



**CLASSROOM LAW PROJECT
PRESENTS**

ELECTION 2020 WHY VOTING MATTERS

UNIT I

Electing a President

UNIT 1

Electing a President

Essential Questions:

- How do Americans hire a president?
- What are the qualities of a good president?
- How do we compare candidates?

Objectives:

Students will

- read and understand a primary source document – the Constitution, Article II
- analyze the constitutional tasks of president
- consider other qualifications of a president
- list the actions and experiences that would make the candidates excellent office holders
- compare the two major candidates for president in 2020

Unit 1 Standards:

OR 2018 Grade 8 Social Studies Standards:

8.2
8.5
8.9
8.10
8.29
8.32
8.34

OR 2018 High School Social Studies Standards:

HS.4
HS.6
HS.10
HS.13
HS.71
HS.73
HS.74
HS.76

11/12 CCSS Literacy in History & Social Studies:

11-12.RH.1
11-12.RH.2
11-12.RH.3
11-12.RH.7
11-12.RH. 9
11-12.WHST.1
11-12.WHST.4
11-12.WHST.9

Grade 8 CCSS Literacy in History/Social Studies:

6-8.RH.1
6-8.RH.2
6-8.RH.4
6-8.WHST.1
6-8.WHST.2
6-8.WHST.9

9/10 CCSS Literacy in History & Social Studies:

9-10.RH.1
9-10.RH.2
9-10.RH.4
9-10.WHST.1
9-10.WHST.9

Unit 1 Vocabulary:

- president
- incumbent
- constitution
- characteristics
- integrity
- executive branch
- qualifications
- candidate

Unit 1 Materials and Handouts:

1.1 How do Americans hire a President?

Handouts:

- Pre-Unit Survey (half sheet handout)
- Constitution, Article 2
- Analyzing a Primary Document – Graphic Organizer
- Analyzing a Primary Document - Questionnaire

1.2 What are the Qualities of a Good President?

Handouts:

- Mind Map: What is the Job of a President?
- The Qualities of a Good President
- Voter Interview Form
- Help Wanted: a President for the United States in 2020

1.3 How do we Compare the Candidates?

Handouts:

- SWOT Analysis of the Candidates
- Issue Analysis for the Candidates

1.1

How do Americans Hire a President?

Handouts:

- Pre-Unit Survey (half sheet handout)
- Constitution, Article 2
- Analyzing a Primary Document – Graphic Organizer
- Analyzing a Primary Document - Questionnaire

Overview of Lesson 1.1:

In this Lesson, students have the opportunity to consider how we “hire” a president in the United States. They will engage directly with the Constitution and do a primary document analysis to understand the basic requirements of the office. This lesson serves as a foundation to the following lessons about the role of the president, and 2020 candidates.

Suggested Opener:

Begin a class brainstorm list of job requirements to be president. Students can later compare their ideas to the Constitution’s requirements.

Investigating the Constitution:

1. Divide students into groups to read through **Article 2 of the Constitution**
2. Give each Student the “**analyzing a Primary Document**” handout – this can be used as an analysis guide and/or an assessment (it can be altered to meet your students’ level)

Adaptation in place of Primary Document Analysis:

1. “Translate” your section of Article V: replace difficult words with kid-friendly words. Edit out parts that your group doesn’t think are needed.
2. Create a chart or poster that elementary students could understand about your section of requirements for the governor.

Optional small group tasks:

- Read around in your group.
- Talk about what you read.
- Pick out most significant or interesting information in Article 2 of the Constitution.
- Identify anything that you did not understand.
- Decide on a word or phrase which best summarizes your sections.
- Which qualification or requirement or job description would you eliminate? Why? What would you add? Why?
- Make a poster illustrating the role of the President.

Name _____

Date _____

Pre- Unit Survey

List **three words** that come to your mind about the upcoming presidential election:

Name _____

Date _____

Pre- Unit Survey

List **three words** that come to your mind about the upcoming presidential election:

United States Constitution
Article II.

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH

Section 1.

[1] The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice-President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows.

