

**IN THEIR WORDS**

(30-40 minutes over two days)

OBJECTIVE

Students interview adults to directly learn about American democracy.

MATERIALS

No materials are necessary for this activity.

GET READY

- ✓ Divide your students into groups of three or four.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Inform your students that they will be interviewing adults to learn more about American democracy.
- ✓ Tell your class that each group will first brainstorm questions and then the class will compile a final list of questions to ask the interviewees.
- ✓ Have each group of students come up with at least two questions to ask the interviewees in respect to their opinions and experiences with the United States, past and/or present. Some examples of questions are:
 - ✓ Which president did you admire most in your lifetime and why?
 - ✓ Have you ever seen a president in person? Which one?
 - ✓ How does being an American feel different from the way it felt 20 years ago?

- ✓ Have the groups come back together, share their questions, and list them on the board.
- ✓ As a class, choose 10 questions that everyone will ask their interviewees.
- ✓ Have your students copy the questions onto a separate piece of paper.
- ✓ Instruct your students to find an adult to interview, follow through with the interview, and then write up the responses.
- ✓ In class, have students volunteer to share the responses they got to the various questions. Follow this sharing session with a discussion based on the questions below.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Did any response given by an interviewee surprise you? If yes, how so?*
- ★ *Did you share any of the same opinions as the person you interviewed? If yes, which ones and why?*
- ★ *What were you able to determine about the United States in terms of its past and its current direction?*
- ★ *Are there any common threads running through the various responses the interviewees gave?*