Election Primary

A guide to using the newspaper in the study of the elections for students in the primary grades

Written by Debbie Lerner and Eileen Bergman, Educators with Ann West, NIE Consultant

Published by
The study of the elections can be a challenge, even for adults. With so much information in the newspapers and from other media, a citizen can feel overwhelmed. During an election year, even our younger classroom citizens can be effectively introduced to the elections through use of the newspaper. It is with this intent that this guide has been designed by three veteran teachers for teachers.

The activities in this guide are designed to assist educators of primary students in providing ideas for using the newspaper with students in grades one through three. Though the newspaper is often seen as an adult tool, it is a highly motivational learning vehicle for even our youngest students! The role of the teacher becomes one of introducing the newspaper to students, assisting them in discovering the contents and encouraging them to learn more about the world around them through worthwhile activities. The activities in this guide are all challenging. As a classroom teacher, you may want to use this guide as a springboard for your own ideas. You may want to use these activities as printed, or you may want to take ideas from the activities and plan your own creative methods of implementation. By having your students work with partners or in small groups may be the most successful approach to implementing many of these activities. Though these activities are worded to students, this does not require that you photocopy and distribute them to each of your students. You may choose to “talk” your students through these activities. The one requirement of each of these activities is the use of a current, local newspaper. Be sure to contact your newspaper’s educational services or NIE department to make arrangements for delivery of newspapers to your school.

You will find that most of these activities focus on the few months just prior to the elections. The final page of supplemental activities should provide you some ideas to use on or after Election Day. However you choose to use this guide with your students, you can be sure that they will be excited about learning through the newspaper! — The Authors

A note about the authors...
Debbie Lerner and Eileen Bergman are currently teachers in the Center School District in Kansas City, Missouri. Debbie was recognized in 1995 as National Elementary Social Studies Teacher of the Year. Both are veterans in the area teaching and using newspapers for instruction with young students.

Ann West, NIE Consultant, has written numerous NIE activity guides, is president of News Relief, Inc. of Lenexa, Kansas and is an instructor and field experiences coordinator for the education department of Avila College, Kansas City, Missouri.

Educators:
Individual activities from this guide may be photocopied and distributed to students in your classroom for use with your local newspaper. For any other use of this guide, in whole or in part, written permission must be obtained by writing News Relief, Inc., 9521 Vista Drive, Lenexa, KS 66220.
# Election Primary

## Table Of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity Number</th>
<th>Activity Title</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Page Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Roll Up Your Sleeves</td>
<td>Identifying the job of the newspaper</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Signs Of The Election Everywhere</td>
<td>Finding election news in the newspaper</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I Love A Parade</td>
<td>Recognizing political parties and candidates</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Copy Editor</td>
<td>Using editing skills</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Is That A Fact?</td>
<td>Analyzing fact and opinion</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Cartoons Speak</td>
<td>Using cartoon characters to express opinions</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>If I'm The Flag, Then Who Are You?</td>
<td>Discovering the parts of the newspaper through drama</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I've Got A Great Feeling</td>
<td>Interpreting visual clues to feelings</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>All-Star City</td>
<td>Collecting and organizing information</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Election Time</td>
<td>Finding election symbols, pictures and words</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Campaign Manager</td>
<td>Making posters to express freedom of choice</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Photo Graph</td>
<td>Creating a graph to show amount of coverage</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Your Voting Style</td>
<td>Using computers to discover fonts</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Right On The Button</td>
<td>Creating campaign buttons for candidates</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>A Closer Look</td>
<td>Identifying common/proper nouns in a photo</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Turning The Page</td>
<td>Writing election words on a news tablet</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Favorite Son</td>
<td>Recognizing election jargon, idioms, figurative language</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>It's Up To You</td>
<td>Discovering rights and responsibilities in elections</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Who Speaks For Us?</td>
<td>Examining a candidate's beliefs</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>The Heart Of The Matter</td>
<td>Building election vocabulary</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Capital Improvements</td>
<td>Practicing capitalization skills</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Think About How You Feel</td>
<td>Writing a letter to express an opinion</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Dialing For A Recorded Message</td>
<td>Using newspaper audio text information</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Politically Correct</td>
<td>Matching candidate opinion with your own</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Oh, Dear Diary!</td>
<td>Creating a calendar/diary entry for one candidate</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Wanted: One Good Leader</td>
<td>Creating a classified ad for an elective office</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>The Right Stuff</td>
<td>Analyzing leadership and other personal qualities</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Where Are They Now?</td>
<td>Following campaign routes in the newspaper</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Let Your Voice Be Heard</td>
<td>Voting for candidates</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>The Finish Line</td>
<td>Recording election results</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Election Flavor</td>
<td>Depicting the election with a commemorative plate</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>More Ideas For Studying Elections</td>
<td>Supplemental activities for use with primary students</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>More Ideas For Studying Elections</td>
<td>Supplemental activities for use with primary students</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity Number: 1
Focus: Identifying the job of the newspaper during the election process

