



**GADSDEN TECHNICAL INSTITUTE  
CONTINUAL EDUCATION  
COVID-19 EMERGENCY LESSONS**

Teacher Name: Ms. G. Jones  
Dates of Instruction: April 14 -15, 2020  
Lesson Title: "The Right to Vote"  
Grade Levels: ABE and GED  
Subject Areas: Social Studies, Language Arts – Writing and Math

**Assignment:** As an American citizen, you only have a right to participate in the voting process, but you also have a responsibility to Participate. In this lesson we will investigate how these freedoms were given and how to participate in the voting process.

The right to vote is one of the most important rights and responsibilities of American citizens. The Constitution of the United States provides for a democracy in which every citizen will have a voice in determining the course that the country will take. Today we will discuss the history of voting in the United States and read the constitutional amendments that granted American citizens the right to vote. We will also investigate the qualifications of persons wishing to vote in the State of Mississippi, examine a voter registration application, and complete a voter registration form. We will also write a paragraph about voting history, responsibilities and the voter registration process. Another activity in this unit will be to calculate the percentages of eligible voters in this class and the percentage of registered voters who voted in the last election.

**Lesson Instructions:**

April 14 – 15, 2020 read the responsibilities of voters and record the responses to the activity worksheet.

**Practice Activities:**

April 14 – 15, 2020 complete worksheets provided on "The Right to Vote".

**Instructional Materials:**

1. "The Right to Vote" Information / Activity Packet.

**Special Notes from Instructor:**

ALL paper work should be signed and dated to reflect completion date(s) prior to bringing them to class with you on April 16, 2020. If there are any questions, I can be reached at (850) 875-8324; ext. 5115 or by email [jonesg@gcpsmail.com](mailto:jonesg@gcpsmail.com).

**Mission Statement**

The mission of Gadsden Technical Institute is to recognize the worth and potential of each student. We are committed to providing opportunities for basic and advanced instruction in a conducive learning environment. The Center encourages academic and technical curiosity, innovation and creativity by integrating applied academic skills in all occupational areas. We strive to instill the attitudes and skills necessary to produce motivated, self-sufficient individuals who are able to function effectively in our ever-changing, complex society.

# **“The Right to Vote”**

## **Information/Activity Packet**

“The History of Voting in the United States”  
“The History of Voting in the United States Worksheet”  
“Does My Vote Really Make a Difference?”  
Sample Topics for the “Right to Vote” Writing Unit  
Math Activity for the “Right to Vote” Unit  
Mississippi Voter Registration Information  
Mississippi Voter Registration Application  
Voter Registration Worksheet  
Right to Vote Word Bank  
Related Web Sites

**Student** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class** \_\_\_\_\_

## The History of Voting in the United States

Suffrage, the right or privilege of voting to elect public officials and to adopt or reject legislation, dates to ancient times. In Greece, all freemen were expected to take part in the government of their city. In Rome the common citizens, called plebs, were granted the right to elect tribunes to intercede for them. The idea that the people under a government should have a voice in selecting the leaders did not gain support until the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

A major principle of U.S. democracy is representative government in which the people delegate powers to elected officials. The elected officials represent the will of the people. The people exercise power through elections. Citizens, with their vote, have the opportunity to have their voices heard and to influence government. Representative government must represent all people. Originally, the only people allowed to vote in the United States were white men who owned property. Voting rights have been extended to include white men without property, blacks, Native Americans, naturalized immigrants, and women.

The U.S. Constitution originally specified that each state would determine the qualifications for its voters; however, amendments to the Constitution have prohibited states from denying voting privileges on the basis of sex, race, and other conditions. Some of the major events in the history of voting in the United States are as follows:

- 1) The 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1868) potentially enlarged the scope of suffrage to all citizens.
- 2) The 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1870) secured the right to vote for black males.
- 3) The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1920) secured the right to vote for women.
- 4) The 24<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1964) prohibited poll taxes, literacy tests, and other devices to determine qualification of voters.
- 5) The 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1971) extended suffrage to citizens 18 years old.
- 6) The Motor Voter Act of 1993 required states to make mail-in voter registration post cards available in motor vehicle, public assistance and military recruitment offices.