[2] Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

[3] [The Electors shall meet in their respective States, and vote by Ballot for two persons, of whom one at least shall not be an Inhabitant of the same State with themselves. And they shall make a List of all the Persons voted for, and of the Number of Votes for each; which List they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the Seat of the Government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the Presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the Certificates, and the Votes shall then be counted. The Person having the greatest Number of Votes shall be the President, if such Number be a Majority of the whole Number of Electors appointed; and if there be more than one who have such Majority, and have an equal Number of Votes, then the House of Representatives shall immediately choose by Ballot one of them for President; and if no Person have a Majority, then from the five highest on the List the said House shall in like Manner choose the President. But in choosing the President, the Votes shall be taken by States, the Representation from each State have one Vote; a quorum for this Purpose shall consist of a Member or Members from two thirds of the States, and a Majority of all the States shall be necessary to a Choice. In every Case, after the Choice of the President, the Person having the greatest Number of Votes of the Electors shall be the Vice President. But if there should remain two or more who have equal Votes, the Senate shall choose from them by Ballot the Vice-President.] *(Note: Superseded by the Twelfth Amendment.)*

[4] The Congress may determine the Time of choosing the Electors, and the Day on which they shall give their Votes; which Day shall be the same throughout the United States.

[5] No person except a natural born Citizen, or a Citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the Office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that Office who shall not have attained to the Age of thirty-five Years, and been fourteen Years a Resident within the United States.

[6] [In Case of the Removal of the President from Office, or of his Death, Resignation, or Inability to discharge the Powers and Duties of the said Office, the same shall devolve on the Vice President, and the Congress may by Law, provide for the Case of Removal, Death, Resignation or Inability, both of the President and Vice President, declaring what Officer shall then act as President, and such Officer shall act accordingly, until the Disability be removed, or a President shall be elected.] *(Note: Changed by the Twenty-Fifth Amendment.)*

[7] The President shall, at stated Times, receive for his Services, a Compensation, which shall neither be increased nor diminished during the Period for which he shall have been elected, and he shall not receive within that Period any other Emolument from the United States, or any of them.

[8] Before he enter on the Execution of his Office, he shall take the following Oath or Affirmation: —“I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will faithfully execute the Office of President of the United States, and will to the best of my Ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.”

Section 2.

[1] The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States; he may require the Opinion in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any subject relating to the Duties of their respective Offices, and he shall have Power to Grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offenses against the United States, except in Cases of Impeachment.

[2] He shall have Power, by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, to make Treaties, provided two-thirds of the Senators present concur; and he shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, Judges of the supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose Appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law: but the Congress may by Law vest the Appointment of such inferior Officers, as they think proper, in the President alone, in the Courts of Law, or in the Heads of Departments.

[3] The President shall have Power to fill up all Vacancies that may happen during the Recess of the Senate, by granting Commissions which shall expire at the End of their next Session.

Section 3.

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

Section 4.

The President, Vice President and all civil Officers of the United States, shall be removed from Office on Impeachment for, and Conviction of, Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors.

Analyze a Primary Document

New Words

(write down any new words you read in the document and look up their definitions)

Title of Document:

Author(s):

Date:

Make Sense of the Document

What is the main idea?

List a quote from the document that support your main idea:

Why do you think this document was written?

What else is there?

Where do you think you could find out more about this document or what is in it?

What question(s) do you have for the author(s) of what you read?

Primary Document Analysis

Meet the Document

What type of document is it (check any that apply):

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Letter | <input type="checkbox"/> Newspaper | <input type="checkbox"/> Press Release |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chart | <input type="checkbox"/> Email | <input type="checkbox"/> Court Document |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Report | <input type="checkbox"/> Patent | <input type="checkbox"/> Memorandum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Congressional Document | <input type="checkbox"/> Advertisement | <input type="checkbox"/> Presidential Document |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speech | <input type="checkbox"/> Identification Document | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Observe the Parts of the Document

Author(s): _____

Audience: _____

Location it was written (if available): _____

Date it was written (if available): _____

Make Sense of the Document

What is the main point of this document?

Why was this document written?

