

Elections and Voting

Preparer - Jen Litts

Context: Grade K (VA SOL); whole group; 1 hour; 18 students

Standards: *History and Social Science Standards of Learning: K.9* The student will recognize the American flag, the Pledge of Allegiance, and that the President is the leader of the United States.

Behavioral Objectives:

1. During and after listening to *Otto Runs for President*, students will discuss the terms *president*, *election*, *vote*, and *voting*.
2. After reading story, students will discuss what characters did to earn votes.
3. After discussing voting, students will cast their own vote for a new Rawls Byrd Elementary mascot.

Materials/Time/Space: *Otto Runs for President* by Rosemary Wells, Pigeon vs. Penguin ballot sheets, crayons, photo of Barack Obama, photo of John McCain, dry-erase board, dry-erase markers, tape, images of promises from story; two half-hour sessions; whole class.

Content & Instructional Strategies:

Day 1:

Introduction (objective and its purpose):

Have students come together as a group on the floor in front of you. Ask students what they know about an election. Once students have said a few of their ideas, tell them that we will be learning about the presidential election and voting over the next two days. They will learn that people do things and make promises to be elected, and afterwards they will even hold a class election!

Content Focus (instructional input):

Read *Otto Runs for President* by Rosemary Wells (**anticipatory set**). Since this book is slightly long for kindergarteners, be sure to make very few breaks during the reading. These breaks should be to draw attention to *election* for *president* at the beginning of the book, to promises Tiffany and Charles make on the locker bumper stickers, to *voting* in line, and to counting the *ballots* when Otto wins. Once the story is complete, revisit these sections of the book focusing specifically on the terms election, president, voting, and ballot by defining these terms (**input**).

Tell class that people do things and make promises to get people to vote for them so that they can win the election. Ask students what Tiffany, Charles, and Otto did to get the other dogs to vote for them (**guided practice**). As students recall what the characters did, tape images of the things students say from the story to the dry-erase board under the name of the appropriate character. If students have trouble recalling, help guide them and reference the story if necessary.

Closure (Day 1):

Review that Otto, Tiffany, and Charles were trying to get the other dogs to *vote* for them in the *election*. Tell students that they will learn about the presidential election involving Barack Obama and John McCain tomorrow.

Day 2:

Introduction:

To **check for understanding** from the previous day, ask students to explain the terms election, president, voting, and ballot. If these terms still seem unclear, review them with students. Review that Otto, Tiffany, and Charles made promises to win the election.

Content Focus (instructional input):

Tell the class that this year, their parents can participate in an election for the president of the United States of America. Put up photographs of Barack Obama and John McCain and tell the class that these are two people running for president this year. They both say that they will do different things if they are elected president, and people pick who to vote for because they like what either Senator Obama or Senator McCain says he will do (**input**) As an example, tell the students that Senator Obama says schools where students are doing poorly on their tests should get money to help them do better, while Senator McCain says that schools where students are doing well on their tests should get money to reward them.

Tell students they will now have their own *election*. The class will decide if they want a new school mascot through *voting* (**objective and purpose**). The candidates will be the Rawls Byrd Penguin who wants to remain the school mascot and the Pigeon from Mo Willems' *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus!*, which is a story the class knows and a character they enjoy. Tell the students the two birds' promises (see background). Afterwards, **model** how to vote for one of the birds by showing the students a ballot and circling Pigeon to vote for him. Then model again using a different ballot by circling R.B. Penguin to vote for him. Make sure students understand that they can only vote once.

Tell students they will now vote. As their names are called, they can get a crayon and a ballot from the teacher and take turns in the "voting booth." Instruct students to put their ballot inside a box in the booth, bring the crayon back, and return to their seat on the carpet (**independent practice**).

Closure:

Once all students have voted, count the votes for Pigeon and votes for R.B. Penguin by taping them in their matched, respective columns on the dry-erase board. Review the terms election, voting, and ballot by describing the class vote and asking the students which bird won the election. Remind the students that people will be voting for a new president soon, and ask them who it might be (Obama or McCain).

Evaluation:

Formative: Can students recall and explain the terms election, voting, president, and ballot? Can students say who might be the next president?

Summative: Students vote for school mascot between the Rawls Byrd Penguin and the Pigeon.

Students name two of the main presidential candidates: Senators McCain and Obama.

