

DEFENSE



Week 6 of the project asks students to consider national defense and which candidate most closely matches their own beliefs.

Question for the Week: ***Which candidate do you feel can best provide for our national defense?***

Online Resources:

Defense

BBC Election Issues Comparison

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/in_depth/americas/2004/election_issues_guide/default.stm

CNN: The Issues

<http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/special/president/issues/index.html>

Combating Al-Qaida

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/vote2004/issues/issue_alqaida.html

On the Issues: Bush on Foreign Policy

http://www.issues2000.org/George_W_Bush.htm#Foreign_Policy

On the Issues: Kerry on Foreign Policy

http://www.issues2000.org/John_Kerry.htm#Foreign_Policy

On the Issues: State by State

<http://www.issues2000.org/default.htm>

Time for Kids: Terrorism and National Security

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/election04/issue-security.html>

Elementary

Scholastic: Countdown to Election Day

http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/election_countdown/candidates/index.asp?article=issues

Middle School

NPR: Compare Candidates' Remarks on the Issues

<http://www.npr.org/politics/issues2004/>

High School

MSNBC: Where do they Stand?

<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/5993610/>



Objectives for Week 6:

Using the online resources provided, identify where the major candidates stand on homeland security and foreign policy issues.

This can include creating a wall-sized chart stating where each man stands on the war in Iraq, finding terrorists and protecting our country and asking students to identify which column of the chart they most identify with, or asking students to first identify their stand on these issues and then have them research the candidates to determine whose stand on the issues most closely matches their own.

Lead a class discussion or debate on defense issues.

You may wish to sort the class into two or more groups, reflecting each student's stand on defense issues (e.g. a Bush, group, a Kerry group, a Nader group), so that you can be sure to give each viewpoint equal time.

Report your answer to the question of the week to the project

*Send an email to walter@surfaquarium.com by Friday evening. In the subject line include your state name and "defense" (for example, "**Maryland Defense**"). In the body of the email, indicate which candidate gets the most votes in your class for having the best policies on defense issues).*

Suggested Procedure:

Monday and Tuesday: have class consider the position each candidate has taken on homeland security and foreign policy issues, specifically the war in Iraq and fighting terrorism at home

Wednesday: have students identify which candidate best represents his or her own beliefs on defense issues

Thursday: conduct a class debate or discussion on foreign policy and culminate the event with a class vote on which candidate has the best defense platform

Friday: Send your findings to Walter so that he can list the project consensus for campaign advertising on the project web site

Materials:

Internet access
Web resources



Optional Extension Activities:

Elementary

Read Scholastic: Countdown to Election Day http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/election_countdown/candidates/index.asp?article=issues and create a chart or semantic map which shows each candidate's stand on homeland security. Then have each student place their name on the map or chart next to the candidate whose beliefs most closely match their own (hint: allow for an area between all candidates where students can sign if they do not feel strongly in agreement with any candidate's views).

Middle School

Have students listen to audio clips from NPR: Compare Candidates' Remarks on the Issues <http://www.npr.org/politics/issues2004/> and take notes on the candidate's ideas with which they most identify. Allow students to use their notes in class discussion or debate about defense issues to back up their support for specific ideas and/or candidates. (Hint: use earphones on computers to cut down on clamor when students are listening to audio clips.)

High School

Direct students to MSNBC: Where do they Stand? <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/5993610/> And have them examine the comparison of Bush and Kerry on Foreign Policy and Homeland Security. Ask students to craft debate questions they would ask each candidate about defense issues if they had the opportunity. Gather the student questions, divide the class into Bush and Kerry camps, and ask students to answer on behalf of their candidate as you read questions to each group in a debate-style format.

All Grade Levels

Build a classroom defense platform that addresses homeland security and foreign policy issues. Once you have achieved consensus, post your platform on a classroom wall for future reference. You may also opt to post your defense platform on your class web site or send it to the editor of your local newspaper.

Create a political advertisement which uses a specific kind of propaganda studied in week 5 to persuade voters to agree with a presidential candidate's stand on a homeland security or foreign policy issue. This can include a political cartoon, a brochure, flyer, radio ad or television ad.

Videotape a presidential debate and view portions which focus on defense issues. Stop at the end of each segment to allow for student questions and response. After viewing the different segments of the debate, ask students if they feel the candidate's positions on defense are very dissimilar. Ask them to cite examples from the debate to back up their answers.

