

#INspirEDlit

October 2020



Voting

Entering into the month of October means that we have only a few weeks left until the next presidential election. This is exciting and nerve racking for everyone. It is exciting because some are hopeful for new opportunities that may come with a change in power; whereas, others are eager for things to stay the way they are.

What is most important is that every vote counts. Educators have a responsibility to ignite civic responsibility in our students starting as early as Kindergarten all the way up through senior year of high school. This responsibility can often times feel heavy and unclear. In this month's newsletter, you will be provided with strategies to utilize when bringing the conversation of voting and government into your classroom for both the elementary and secondary setting. We will also provide digital resources for you to explore.

We urge you to use these teaching strategies and engage with the digital resources to make sure students know the responsibility they have of being an informed voter.

Follow this [link](#) to read about voter guidelines in Indiana and to register to vote.

Ideas and Insight

Incorporating Voting Education Into the Classroom

Elementary

In the elementary setting, teachers are explaining the importance of democracy and voting. Teachers can do activities where students practice voting, discuss what it means to cast a vote, and why the United States has the opportunity to cast individual ballots.



Provide opportunities for students to practice voting

You can hold a classroom vote on any number of topics: book characters, book recommendations, or a favorite animal. To provide students the experience of what a campaign is like, allow students to create posters, speeches, and campaign for their favorite choice. You can then hold a classroom election where students are provided the opportunity to privately vote and then you can announce the winner of the election. Relate the experience of your classroom election to the way our government elections work.

Provide students opportunities to learn voting terminology

Read a variety of books that relate to voting. Focus in on the words that come up across the texts and provide students the chance to practice these words in their written and oral vocabulary. Consider including words like, voting, ballot, democracy, politics, president, governor, and mayor. Talk about why these words are important to taking part in the voting process.

Provide opportunities for students to create meaning

Create an opportunity for a project-based learning (PBL) unit where students research, read, create, and present their findings. You may consider providing students with various materials or online platforms to create and present. This may be a great opportunity to collaborate with another class via Zoom or Google Classroom.

Voting for Kids | Why Voting is Important? - Election day | Kids Academy



Secondary

In the secondary setting, you are transitioning from what voting and a democracy is, to the responsibility citizens have to be informed voters. You can begin conversations about the

different political parties, common issues addressed in political platforms, and steps a citizen can take to register to vote.

Provide students opportunities to conduct research

A large part of being an informed voter is doing one's research on all the different candidates and their positions on issues that matter most to the voter. You want students to begin learning this responsibility early so that when it is time for them to begin voting, they know research is part of their duty. There are two ways to have students conduct research: starting with the candidates or starting with an issue. Whichever starting point they choose, instruct students to research the candidate or issue using reliable sources. Students will need to be taught what this means and where they may find them.

Following the research, have students write up a position paper on which candidate best aligns with their own values and why.

Provide students opportunities to have discussions

A large part of the political process is debating. This is a skill that has been lost among society over the last several years. How can we learn to discuss our differences with others while still maintaining respect for one another? We have to explicitly teach it. You can do this several ways. Put students into small groups and assign each group a different political issue: immigration, college funding, climate change, gun control, etc. Students discuss the issue within the small group. When an appropriate time has passed, have students switch issues going in a clock-wise direction. This gives students opportunities to discuss several different issues and realize they may disagree with a peer on one issue and agree with them on another.

Another great exercise is for students to practice debating against their own beliefs. Mock debates can help students view issues from another perspective. You can assign students to be one of the two candidates running for an office. Have students develop an argument that would be stated by the candidate they have been assigned, regardless if that is the same stance the student believes. Asking students to step outside of their comfort zone encourages deep critical thinking skills and will require a student to collect research rather than to rely on what they already believe.

Provide students opportunities to analyze political speeches

"Words, words when spoken out loud for the sake of performance are music." -Jeff Bartlett, *The West Wing*

What better time is there to teach rhetorical strategies than during the height of a political season? Take time to show clips or full versions of famous and current political speeches. Have students analyze the stylistic choices being made by politicians that are intended to persuade their audience. It is essential for students to be able to identify when information is being presented in a way that is intended to persuade the listener in a specific direction. The skill of rhetorical speaking is demonstrated by all politicians and being able to identify the strategies is key to casting a vote based on facts rather than feelings. Ask students to identify examples of ethos, pathos, and logos in political speeches. Following the collection of data, instruct students to discuss or write about which rhetorical appeal was the most effective and why.



Digital Resources

[Newsela](#)

[Allsides](#)

[Colts outreach](#)

[Teaching Tolerance Voting](#)

[Primary Voting Video](#)

[Indiana Kids' Election](#)

[ProCon.org](#)

[Rock the Vote](#)

Literacy Updates from IDOE

Survey for Instructional Support

Please share your thoughts in this short survey below to help the IDOE Teaching and Learning Team provide the most relevant support to you and the field.

Support Survey

IDOE has created a Re-entry Resources page for educators and families (<https://www.doe.in.gov/covid-19/re-entry-resources>). In addition to this, the Teaching and Learning Team would like to know how we can best support your instructional needs during this time.

* Required

I need additional instructional supports in *

- Math
- ELA/Literacy
- Social Studies



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articulation of each standard or concept, a brief overview video introducing the standard, and grade-specific videos demonstrating strategies to effectively teach each goal.

Click here to access the resources: <https://tinyurl.com/y2rs4v1v>

Family Tip Sheet to Support Virtual Learning

IDOE has created a [tip sheet](#) for families to help support their student while engaged in virtual learning.



