

ITN

THE INNOVATIVE TEACHING NEWSLETTER



*"If the only tool you have is a hammer.....
everything around you looks like a nail."*

Election 2004

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presented by

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It's an election year here in the states, and we're gearing up for another round of media ads, candidate debates and campaigning, sure to try and trump the nail-biter of 2000. Regardless of who is running, national elections are a great opportunity to integrate civics, geography, and current events with language arts, mathematics - even science! Whether you conduct classroom mock elections or use Web resources to scrutinize media coverage, analyze data, and project trends and winners, the weeks of school from late August to early November can be among the most compelling in the Fall of an election year!

Three big announcements:

One:

As a part of the preparation for the Fall election season, I am launching a new Surfaquarium project, the 2004 National Cyber Convention, in which classes from each state are invited to

- study the presidential and congressional campaign issues and voting trends that are apparent through their state's media,
- act as virtual delegates, posting their state election predictions to the convention website
- compare their predications to the actual results on election day!

The project activities will begin right after labor day. If you would like to represent your state, register today at <http://surfaquarium.com/NCC/index.htm> !

Two:

I am proud to announce the launching of the first online course on the Surfaquarium, Ways of Knowing: Multiple Intelligences and Technology. Based on my first book,

Multiple Intelligences and Instructional Technology: A Manual for Every Mind, I am offering a free beta run of this ten week course from June 6 - August 14, 2004. There are only 30 seats available, and you will receive a printable certificate for forty seat hours upon your successful completion of the class. In return, I'll gain valuable feedback from course participants in preparation for the first accredited version of the course this coming Fall! If you're interested in looking at the syllabus and registering, go to http://surfaquarium.com/MI/ways_of_knowing_beta.htm !

Three:

Next month is the final issue of the newsletter for this school year, and we're doing it up big with our 2nd annual teachers' summer reading issue! Once again I am inviting each of you to send their recommendations for summer reading, both for pleasure and for professional interest. Last year's June issue on summer reading was extremely well received, so much so that I wanted to continue the practice again this June. Send your titles with authors and a quick blurb as to why you recommend each book to walter@surfaquarium.com !

I know you'll find useful election resources in this month's issue which will help you plan your Fall 2004 elections unit! Enjoy!

America Votes 2004 - <http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2004/>

CNN's coverage of the 2004 elections with nice coverage of resumes, issues, and email alerts by candidate.

Ben's Guide to Elections - <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/3-5/election/president.html>

A quick reference guide to the legal requirements to run for the presidency, the senate and the house of representatives.

By the People: Election 2004 - <http://www.pbs.org/elections/>

This PBS site brings together all kinds of current resources for following this year's elections both nationally and locally.

Cast Your Vote! - <http://www.learner.org/exhibits/statistics/>

The Annenberg Project presents this look at political polling through an interactive examination of the process.

Debating Our Destiny - <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/debatingourdestiny/>

This PBS site covers the last forty years of campaigns and the speeches and debates that helped decided their outcome.

Dumb Laws - <http://www.dumblaws.com/>

All kinds of incentive to fuel an interest in politics - who makes up some of these incredibly impractical laws? And who enforces the outdated ones?

Election 2004 - <http://www.capwiz.com/c-span/e4/>

C-SPAN's coverage of candidates, issues and trends; view the DNET grid to see a nice array of issues by candidate.

Every Four Years - <http://www.newseum.org/everyfouryears/>

The Newseum offers this scrolling timeline that examines the marriage of elections and media over the past century.

Federal Election Commission - <http://www.fec.gov/>

Lots of information and recent news on campaigning ; the citizen, media and candidate guides help refine your focus in all this material.

Federal Register -
http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/electoral_college/

This portion of the National Archives' site addresses the electoral college historically; check out the electoral college calculator.

Gender Gap - <http://www.gendergap.com/>

While gender Gap can have a strong tone which may be inappropriate for younger students, its content is important for all voters to consider.

History and Politics Out Loud - <http://www.hpol.org/>

HPOL is a searchable multimedia database that contains audio files of important speeches in American history and politics.

History of Presidential Elections -
<http://www.historycentral.com/elections/index.html>

An examination of the popular and electoral votes in each election, issues and turnout, as well as a review of the 2004 elections.

Kids Voting USA -
<http://www.kidsvotingusa.org/students/students.asp>

Student-friendly presentation that helps promote the notion of being an informed voter - full of information and ideas.

Learning Adventures in Citizenship -
<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/newyork/laic/index.html>

Based on the PBS Kids' series, this site emphasizes civic involvement as a cornerstone of participatory democracy.

The Living Room Candidate -
<http://www.movingimage.us/livingroomcandidate/>

This site showcases campaign commercials from the Eisenhower Campaign of 1952 through the last presidential election in 2000.

National Student/Parent Mock Election -
<http://www.nationalmockelection.org/index.html>

Web presence for Mock Election Day (October 28, 2004); open to schools and families to help students be a part of the election process.

Online News Hour Extra: Politics -
<http://www.pbs.org/newshour/on2/elections.html>

While the election cycle covered 1998, the content on ethics and character are important and well presented.

Open Secrets - <http://www.opensecrets.org/>

Hosted by the The Center for Responsive Politics, this site reports and analyzes campaign spending as it happens.

Project Vote Smart - <http://www.vote-smart.org/>

Responsible coverage of elections and candidates without bias or agenda; appropriate for secondary students.

Scholastic Election 2004 -
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/election2004/>

Kid reporters and splashy design schemes cover the race, from how to run for president to life as president from 2005-2009.

Thirty Second Candidate - <http://www.pbs.org/30secondcandidate/>

1998 examination of television and media coverage impacted the political process; great for media literacy

USA Today: Politics -
<http://www.usatoday.com/news/politicselections/front.htm>

Succinct coverage of topical stories that are currently receiving media attention; includes polls and state-by-state data.

Find More Great Resources at <http://surfaquarium.com/IT/>

Next Month's Topic: Summer reading 2004

You can email URL's of high quality sites which may be of interest to our readers as well as new topic ideas and input and feedback to walter@surfaquarium.com

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