



United States Presidential Election



As the United States approaches the 2020 presidential election, our young learners and emerging leaders will encounter civics and government in ways that will allow them to bridge standards taught in classrooms to real-world experiences. The increased campaign coverage on social media sites, music platforms, and TV broadcasts gives students the opportunity to embrace politics, inquire about freedoms and rights, and discuss civics and social topics.

The Social Studies Department reviewed several resources that align with the Georgia Standards of Excellence that can be used by families to celebrate and navigate the events leading up to election day 2020.

Georgia Standards of Excellence

The Georgia Department of Education provides content standards to guide students' learning on history, civics and government, geography, and economics. These interrelated domains are taught in elementary grades in a progression that builds from one grade level to the next. Below is a chart illustrating some standards taught at the elementary level to prepare students for civic participation and better understandings of our national government.

K	• SSKH2h	- Identify the following American symbol: White House (identify image and associate with Presidents Day and the current president).
	• SSKCG2	- Describe examples of positive character traits exhibited by good citizens such as honesty, patriotism, courtesy, respect, pride, and self-control.
1	• SS1CG2	- Explore the concept of patriotism through the words in the songs <i>America (My Country 'Tis of Thee)</i> and <i>America the Beautiful</i> (for example: brotherhood, liberty, freedom, pride, etc.).
	• SS1CG1	- Describe how the historical figures in SS1H1a display positive character traits such as: fairness, respect for others, respect for the environment, courage, equality, tolerance, perseverance, and commitment.
2	• SS2CG1	- Define the concept of government and the need for rules and laws.
	• SS2CG2a	- Identify the following elected officials of the executive branch and where they work: President (leader of our nation) and Washington, D.C. – White House.
3	• SS3CG1a	- Describe the elements of representative democracy/republic in the United States. Describe the three branches of national government: executive (president), legislative (Congress), and judicial (Supreme Court of the United States).
	• SS3CG2	- Explain the importance of Americans sharing certain central democratic beliefs and principles, both personal and civic.
4	• SS4CG2	- Explain the importance of freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.
	• SS4CG1d	- Describe the meaning of: Representative democracy/republic.
5	• SS5CG1a	- Explain how a citizen's rights are protected under the U.S. Constitution. Explain the responsibilities of a citizen.
	• SS5CG3a	- Explain how amendments to the U. S. Constitution have maintained a representative democracy/republic. Explain how voting rights are protected by the 15th, 19th, 23rd, 24th, and 26th amendments.

*This is not a comprehensive list.

Elementary Grades

In elementary grades, families are encouraged to support students' curiosity to learn more about their roles as citizens, their rights, and the role of the president. Included below are activities that are age-appropriate and aligned to the Georgia Standards of Excellence for grades K-5. Several activities are provided for students in grade bands (K-2 and 3-5) to offer multiple options for families who would like to include learning opportunities about the elections process while at home.

Grade Band	Resource	Description
K-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Duck for President read-aloud - Duck for President Parent Companion 	The video read-aloud of children's book, Duck for President , shows how one farm animal decides to hold an election to run the farm. The parent companion was designed by the Social Studies Department to assist parents as they read the book with students.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ducksters, How Voting Works? 	As an informative and child-friendly website, Ducksters offers unbiased answers to questions such as: (1) who can vote, (2) is voting important, and (3) why do we have political parties? This activity includes a recorded reading of the article as well as a 10-question quiz.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Mock Election for Little Learners 	Blogger and former teacher from <i>A Dab of Glue Will Do</i> shares sample ballots and voting booths that can be easily recreated at home.
3-5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If I Ran for President read-aloud - Additional digital activities for the book 	Child actors affiliated with the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) recorded a read-aloud of the book If I Ran for President written by Catherine Stier, illustrated by Lynne Avril Cravath. Readers (Lonnie Chavis, Parker Bates, and Mackenzie Hancsicsak) are actors on the tv show, <i>This is Us</i> .
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Speechwriting as the President of the United States 	Each president delivers an inaugural address, which is a speech delivered to introduce intentions as leader of the United States. This activity provides a step-by-step guide for students to prepare a speech to the American people as if elected to the office.
	<p>Becoming an Informed Voter - Referendums</p> <p><i>The following materials are suggested:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vocabulary Builder - Ballot Questions - Actual Referendum Questions 	The <i>Informed Voter</i> activity from the Center for Civic Education shows students the value of becoming an informed voter. Parents are asked to guide students on the three documents located under Resources, and students are encouraged to read the actual referendum questions AFTER submitting their ballots. Parents can access follow-up questions at www.civiced.org .

Secondary Grades

In middle school, students enrolled in Social Studies courses learn about world governments, build connections between their environment and the global community, and conduct research that shows similarities and differences in civics and government concepts based on history, geography, and cultural norms. Below are a variety of activities for family engagement and discussion appropriate for middle-schoolers.

6-8	<u>Win the White House</u>	iCivics provides a free and interactive digital game where students build a presidential campaign and simulate a presidential election. Students create a candidate profile, raise funds for a successful campaign, and poll potential voters.
	C-SPAN Classroom – Campaign 2020 <i>The following videos are suggested:</i> - Campaign 2020 and Mail-in Voting - The Structure of the 2020 Presidential Debates	C-SPAN offers videos that explain the various aspects of the election process. Selected videos are short and informative. Videos explain the different types of mail-voting and differences between primary and presidential debates.
	Britannica’s ProCon.org <i>The following videos are suggested:</i> - Should the US Economy Be Shut Down again during the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Pandemic if Recommended by Scientists? - Should Voters Be Required to Show Photo Identification in Order to Vote?	ProCon.org is a website that boasts neither conservative nor liberal ideas; instead, it documents candidates’ perspectives on popular issues using their own comments during the presidential campaign. The two suggested questions were answered by presidential candidates showing their ‘pro’ or ‘con’ stance on the issues.

American Government and Civics serves as one of the graduation requirements for a high school diploma and is a course in which students learn more about their national government, political figures, civil liberties and rights, and criminal justice. Other high school courses, such as *United States History* and *Sociology*, provide opportunities to engage in civic discourse about society and civic-related topics. Below are suggested activities families can explore together as the nation approaches the presidential election.

9-12	<u>A Starting Point, What are current voting rights issues?</u>	Chris Evans, famous actor appearing as Captain America in Marvel films, co-founded a video-based civic engagement platform that provides bipartisan perspectives. In this ASP question, six political figures (three democrats and three republicans) answer the question, “What are current voting rights issues?”
	<u>Youth Voices: A Student Town Hall on the 2020 Election</u>	The National Council for Social Studies is holding a student town hall. All students are invited to participate. Students can submit a pre-recorded video answering two town hall questions, what issues matter most to you and what do they think it means to be a citizen?
	<u>All Sides, Perspectives: The 2020 Vice Presidential Debate</u>	<i>All Sides</i> collects news stories across the political spectrum to show “all sides” including left (Politico), center (Reuters), and right (The American Spectator). The selected ‘perspective’ covers the vice presidential debate.