

“Running Your Class”

This lesson is for at least ten class periods.

In the first period: “What is Government?”

1. Teach about government at the federal, state, and local levels.
 - a. What are the branches of government?
 - b. How does each branch function?
 - c. What are the duties of the branches of government?
 - d. What are the differences between federal, state, and local government?
 - e. What offices are at each level? (i.e. President for federal, Governor for state, and Mayor for city).
 - f. Why are checks and balances important?

Second period: “How Does Government Work?”

2. President, Governor, and Mayor: What are their roles in government?
3. Senators and Representatives: What are their roles? How are state and federal senators and representatives different?
4. What are bills? How do they become laws? What is a veto?
5. What is an executive order?
6. Why are laws important?

Third period: “Elections: Their Importance and Voting”

1. Why do we vote?
2. What are the reasons for elections?
3. Why are elections important?
4. Who do we elect?
5. How does voting affect us?

Fourth period: “Class Officers”

1. Have students discuss what officers are needed in the classroom.
 - a. The students can come up with as many officers as they agree on and can create various roles.
 - b. For example:
 - i. Classroom President – Someone who the students can tell an issue to, such as lack of extra pens in the classroom, and the class president can work with the teacher to come up with a solution.
 - ii. Classroom Secretary – a student who can take notes for those who missed class and give them to the teacher to make copies for the missing students; also, the secretary can make note of the homework assignments and remind classmates.

Fifth and Sixth Period: "Class Campaigning"

1. Students will learn about campaigns and how to create campaign posters.
2. Students will choose nominees for each office.
 - a. Say there are four offices, have at least two nominees per office. Best to have a minimum of two nominees and a max of three for each office.
3. The teacher can assign remaining students to "campaigns" and the students can help the nominee create campaign posters and signs.
4. Once signs are completed, the students can tape them around the classroom for everyone to see.

Seventh and Eighth Period: "Spectating Speeches"

1. Have the class bring up classroom or school issues on which the nominees can speak.
2. The nominees and the campaign team can work together on a short speech talking about the issues and what they can do for the class.
3. The nominees give their speeches to the class.

Ninth Period: "Vote, Vote, Vote"

1. The students will go around the class looking at campaign posters and signs.
2. The students will speak with the nominees.
3. The teacher will hand out pre-printed ballots and direct the students to the polls.
 - a. With the polls, teachers can get creative with putting up dividers and decorating tissue boxes where students can fill in and stuff their ballots.
4. The teacher will count out the votes and announce the winners.

Tenth period: "What Did We Learn?"

1. Have students discuss their takeaways from these lessons.
2. Have them talk about why government and elections are important.
3. Have them write about the most important lesson they learned from these classroom lessons.