



Democracy 101

New Jersey Student/Parent Mock Election



This is the first of four campaign issues that will be on the 2008 national Mock Election ballot.

The content of this page offers teachers some ideas for student projects as they prepare to vote in the Mock Election in October.

Question 1: The U.S. Economy

Which one of the following statements most closely reflects your beliefs about the economic policies the next President should use to improve Americans standard of living?

a) International trade agreements like NAFTA have benefited our partner countries at the cost of American jobs and business and should be terminated or renegotiated to include better terms for U.S. workers, and stronger protection of consumer goods.

b) The President should take measures to significantly reduce the federal budget deficit, which is projected to be \$410 billion for 2008. Doing so would lower our trade imbalances, raise savings while lowering our need of foreign debt, and improve our long-term economic growth.

c) The President should make extensive improvements to our aging infrastructure. Replacing old bridges, investing in modern rail networks, and upgrading our outdated electricity grid would create jobs and promote greater efficiencies that would benefit our economy.

d) With oil prices high and job creation slow, taxes should be lowered to give households more income to meet their rising bills. This would put money back into the economy and create new jobs.

e) Uncertain, need to learn more about this issue.

Campaign Issue 1

The U.S. Economy

Explore

What is the position of each candidate for President of the United States? Go to www.njmockelection.org and examine the links in the right column of that web page. For example, www.ontheissues.org offers a comparison of Senator McCain's and Senator Obama's opinions. The editorials published in New Jersey's newspapers, as well as news articles on the Internet, offer timely information about the candidate's positions and statements they make every day.

Express

Students can write their own plan for restoring stability in the U.S. economy. For example, they can suggest what individuals, banks and the federal government can do to protect savings and retirement accounts. Read letters to the editor in the local newspaper to see what others are saying.

Debate

This and other campaign issues offer great material for students to conduct debates in classes. The school's debate team coach (or any teacher) can organize and videotape a debate within the school or with a neighboring school. Clips of the debate can be sent to YouTube, which has already received numerous Mock Election videos produced by students. This is a great way to put N.J. schools on display.

Create

Students can create "mock" stock portfolios and track their money for one week, using stock tables in printed and online newspapers, as well as other websites.

Next Week's Issue: The Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

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