Roll Up Your Sleeves

Many people work hard during election time. The newspaper staff works to collect and print information so that people can make good decisions about the candidates running for office. The newspaper’s job during election time is to tell the news, provide information, give opinions and provide opportunity for advertising. The reader’s job is to know the difference between facts and opinions.

Student Name ____________________________

Do This:

• Find, cut out and glue examples of the items shown in the flag below that are found in the newspaper.
• Glue your examples on a piece of construction paper.
• Above each example you find, identify the section of the newspaper where it was found.

(1) A news article about the election
(2) A graph or chart about the election
(3) An opinion about the election (letter to the editor, cartoon, etc.)
(4) An advertisement about the election or about one of the candidates

Election Extra: Highlight or write three words from your example of an opinion and an advertisement that you think shows opinion rather than fact. Your teacher may want to select an opinion from the newspaper to show the whole class what types of words are used in expressing opinion.
Activity Number: 2
Focus: Finding election news/comments throughout the newspaper

Signs Of The Election Everywhere

Student Name ________________________________

Do This:

• Fold a 9" by 18" piece of paper in half three times to create eight squares.
• Write the name of each part of the newspaper (listed in the cartoon balloon below) in each square.
• Try to find one example of election news or comment in each part of the newspaper. Cut out the example and glue it under the proper category.

Hunt for comments, news and any other information about the elections in the following parts of the newspaper...

1. Front page
2. Business section
3. Editorial section
4. Comics
5. Advertisements
6. Editorial cartoons
7. Charts, graphs, maps
8. Photos

Election Extra: Try to think of at least two reasons why a newspaper would choose to print information about the elections in so many different ways and in so many different places.
Student Name __________________________

Do This:

• From your newspaper, choose a candidate who is a Republican and one who is a Democrat.
• Write each candidate’s name and the office they want to be elected to beside the correct political party symbol below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Candidate Name:</th>
<th>Candidate Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Office:</th>
<th>Political Office:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Party:</th>
<th>Political Party:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Cut out a picture from your newspaper of an elephant and a donkey and a picture of each candidate. On a folded piece of construction paper, place the party symbol on one side and the candidate’s picture on the other. Use red construction paper for Democrats. Use blue construction paper for Republicans. Using words from the newspaper can help to make the sign tell more about the candidate. Make one poster for each candidate. Tape the sign to either a paint stir or ruler. Listen to patriotic music and wave the signs during your own patriotic parade!

Election Extra: How many different caricatures (pictures) of the donkey or the elephant can you find in the newspaper? Each time you find a different illustration of each of these party symbols, clip it from your newspaper and post it on a bulletin board at school or in your own election scrapbook!
Activity Number: 4
Focus: Using editing skills when reading about the election

Copy Editor

Student Name __________________________

Do This:
• Find an accurate and readable sentence about the election in the newspaper.
• Cut out each of the words in the sentence and mix them up.
• Glue the words onto another piece of paper in the mixed-up form.
• See if another student in your class can be a copy editor and rewrite the sentence to make it readable.

TEACHER NOTE: You may want to choose election sentences and create the mixed up sentences before giving them to the students to edit. Large type will be helpful for younger students.

