announce the winner of the election.

Learning Suggestions: Talk about the importance of everyone voting, especially if the votes were close. Talk about what would happen if $\frac{2}{3}$ of the class didn't vote, and if the outcome would be representative of the whole class. Talk about if the results are fair. Talk about why it's important for everyone to respect the outcome even if it wasn't what they voted for.

7. Have a class party later in the week and serve the treat that won the election!



Party Ballots

☐


Oreos

☐


Chocolate kisses

☐

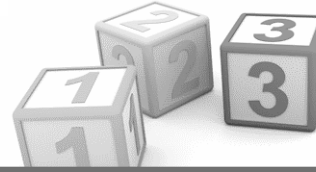

Chocolate chip cookies

☐


Donuts

☐


Cupcakes



Election Results



Oreos

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Chocolate kisses

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Chocolate chip cookies

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Donuts

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Cupcakes

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Thank you for downloading!

Print only the pages you need! This packet contains 4 versions: 1) 8.5x11 black and white (above), 2) 8.5x11 color (below), 3) A4 b&w (below) and 4) A4 color (below).



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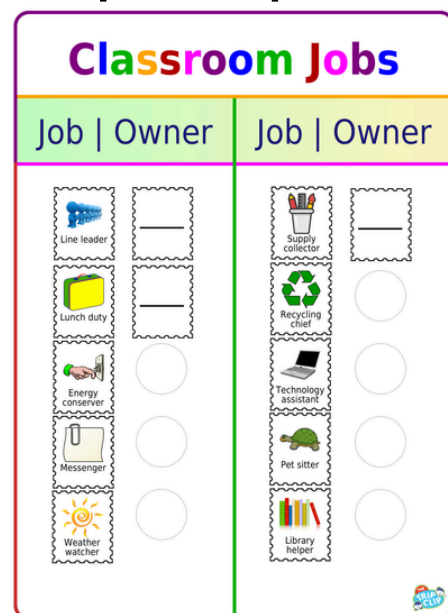
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More From The Trip Clip®





Party Ballots

☐


Oreos

☐


Chocolate kisses

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Chocolate chip cookies

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Donuts

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Cupcakes



Election Results



Oreos

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Chocolate kisses

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Chocolate chip cookies

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Donuts

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Cupcakes

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1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Voting Facts

Voting Basics:

- States are in charge of elections. Each state does it differently. States might have a secretary of state, a lieutenant governor, or a bi-partisan board or commission run their elections.
- Voters must be 18 or older, a U.S. citizen, and a resident of their state. Some states automatically register you to vote when you get your driver's license, and some states require you to ask to become a voter. Registration deadlines vary by state (some states allow registration on election day).
- Presidential elections happen every 4 years. Midterm elections happen halfway through a presidential term to elect members of the House of Representatives (every 2 years) and members of the Senate every 6 years. Senators' terms are on a staggered schedule, so about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the Senate is up for a vote each election.
- The presidential race is determined by the electoral college. The number of electoral college votes each state gets is decided by how many senators (2 per state) and representatives (based on population) each state has. There are 538 electors, 270 are needed to win, and D.C. gets 3 electors even though it has no senators. Most states give all their electors to the statewide winner, but Maine and Nebraska split theirs.

Who gets on the ballot and how?

Candidates can pay a fee or collect signatures via a petition to get on a primary ballot. This varies by state. Once a candidate is on the ballot, they run in a primary against other candidates who want to be on the ballot. Independents who aren't associated with either party typically petition to get on the general election ballot. Most states run primaries that select 1 Democrat and 1 Republican. A few select the top 2 vote getters regardless of their party. Maine uses ranked choice voting, and Alaska uses ranked choice voting along with a top 4 primary.

Voting privacy

You do not have to tell anyone how you voted. Your name will never appear on your actual ballot (though it may be on an external envelope). Whether or not you voted is public record in most states, but how you voted is not.

In-person and Mail-in Voting

Most states use mostly in-person voting, some use mostly mail-voting, but all states offer both in some form. In-person voting happens on election day (which is the Tuesday after the first Monday in Nov for presidential and midterm elections) or earlier than election day for states with early voting. This requires the state to set up voting locations around the state that are accessible to the people who live in that area. In most places people mark a paper ballot and feed it into a scanner for counting. In a few places they make their selection using a touchscreen that produces a paper ballot. States that primarily use mail-in voting will send all registered voters a ballot in the mail. Voters will fill it out at home and then either take it to a ballot drop box or mail it in using the United States Postal Service (USPS). All states will send a mail-in ballot if a voter requests it (for example, if they need an absentee ballot because they

won't be in their state on election day), but the voter may need to provide a reason for needing a mail-in ballot.

Vote Counting

Almost all votes are counted by machines except in some very small jurisdictions. Each county (or in some states, town) counts its votes and then submits an official tally to the state. How long this takes can depend on how many people live in each county or state, and whether or not the state has mail-in voting and needs to wait for ballots that were mailed on election day but take a few days to get delivered (states set their own deadlines).

Recounts

If there is a very close race, there may need to be a recount. In some states this is triggered automatically, in some states a candidate needs to request it. Recounts are usually done initially by submitting the ballots to the machines a second time and comparing the results. Sometimes a hand recount is needed.