**NOTE:** An excellent web site for this unit is [www.pbs.org/democracy/votinginamerica/](http://www.pbs.org/democracy/votinginamerica/)

### References

"Constitution of the United States," Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2002

<http://encarta.msn.com> © 1997-2002 Microsoft Corporation.

"Election," Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2002 <http://encarta.msn.com> © 1997-2002 Microsoft Corporation.

"Suffrage," Microsoft® Encarta® Online Encyclopedia 2002 <http://encarta.msn.com> © 1997-2002 Microsoft Corporation.



## The History of Voting in the United States Worksheet

Read the following Constitutional Amendments and summary of other Congressional Acts related to voting. Refer to this information to answer the questions that follow.

**The Fourteenth Amendment— 1868**—"All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

**The Fifteenth Amendment— 1870**—"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

**The Nineteenth Amendment— 1920**—"The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

**The Twenty-Fourth Amendment— 1965**—"The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay any poll tax or other tax."

**The Twenty-Sixth Amendment—1971**—"The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age."

**The National Voter Registration Act of 1993(The Motor Voter Act)**-Required states to make mail-in voter registration post cards available in motor vehicle license offices, public assistance offices, and military recruitment offices.

1) In 1872 Susan B. Anthony was arrested as she tried to vote in the presidential election because women did not have the right to vote. In what year were women granted the right to vote and by what amendment?

- A. 1870—The Fifteenth Amendment
- B. 1920—The Nineteenth Amendment
- C. 1971—The Twenty-Sixth Amendment

2) In 1890 the Mississippi Legislature called a Constitutional Convention that required a \$2.00 poll tax. What was the intended purpose of the poll tax?

- A. To prevent women from voting.
- B. To help pay for the elections
- C. To prevent African Americans from voting.

3) Which of the following groups of people were granted the right to vote first?

- A. women
- B. African Americans
- C. eighteen year olds

4) In the year 1969 which of the following American citizens could not vote?

- A. A 19 year old soldier serving in Viet Nam.
- B. A 30 year old white woman receiving food stamps.
- C. A 50 year old black man working in Jackson, Mississippi.

5) What is the intended purpose of the Motor Voter Act of 1993?

- A. To insure that only people who owned a motor vehicle could vote.
- B. To make voter registration forms easily available to citizens.
- C. To insure that voters would have transportation to the voting polls.

Answers: 1) B   2) C   3) B   4) A   5) B

## **Does My Vote Really Make a Difference?**

**"Just" one vote can and often does make a difference in the outcome of an election.**

### **EXAMPLES FROM HISTORY**

**Source:** [http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/Outreach/civics/pg\\_13.ht](http://www.ss.ca.gov/elections/Outreach/civics/pg_13.ht)

- In 1645 one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control of England.
- In 1649 one vote caused Charles I of England to be executed.
- In 1776 one vote gave America the English language instead of German.
- In 1839 one vote elected Marcus Morton as the Governor of Massachusetts.
- In 1868 one vote saved President Andrew Johnson from being removed from office.
- In 1923 one vote gave Adolph Hitler leadership of the Nazi Party.

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**Source:** <http://www.fec.gov/pages/faqs.htm>

### **EXAMPLES IN FEDERAL ELECTIONS**

- In the 1829 election for the U.S. House of Representatives in Kentucky's 2nd District, Jackson Democrat Nicholas Coleman defeated National Republican Adam Beatty 2,520 to 2,519.
- In the 1854 election for the U.S. House of Representatives in the 7th District of Illinois, Democratic candidate James C. Allen bested Republican William B. Archer 8,452 to 8,451.