The copy editor's job on a newspaper is to make sure the information (or copy) in the newspaper is correctly punctuated and capitalized and that sentences are made to read clearly. This is an especially hard job during election time. The copy editor needs to pay close attention to what has been written so that the voters are getting accurate and readable information about the election.

Election Extra: Use the balloon space above to explain what the sentence you edited means.
Activity Number: 5
Focus: Analyzing fact and opinion/recognizing signal words

Is That A Fact?

Student Name ____________________________

Do This:

• Find a picture in the newspaper, preferably one that relates to the campaign or to the election issues.
• Cut out the picture and glue it on a piece of paper or glue it below, if there is room.
• After looking at the picture carefully, write two sentences that tell facts about the picture. Then write two sentences that give an opinion about what is happening in the picture.

Newspapers contain statements that may be fact or may express opinion. Facts are true statements about someone or something that can be observed. Opinions express how or what a person feels or thinks about someone or something. People may agree or disagree with opinions, but people are usually able to agree on facts. It is important that readers are able to tell the difference between fact and opinion.

Election Extra: Put a box around the words that you use that make your sentence an opinion.
Cartoons Speak

Students Name ____________________________

Do This:

• In your newspaper, find a cartoon character you like.
• Cut out the picture of the character from the newspaper and paste it below.
• Write what your character would like voters to know. Have your character explain how they could make a difference in this country. For example, if Snoopy were running for office, would he want all dogs treated well?

Candidates running for office in an election tell the voters what they believe and how they will help make a difference in our country.

If one of your favorite cartoon characters were running for office, what kinds of things would the character tell the voters to get their vote?

Election Extra: Clip a comic strip you enjoy from your newspaper. Paste it on the back of this page. Erase the words in the strip and use this space you created to make a comment about the election in our country today.
Activity Number: 7
Focus: Discovering the parts of the front page through creative drama

If I'm The Flag, Then Who Are You?

The newspaper has many parts. Much news about the election can be found on the front page of the newspaper. Some of this news contains intense moments in the daily stories of the election. This leads to drama on the front page.

As you discover more about the elections and the candidates, you will discover more about the newspaper and its parts! You may even get a chance to be one of the front page parts. Could you be a headline, a photo, or the flag of the newspaper?

Student Name ________________________________

Do This:

• Look at the newspaper and see if you can write down the parts of the newspaper that are described. Can you position yourselves as parts of the newspaper in your room?

What is the flag (or name) of your newspaper? ______________________________

What is the price of the newspaper? ______________________________

What is the date of the newspaper? ______________________________

Identify one of the candidates pictured in a photo on the front page of the newspaper. ______________________________

What is the caption (or cutline) for this photo? ______________________________

What is the headline for an election article? ______________________________

What is the byline for this election article? ______________________________

What is the article about under the headline? ______________________________

Election Extra: Can you select a part of the newspaper from the list above and position yourself around the person playing the "flag"?

TEACHER NOTE: Students may need to find each of the newspaper parts first. Help the students position themselves in your room so they become a specific part of the newspaper. Start with the flag of the newspaper at the front of the room and have students position themselves in relation to the flag of the newspaper. Other parts of the newspaper may be "acted out" as well – the index, the weather, highlights of articles inside, "jumps" (the references at the bottom of an article where the reader is referred to continue reading on inside pages), credit lines (lines giving credit to the photographer or a news service that provided a photo), etc. When complete with the positioning, have students "read" their parts.
Activity Number: 8
Focus: Interpreting visual clues to feelings

I've Got A Great Feeling

Student Name __________________________

Do This:

• Clip from below the smiling face and the unhappy face and glue them on separate sheets of paper.
• Look through the newspaper for pictures of the candidates running for office.
• Try to find a picture and at least three words that you think show good feelings.
• Glue the picture and words on a paper with the smiling face you clipped from below.
• Find a picture and three words that might make us feel not so good (sad, angry, etc.).
   Clip these from the newspaper and glue them on another sheet of paper that contains the not-so-happy face below.

