United States Government

How Voting Works



An important part of the United States government is the right of every person over the age of 18 to vote. Voting is not only a right, but a privilege and a responsibility.

When the US government was first formed only white men over the age of 21 were allowed to vote. This was changed over the years to include everyone regardless of race or gender. Today all citizens over the age of 18 can vote.

Each authorized voter should vote. Even though it may seem to not make a difference as your vote is one in millions, it is necessary for democracy that people get to have their say and cast their votes.

The two main parties in the United States are the Republican and Democratic Parties. They seem to be fighting and arguing a lot over issues. This may seem like a bad thing, but is really a good thing. Having different parties allows for different sides of issues to get discussed and voted on. If there was a single party, then the party leaders would decide everything and other ideas would not get presented and voted for.

In elections in the United States we mostly vote for people who are going to represent us in the government. This could be in a wide variety of positions, but usually we vote for someone who we think is going to vote and work for issues we find important. People who think like us. This way our opinion and viewpoint are represented in the government.

Elections can be complicated things, especially when you are talking about a nationwide election like the president. Candidates have large teams of people working for them who try to convince voters to vote for them. They use statistics and polls to determine what people like and try to say and do the right things to get elected. Candidates run ads on TV, hand out buttons, give speeches, and have debates to let people know why they will be the best person for the job.

You may think that the President of the United States is just voted on by all the people in the country and then the person with the most votes wins. But it's not that simple. The president is actually elected by something called the Electoral College.

Each state has a certain number of delegates in the Electoral College based on the population of the state. During the election, when one person wins the popular vote in a state, then they win all the electoral votes for that state (the exception being Nebraska and Maine who apply electoral votes per each Congressional District). Once all the votes are in, if one candidate has a majority of electoral votes, then they win the election and become president.

In the case where one person does not have a majority of Electoral College votes, then the House of Representatives votes on who will be president.

https://www.ducksters.com/history/us_government_voting.php

A. Comprehension

1) How old do you need to be to legally vote in the United States?
15 16 18 21 25

2) What were the requirements to vote when the United States first became a country?
- You had to be 21 years old.
- You had to be white.
- You had to be a man.
- All of the above.
- You had to be 25 years old.

3)What are the two main political parties in the United States today?
- Democrats and Republicans
- Whigs and Tories
- Nationalists and Democrats
- Republicans and Whigs
- Conservative and Liberal

4) What is the primary thing that is voted on in most elections in the United States?
- Supreme Court Judges
- Elected Representatives
- The income tax rate for the next year
- Whether a Bill should become a Law
- What holidays to celebrate

5) Which of the following statements best describes the right to vote?
- A pain in the neck
- Something only a few people should be allowed to do
- You should do it if you like stickers
- Not worth the wait in line
- A privilege and responsibility

6) Having more than 1 political party
- generates healthy debates
- is a bad thing
- should be avoided

7) Which of the following are things that politicians will do to try and get elected?
- Run ads on TV
- Participate in debates
- Give speeches
- All of the above

8) What is the group of people that determine who will be president called?
- The Electoral College
- The Presidential Voters
- The Election Representatives
- The Executive Pollers
- The Premium Electors

9) The number of delegates in the Electoral College per state
- was determined historically
- is proportional to the population of the state.
- depends on the Governor's party

10) If one person does not receive a majority of votes from the Electoral College, what group decides who will be president?
- The Senate
- The Democrats
- The House of Representatives
- The Supreme Court
- The Republicans

B. Vocabulary

B1. Find the equivalent of the words below in the text. Write the words as they appear.

à l'échelle nationale	-
âge de plus de	-
autorisé à	-
citoyen	-
déposer leur vote/ voter	-
un droit	-
une grande variété	-
principaux	-
questions/problèmes	-
la race et le genre	-
sans tenir compte de	-
se disputer (ici)	-
sondages	-
unique	-

B2. Drag the words and phrases in front of the matching definitions.

to convince | opinion | political parties | the best person for the job | viewpoint

> a view or judgement formed about something, not necessarily based on fact or knowledge

> a person's opinion or point of view

> persuade (someone) to do something

> formally constituted groups that contest elections and attempt to form or take part in a government

> the man or woman that is the most qualified for the position.

B3. Drag each phrase under the correct picture.

run ads on TV | hand out buttons | give speeches | have debates

			

D. all, every et each : la totalité

All

All citizens over the age of 18 can vote.

« all + nom » : un groupe en général

« all the + nom » : un groupe en particulier.

All candidates want to win the election.

All the Republican candidates attended the debate.

all of ou all + déterminant, all of = all

all my friends = all of my friends.

all of + pronom personnel

The candidate hoped to convince all of them.

forme négative : not all.

Not all candidates are cut for the job.

Every and each = « chaque »

Each authorized voter should vote.

the right of every person over the age of 18 to vote.

+ nom singulier, verbe à la 3e personne du singulier

Every candidate has three minutes to convince the voters.

every ≠ all.

every day = chaque jour / all day = toute la journée

every morning = chaque matin / all morning = toute la matinée

every time = à chaque fois / all the time = tout le temps

Avec each, on insiste sur chaque unité.

In a debate, each candidate answers the same question one after the other.

Every est obligatoirement suivi d'un nom, mais each peut s'employer seul.

• Each has spoken for three minutes.

D1. Select the correct answer.

1. During a campaign a candidate works every time all the time.
2. I was at work every morning all morning. That's why I didn't call you.
3. Every state take part takes part in the election.
4. All the supporters Every supporter were invited.
5. The president works all day every day of the week even on Sundays!
6. They all every one came to the meeting, but every each participant talked about a different issue.

D2. Fill in the blanks with all, each, or every.

1. The candidate insisted on shaking _____ supporter's hand. It took a while.
2. Not _____ of them are happy with the results.
3. These photographs are dear to me. _____ shows a different step in the campaign.
4. _____ candidate is over 35 years old.
5. _____ candidates must be American citizens.