List two quotes that demonstrate the theme of the document:

Why might this document be important to Americans?

What did you learn from this document that you didn't know before?

What two questions might you ask the author(s) of this document if you could?

What does it Take to be a Good President?

Handouts:

- Mind Map: What is the Job of a President?
- The Qualities of a Good President
- Voter Interview Form
- Help Wanted: a President for the United States in 2020

Overview of Lesson 1.2:

In this lesson, students go beyond the constitutional requirements for president and contemplate the character traits and qualities of a person who should lead the state. There is an interview activity for the students to talk with an adult eligible voter to discover what they are thinking about the race for President and the primaries during Spring 2020. This will hopefully prompt the students to begin thinking about how the people around them will be voting. Also included is a fun “Help Wanted” activity for students to contemplate a job placement ad for president based on the qualities they think are most important.

Suggested Opener:

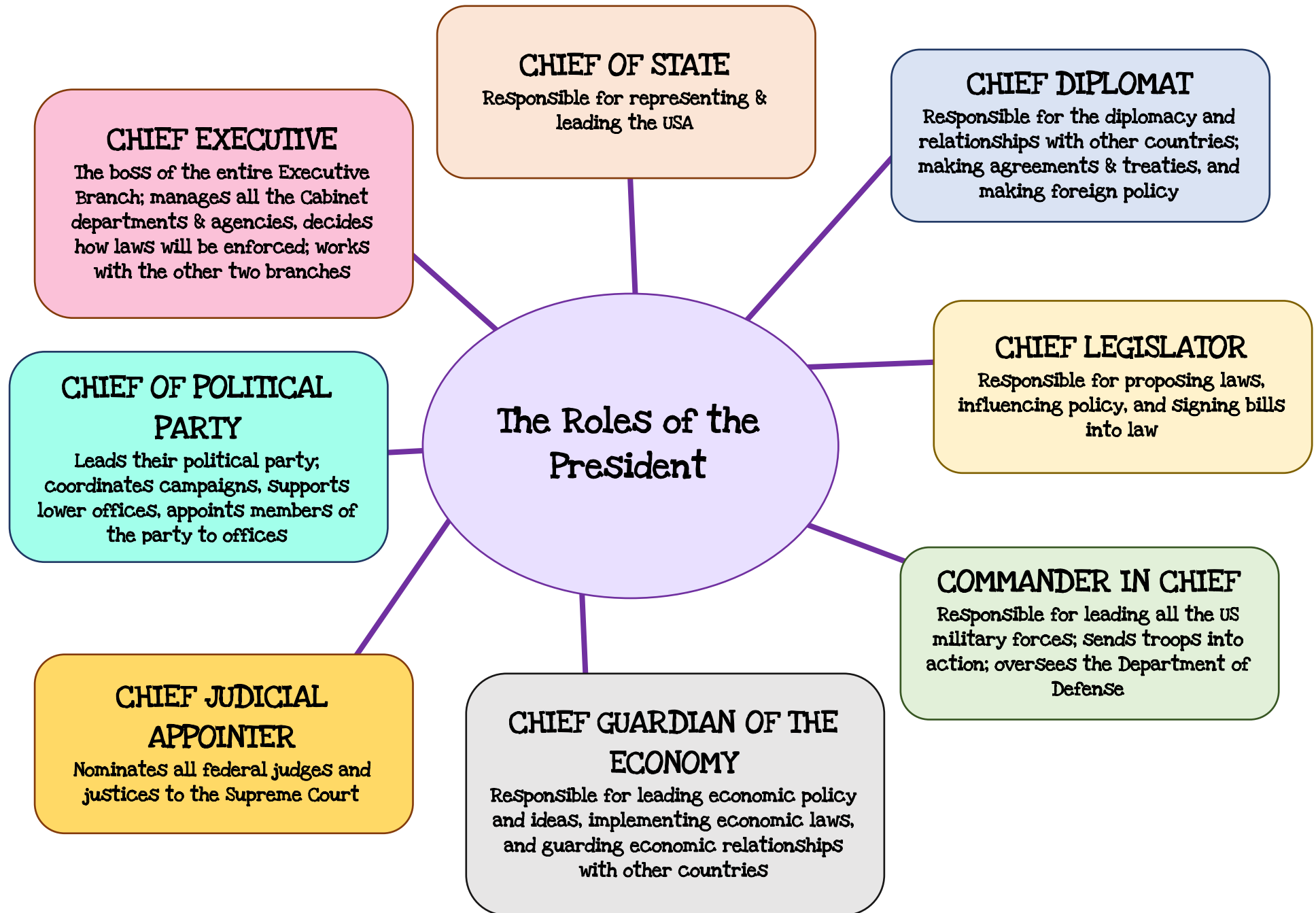
Begin a class brainstorm list of **qualities** or **character traits** of a good president. This list can be compared to the work they do in this section.