Both pictures and words can express feelings. Newspapers tell us about things that happen to people. Sometimes we can imagine how the people must be feeling from the pictures or from hearing the story about what has happened. Sometimes the story or picture can make us feel good or not so good.

Election Extra: Write a story about A Really Great Day or A Terrible, Terrible Day. Can you find a candidate in your newspaper who is running for office and having a really great day? Can you explain how you know this and what has made this person’s day so great?
Do This:

• Fold an 11" by 14" piece of paper to create eight rectangles. Select a candidate whose picture is in the newspaper and paste the picture in the first rectangle. Write the candidate's name in the same box.
• Use your newspaper to find the information below about your city and place this information in various rectangles on your paper. Label each box with the labels given.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEATHER WORD BANK</th>
<th>Weather information that the candidate will need to know.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHAT'S HAPPENING</td>
<td>Ten words that the candidate could use to write a speech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE &quot;WRITE&quot; PEOPLE</td>
<td>about your city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIP</td>
<td>A picture about something going on in your city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENTERTAINMENT</td>
<td>Three by-lines (names of reporters from your newspaper)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEWSPERSON</td>
<td>so this candidate will know who may write articles about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the candidate's visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A picture of someone from your city in the newspaper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>this candidate may want to meet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An entertainment event or a place to go for enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>that would help the candidate meet many people from the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The name of an important person at the newspaper that the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>candidate should meet with to talk about the candidate's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>opinions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Election Extra: Create an advertisement for your city that would attract candidates for a visit. Use pictures and words from your newspaper to make your advertisement.
Student Name _______________________

Do This:

- Label a piece of paper with the headings, Election Words, Symbols and Pictures. Clip any items from the newspaper that make you think it is election time. Paste the items below the correct headings.

Election Extra: Explain what three of the symbols that have been clipped mean. Would you see these symbols in places other than the newspaper? Where? Would these symbols be used at another time during the year?
Activity Number: 11
Focus: Making posters to express freedom of choice in the election

Campaign Manager

Do This:

• Be a campaign manager for your favorite candidate. Select words, pictures and symbols from your newspaper to create an eye-catching poster or sign that will encourage someone to vote for “your” candidate in the coming election. Your sign may refer to local or national candidates for office. Write the name of your candidate, the office this person is running for and your ideas for symbols or slogans in the banner below.

Election Extra: Look in the newspaper for interesting slogans that candidates use to encourage people to vote for them. Create a collage of the mottos or sayings being used in the current election.
Student Name ____________________________

Do This:

• During a one-week period, look through your newspaper to see which candidates are pictured in the newspaper.
• On the clipboard below, write in the names of each candidate you find pictured and make a tally mark each time you see a picture of the various candidates.
• At the end of one week, create a graph as a class or in small groups to show your findings. What did you discover from your “photo graph?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Candidate</th>
<th>Number of Photos</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Activity Number: 13
Focus: Using the computer to discover fonts and the messages they may communicate

Your Voting Style

If all the election news contained the same type style (font) and the same size of type, many people would not find the newspaper very interesting to read. Everything would look the same.

Most newspapers have a certain font (or type style) that is used for the words in newspaper articles. Another type style and size may be used for headlines. In advertising and for some headings, newspapers often use some very different fonts to attract a reader’s attention or to create a feeling.

Computers allow us to be more creative in the fonts we use.

Student Name __________________________

Do This:

• Look through your newspaper to find at least three different sizes of print, three different shapes (or styles) of print and three different colors used in the print.
• Use a computer in your classroom, in your computer lab at school or at home to experiment with different styles, sizes and colors of type.
• Write the word “Vote” in as many shapes (fonts), sizes and colors that you can. Print out a few examples to show some of the different ways the word “Vote” can appear.
• If you do not have a computer, draw the word “Vote” in as many colors, sizes and shapes as you can.

