



# Voting in the U.S. | Lesson Plan

How is voting a fundamental part of American life?

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Students will understand that the voting process ensures that our government represents the people. They will explore the basics, such as who can vote and how to vote.

## Learning Objectives: Students will

- Explain that voting is a fundamental part of America's political system and makes the government representative of the people.
- Investigate voting requirements in the United States.
- Differentiate between the levels of government elections and recognize that U.S. citizens can vote in federal, state, and local elections.
- Explore the process by which a citizen may vote.

## Key Vocabulary:

- **Ballot:** The paper form on which voters mark who and what they want to vote during an election.
- **Register to Vote:** The act of officially enrolling oneself on a list of eligible voters in a specific electoral district. In the United States, this can be done online, by mail, or in person.
- **Citizen:** A participating member of a country.
- **Federal:** Relating to the central government rather than separate units (states).

**Educational Standards:** CCRA.L.1, CCRA.L.2, CCRA.L.4, CCRA.L.5, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.R.4, CCRA.R.6, CCRA.W.2, CCRA.W.4

**Academic Subject Areas:** Political Science, Civics, America

## What You'll Need

- Video: *Street Smarts: Voting in the U.S.* (Watch [Here](#))
- Worksheet: *Street Smarts: Voting in the U.S.* (Click [Here](#))
- Paper, marker, tape

## Lesson Plan (45 minutes)

Warm Up: (10 minutes)

1. Introduce the concept of voting and its significance in a democratic society.
2. Discuss the Key Vocabulary as a class.
3. Explain that students will play a quick game to test their knowledge about the voting process in the United States.



4. Using paper, markers, and tape, label each of the four classroom walls with one of the following titles in random order: REGISTER, COMPLETE ABSENTEE BALLOT, FILL OUT ELECTION BALLOT, CAST VOTE!
5. Ask students to stand up and walk to the wall that they think is labeled with the action that takes place first in the voting process. After every student has chosen a wall, reveal the correct answer (REGISTER) and guide all students to stand along the REGISTER wall. Then, ask what comes next after registering to vote. Continue until all four actions (labeled walls) have been called.
6. Guide students to return to their seats and summarize the activity by writing the steps of the voting process on the board in order—from voter registration to casting a vote.
7. Reveal that students will expand their knowledge by learning voting requirements in the U.S. and why voting is a fundamental part of being an American.
8. Give each student a copy of the “Street Smarts: Voting in the U.S. Worksheet” and display it on a screen.
9. Divide the students into small groups. Have the students collaboratively fill in what they know in the spaces provided.

Watch and Complete: (25 minutes)

1. Watch the video as a class, answering the blanks on the worksheet as each question is addressed in the video.
2. Pause the video after each key question and concept is presented. Encourage students to share their answers to check for accuracy.

Wrap-Up: (10 minutes)

1. After the video, conduct a short review of the importance of informed voting and how it impacts the community.
2. Collect the completed worksheet as a formative assessment or participation credit.

Extension Activities:

If time permits, introduce terms like Electoral College and Primary Election, as these are also fundamental to understanding U.S. elections.

**Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15 minutes)**

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.