Content/Background Information:

The people of America choose a President every four years by holding a vote. This year, people will be voting for our new President on November 4! On that day, Americans who

are over 18 years old and registered or signed up (I think “signed up” is more understandable to kindergarteners than “registered” even if it is not entirely accurate) to vote will pick who they want to be their new President among the people who are trying to win the job. This year, two of the main people running for President are Arizona Senator John McCain and Illinois Senator Barack Obama. After all of the votes are counted, we will know who will be our new President!

Vocabulary:

Election – process of selecting by vote

Voting – to express what one wants among choices

Ballot – a sheet of paper used to cast a secret vote

President of the United States – someone voted to be the leader of the United States

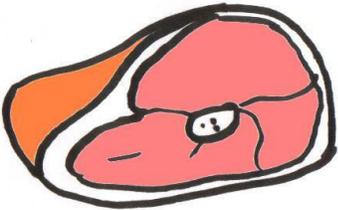
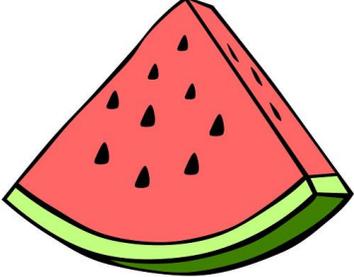
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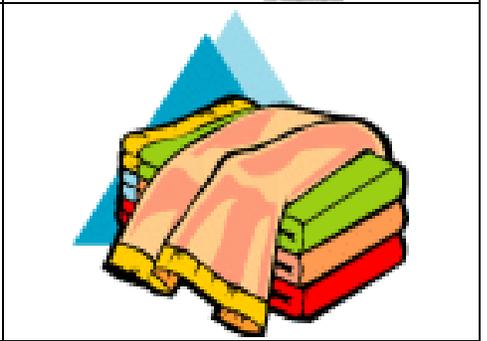
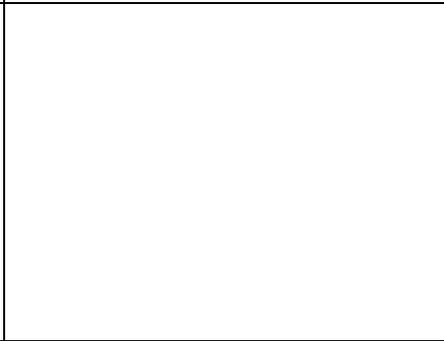
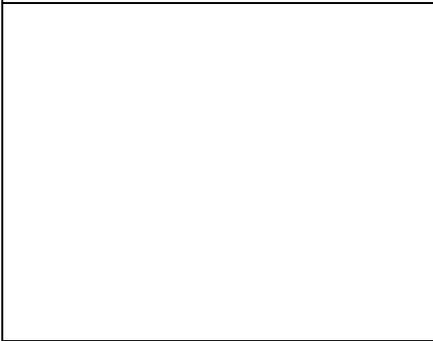
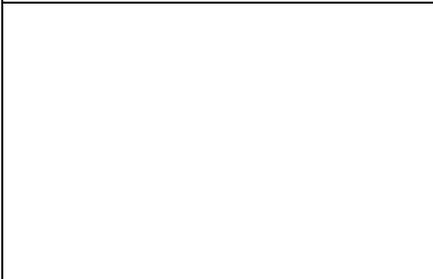
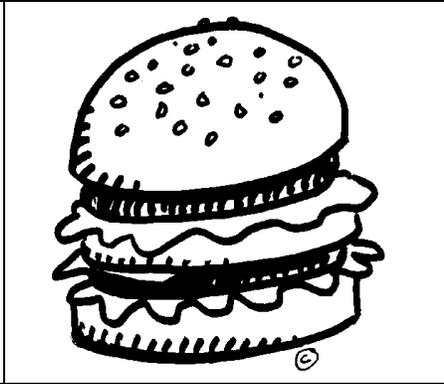
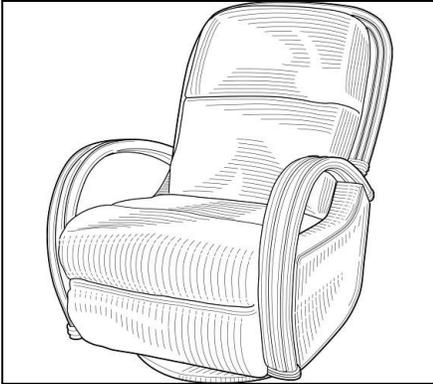
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Tiffany	Charles	Otto
		
		



		
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