Vote Vote Vote
Vote Vote Vote

Election Extra: Post on a bulletin board, some of the examples of the different ways the word “Vote” appears. As a class, talk about some of the different feelings that are conveyed by the different fonts. If you were a campaign manager, which font would best represent your candidate’s personality or image?
Do This:

- Find a small photo of a candidate in the newspaper and cut out the picture.
- Find the name of the job that the candidate is seeking, as well as the candidate’s name.
- Paste these items on tag board or construction paper that is cut in the shape of a circle.
- Find some words in the newspaper that describe this candidate or that would help this candidate get elected to office. Add these words to your button.
- Finally, use crayons or markers to decorate the campaign button. Put tape or a pin on the back of the button and wear it. You may want to laminate the button or use a button maker to finish your button!
Do This:

- Find a picture about an election topic in your newspaper.
- Cut out and paste the picture on a piece of paper.
- Look closely at the picture and identify or tell the name of at least 10 items or details in the picture. Write the words outside the picture and draw lines to the items. An example is given below.

Election Extra: List each of the items in the chart you created for this activity as a person, a place or a thing. If it is the special name of a person, place or thing, it is a proper noun and must begin with a capital letter. Put a star next to any proper names you have found.
Activity Number: 16
Focus: Writing election words on a newspaper tablet

Turning The Page

Student Name ______________________

Do This:

• Use a list of election words that you have taken from the newspaper to practice your handwriting.
• For your handwriting "tablet," take one page from the classified advertising section of your newspaper and turn it so that the columns of advertising are horizontal, rather than vertical.
• Use a black or colored marker to write your words where the black print is. This means that you will have to write your words large in order to fill up the space. You will know if your letters are too large if they go into the white spaces above or below the black print.

When the classified advertising section of the newspaper is turned horizontally, instead of being in its usual vertical position, it makes a really good tablet for handwriting practice of election words and it is one way to recycle old newspapers, too.

There are many words you will find in your newspaper's headlines, stories and advertisements that refer to the elections. Look for these as you begin to develop your election vocabulary!

Congress
vote
President
ballot
senator

Election Extra: Are you learning to write in cursive yet? Try to complete your election vocabulary words in cursive.
Student Name ____________________________

Do This:

• Look in all parts of the newspaper for words and phrases that have to do with the election that might be considered idioms. Look for the following terms or look for phrases to add to this list. Talk about the meanings of these phrases.

SOME IDIOMS TO LOOK FOR OR ADD TO THIS LIST
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a dark horse</th>
<th>running mate</th>
<th>landslide victory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>favorite son</td>
<td>holds office</td>
<td>on the bandwagon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seeing eye to eye</td>
<td>shooting the breeze</td>
<td>runs for office</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Running For Office...

• Choose one of the sayings from above and write it at the top of a piece of paper. Draw a picture of what the words are actually saying.
• Choose a campaign picture from the newspaper. Paste it to a piece of paper. Write one or two sentences about the person in the picture or about the picture that uses one or more of the idioms you have found.
Student Name ________________________________

Do This:

• Choose a picture from the newspaper of something that you like or care about. Fold the picture in half and cut the picture into two halves.
• Glue one of the parts onto a piece of paper, centering it so the cut part is in the center of the paper.
• Use your crayons, markers and pencils to complete the part of the picture that has been cut off. Add background and scenery by expanding the picture on all sides.
• Write one or two sentences to tell why leaders should care about the picture you have chosen. For example, if you choose an animal, you will draw the other half of the animal and its habitat. Then you might write a letter encouraging the President to protect that animal from extinction or to protect it from harm that may come to it in this world.

Voters can take part in the election by campaigning for a candidate, learning about the election from the newspaper, talking to others and voting.

Our government depends on everyone doing their part to participate in this democratic process. It is a right and a responsibility for each citizen to take part in the election.
Activity Number: 19
Focus: Examining a candidate’s beliefs

Who Speaks For Us?

Do This:

• Look in the newspaper for some of the things the candidates for office are saying, or what people are saying about them. Try to find out what some of the problems (issues) candidates and people are talking about. These topics may be some of the most important items of discussion among candidates. Look for words or pictures that mention or remind you of the campaign issues.
• Clip out words and pictures that represent the issues and paste them on a large sheet of paper. If you find a picture, write beside the picture the words that identify the issue or problem. If you find a word, draw a picture that depicts the issue or problem.