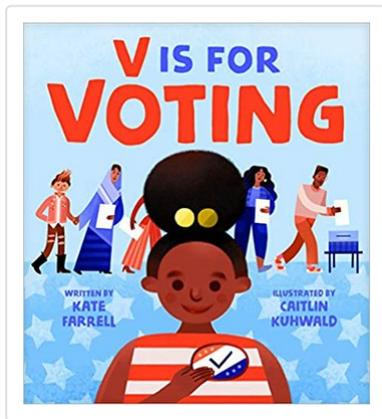
Literacy Framework

Does your school utilize a curriculum map, scope and sequence, or pacing guide? The [Literacy Framework](#) is a tool you can use to curriculum map and plan throughout the school year. Use the Literacy Framework to dive into each standard through "I can" statements, question stems, practical examples, and digital resources!

Have special requests for support? Feel free to reach out to us at any time. That's what we are here for!

Book Suggestions

The following book suggestions can be used in the classroom to facilitate conversations about voting. Some of these books address voting at its most basic level up to understanding how marginalized groups have had to advocate for their voting rights.



V is for Voting

Written by: Kate Farrell

Illustrated by: Caitlin Kuhwald

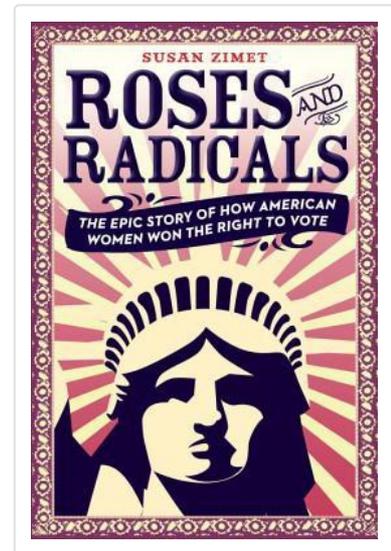
V is for Voting is an alphabet book. Each letter of the alphabet is related to a phrase that is connected to the process of voting in the United States. This book can help students practice their letters while also gaining content knowledge.



A Kids Book About Voting

Written by: Next Up

A Kids Book About Voting is part of a series that tackles major issues in a way that is relatable for children. This book takes the reader through what voting is, how it works, and challenges kids to wonder, "why voting is important?".



Roses and Radicals

Written by: Susan Zimet

Roses and Radicals: The Epic Story of How American Women Won the Right to Vote tells the story of women's suffrage in America. The book goes through the women who were involved in fighting for their right to vote and the obstacles they had to overcome knowing the right for women to vote would likely come after their lifetime. The book includes illustrated portraits, period cartoons, and other images.

Educator Opportunities to Check Out!

PATINS Project Virtual Education Conference

Join the PATINS Project for the first ever [virtual Access to Education 2020](#) conference on **November 18 and 19**). The [schedule](#) is live with sessions to super power your teaching.

For the low price of \$100, you gain access to:

- Two days of sessions (20 in total)
- Influential keynote speaker - Lance McLemore
- Pre-conference educator panel (November 17)
- Assistive Technology Exploratorium
- Universal Design for Learning Classroom Experience
- Recorded summary videos of all sessions

Register by November 10!

Poetry Out Loud Competition

High schools that wish to be part of the official [Poetry Out Loud](#) program must [click here to sign up](#) by December 11, 2020 to participate. The Indiana Arts Commission will work with interested schools to include them in the official Poetry Out Loud program. Schools that are not in the official program may conduct their own contests using the online resources. Contact Stephanie Haines at shaines@iac.in.gov or visit poetryoutloud.org for more information.



Lilly Endowment Teacher Creativity Fellowship

Lilly Endowment has announced its [34th Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program](#) (TCFP). We are aware that educators are facing mounting and evolving challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Especially during this difficult time, the TCFP renewal program plans to support educators through new experiences, exploration and reflection. The Endowment anticipates that educators will discover renewed energy in their careers, innovative approaches to

teaching and educational leadership, and thoughtful ways to encourage students' creative thinking. Approximately 100 grants, each totaling up to \$12,000, will be awarded in 2021.

Kindergarten Enrollment Guidance

IDOE receives a lot of questions from parents regarding kindergarten enrollment. This [document](#) is meant to help guide parents on Indiana law, options for kindergarten and Pre-K, and answers to frequently asked questions. For more questions, please check out the kindergarten webpage [here](#).



Literacy and Tech: Thought of the Month!

Teaching Books is an online catalog of thousands of book resources, lesson plan activities, and extras for classroom implementation. The Indiana State Library has paid for all Indiana educators to access this site.

How to sign in to Indiana's paid TeachingBooks access

1. Go to <https://teachingbooks.net/INSPIRE>
2. Click 'Sign In' and enter your school email
3. Follow the prompts and if you have any issues [email accounts@teachingbooks.net](mailto:emailaccounts@teachingbooks.net)
4. Enjoy!

Connect on Twitter!

It's been reported that over four million educators use Twitter for professional conversations. As educators, there is so much we can learn from each other. We invite you to connect with us and each other!

1. Tweet about all things LITERACY using #INspirEDlit
2. Follow the hashtag and connect with other coaches and educators
3. Follow @EducateIN for the latest updates from Indiana Department of Education
4. Follow your IDOE Literacy Team: @RoseTomishima, @KellyKWaller, & @JMRisch1

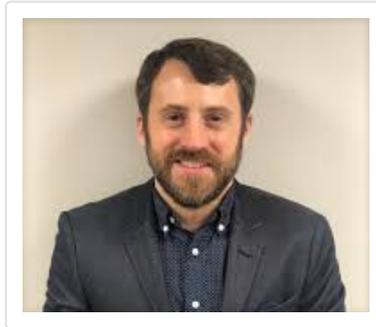
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