Lesson Options:

1. The graphic provided gives a general outline of the roles the president must fulfill while in office. Once students examine the mind map, they will have a better idea of what qualities might be needed for this job.
2. The **Qualities of a Good President worksheet** provides for a discussion of leadership qualities, may give the class some comparisons to the list you created as a class beforehand.
3. Consider having students do **small group discussion** before using the worksheet to analyze the qualities they believe a good governor should have.
4. You may want your students to **conduct an interview** of one or more eligible voters they know – their interview results can be a good opportunity for conversation about why people vote the way they do. This issue will arise again in a later unit.
5. A fun culminating activity might be the “**Help Wanted**” ad for students to advertise for a new governor based on the character traits they deem most important.

Supplemental Lesson Ideas:

1. **Ideal President poster** – Another option (great for middle schoolers) is to make posters or large paper dolls of the "Ideal President" in which students label the body parts needed by the president. Examples: a good brain to think through issues; a mouth to voice one's thoughts; a heart to care for others; hands to do the hard work; etc. One class had a great time tracing the outline of their own bodies on butcher paper then labeling (credit to Melanie Morris, West Sylvan MS, Portland).
2. **Qualities needed to govern compared with qualities needed to win** – Begin with brief class discussion in which students share qualities necessary to *win* the gubernatorial election. These may include things like personal attractiveness, speaking ability, persuasiveness, organizational skills and the ability to raise money. In pairs, ask students to list winning qualities on one side of a sheet of paper. On the other side of the paper list *qualities needed to carry out presidential responsibilities*. Compare and discuss the two lists. To what extent are the qualities the same? How are they different? As a class, discuss how can this knowledge help voters to make an informed choice among governor candidates.
3. **Presidential Pie** – Individually or in small groups, consider the presidency as a pie chart. Divide the pie into the pieces they consider to be most important to the job. For example, knowledge of the economy may have a large slice while space exploration may have a small slice. With whole class, compare charts.
4. **Qualities diagram** – Create a diagram that demonstrates links between personal characteristics and presidential duties. For example, experience in the military (personal characteristic) may imply greater ability to be Commander in Chief (official duty).



The Qualities of a Good Leader

1. Consider some qualities of a good leader & whether you agree with them:

Qualities / Characteristics	Skills / Abilities
<p>A Leader can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assume responsibility • Take initiative <p>A Leader is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Achievement-oriented ▪ Adaptable to situations ▪ Alert to social environment ▪ Assertive ▪ Competent ▪ Cooperative ▪ Courageous (risk-taker) ▪ Decisive (good judgment) ▪ Dedicated (committed) ▪ Dependable ▪ Energetic (high activity level) ▪ Enthusiastic ▪ Honest (high integrity) ▪ Optimistic ▪ Persistent ▪ Self-confident ▪ Tolerant of stress or anxiety (resilient) ▪ Welcoming of ideas and people ▪ Loyal to their organization/group 	<p>A Leader can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate well • Listen openly to others • Resolve conflict <p>A Leader is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Broad-minded (seeks diversity) ▪ Clever (intelligent) ▪ Sees the Big Picture ▪ Creative and imaginative ▪ Diplomatic and tactful ▪ Outgoing and personable ▪ Fair-minded ▪ Forward-looking ▪ Knowledgeable about their team ▪ Motivational ▪ Persuasive ▪ Socially skilled ▪ Technically skilled ▪ A good speaker