There are many ways to go about selecting the right person for a job in government. Perhaps one of the most responsible ways is to look at what the candidates for office say and what they stand for.

Candidates quickly get a reputation for their stated beliefs. One candidate, for example, may become known as the environmental candidate, if that person has strong belief in cleaning up and protecting the environment.
In order to understand the elections and news about the elections, every reader must become familiar with words that may be used when writing about elections.

You can be sure that election words can be found in the news, in advertising and in the comic strips of the newspaper as Election Day gets closer. You can find election words from A to Z.

Student Name ____________________________

Do This:

• The “heart chart” below has the alphabet written around the edge.
• Use your newspaper to find words that describe elections. Try to find at least one word beginning with each letter of the alphabet. Try to find election words that start with at least 15 different letters of the alphabet.
• Cut from your newspaper words that you find and paste them on the chart in alphabetical order. You may use the back of the page if you need more room.

Election Words From The Newspaper (in alphabetical order)

Example: a is for absentee voter
Activity Number: 21
Focus: Practicing capitalization skills

Capital Improvements

Student Name _______________________

Do This:

• Look at the election news on the first page of the news section of your newspaper.
• Highlight or circle the words that have capitals.
• Choose some of the capital words that you found and write them on the chart under the proper category.

What is the difference between the words "capital" and "capitol"? These words are pronounced the same, but they have different meanings. They are homonyms. The Capitol is a building where laws are made. A capital is the upper case letter you use to start a word like a person's name, the name of a special place or an address, months of the year and days of the week.

As you study the elections, be alert to how the words "capital" and "capitol" are used and when capital letters are used.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of People</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Places</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names of Things</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Think About How You Feel

Many people vote for a candidate because he or she will help our country or our state. How do you want the lawmakers in our government to improve or make our country better?

In a democracy, the people should make their feelings known. Explaining what you think can be done in a letter to the editor or in a letter written to a lawmaker (usually a representative of a person's state or district).

Student Name ____________________________

Do This:

• Clip from the newspaper, a picture of a candidate who would like to be a lawmaker in your state or in Washington, D.C. On the clipboard below, list some ways that you think our country or our state could be made better. Use your ideas below to write a letter to the candidate. Paste the picture of the candidate at the top of your letter. Write your letter neatly or use a computer to create your letter.
Student Name ________________________________

**Do This:**

- Look through your newspaper to find some phone numbers that will connect you to your newspaper and special recorded information.
- Some of these phone numbers will give information about the weather, sports, news events and entertainment. Write below the phone numbers you find and the special information you think the recorded message will give you.
- Try to find at least one phone number that should give you recorded information about the election.
- In your media center, library, classroom or at home, work with an adult to dial a few of the numbers you have listed below. Be ready to explain what you learned from dialing the recorded message.

Throughout the year, most newspapers publish telephone numbers that you can call for more information. Many newspapers have their own telephone systems that people can call for recorded messages to learn more about sports, weather, entertainment, etc.

During an election year, there may be special recorded information about candidates, voting places, etc., that readers can get by dialing numbers published by the newspaper.
Student Name ____________________________

Do This:

- List below the names of candidates running for a particular office.
- Use your newspaper to find out what each candidate is saying or has said. List direct quotes or indirect quotes by the name of each person and place a check mark by the statements with which you agree.

RUNNING FOR THE OFFICE OF... ____________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CANDIDATE NAME</th>
<th>WHAT THEY SAY</th>
<th>AGREE?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The newspaper reports what candidates say they believe and what they promise to do if elected to office.

The main task for a voter is to decide which candidate stands for those beliefs which are agreeable to the individual voter. Sometimes this is a difficult decision.

By reading the newspaper, a voter can find out what the candidates running for office are saying and this can help a voter decide which candidate might be the best one for the position.