### **RECENT EXAMPLES IN NONFEDERAL ELECTIONS**

- In 1994, Republican Randall Luthi and Independent Larry Call tied for the seat in the Wyoming House of Representatives from the Jackson Hole area, with 1,941 votes each. A recount produced the same result. Mr. Luthi was finally declared the winner when, in a drawing before the State Canvassing Board, a PingPong ball bearing his name was pulled from the cowboy hat of Democratic Governor Mike Sullivan.
- In 1997, South Dakota Democrat John McIntyre led Republican Hal Wick 4,195 - 4,191 for the second seat in Legislative District 12 on election night. A subsequent recount showed Wick the winner at 4192 - 4,191. The State Supreme Court, however, ruled that one ballot counted for Wick was invalid due to an over vote. This left the race a tie. After hearing arguments from both sides, the State Legislature voted to seat Wick 46-20.

## **Suggested Topics for the “Right to Vote” Writing Unit**

Select one of the topics below and write a paragraph stating your point of view. The paragraph must have a topic sentence, supporting ideas, and a conclusion. Use interesting details, facts, or other information to support your ideas.

- 1) “Why Should I Participate in the Voting Process?”
- 2) “Does My Vote Really Matter?”
- 3) “Why Is the Right to Vote So Important?”
- 4) “Every American Has a Right and a Responsibility to Vote”
- 5) “Voting Determines the Course of America”
- 6) “The History of Voting in America”
- 7) “How Did Americans Acquire the Right to Vote?”
- 8) “What Effects Did the 15<sup>th</sup> (or the 14<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup>) Amendment Have on Voting in the United States?”
- 9) “Why Do Many Citizens Fail to Vote?”
- 10) “Factors Which Affect Voter Apathy”



## Math Activity for "Right to Vote" Unit

### Instructions:

- 1) Conduct a poll of all students in the class to determine the number of eligible voters, the number of registered voters, and the number of registered voters who voted in the last election. ( For an extension of the activity, students may collect additional information such as age or sex of each class member)
- 2) Using the information from the poll, calculate the following:
  - A) What percent of the entire class is eligible to vote?
  - B) What percent of females/males are eligible to vote?
  - C) What percent of the entire class has registered to vote?
  - D) What percent of females/males have registered to vote?
  - E) What percent of the registered voters voted in the last election?
  - F) What percent of registered females/males voted in the last election?
- 3) Using the information from the poll, construct a pie graph which show registered and non-registered eligible voters in the class.
- 4) Construct another pie graph which shows the number of registered voters who voted in the last election as compared to the number of registered voters who did not vote.
- 5) Construct a third pie graph which compares the number of registered female voters to the number of registered males voters or comparing registered voters in the 18-30 age range to registered voters in the 30-50 age range and voters in the 50 and above age range.

Source: <http://www.sos.state.ms.us/elections/voterinfoguide.asp>

## **MISSISSIPPI VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Every U.S. citizen who possesses the following qualifications is entitled to register to vote in Mississippi:

- An inhabitant of Mississippi, except persons judicially declared mentally incompetent; At least 18 years old (or will be by the date of the next general election);
- A resident of the state, county, and supervisor's district for 30 days;
- Has never been convicted of any crime listed in Section 241 of the Mississippi Constitution (murder, rape, bribery, theft, arson, obtaining money or goods under false pretense, perjury, forgery, embezzlement, or bigamy).
- Once you are registered, you generally remain registered indefinitely, unless you move or no longer meet one of the qualifications to vote.

### **WHERE TO REGISTER**

You may register to vote either by mail or by visiting your county Circuit Clerk (usually in the county courthouse) or Municipal Clerk (usually in City Hall).

You also may register to vote when applying for or renewing your driver's license, or when applying for services at numerous state and federal government agencies.

### **REGISTERING BY MAIL**

Any Mississippian qualified to register to vote may do so by mail. For an application, call your county Circuit Clerk, or pick one up at the courthouse, public library or other participating government office. Mail-in voter registration forms are also available from the Secretary of State's Office.

### **WHEN TO REGISTER**

If you register by mail: Your application must be postmarked at least 30 days prior to the election in which you want to vote.

If you register in the clerk's office: You must register at least 30 days prior to the election in which you want to vote. In most cases, Circuit Clerks and Municipal Clerks are required to register voters at any time during usual business hours of 8 a.m. until 5 p.m.

### **WHERE TO VOTE**

After registering, you will be given your precinct name and the location of that precinct's polling place. The polls are open 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. each election day.

