

**CAMPAIGN ISSUE**

(Time varies)

OBJECTIVE

Students write papers describing several candidates' positions on selected campaign issues.

MATERIALS

Newspapers; library access; local phone book;
Internet access

GET READY

- ✓ Arrange a time for your class to meet with the school's librarian so they can learn how to effectively/efficiently research their candidate.
- ✓ Organize a list of the current candidates for the students to choose from.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Have your students read newspapers and watch the news to determine the issues of central concern in an upcoming local election. They could also contact campaign offices to get candidates' views on the issues of greatest concern.
- ✓ Each student should choose one issue to address. This should be an issue the student cares about and that is relevant for youth.
- ✓ The next task is to collect information on this issue from a variety of sources (books, newspapers, journals, Web sites). Students could work individually, in pairs, or in small groups as they research an issue.
- ✓ Next, have your students research the candidates' positions on the issue. Each student can focus on the candidates running for one elected position. They can find the candidates' positions from news articles, Web sites,

campaign literature, contacting the candidates' campaign offices, or interviewing the candidates in person or via e-mail.

- ✓ Students should then develop their own position on the issue and decide which candidate's views are most aligned with their own.
- ✓ Have students write a paper summarizing their research. Each student should include the following:
 - ✓ An overview of the issue locally, nationally, and historically
 - ✓ A summary of several candidates' views on this issue
 - ✓ The student's position on the issue with a rationale for why he/she has chosen this perspective
 - ✓ Actions the student could take to influence candidates' views on this issue

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What made you choose your campaign issue?*
- ★ *What did you learn about the issue that interested you the most? Why?*
- ★ *Which candidate's position did you agree with the most? Why?*
- ★ *How are you going to stay involved in the issue after the election?*

MORE!

Students can develop, publish, and distribute a print or electronic newsletter that includes information about each candidate running for office, including their positions on the key issues.