Election Extra: Discuss in your class if you think some voting decisions can be difficult to make. How can these decisions be made easier?
Student Name ____________________________

Do This:

• Look through your newspaper to find out where one candidate running for office is going to be today (or you may decide to find out where the candidate was yesterday). Look for clues to the different places that the candidate may be appearing for meetings with groups, for speeches that must be given and for dinners or social events.
• In the calendar entry below, write down what you think this candidate’s personal calendar may look like for one day.
• Make a diary page on the back of this activity sheet and write down some things that the candidate might write in his or her personal diary following the day’s events.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appointments for Name: ______________</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Give the day’s date on the line above.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning Appointments/Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:00 a.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon Appointments/Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening Appointments/Events</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The job of running for office can be so hectic for a candidate. A candidate may travel to many different states or cities in one day to meet voters, to speak at special events and to attend meetings.

A newspaper reader can get a good idea what the daily calendar of each candidate running for office might look like. It would be even more interesting to guess what a candidate might write in a personal diary at the end of the day.

Election Primary copyright, © 1995 News Radio, Inc.
Activity Number: 26
Focus: Creating a classified ad for an elective office

**Wanted: One Good Leader**

**Do This:**

- Read some of the classified advertisements in your newspaper that announce jobs available. In each advertisement, try to find the job title, description and some of the qualities a good job candidate should have.
- In the space below, write a classified advertisement to describe one position that must be filled in the coming election. This position can be for a local, state or federal elective office, for example; city council, mayor, governor or senator.

*As you look through most newspapers, you can see that there is a section called the “classified ads” or “want ads.” This section contains many different parts. One important part of this section of the newspaper contains listings of jobs available.*

*In one of these ads, you can find the job title, the job description and the experience and qualities needed for the job. Sometimes, you may find information about the salary offered and the job location.*
Do This:

• Look in your newspaper to find pictures or names of people who are leaders (not necessarily in the government) in your community. Select one of these leaders and clip out that person’s name or picture and paste it below in the space provided.
• Think about the personal qualities that this person must have to be a good leader and list those qualities in the space to the right of the person’s name or picture.

Paste Picture Or Name Of The Leader Here

List The Personal And Leadership Qualities You Think This Person Has

Election Extra: Look for a picture or the name of a person running for office this year. Clip the name and/or picture of this person and glue it on a piece of construction paper. Below the name and/or picture, list the personal and leadership qualities you think this person has. Does this person’s opponent have the same qualities?
Where Are They Now?

Candidates for Federal office may travel all over the nation. Candidates for state office often travel all over the state. Candidates for local office may travel all over the city or community to campaign for office.

Campaigning is hard work. Travel can be both exciting and tiring for the candidate, the candidate's family and the volunteers and paid workers who travel to help campaign for the candidate. You can trace the campaign trail by reading the newspaper.

Student Name __________________________

Do This:

• Select one candidate running for elective office during this election year. Use your newspaper to find out where this candidate will be campaigning.
• List the names of places mentioned where this candidate will be traveling soon.

Candidate Name:

Places Where This Candidate Will Visit Soon:

Election Extra: Review your list of places where your candidate will be during a couple of days. Find one of these places on a map and use the weather page of your newspaper to see if you can find what type of weather will "greet" the candidate on his or her visit.
Activity Number: 29
Focus: Voting for candidates

Let Your Voice Be Heard

Student Name ______________________

Do This:

• Look in your newspaper for a sample ballot. If you can find one, clip it out and paste it on a separate sheet of paper.
• Count the number of decisions that a voter will have to make to complete the ballot.

On Election Day, voters go to the polls to vote for their favorite candidates. The number of choices a voter has to make in the voting booth depends on where a voter lives. In some areas, there may be many decisions to make.

Newspapers try to provide help to voters by printing a sample election ballot. This ballot may help remind readers of the choices that will have to be made. By looking at a sample ballot, a reader can also be better prepared to vote.

Election Extra: Take a class vote on the candidates and issues in the campaign this year. Cast your votes on the sample ballot published in the newspaper or use a ballot that your class has created.
Activity Number: 30
Focus: Recording election results

The Finish Line

Student Name __________________________

Do This:

• Look in your newspaper for the winners of the election this year. Fill in the chart below, using this information.

And the winners are...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office</th>
<th>Winning Candidate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Federal Election</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President Of The United States</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice - President Of the United States</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Election</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor (from your state or one nearby)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Senator</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. House Of Representatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Election</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same is true for any candidate who runs for election. The election process is called a race. How do you think the election campaign is like a race?