### **ABSENTEE VOTING**

Some registered voters are eligible to vote absentee because of age, health or work demands, or their affiliation with the U.S. armed forces. For example, voters who will be outside their county of residence on election day are entitled to vote by absentee ballot. Please check with your Circuit or Municipal Clerk to determine if you are entitled to vote absentee and to learn the procedures for doing so.



Absentee voting deadlines come early to help assure your ballot is counted. If you know you will vote absentee, contact your Circuit or Municipal Clerk at least two weeks before the election. For more information, consult "Absentee Voting in Mississippi," a publication of the Secretary of State's Office.

### **IMPORTANT ELECTION DATES**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Primary</b>	<b>Runoff</b>	<b>General</b>
2002	June 4th	June 25th	Nov. 5th
2003	August 5th	Aug. 26th	Nov. 4th
2004	June 1st	June 22nd	Nov. 2nd
2005	May 3rd	May 17th	Jun. 7th

### **PRIMARY ELECTIONS**

Party candidates are nominated through primary elections. A voter may vote in either party's primary, and cast a ballot for that party's nominees to the general election. If no candidate receives a majority of the votes in a primary, a run-off is held between the top two vote-getters.

A voter who votes in the primary of one party may not "crossover" to vote in the run-off of another party.

By law, primary elections are run by each political party's county or municipal executive committee with oversight from the state party executive committees. Circuit and Municipal Clerks also provide support.

### **GENERAL ELECTIONS**

Candidates are elected to office in general elections. The general election ballot contains the names of the party nominees, plus any independent or third party candidates who have qualified. For most elective offices, the candidate who receives the highest number of votes is elected. Offices in which candidates do not run in party primaries (most judicial offices, county election commissioner, some others) require a run-off if no candidate receives a majority vote in the general election.

By law, general elections are run by county or municipal Election Commissioners with limited oversight from the State Board of Election Commissioners. Circuit and Municipal Clerks also provide support.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Contact your Circuit Clerk, Municipal Clerk, Election Commissioner, or the Secretary of State's Office for further assistance.

## SECTION 1.

## Mississippi Voter Registration Application

## IMPORTANT !

\* If you are not registered to vote where you now live, you can use this form to register to vote or report that your name or address has changed.

\* If you have questions, call your county Circuit Clerk or call the Secretary of State at 1-800-829-6786.

## To register to vote, you must:

- \* be a U.S. citizen
- \* live in the state and county for at least 30 days before voting
- \* be 18 years old by the next general election
- \* have not been convicted of a crime that bars you from voting or have had your rights restored as required by law
- \* have not been declared mentally incompetent by a court

## IMPORTANT !

- \* Complete Sections 2, 3, and 4, then mail or hand deliver it to your county Circuit Clerk at least 30 days before the election in which you want to vote. County addresses are on the back.
- \* If you are qualified and the information on your form is complete, you will be mailed a voter card that tells you where to vote.

## SECTION 2.

"PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE IN BLUE OR BLACK INK"

Mr. _____ Mrs. _____ Miss _____ Ms. _____	(Last Name)	(First Name)	(Middle / Maiden)	(Circle if Appropriate) Jr. Sr. II
Home Address (Use 911 Address Not P O Box)				Social Security Number
City _____	County _____	State _____	Zip _____	
Mailing Address: (If different from home address)				Date of Birth Mo. _____ Day _____ Year _____
City _____				Race (optional)
State _____				Zip _____

## SECTION 3. IF YOU WERE PREVIOUSLY REGISTERED UNDER A DIFFERENT NAME OR ADDRESS, LIST THAT NAME OR ADDRESS

Last Name _____	First Name _____	Middle / Maiden Name _____
Street Address _____		
City _____	County _____	State _____ Zip _____

## SECTION 4.

## VOTER DECLARATION Read and Sign

I swear / affirm that: I am a U.S. citizen. I will have lived in this state and county for at least 30 days before voting, and if a resident of a municipality, I will have lived in the municipality for at least 30 days before voting. I have never been convicted of murder, rape, bribery, theft, arson, obtaining money or goods under false pretense, perjury, forgery, embezzlement, or bigamy, or I have had my rights restored as required by law. I have not been declared mentally incompetent by a court. Furthermore, I certify that I am at least eighteen (18) years old (or I will be before the next general election), the information given by me is true and correct and that I have truly answered all questions on this application for registration, and that I will faithfully support the Constitution of the United States and of the State of Mississippi, and will bear true faith and allegiance to the same.

