



## STUDENT INTERVIEWS

(30-40 minutes)

### OBJECTIVE

Students interview their classmates about their ideas on politics and voting.

### MATERIALS

Lined paper; class list

### GET READY

- ✓ Find guidelines about how to properly conduct an interview. (One such source for guidelines is <http://www.kosmicki.com/102/htinterview.htm>.)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Inform your class that they will be conducting interviews with each other about politics and voting.
- ✓ Share with your students the guidelines you found regarding conducting interviews.
- ✓ As a class, develop a common set of questions for the interview. Following are some possibilities:
  - ✓ What is your name, grade, and age?
  - ✓ What do you think “politics” is about?
  - ✓ What does voting mean to you? Besides Kids Voting USA activities, can you remember a time you had to vote at school or at home?
  - ✓ Why do you think it is important (or not important) for people to vote?
  - ✓ Have you ever spoken with anyone that has voted? If so, what did you learn while speaking with them?
  - ✓ Do you think you will vote in elections when you turn 18? Why or why not?
  - ✓ Besides voting, how do people make a difference in their community?

- ✓ Can you give an example of a time you made a difference in your community?
- ✓ Do you have ideas for additional ways students our age can get involved?

- ✓ Using your class list, pair students off for the interviews. (Decide whether or not you want interviews to be conducted in class or for homework.)
- ✓ Make sure students record the results of their interviews on a sheet of paper.
- ✓ In class, ask each student to cut their interviews in strips with one question and response on each strip.
- ✓ Have the students put all their question and response strips into a box.
- ✓ Have students draw strips from the box at random and read them aloud. (This keeps the results process random.) Have students draw question and response strips until you have gotten at least one response for each question.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ★ *What do the results of your interviews tell you about middle school students’ knowledge of politics and voting?*
- ★ *What do the results tell us about middle school students’ interest in voting?*
- ★ *Did you learn a lot about your own personal views on voting and democracy through this exercise? If so, what did you learn?*