The candidates are nearing the end of their race to be elected. On Election Day, voters will decide who will win.
Activity Number: 31  
Focus: Depicting the election with a commemorative plate

Election Flavor

Many people like to have a memory of an event that has taken place. The election may be an event that some people would like to remember in a special way. When you remember an event in a special way, this is called “commemorating” the event. Some people remember events by buying commemorative plates to put in displays in their homes. Some people buy commemorative coins or stamps.

The newspaper can help you decide on the events of this year’s election that you may want to remember.

Student Name ________________________________

Do This:

• Select from your newspaper at least four events of this election year that you want to illustrate on your commemorative plate. Make a list of these election events in the space below.

Memorable Events I Want To Illustrate

1
2
3
4

• Using a paper plate, divide the plate into four sections. Draw a different event on each section of your paper plate. Be sure to put the year on your plate so that it can be remembered in the future. Decorate your plate by creating a border around the outside and inside edges. Take your plate home and display or keep it in a special place.

Election Extra: If you have never seen a commemorative plate, ask your teacher to bring one to show to the class. You may decide to include on your plate different election year items – candidate picture, ballot, voting booth, campaign slogan, party affiliation, official vote count, campaign issues or symbols of our country.

Election Primary copyright, © 1995 News Relief, Inc.
More Activity Ideas For Studying The Election In The Primary Grades

Use the activity ideas below with your local newspaper to help your students learn more about the election process and results. You may want to create your own activity sheets based on the ideas below. Many of these ideas may also be used in learning or enrichment centers in your classroom.

A Creative Character
Create a simple poem about a candidate running for office by using the letters of a candidate's last name. Start each line of the poem with a word that begins with a letter from the character's name.

Special Voting Directions
Use your newspaper to find out where people can vote. Make a list of the six polling places that are closest to your school. Create a map to show where these places are located in relation to your school.

What To Wear, What To Wear
Read the newspaper on Election Day and find out what type of weather voters in a different city will face when they go to the polls. Create voting day outfits for use in different cities by clipping clothes from advertisements.

Signs Of Election Day
Look in your newspaper to see if any businesses are closed or have special hours due to Election Day. Why would a business have special hours on Election Day?

Rise And Shine
Look in your newspaper to find out when the polls open and close on Election Day in your area. Ask a parent or another adult what time they plan to vote. Make a face of a clock on a paper plate to show this time.

The Race For Governor
On a blank map of the United States, or on a newspaper weather map, mark the states that are voting for a governor this year. Create an alphabetical listing of these states.
More Activity Ideas For Studying The Election In The Primary Grades

Use the activity ideas below with your local newspaper to help your students learn more about the election process and results. You may want to create your own activity sheets based on the ideas below. Many of these ideas may also be used in learning or enrichment centers in your classroom.

Candidate Profile
Create a profile of one candidate for office by clipping a picture of the person from the newspaper, pasting it on a piece of paper and adding personal information: age, education, home state, family, job experience, hobbies, goals, etc.

Inaugural Festivities
Talk about what the inauguration means. Read your newspaper to find out some of the details about past inauguration festivities and what types of events will occur for the next celebration. Make a list of these events.

Red, White and Blue Menu
Use grocery ads and recipes from your newspaper to create a meal that you think is appropriate for Election Day. Your meal should contain foods that are either red, white and blue or those that you think are typically American. What's the total cost?

Fireside Chat
If you could “chat” with one of the new leaders elected, what would you say? Do you have interest in something special you would like to see done? Write a few of your comments or pieces of advice in a letter to one of the leaders.

Moving Day For The First Family
After the election, you will know who will live in the White House. Look in your newspaper to find out how and when the “move” will occur. If there is to be a new family in the White House, what are some of the changes expected? When does moving day occur for new governors?

What Happened At The Polls
After Election Day, the newspaper reports the final vote totals for candidates. The newspaper also tells us what the American people were trying to say with their votes. What were some of the messages the voters sent?