



ELECTION JUDGE TRAINEES

(Time varies)

OBJECTIVE

Students learn the significance of voting as they assist at the polls during an election.

MATERIALS

A local phone book

GET READY

- ✓ Contact your local elections or voter information office. Invite someone to come and speak to the class about the election process and the importance of voting.
- ✓ Talk with the entity in your area responsible for elections about the possibility of involving your students as election officials with responsibilities, election judge trainees.
- ✓ See “Elections” in the Appendix.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Invite your guest speaker to talk with your class about the election process.
- ✓ The next day in class, have students discuss which part of the election process presented by the guest speaker they are most interested in.
- ✓ Since poll workers are getting older and seeking volunteers is sometimes challenging, there is enthusiasm in some locations for involving youth in this capacity. Let your class know about the possibility of them serving as an actual election official. (Be sure to clear permission for this activity with your school principal.)

- ✓ Some of the duties of election judge trainees could include:
 - Helping regular adult election judges with opening and closing the polls
 - Being responsible for all election materials
 - Ensuring that only qualified voters are permitted to vote and that each qualified voter is permitted to vote only once
 - Distributing ballots, ensuring that all votes are cast in secret
 - Helping voters who require assistance
 - Maintaining order in the voting place throughout the day
 - Obtaining the results after the polls are closed
 - Certifying the precinct election results

- ✓ If serving as judge trainees is not feasible because of state election laws or other restrictions, an alternative volunteer opportunity might incorporate a range of more modest activities including: helping set up equipment at the polling places, answering phones, getting refreshments for poll workers, welcoming voters, handing out ballots, providing translation services, providing assistance for those with special needs, assisting in counting ballots, and packing up equipment and supplies.
- ✓ After completing the service activity, ask students to discuss or write about their experiences as poll workers.

**ELECTION JUDGE TRAINEES** (continued)**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- ★ *Why is voting so important?*
- ★ *How has the voting process changed over time?*
- ★ *How do election laws or the voting process differ from state to state?*
- ★ *What are some of the challenges that have disenfranchised voters (e.g. poll taxes, butterfly ballots)?*
- ★ *How do you think the voting process can be improved?*
- ★ *How and why does the election process work the way it does?*
- ★ *What contributions do poll workers make to the election process?*
- ★ *Was your service activity hard to do? Fun?*
- ★ *What did you learn about voting and elections from your experience?*