

**PINWHEELS**

(20-30 minutes)

OBJECTIVE

Students discuss how a democracy is powered by the people that participate in it.

MATERIALS

Pinwheels Pattern handout; fasteners, hole punchers, scissors, crayons/markers; plastic straws

GET READY

- ✓ Copy a pinwheel pattern for each student.
- ✓ Set out fasteners for each student.
- ✓ Gather a hole puncher, scissors, and crayons or markers.
- ✓ Buy plastic straws, flatten them at one end, and punch a hole to use them for stems.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Instruct your students to decorate their pinwheels as they wish. Then tell them to cut on the heavy lines of the pattern and fold on the lines as indicated.
- ✓ Help them stick the fasteners through the pinwheels and the stems. Be sure they keep the fasteners loose enough so the pinwheels will turn.
- ✓ Ask your students to hold the pinwheels still (without blowing on them) to see if they turn.
- ✓ Then ask them to power the pinwheels by blowing on them.
- ✓ Suggest to your class that the pinwheels and our government are alike in that they both need a source of power.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *Did the pinwheels turn without your power?*
- ★ *Does the government work without our power?*
- ★ *We power the pinwheels with our breath. How do we power our government? (With our vote, by running or helping someone else run for office, writing letters, serving on committees, paying our taxes, etc.)*

MORE!

Use fluorescent crayons and a black light on the pinwheels. Also, have your students vote on an issue that can be implemented quickly so they can feel the power their vote gives them. Possible issues might be room arrangement, recess game, a class assignment, etc.



PINWHEELS PATTERN

