

nick NEWS **KIDS PICK** **the PRESIDENT**

COMPANION GUIDE

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1. **Politics in the Classroom.** Tips for bringing elections into the classroom

2. **Elections at Home.** Inspiring activities for involving your kids in the process

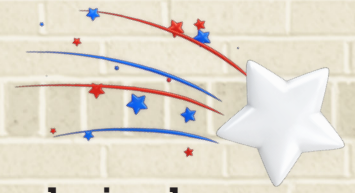
3. **Make Elections Fun.** Exciting games for learning about the electoral process

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YOUR ELECTION HEADQUARTERS

Interested in bringing your kids into the election conversation? Election Headquarters is the place to find non-partisan resources to teach youth about the upcoming election and voting. You'll find fun and free readings, activities, infographics, webquests, games and more to use before November 3rd and beyond. Visit Election Headquarters at www.icivics.org/election.



POLITICS IN THE CLASSROOM

Talking about politics can be intimidating. And in this polarized climate, differing opinions can cause tension. But making space to talk about upcoming elections can encourage students to express their own ideas and appreciate diverse viewpoints—all critical skills for democratic citizenship. Here are a few things to consider:

1

Involve parents and your administrator. Send out an email or letter to parents letting them know students will be learning about this year's election. Outline the topics you plan to cover and offer tips for continuing the conversation at home.

2

Set ground rules. Invite students to take part by establishing rules that create a safe and respectful environment. Rules should be clear and agreed upon, so you can reference them if you need to later in the conversation.

3

Think about what skills you want students to learn. Engaging in civil discourse, listening actively, thinking critically, respecting differences, and analyzing information are all skills students can and should learn from discussing current events.

4

Consider strategies. An open discussion might sound like a good idea, but it can also be a recipe for disaster. Teaching strategies provide structure and support classroom management to help discussions stay on track.

5

Start with the process. Teaching the electoral process offers a foundation for students to understand our system of government and the current events happening around them. Age-appropriate resources from iCivics and Nickelodeon can help!

6

Lead with facts. In an age of mis- and disinformation, be mindful of what information students are bringing to the classroom. Encourage students to lead with facts, employing research and fact-checking skills as you teach.

7

Use "I" statements. Student viewpoints should be encouraged. After all, you're teaching students to formulate their own ideas. Help students avoid generalizations and personal attacks by using "I" statements when stating their opinions (I believe, I understand, etc.).



Not sure where to start with the presidential candidates? [iCivic's Candidate Bios](#) lesson includes discussion and activity ideas, candidate cards, and a table that compares seven different elements of each candidate and their campaign. Find it in the Election Headquarters at www.icivics.org/election.

ELECTIONS AT HOME

You absolutely should be talking about the election with your kids at home. Even our youngest children can begin to learn about what it means to vote. Keep in mind that your kids are watching you. They pay attention to the way you speak about and react to politics. Have conversations at home and be open, honest, and civil when it comes to opposing viewpoints. Kids should walk away knowing that it's okay for two people or even two friends to disagree as long as it's respectful. Then try these activities at home for future voters:



KEEP UP WITH THE ISSUES

Sit down as a family to watch *Nick News: Kids Pick the President*. The hour-long special will provide an overview of the basics of voting and give kids a platform to voice their concerns on the issues they care about most in the 2020 presidential election. The special airs on Nickelodeon Tuesday, October 27th at 7PM ET.

MAKE A VOTING PLAN

Map out your voting plan with your kids by looking up your precinct, voting office, voter registration status, and anything else you'd need for voting. Fill out a sample ballot at home and research the candidates. Go beyond the federal election. Local elections are just as important, and their impact may be more relatable for your kids.

VOTE TOGETHER

If you're going to vote in person and it's safe enough, bring your kids with you to the polls. Voting by mail? Sit down with your kids as you fill out your ballot and talk to them about why you're voting and who you're voting for. Kids can vote in Nickelodeon's Kids Pick the President vote by visiting [KidsPickthePresident.com](https://www.kidspickthepresident.com).

WATCH THE RESULTS

When results start coming in, turn on a trusted news source and watch as votes turn into representation. You can visit [icivics.org/election](https://www.icivics.org/election) to download our handy [Election Results Tracker](#). Break out the crayons as you color states red or blue as you go!

MAKE ELECTIONS FUN!

We believe that learning should be fun and that kids should be at the very center of it. That's why at iCivics we put students in the driver's seat for both candidate and voter in two of our most popular election games, [Win the White House](#) and [Cast Your Vote](#). Access both games for free at home or at school at [icivics.org/election](https://www.icivics.org/election) or in the Apple App and Google Play stores.

PLAY TOGETHER AT HOME

Ramp up the fun by keeping a family leaderboard. Track each family member's highest game scores over the course of a week. Raise the stakes with a prize or just relish in the friendly competition that arises.

PLAY AT SCHOOL

Use iCivics games as the perfect entryway for talking about elections. Find discussion questions and activity ideas in our downloadable game guides and extension packs. Available at [icivics.org/election](https://www.icivics.org/election) for free with an educator or parent account.



MEDIA LITERACY TIP SHEET

There's so much information coming at us every day (and night). It can be hard to keep up. When it comes to information about elections, it's super important to make sure you are using your critical thinking skills to assess all that you see, hear, and read!

TIPS

Always ask questions about the information you consume. Who created this and why did they create it are great questions to start with when you are watching, reading or listening. All content is made for a reason by people who want to get you to feel or do something. Knowing what the purpose is helps us get closer to understanding the message.

More information doesn't mean that you are more informed. There is a ton of information to sift through every single day. But it isn't the AMOUNT of information that matters. It's the QUALITY of information. Make sure you and your loved ones are choosing sources that are reliable and credible.

News and advertisements around election time can be really emotional. Asking "how does this make me feel?" is a great way to assess your reaction to the content. If it makes you sad or angry, you may be reacting EXACTLY how the people behind the scenes want you to! Remember that you have the power to turn the TV off or put your device down.

Information spreads really quickly on social media. Never before has information spread so fast to so many. Just because something is getting a lot of attention on social media doesn't mean it's true. False information spreads faster than the truth! Always double check your sources, read past the headline and don't share if you don't have time to fact check.

Misinformation and disinformation can look a lot like reliable information. Sometimes it's really hard to tell the difference between the types of information you are looking at in a search engine or on a social media feed. Before you believe or share information, take time to find out what the source of the information is and whether or not you can find the information on multiple websites.



KEY TERMS

Misinformation false, inaccurate or misleading information

Disinformation false information that is being presented as fact with the INTENTION to deceive

Credible Source a source of information that provides evidence backed up by expertise and research to be trustworthy. Credible sources share author names and funder information as well as site sources, correct mistakes and are clear about the difference between news, opinion and advertising.

Reliable Source a source of information that has proven to be consistently credible over time

News information about recent events provided by different media

Opinion a belief or judgement that might not be based on facts

Fact a piece of information proven to be true

Fake News false news stories created to make money, mislead or damage credibility