X \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature (or mark) of applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

X \_\_\_\_\_  
If applicant is unable to sign, the signature of the person who helped fill out this application is required.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone number (s) where applicant can be reached

**WARNING:** False registration is a felony. The penalty for conviction of false registration is imprisonment for not more than five (5) years or a fine of not more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), or both.

For Office use Only

## **Voter Registration Worksheet**

**Use the Mississippi Voter Registration Application to answer the following:**

- 1) True or False: The completed application can only be mailed to the Circuit Clerk.
- 2) True or False: In order to register to vote you must be 20 years old.
- 3) True or False: You must live in the state and county 6 months before voting.
- 4) The penalty for false registration is \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) What is the purpose of Section 3 of the form?
- 6) Whom should you contact if you have questions concerning voter registration?
- 7) What are 4 qualifications necessary to register to vote in Mississippi?
- 8) What type of address must be used on the voter registration form?
- 9) In Section 2 what information is optional?
- 10) What does the paragraph in Section 4 refer to?

**Use the Mississippi Voter Information Sheet or other resource to answer the following:**

- 1) How do you register to vote?
- 2) Where do you register to vote?
- 3) What is the name and address of your county registrar of voters?
- 4) Can anyone vote?
- 5) After registering to vote, when must you re-register?
- 6) How much does it cost to register and/or to vote?
- 7) What is absentee voting and how does it work?
- 8) How long before an election should you register?
- 9) After registering, how will you know where to go to vote?
- 10) Name 3 ways you can register to vote.



## Right to Vote Word Bank

absentee ballot  
absentee voting  
amendment  
ballot  
campaign  
Circuit Clerk  
Constitution  
county registrar  
democracy  
election  
election returns  
electoral college  
literacy test  
political parties  
poll  
poll taxes  
polling place  
primaries  
ratified  
register  
registered voter  
run-off  
Secretary of State  
suffrage  
vote  
voter registration  
voting booth  
voting machines  
voting precinct

## **Related Web Sites**

[www.sos.state.ms.us/](http://www.sos.state.ms.us/) Click on "Register", then click on "To Vote"

[www.pbs.org/democracy/votinginamerica/](http://www.pbs.org/democracy/votinginamerica/) Information about the history of voting

[www.fec.gov/pages/faqs.htm](http://www.fec.gov/pages/faqs.htm) Questions about voting

[www.fec.gov/pages/elecpg.htm](http://www.fec.gov/pages/elecpg.htm) Federal Election Commission

[www.usatoday.com/politics/voting/frame.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/politics/voting/frame.htm) Information about voting machines

[www.howstuffworks.com/e-voting.htm](http://www.howstuffworks.com/e-voting.htm) Information about e-voting

[www.easyvoter.org/](http://www.easyvoter.org/)

[www.pbs.org/democracy/buildyourowncampaing/teacher.html](http://www.pbs.org/democracy/buildyourowncampaing/teacher.html)

[www.fvap.gov/publications/vaginfo.html](http://www.fvap.gov/publications/vaginfo.html) Voting assistance guide

[www.hom.net/~jmurtagh/voting.html](http://www.hom.net/~jmurtagh/voting.html) Voting and Civil Rights

[www.vote-smart.org/vote-smart/states.phtml](http://www.vote-smart.org/vote-smart/states.phtml) Voter info

[www.myabsenteeballot.com/](http://www.myabsenteeballot.com/) Absentee ballot info

[www.encarta.msn.com](http://www.encarta.msn.com) Keyword "election" (History of voting, voter information)  
Keyword "suffrage"  
Keyword "Constitution of the United States"