2. Rank the Qualities/Characteristics of a leader into your top 5 requirements for a President:

3. Rank the above Skills/Abilities of a leader into your top 5 requirements for a President

4. Are there any leadership qualities listed that you think might not be applicable to being president? Why?

5. Make a comparison of your own:

A good president is more like a _____ than a _____.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Election Interview Form

Interviewer Name: _____ Date of Interview: _____

Interviewee Name (optional): _____

1. What is your role in the community (student, parent, business person, volunteer, teacher, etc.)

2. Do you plan to vote in the 2020 Presidential Election? (circle one): **YES** / **NO**

Why or Why not? _____

3. Have you decided which candidate for President you will vote for? (circle one):

YES / NO / UNDECIDED

4. When will you vote (Oregonians vote by mail – how early do you turn in or mail your ballot)?

5. What do you think the biggest issue will be for voters in the 2020 election (either in Oregon or the whole country)?

6. How was this interview conducted: _____ in person _____ phone/text _____ email

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Help Wanted!

Directions:

- Study the general format of classified ads online (one source might be OregonLive online)
- Review the responsibilities, experience, skills, and character traits of a good president/leader
- Write a classified ad for the position of President to be hired by the people of the United States

(title of ad)

**adapted from Using Newspapers to teach about the Election: A Lesson Plan by Colette Yeich, Social Education, Vol. 66, Issue 6, National Council for the Social Studies, 2002.*

How do we Compare Candidates?

Handouts:

- SWOT Analysis of the Candidates
- Issue Analysis for the Candidates

Links:

[Joe Biden for President](#)

[Donald Trump for President](#)

Suggested Opener:

Start with a class discussion about what students the *candidates* for president will see as important issues for voters / and if that might be different from what the *voters* see as important. If they start with a list, they can refer back to it as they research candidates.

Thinking through Presidential Candidates' qualifications and positions:

Students have already determined what qualities and background they think would make a good president. They can build off this foundation by comparing the positions on issues of the two main candidates for 2020. How each candidate wants to make policy around issues that are important to the students will impact how they view each candidate.

Lesson Options:

1. Provide students the links to each of the main candidates' campaign websites. Ask them to note specifically:
 - a. What do they first notice about the site?
 - b. What can you learn about the candidate's background and qualifications?
 - c. What do you learn about the candidate's positions on at least 3 issues that are important to you?
2. **SWOT Analysis** gives students an opportunity to analyze each candidate based on what their research of the campaign websites tells them.
3. Candidate Position Analysis – this is a more focused graphic organizer of candidate positions that students can use either individually or as groups to analyze what they learn from the candidate websites.
4. You may want to have students do more in-depth research on the candidates' issues positions on their own. It may be an interesting exercise to see how easy it is to find where they stand on issues that are important to the student.
5. Consider concluding this lesson or the entire unit with a straw poll or giving them a link to a positions quiz to see how their personal positions might align to the candidates. One option is: [ISideWithQuiz](#)

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

SWOT Analysis of a Presidential Candidate

Directions: Find examples of strengths and weaknesses of the presidential candidates you researched. Provide evidence by filling in the spaces below with quotations, facts or other insights from your resources. Cite your sources.

STRENGTHS What advantages does each candidate have in the election?		WEAKNESSES What are some weak points in the system?	
Trump	Biden	Trump	Biden
OPPORTUNITIES What opportunities does each candidate have that they can take advantage of before the election and how will they help?		THREATS (CHALLENGES) What challenges does each candidate face in the weeks leading up to the election?	
Trump	Biden	Trump	Biden

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

How Do the Candidates Address the Issues?

Directions: use the chart below to track issues that are important to you and how the two major candidates for president address those issues. This can be a supplement to your tracking of the outcome of the election to see if these issues were important to other voters and may have affected the outcome of the elections.

Issue that is Important to me	Why it's important	Candidate #1 Position Name of Candidate:	Candidate #2 Position Name of Candidate:

