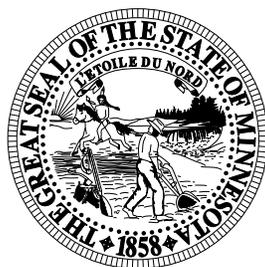




Your Vote Matters

Three lessons on voting in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Voting Rights Act



About Your Vote Matters

Your Vote Matters is the Minnesota Secretary of State's high school voter education program to support Minnesota civics and government teachers.

In addition to curriculum, Your Vote Matters includes support for school voter registration drives, free materials and in 2015, materials on the Voting Rights Act's 50th anniversary.

For more information, contact the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State's Voter Outreach Director at 651-201-1339.

This unit was adapted from "[Voting Matters to Me](#)," by Learning Law and Democracy Foundation, © 2014. Adapted with permission.

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Unit Overview

Summary

This three lesson unit teaches students about voting rights, the importance of voting, and how to get ready to vote. Lesson one can be used for grades 5-12, and lessons two and three for 9-12.

Duration

Each lesson lasts one class period. Any one lesson can be done independently or all three lessons can be combined and taught over three separate class periods.

Minnesota Social Studies Standards

All lessons are aligned with the Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in Social Studies Civics and Government. See page 7 for details.

Why teach this unit?

A fundamental purpose of education is to prepare students for their role as active and engaged citizens by teaching the importance, skills, and rights of voting.

Grade levels

- ◆ Lesson one: 5-12
- ◆ Lesson two: 9-12
- ◆ Lesson three: 9-12

Lesson structure

Each lesson has an accompanying PowerPoint that guides students through the lesson's three activities. Activities include:

- ◆ An introductory activity to capture student interest with relevant voting topics.

- ◆ An instruction activity with voting information and practices.
- ◆ A reflection activity for students to reflect on their own attitudes towards voting.

Guest speakers

Each lesson can be enhanced by inviting outside experts to team-teach content and share experiences. The Minnesota Secretary of State's office may be able to help you locate a speaker on elections, voting, and the Voting Rights Act. Call 651-201-1339 for more information.

Additional resources

- ◆ The Minnesota Secretary of State's website, mnvotes.org, is the source of voting and election information, videos, and voting materials used in the unit.
- ◆ For additional lessons on voting and the Voting Rights Act, visit teachingcivics.org/find-lessons-2/?q=voting.

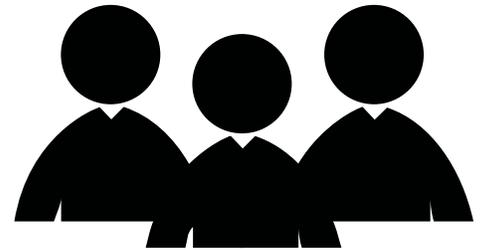
Lesson 1 - Why vote? Your vote matters!

Grade level

- ◆ 5-12

Duration

- ◆ One class period (45 - 50 minutes)



Summary

This lesson encourages young people to get involved in the electoral process by seeing the realities of voter turnout and how it impacts them personally. Students will consider the questions:

- ◆ Why do people vote? Why don't people vote?
- ◆ Who votes?
- ◆ What happens when people don't vote?
- ◆ What are barriers to voting, and how can people overcome them?

Lesson adapted from "Voting Matters to Me" at teachingcivics.org/lesson/voting-matters-to-me.

Learning objectives

- ◆ Students will evaluate the impact of voter turnout.
- ◆ Students will identify why people don't vote and explore ways to remove obstacles to voting.
- ◆ Students will articulate why voting matters to them personally.

Lesson 2 - Getting Ready to Vote

Grades

- ◆ 9-12

Duration

- ◆ One class period (45 - 50 minutes)



Summary

This lesson covers critical information about voting rights, how election law is made, and how to prepare to

Lesson Summaries (cont.)

vote. The introductory activity reflects on the impact of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. A Voter's Bill of Rights informs students about current rights under Minnesota election law and on steps to get ready to vote.

Get additional lessons on the Voting Rights Act at teachingcivics.org/find-lessons-2/?q=voting+rights.

Learning objectives

- ◆ Students will understand voting rights and how election laws are made.
- ◆ Students will learn essential Minnesota election laws.
- ◆ Students will understand how to prepare for voting.

Lesson 3 - Running a Polling Place

Grades

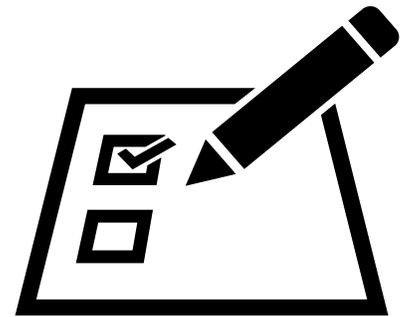
- ◆ 9-12

Duration

- ◆ One class period (45 - 50 minutes)

Summary

This lesson teaches students what goes on in a polling place on Election Day by learning about what poll workers do. The introductory activity explores how Election Day voting has changed over time. In the learning activity, students learn about poll worker roles and how they uphold voter rights. Students then examine hypothetical situations poll workers may encounter. In the reflection activity, students share ideas on how to improve our election system.



Learning objectives

- ◆ Students will understand how Election Day practices have changed over time.
- ◆ Students will understand the basics of polling place behavior and expectations.
- ◆ Students will learn about the voting process and voter rights by exploring what poll workers do.
- ◆ Students will learn about opportunities to become election judges themselves.



Minnesota K-12 Standards

All lessons are aligned with the following Minnesota K-12 Social Studies Civics and Government Standards

5.1.1.1.1

Simulate a historic event to show how civic engagement (voting, civil discourse about controversial issues and civic action) improves and sustains a democratic society, supports the general welfare, and protects the rights of individuals.

- ◆ For example: Historic events—Constitutional Convention, a town meeting.

6.1.1.1.1

Evaluate arguments about selected issues from diverse perspectives and frames of reference, noting the strengths, weaknesses, and consequences associated with the decision made on each issue.

- ◆ For example: Historical issues—women’s suffrage, treaties with indigenous nations, Civil Rights movement, New Deal programs. Strengths might include—expanded rights to new group of Americans, established tribal sovereignty, collaborative effort of multiple groups in American society, provided a financial safety net for individuals. Weaknesses might include—too expensive, unintended consequences, caused more problems than it solved.

7.1.3.5.1

Describe the components of responsible citizenship including informed voting and decision making, developing and defending positions on public policy issues, and monitoring and influencing public decision making.

7.1.4.9.1

Analyze how changes in election processes over time contributed to freer and fairer elections.

- ◆ For example: Fifteenth, Seventeenth, and Nineteenth Amendments; Voting Rights Act of 1965; redistricting.

9.1.1.1.2

Demonstrate the skills necessary to participate in the election process, including registering to vote, identifying and evaluating candidates and issues, and casting a ballot.

9.1.4.9.1

Analyze how the United States political system is shaped by elections and the election process, including the caucus system and procedures involved in voting.

1 Why vote? Your vote matters!

Grade Level

- ◆ 5-12

Duration

- ◆ One class period (45 - 50 minutes)

Summary

This lesson encourages young people to get involved in the electoral process by seeing the realities of voter turnout and how it impacts them personally. Students will consider the questions:

- ◆ Why do people vote? Why don't people vote?
- ◆ Who votes?
- ◆ What happens when people don't vote?
- ◆ What are barriers to voting, and how can people overcome them?

Lesson adapted from “[Voting Matters to Me](#),” by Learning Law and Democracy Foundation, © 2014. Adapted with permission.

Learning objectives

- ◆ Students will evaluate the impact of voter turnout.
- ◆ Students will identify why people don't vote and explore ways to remove obstacles to voting.
- ◆ Students will articulate why voting matters to them personally.

Materials

- ◆ Lesson One PowerPoint. <http://bit.ly/1UPy6Wh>

- ◆ Graphic organizer student handout on page [11](#).
- ◆ Signs for Candidate A and Candidate B on pages [12](#) and [13](#).
- ◆ If not doing Lesson Two, download and print Minnesota voter registration applications, or have students register online. Follow instructions on page [17](#).

Introductory Activity

In this activity, students see how voter turnout affects which issues legislators focus on.

Duration: 15 minutes

1. **Warm-up discussion. Ask class:** Slides 2-4

What are elections and what do they accomplish?

Who participates in elections? Is it important for voters to participate? Why?

What happens if there is an election and few people participate?

How might such an election affect you? Would it matter to you?

Let's see how voter turnout can change elections.

2. **Divide class into Millennials and Baby Boomers.** Slide 5

- ◆ Assign 60% of students to role play Millennial voters (ages 18-24).

- ◆ Assign 40% of students to be Baby Boomer voters (ages 65-74—tell students to pretend they are their grandparents).

Tell students:

You will be voting in an upcoming midterm election. Midterm elections take place in the middle of a four-year presidential term. In this election, there are two candidates running for office, Candidate A and Candidate B.

3. Assign two students to role play candidates. Slide 6

Ask for two class volunteers, one from each group, to stand in front of the room with a candidate sign. Ask Candidate A to hold their sign on one side of room, and Candidate B on the other.

4. See how many supporters each candidate has.

Each candidate's sign lists their top priority. Candidate A's top issue is reducing college costs. Candidate B's top issue is reducing nursing home costs. Election Day is coming soon, and we're going to see how much support each candidate has and predict who will win.

Get out of your seat and stand by the Candidate you will support. Remember to support the Candidate whose position best represents the interests of your age group.

Direct students to get up and move to their candidate's side of the room. Have students remain standing.

Count how many supporters each candidate has. Who will win the election?

Since 60% of students are Millennials, Candidate A should be the winner since Candidate A cares about lowering tuition costs and that is an important issue for Millennials.

5. Simulate who actually voted on Election Day. Slide 7

Election Day has come and it's time to vote. Candidate A expects to win.

But as it turns out, not all of A's supporters actually went to vote. In fact, only 20% of 18 - 24 year olds who were eligible to vote actually voted in the 2014 midterm elections. So now we're going to see how that impacts this mock election.

For every 5 voters standing by Candidate A, 4 of you have to sit down. Count off by 5s - 1, 2, 3, 4 (sit) and #5 stay standing. 80% of Millennials should be back in their seats.

Remember, Candidate B had fewer supporters, but Baby Boomers had the highest voter turnout of any age group in 2014, almost 80%.

So let's count off by 5s and this time #1, 2, 3, 4 remain standing and #5 sits down.

80% of Baby Boomers are still standing! They are the ones who showed up to vote.

Let's count the total votes of those who showed up on Election Day. Announcing our election results, Candidate B is the winner! Applause.

Ask voters standing by Candidate B:

Why do you think Baby Boomers are more likely to vote?

Turn to the Millennials:

Is this a good election result? Why or why not?

Why do you think so many Millennials don't vote?

What will happen to the tuition issue they cared about?

Thank students for participating and have them return

to their seats.

6. Review statistics on voter turnout. Slides 8-9

You can see from this slide that young people did not vote as much as older people (20% of Millennials versus close to 80% of Baby Boomers) in 2014.

Many people of all ages don't vote in midterm elections. The next slide shows turnout state-by-state in 2014. Only 36% voted nationwide. In Minnesota, where turnout is always comparatively high, 50% voted. However, in a Presidential year, turnout in Minnesota is usually over 70%.

Midterm elections are important for any issue you care about. That's because Congress and state legislatures are the ones who pass laws, and many of them are up for election every two years, not just in a Presidential election year. Every election matters!

Instruction Activity

Duration: 20 minutes

1. Discuss reasons why people do and do not vote. Slides 10-22

Hand out the graphic organizer. Instruct the students to fill it out as you move through the PowerPoint.

In this lesson, we will be taking a closer look at why people vote and why voting is important to all of us.

At the end of today, I would like you to decide why voting matters to you.

Now we're going to look at why people do and do not vote, what happens if you don't vote, and what stops people from voting.

2. Register eligible students to vote.

If not doing Lesson Two, register eligible students to vote. Follow instructions on page [17](#).

Reflection Activity

Duration: 10 minutes

1. Ask students to reflect on what issues matter to them. Slide 24

What are the issues that impact you?

What issues are you passionate about?

Do you care about that issue enough that you are willing to vote because of it?

Explore impact of issues with students.

2. Ask students to choose one issue and explain how voting impacts that issue (in writing and/or class discussion). Slide 25

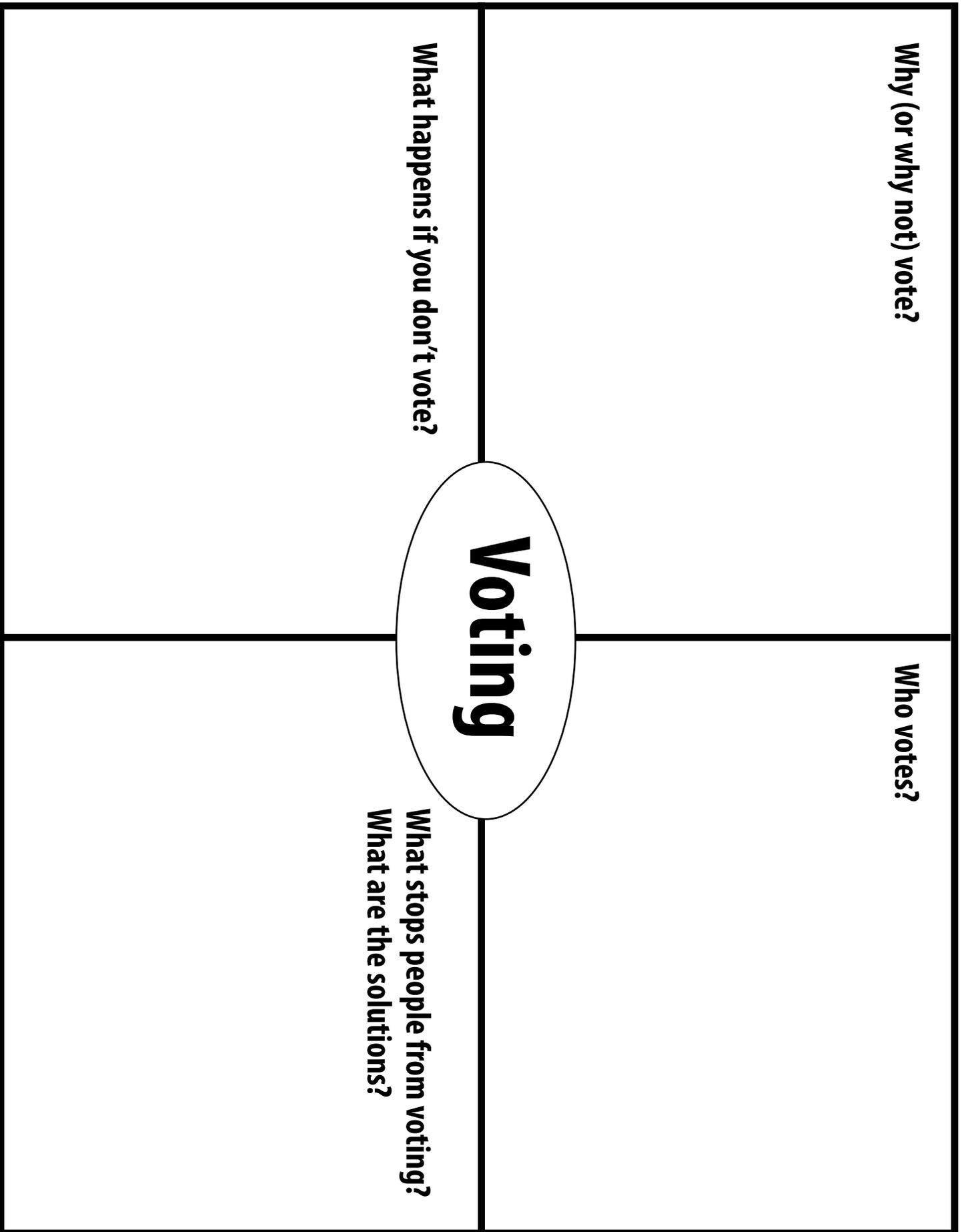
Explain how your vote makes a difference on an issue that's important to you.

How will your vote make a difference on whether elected officials act on your issue?

Why should you vote?

Resources

- ◆ Minnesota voting statistics can be found in the 'Election Results' section at mnvotes.org
- ◆ Find additional voting and registration statistics at:
 - ◆ U.S. Census Bureau: census.gov/hhes/www/socdemo/voting/index.html
 - ◆ United States Election Project: electproject.org/





Vote Candidate A

**I will make college
affordable!**



Vote Candidate B

**I will make nursing homes
affordable!**

2 Getting Ready to Vote

Grade level

- ◆ 9-12

Duration

- ◆ One class period (45 - 50 minutes)

Summary

This lesson covers critical information about voting rights, election law and how to prepare to vote. The introductory activity reflects on the impact of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Voter's Bill of Rights informs students about current rights under Minnesota election law and on steps to get ready to vote.

Lesson adapted from "[Voting Matters to Me](#)," by Learning Law and Democracy Foundation, © 2014. Adapted with permission. Find more lessons on voting rights at teachingcivics.org/find-lessons-2/?q=voting+rights.

Learning objectives

- ◆ Students will understand voting rights and who decides election laws.
- ◆ Students will learn essential Minnesota election laws.
- ◆ Students will understand how to prepare for voting.

Materials

- ◆ Lesson Two PowerPoint. <http://bit.ly/1UPy6Wh>
- ◆ One-minute video clip from the movie 'Selma' <http://bit.ly/1vowrVc>.

- ◆ Two-minute video clip ('Let's Get Ready to Vote!') from the Minnesota Secretary of State that provides voters with an overview of the voting process. <http://bit.ly/1JUQG9N>.
- ◆ Minnesota voter registration applications, or have students register online. Follow instructions on page [17](#).
- ◆ Minnesota Voter's Bill of Rights on page [16](#).

Introductory Activity

Duration: 15 minutes

1. Warm-up discussion.

Slide 3

Ask class:

How has the right to vote evolved in America?

How has the Constitution's protection of voting rights changed over time? (15th, 19th, 26th amendments)

Who decides voting laws and rules?

How have laws been used to prevent or help people vote?

2. Show clip from the movie, 'Selma.'

Slide 4

This is a 1 minute scene where an African-American voter (played by Oprah Winfrey) tries to register to vote in Selma, Alabama in 1965. [You will need to be connected to the internet to play the clip]. The registrar asks three questions and then denies her application. It is an example of a literacy test. Ask the class:

What right is the voter exercising?

What obstacle prevents her from registering? Is this

fair? Why or why not?

Has this obstacle been removed?

- 3. **Discuss voting rights, past and present.** Slides 5-6

The Voting Rights March from Selma to Montgomery in March of 1965 led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act in August.

Many states suppressed the votes of African-Americans and other communities of color. They used poll taxes and literacy tests, as well as brute force and intimidation, to deny certain citizens the right to register to vote.

The Voting Rights Act made those tactics illegal.

What obstacles are there to voting today? How should they be addressed?

- 4. **Discuss who decides election law.** Slides 7-9

States decide most election laws. Your experience voting might be quite different depending on where you live.

We're going to look at a number of important decisions they make.

Show examples and then discuss:

What are the benefits to having states set their own election laws? What are the drawbacks?

- 5. **Explain the levels of government that run elections in Minnesota.** Slide 10

Elections in Minnesota are run by several levels of government. Our elections are fairly decentralized, meaning that local officials have a lot of responsibility.

Instruction Activity

Duration: 25 minutes

- 1. **Explain who can vote in Minnesota.** Slide 12

Today's lesson will help you understand voting rights, key election laws in Minnesota and how to prepare for voting. We'll start by looking at who is eligible to vote in Minnesota.

- 2. **Show 2 minute video on voting basics.** Slide 13

"Let's Get Ready to Vote" at <http://bit.ly/1gxmsND>

- 3. **Walk through steps needed to register.** Slides 14-16

Register eligible students to vote. Follow registration instructions on page [17](#).

- 4. **Discuss how to learn about what is on the ballot.** Slide 17

- 5. **Prepare students for what to do at the polling place.** Slides 18-27

- 6. **Explain their rights under Minnesota law.** Slides 28-29

Pass out the Voter's Bill of Rights handout.

Reflection Activity

Duration: 10 minutes

- 1. **Have students reflect on President Johnson's speech to the Congress in 1965 on voting rights.** Slide 31

What does this tell us about voting rights? Do you agree or disagree with his view?

- 2. **Have students create a personal voting statement.** Slide 32

Ask students to reflect on what the right to vote means to them.

What is your statement about voting?



Minnesota Voter's Bill of Rights ¹⁶

Student Handout

Get paid time off to vote

You have the right to miss work to vote in any regularly scheduled election without losing pay, personal leave, or vacation time.

Vote if you arrive by 8:00 P.M.

If you are in line at your polling place any time before 8:00 p.m., you have the right to vote.

Register on Election Day

You have the right to register to vote on Election Day. You will need to show proof of where you live (for example, a driver's license with your address). You can also go with a registered voter in your precinct who can vouch for where you live.

Get help when voting

You have the right to request special assistance when voting from anyone you choose (except from your employer, your union, or a candidate).

If you can't sign your name, you have the right to orally confirm your identity with an election judge and to ask another person to sign your name for you.

Bring your kids

You have the right to bring your minor children into the polling place and into the voting booth with you.

Vote after serving your sentence

If you have been convicted of a felony but your felony sentence has expired (been completed) or you have

been discharged from your sentence, you have the right to vote.

Vote when under guardianship

If you are under guardianship, you have the right to vote, unless the court order revokes your right to vote.

Vote without others influencing you

You have the right to vote without anyone in the polling place trying to influence your vote.

Get a new ballot if you make a mistake

If you make a mistake when voting, you have the right to get a new ballot.

File a complaint

You have the right to file a written complaint at your polling place if you aren't happy with the way an election is being run.

Bring a sample ballot

You have the right to take a sample ballot into the voting booth with you.

Bring Voter's Bill of Rights with you

You can bring a copy of these rights with you to the polling place.

Text adapted from the Minnesota Voter's Bill of Rights, Minnesota Statutes 204C.08, subd. 1b.

Guide to Student Voter Registration

General guidelines

- 1. Allow enough time in class.** Give students time to complete the application and ask questions. Don't leave it for the last five minutes of class!
- 2. Online registration is preferable.** Registering online is quicker and easier, and doesn't require you or students to return a paper application.
- 3. Return paper applications on time.** If you do use paper applications, make a plan to collect them and mail them back. They must be received by election officials within 10 days of when they are signed.
- 4. Resolve questions about eligibility.** If a student isn't sure they are eligible to register, instruct them to wait. You or the student can call the Minnesota Secretary of State's Office for basic questions about voter eligibility (1-877-600-VOTE).
- 5. Students will need to register at their polling place if the election is less than three weeks away.** Pre-registration closes 21 days before the election. Anyone not registered at that time will need to register at their polling place and show proof of residence. You can teach students how to register on Election Day by visiting mnvotes.org.

Who can register?

- ◆ Students who are 18 years old can register.
- ◆ Students who are 17 1/2 years old and will turn 18 on or before Election Day can also register. For example, any student who will turn 18 between May and Election Day in November can register.

In addition, the student must be:

- ◆ A U.S. citizen
- ◆ A resident of Minnesota for at least 20 days
- ◆ Finished with all parts of any felony sentence

Students can vote while under guardianship unless a judge specifically has revoked their right to vote.

Register online

- ◆ The online voter registration application can be found at mnvotes.org.

Register with a paper application

- ◆ Download applications to print and distribute at <http://bit.ly/1P1hnrX>.
- ◆ Or, request paper copies from the Minnesota Secretary of State's office or your county election office.
- ◆ Translations are available in select languages.

Returning completed applications

- 1. Check for legibility**—if you can't read it, the county official won't be able to either!
- 2. Check that all required fields are complete.**
- 3. Make sure the application is received by election officials within 10 days of the signature date.** Mail or drop off the application to the voter's county election office, or to:

Minnesota Secretary of State
60 Empire Drive
Suite 100
St. Paul, MN 55103

3 Running a Polling Place

Grade level

- ◆ 9-12

Duration

- ◆ One class period (45 - 50 minutes)

Summary

This lesson teaches students what goes on in a polling place on Election Day. The introductory activity explores how Election Day voting has changed over time. In the instruction activity, students learn about poll worker roles and how they uphold voter rights. Students then examine hypothetical situations poll workers may encounter. In the reflection activity, students give their ideas for how to improve our election system.

Learning objectives

- ◆ Students will understand how Election Day practices have changed over time.
- ◆ Students will understand the basics of polling place behavior and expectations.
- ◆ Students will learn about the voting process and voter rights.
- ◆ Students will learn about opportunities to become election judges.

Materials

- ◆ Lesson Three PowerPoint. <http://bit.ly/1UPy6Wh>
- ◆ Student handout, “You Be the Election Judge” on

page [20](#).

- ◆ If not doing Lesson Two, hand out and review the Minnesota Voter’s Bill of Rights on page [16](#).
- ◆ If not doing Lesson Two, download and print Minnesota voter registration applications, or have students register online. Follow instructions on page [17](#).

Introductory Activity

Duration: 10 minutes

1. **What was a polling place like in the 1800’s?** Slides 3-4

This slide is a painting of a polling place on the steps of the courthouse in Saline County, Missouri, in 1846.

Who is in charge of the polling place?

Who gets to vote?

How is voting done? Does it seem fair?

How do you think voting is today different?

2. **How is voting different today?** Slides 5-6

Who is in charge of the polling place?

Who gets to vote?

How is voting done? Does it seem fair?

Instruction Activity

Duration: 30 minutes

1. **Introduce who election judges are and what they do.** Slide 8

2. Explain how election judges commit to strict standards of fairness. Slides 9-10

Election judges take an oath that they will be fair and impartial. Their job is to follow the laws as written—not how they think the laws should be. On Election Day, election judges must leave their opinions at home and avoid any action that may influence how a person votes.

3. Introduce the types of election judges. Slides 11

Judges split up the work and take on specific roles during the day.

As we discuss each judge’s role, think about what their tasks say about how our system works.

In what ways are they creating a fair process that protects the rights of all voters?

4. Go over the main duties of each election judge. Slides 12-19

Using the slides, review the 2-3 main tasks of each judge.

5. Discuss ways voter can receive help at the polling place. Slides 20-24

6. Using the slides and handout “You Be the Election Judge” complete the activity. Slide 25

Have students answer which election judge would help voters in each scenario, and how each problem would be solved. An answer key is on page [21](#).

If you haven’t done Lesson Two, hand out and review the Minnesota Voter’s Bill of Rights on page [16](#) before you do this exercise.

7. Encourage students to consider Slides 26-27

becoming an election judge.

8. Register eligible students to vote.

If not doing Lesson Two, register eligible students to vote. Follow instructions on page [17](#).

Reflection Activity

Duration: 10 minutes

1. Have students reflect on the modern way of voting. Slide 29

What have you learned about polling place rules? Is voting easy? Fair?

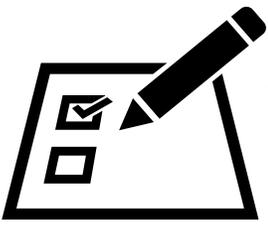
2. What do you want to see changed in our election system? Slide 30

Ask students to write down 1-2 things they would change about how our election system works.

Some examples you can give to spark their ideas are moving Election Day from Tuesdays to a weekend day; being able to vote online; or voting all by mail instead of at a polling place, as they do in Washington and Oregon states.

Resources

- ◆ Election judge training videos from the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State can be found at <http://bit.ly/1MYbLRv>.
- ◆ An in-depth role play of a voting polling place can be found in the lesson, “Voting as Easy as 1-2-3” at teachingcivics.org/lesson/voting-matters-to-me/.



You Be the Election Judge

Write which judge will help the voter and how the judge will handle the situation.

Choose from Head, Roster, Registration, Demonstration, Ballot, or Ballot Counter Judges.

1. Mark was convicted of a felony and has finished his sentence. He wants to register. Can he? Which election judge will help answer his question?

2. Sandra wants to write in the name of a candidate who is not on the ballot. Is this allowed? Which election judge will help her?

3. Brittany wants to bring a sample ballot she filled out into the voting booth to remind her of who she wants to vote for. Can she? Which election judge will help her?

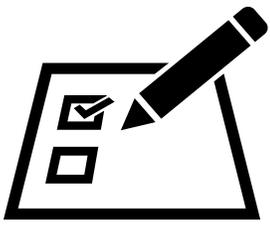
4. Damion comes to vote at a polling place near his work. He lives on the other side of town, but wants to vote at this polling place. Can he? Which election judge will help him?

5. Ruth has difficulty walking and wants to vote from her car. Can she? Which election judge will help her?

6. John is visually impaired and wants to vote independently without help from another person. What options does he have? Which judge will answer this question?

7. Antonia made a mistake filling out her ballot. She's not sure if she can get a replacement ballot. Can she? Which election judge will help her?

8. Ray is standing in line waiting to vote. He chats with the person next to him about who he is going to vote for. Is this allowed? Which election judge will address this situation, and what will the judge say?



You Be the Election Judge 21

Answer Key

1. Judge: Registration Judge.

Answer: Yes, Mark can vote. If you have been convicted of a felony but your felony sentence has expired (been completed) or you have been discharged from your sentence, you have the right to vote.

Reference: Minnesota Voter's Bill of Rights.

2. Judge: Demonstration or Ballot Judge.

Answer: Yes, Sandra can write in a choice. Blank spaces are provided on the ballot for write-ins for each office. To cast a write-in vote, fill in the write-in oval and write in the name of a candidate who is not on the ballot.

Reference: Slides on Demonstration Judge.

3. Judge: Demonstration or Ballot Judge.

Answer: Yes, Brittany has the right to take a sample ballot into the voting booth with her.

Reference: Minnesota Voter's Bill of Rights.

4. Judge: Greeter Judge.

Answer: No, Damion cannot vote there. Each voter is assigned a polling place that is usually very close to where they live. The Greeter Judge may help Damion find where he needs to vote.

Reference: Slide on Greeter Judge.

5. Judge: Greeter or Head Judge.

Answer: Yes she can. Two election judges from different political parties will bring voting materials to her car. This is called 'curbside voting.'

Reference: Slides on helping voters.

6. Judge: Ballot or Demonstration Judge.

Answer: Yes, John can vote independently using the assistive voting machine. This device can display the ballot in large print or with a high-contrast background; it can read the ballot aloud through headphones; and it allows voters to select candidates through a Braille keypad, touchscreen or sip-and-puff device.

Reference: Slide on Ballot Judge.

7. Judge: Ballot Judge.

Answer: Yes, if Antonia made a mistake when marking her ballot, she has a right to get a new one.

Reference: Minnesota Voter's Bill of Rights

8. Judge: Greeter Judge or Head Judge.

Answer: No. Nobody in the polling place, including voters waiting in line and election judges, is allowed to talk about who they are going to vote for. The polling place is meant to be neutral space.

Reference: Slide on Greeter Judge.

Reader's Note

The following pages include historical artifacts, such as news articles, quotes, and published letters from the 1960s about the events leading up to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. They were originally published as part of the Secretary of State's 2015-2016 Legislative Manual, or "Blue Book."

As readers will see, the language used and printed fifty years ago to describe the struggles faced by African-Americans and other communities of color is considerably different than today. The Secretary of State's Office, in consultation with the Saint Paul

NAACP, felt it was important for Minnesotans to read these sources of information as they were written in 1965, not only for historical context but so Minnesotans can better understand how far we've come and how far we have yet to go.

Steve Simon

Minnesota Secretary of State

Jeffry Martin

Saint Paul NAACP, President



St. Paul Pioneer Press, March 16, 1965

Key Events and Legislative Dates

- ◆ March 7 – March 25, 1965: Voting rights marches in Selma, Alabama
- ◆ March 15, 1965: President Johnson addresses Congress and calls for voting rights legislation
- ◆ March 17, 1965: Voting Rights Act introduced in the Senate as S. 1564
- ◆ May 26, 1965: Passed the United States Senate (77-19)
- ◆ July 9, 1965: Passed the United States House of Representatives with amendment (333-85)
- ◆ July 29, 1965: Reported by the joint conference committee
- ◆ August 3, 1965: Agreed to by the United States House of Representatives (328-74)
- ◆ August 4, 1965: Agreed to by the United States Senate (79-18)
- ◆ August 6, 1965: Signed into law by United States President Lyndon B. Johnson

Mondale Calls for Voting Bill

Three days before Bloody Sunday in Selma, Ala., *The Minneapolis Spokesman* highlighted Senator Walter Mondale's call for voting rights legislation. The story, published on March 4, 1965, was placed in the upper-right corner of the front page, indicating it was the most important story in that week's issue.

Mondale says Congress Must Enact Legislature Insuring Voting Rights

Minneapolis Spokesman, March 4, 1965

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Senator Walter Mondale said Saturday that “Congress must adopt legislation this session to permit Negroes full participation in the American political process.”

In an address to the Metropolitan Washington Chapter of Americans for Democratic Action, the Minnesota Senator said “legislation must be adopted that will remove the last remnant of restrictions on Negro voting rights in both federal and local elections. Literacy tests can no longer be permitted to deny Negroes their voting rights,” Mondale said.

“Voter registration cannot be left in the hostile hands of persons whose very jobs depend on the continued frustration of the Negroes’ right to vote. And we can no longer justify the token registration of a few Negroes through the tedious process of case-by-case ‘trial by combat’ through the courts.”

“Who are we—we who enjoy all of our rights—to tell the Negro to be patient or to set time-tables for the exercise of his Constitutional rights. The time for patience is past. The insistent demands for Freedom Now require action now—action by an effective federal instrumentality.

“Other Constitutional and human rights cannot effectively be secured where the right to vote is denied—where political power is absent,” Mondale said. “For in the last analysis, it is the local elected official—not the federal marshal or federal judge—who daily dispenses justice or injustice to the Negro. It is the local Sheriff, the local Chief of Police, the local School Board members, the local voting registrar who set the pace in closing the glaring gap between the federal ‘right’ and the local ‘practice’ under which the right is desired.”

Mondale, who succeeded Vice President Hubert Humphrey in the United States Senate, said Congress must adopt legislation to:

- ♦ extend voting guarantees to all elections—local, state and federal;
- ♦ correct abuses in the administration of literacy tests, especially where prior education has been so discriminatory that literacy tests are per se unreasonable, or where such tests are newly-installed and do not apply equally to already-registered whites;
- ♦ and authorize temporary federal registrars to step in and register voters in cases where it is established that the local registrar has deliberately frustrated the registration of qualified Negroes.

“Our objective is not to move a massive federal apparatus into the South, but to provide a remedy in those areas where abuses exist.”



Selma and Bloody Sunday

On March 9, 1965, two days after Bloody Sunday in Selma, Alabama, Congressman Joseph E. Karth, who represented Minnesota's 4th District, wrote a letter to the U.S. Attorney General urging him "to launch immediately a full investigation."

The Honorable Nicholas deB. Katzenbach
The Attorney General
Department of Justice
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

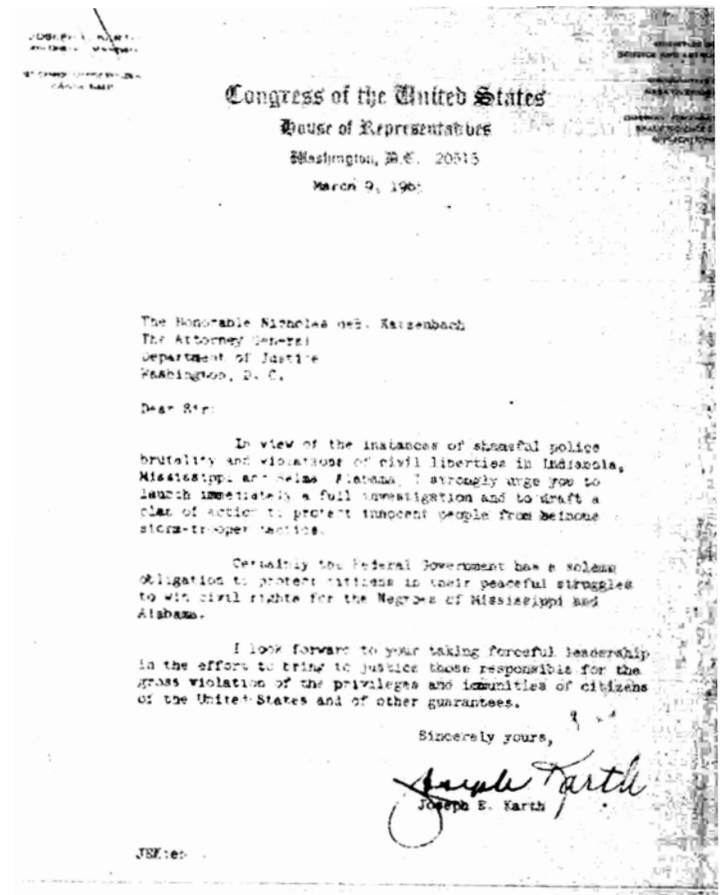
In view of the instances of shameful police brutality and violations of civil liberties in Indianola, Mississippi and Selma, Alabama, I strongly urge you to launch immediately a full investigation and to draft a plan of action to protect innocent people from heinous storm-trooper tactics.

Certainly the Federal Government has a solemn obligation to protect citizens in their peaceful struggles to win civil rights for the Negroes of Mississippi and Alabama.

I look forward to your taking forceful leadership in the effort to bring to justice those responsible for the gross violation of the privileges and immunities of citizens of the United States and of other guarantees.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph E. Karth



In 1965, the Minnesota Republican Party chair, Robert Forsythe, traveled to Alabama for a “two-day observation trip.” Upon his return to Minnesota, Forsythe held a press conference, which was covered in the Minneapolis Tribune on March 16, 1965.

LBJ Alabama Policy Backed by Forsythe

Minneapolis Tribune, March 16, 1965

President Johnson’s “middle of the road” response to Negro voting rights demonstrations in Alabama was commended Monday by Robert Forsythe, Minnesota Republican chairman.

Forsythe, who returned Sunday from a two-day observation trip to Alabama, told a press conference yesterday that he thought the Democratic President had acted “wisely and prudently.”

Instead of doing nothing, on one hand, or rushing in immediately with federal troops, on the other, Mr. Johnson chose to move cautiously by sending in FBI agents to investigate reports of violence and federal civil rights officials to try to mediate between Negroes and whites in Selma, Forsythe said.

This, he said, seemed to be the goal of federal officials who were working to calm the situation until Congress can adopt federal legislation assuring Negroes the right to register to vote.

Noting that only 600 of 15,000 Negroes are registered in Dallas County, where Selma is situated, Forsythe said it is obvious that “something is wrong” with Alabama’s voting procedures.

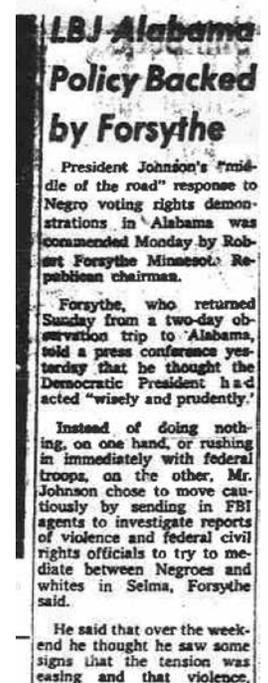
He said that, for example, registrars are required to be open for business only two days a month. In addition, he said, state law requires that prospective applicants not only meet all voting requirements but also must bring along a registered voter to vouch for their character and identity.

Both laws, he said, have been used to prevent Negroes from registering.

He called the Negro demonstrations of the past two weeks “one of the proper ways” for citizens to obtain their constitutional rights.

He predicted Congress will expeditiously approve voting rights legislation with support from the Republican minority.

He said he planned to report on his trip to Minnesota’s four Republican congressman – Reps. Albert Quie, Archer Nelson, Clark MacGregor and Odin Langen.



Minnesotans Head to Selma

In 1965, many Minnesotans made trips to Selma, Alabama to “see for themselves” the reports in the news and to help with voting rights efforts. The article below was published in the Minneapolis Star on March 19, 1965.

14 Volunteers for Selma Trip

Minneapolis Star, March 19, 1965

Eight college students and six adults so far have volunteered for a trip to Selma, Ala., to “see for themselves” what’s happening in the civil rights movement.

The trip is being sponsored by a group of University of Minnesota students, and trip – planning headquarters are at the home of Jack Mogelson, 3152 Florida Av., St. Louis Park.

Mogelson said the group is also trying to raise funds to help pay trip expenses. The group plans to leave here sometime Sunday morning and return next Friday. He said it was hoped the number of volunteers for the bus trip would be 35.

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In 1965, the president of St. Thomas College in Minnesota traveled to Selma, Alabama to speak at the memorial service of civil rights activist Reverend James J. Reeb, who was a St. Olaf graduate and killed during the civil rights marches in Selma. His trip was covered in the St. Paul Dispatch on March 16, 1965.

Msgr. Shannon Returns Here

St. Paul Dispatch, March 16, 1965.

Msgr. James Shannon, president of St. Thomas college, returned here today from Selma, Ala., saying that he was “greatly encouraged” by what he saw there.

Msgr. Shannon spoke in appreciation of the Rev. James J. Reeb at a memorial service conducted Monday in Selma for the slain Unitarian minister.

The highest ranking Catholic clergyman at the memorial service, Msgr. Shannon, will be consecrated a bishop March 31 in the St. Paul Cathedral.

He was one of a number of clergyman of both Protestant and Catholic faiths who went to Selma Sunday to be present there at the services Monday.

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Olaf Alum Murdered in Selma

Civil rights activist Reverend James J. Reeb was killed during the civil rights marches in Selma, Alabama. He died on March 11, 1965. Rev. Reeb was a graduate of St. Olaf College in Minnesota. Following his death, St. Olaf announced a lecture series in his honor, as reported by the St. Paul Dispatch on March 16, 1965.

St. Olaf's Announces Reeb Lecture Series

St. Paul Dispatch, March 16, 1965

NORTHFIELD—The president of St. Olaf college today announced the establishment of the James J. Reeb Memorial lecture series in honor of the clergyman killed in the cause of civil rights in Selma last week.

President Sidney Rand made the announcement at a memorial service at 9 a.m. today in the college chapel. The Rev. Mr. Reeb was a graduate of St. Olaf in the class of 1950.

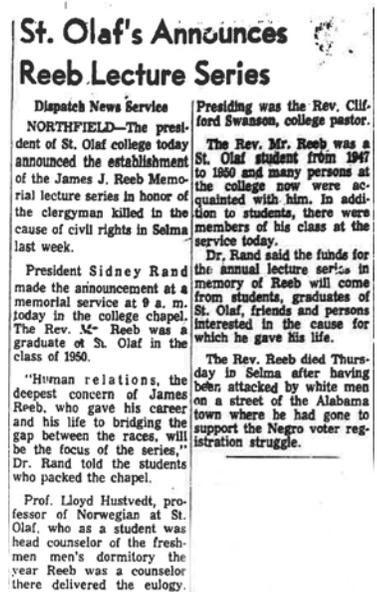
“Human relations, the deepest concern of James Reeb, who gave his career and his life to bridging the gap between the races, will be the focus of the series,” Dr. Rand told the students who packed the chapel.

Prof. Lloyd Hustvedt, professor of Norwegian at St. Olaf, who as a student was head counselor of the freshmen men’s dormitory the year Reeb was a counselor there delivered his eulogy. Presiding was the Rev. Clifford Swanson, college pastor.

The Rev. Mr. Reeb was a St. Olaf student from 1947 to 1950 and many persons at the college now were acquainted with him. In addition to students, there were members of his class at the service today.

Dr. Rand said the funds for the annual lecture series in memory of Reeb will come from students, graduates of St. Olaf, friends and persons interested in the cause for which he gave his life.

The Rev. Reeb died Thursday in Selma after having been attacked by white men on a street of the Alabama town where he had gone to support the Negro voter registration struggle.



Local Leaders Speak Out

During the civil rights marches in Selma and after President Lyndon B. Johnson addressed a joint session of Congress and called on them to pass a voting rights bill, local elected and party officials spoke out. St. Paul Mayor George Vavoulis sent telegrams to Minnesota's congressional delegation and the Hennepin County DFL passed a resolution supporting voting rights for all citizens, according to articles in the St. Paul Dispatch and Minneapolis Spokesman on March 16 and March 18, 1965, respectively.

Vavoulis Supports Right-to-Vote

St. Paul Dispatch, March 16, 1965

Mayor George Vavoulis sent telegrams today to Minnesota members of congress urging them all to support the federal administration's right-to-vote program. A short time later his move was approved by the City Council. The mayor wired:

"America's future and confirming symbol of a free and democratic society can only be maintained by all Americans being able to exercise their inalienable right to vote. "I respectfully urge you to let Americans know that the citizens of St. Paul and Minnesota demand that the right to vote shall be guaranteed." The message did not specifically mention President Johnson's Monday night speech and proposals for a right-to-vote bill.



The wires were sent to Sens. Eugene McCarthy and Walter Mondale and to Reps. Joseph Karth, Clark MacGregor, Odin Langen, Albert Quie, Ancher Nelson, John Blatnik, Donald Fraser and Alec G. Olson.

Alabama Hit By Hennepin County DFL Convention Resolution

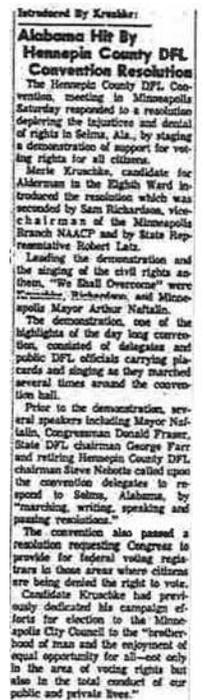
Minneapolis Spokesman, March 18, 1965

The Hennepin County DFL Convention meeting in Minneapolis Saturday responded to a resolution deploring the injustice and denial of rights in Selma, Ala., by staging a demonstration of support for voting rights for all citizens.

Merle Kruschke, candidate for Alderman in the Eighth Ward, introduced the resolution which was seconded by Sam Richardson, vice-chairman of the Minneapolis Branch NAACP and by State Representative Robert Latz. Leading the demonstration and the singing of the civil rights anthem, "We Shall Overcome" were Kruschke, Richardson and Minneapolis Mayor Arthur Naftalin.

The demonstration, one of the highlights of the day long convention, consisted of delegates and public DFL officials carrying placards and singing as they marched several times around the convention hall.

The convention also passed a resolution requesting Congress to provide for federal voting registrars in those areas where citizens are being denied the right to vote. Candidate Kruschke had previously dedicated his campaign efforts for election to the Minneapolis City Council to the "brotherhood of man and the enjoyment of equal opportunity for all—not only in the area of voting rights but also in the total conduct of our public and private lives."



Johnson's Speech to Congress

After President Lyndon B. Johnson called on Congress to pass a voting rights bill, the Minneapolis Spokesman published an editorial on March 18, 1965 praising the President for "perhaps the greatest speech a Chief Executive of this great Nation ever made..."

A President's Finest Hour

Minneapolis Spokesman, March 18, 1965

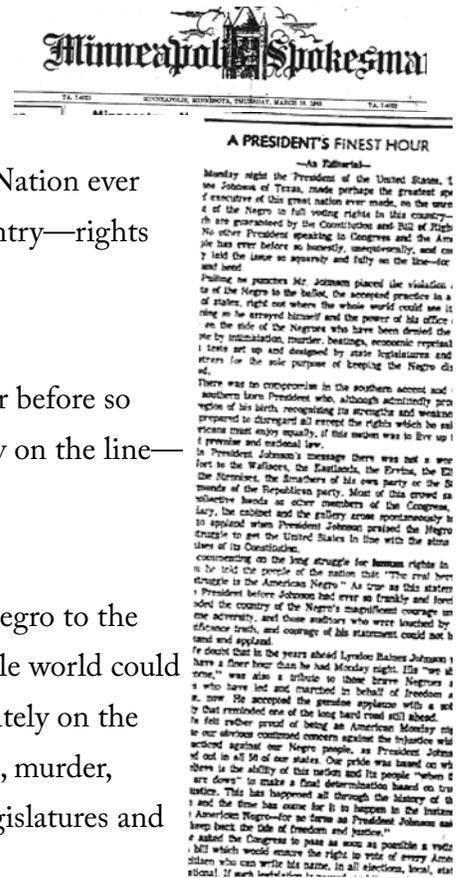
Monday night the President of the United States, Lyndon Baines Johnson of Texas, made perhaps the greatest speech a Chief Executive of this great Nation ever made, on the unresolved right of the Negro to full voting rights in this country—rights which are guaranteed by the Constitution and Bill of Rights.

No other President speaking to Congress and the American people has ever before so honestly, unequivocally, and courageously laid the issue so squarely and fully on the line—for all to see and heed.

Pulling no punches, Mr. Johnson placed the violation of the rights of the Negro to the ballot, the accepted practice in a number of States, right out where the whole world could see it. And in doing so, he arrayed himself and the power of his office definitely on the side of the Negroes who have been denied the right to vote by intimidation, murder, beatings, economic reprisals, and trick tests set up and designed by State legislatures and vote registrars for the sole purpose of keeping the Negro disfranchised.

There was no compromise in the southern accent and voice of a southern born President who, although admittedly proud of the region of his birth, recognizing its strengths and weaknesses, was prepared to disregard all except the rights which he said all Americans must enjoy equally, if this Nation was to live up to its great promise and national law.

In President Johnson's message there was not a word of comfort to the Wallaces, the Eastlands, the Ervins, the Ellenders, the Stennises, the Smathers of his own part or the Strom Thurmonds of the Republican Party. Most of this crowd sat on its collective hands as other Members of the Congress, the judiciary, the Cabinet, and the gallery arose spontaneously to its feet to applaud when President Johnson praised the Negro for his struggle to get the United States in line with the aims and promises of its Constitution.



Johnson's Speech to Congress

In commenting on the long struggle for human rights in this Nation he told the people of the Nation that, "The real hero of this struggle is the American Negro." As true as this statement is, no President before Johnson had ever so frankly and forcibly reminded the country of the Negro's magnificent courage under extreme adversity, and those auditors who were touched by the magnificent truth, and courage of his statement could not help but stand and applaud.

We doubt that in the years ahead Lyndon Baines Johnson will ever have a finer hour than he had Monday night. His "we shall overcome," was also a tribute to those brave Negroes and whites who have led and marched in behalf of freedom and justice, now. He accepted the genuine applause with a sober dignity that reminded one of the long hard road still ahead.

We felt rather proud of being an American Monday night despite our obvious continued concern against the injustice which is practiced against our Negro people, as President Johnson pointed out in all 50 of our States. Our pride was based on what we believe is the ability of this Nation and its people "when the chips are down" to make a final determination based on truth and justice. This has happened all through the history of this Nation and the time has come for it to happen in the instance of the American Negro—for no force as President Johnson said, "can keep back the tide of freedom and justice."

He asked the Congress to pass as soon as possible a voting rights bill which would insure the right to vote of every American citizen who can write his name, in all elections; local, State, and National. If such legislation is passed, and it must be enacted, the final barriers to full citizenship will have been pushed aside to allow every qualified American man and woman of voting age to participate in the selection of public officials. This will greatly affect the peace, harmony, and unity of the country which has long been divided by the denial of constitutional rights, to part of the country's citizenry.

The Nation owes a debt of gratitude to President Johnson and the aroused public opinion which convinced him that he had to take a strong position and promised him the support which made his Monday night speech such a great document of true statesmanship. -CECIL NEWMAN.

During the civil rights marches in Selma, Alabama, Minnesotans submitted letters to their local newspapers. Below are two examples of letters that ran in the Minneapolis Star on March 19 and March 20, 1965.

Why Civil Rights Laws?

To the editor: The March 12 Star carried the headline, "Jet Sent for Mr. Reeb's Family." The article stated that Selma's public safety director said four Selma men had been arrested and charged with murder. They were released later under \$25,000 bond each. He said Alabama law permits bonds on a murder charge if there is indication that a jury will not return the death penalty.

How on earth do they know the death penalty will not be asked for by a jury before the facts are presented to the jury? It certainly looks cut and dried, and not good for the people or laws of Alabama. I would never in my life believe the majority of people in Alabama sanction the things going on at this time in Alabama.

Why do we need civil rights and voting legislation for Negroes when they are natural born citizens of the United States? The 14th Amendment, adopted in 1868, states that everyone born in the United States is a citizen and is entitled to full citizen's rights and that's that. All we need is law enforcement. Why do we have to spell it out? – Kenneth J. Dumas, Hopkins

Coercion of Voters

To the Editor: Some of the civil rights proponents have about as much concern for the individual's rights as the "War on Poverty" has for helping the poor. Most everyone agrees that it is wrong to interfere with voting rights, but what about use of the "pork barrel" to intimidate voters?

Sen. Mondale displayed emotional concern over voting rights when speaking to the gathering at the state capitol; but where was his concern when an official on government payroll told the citizens at Fridley that the way to get a new post office was to elect a Democrat?

What about the vote irregularities the big city Democratic machines indulge in? What about the coercion that goes on throughout the union monopoly?

Mondale aligns himself with those who promise to amend the Taft-Hartley law to give labor leaders more power over the individual. – I. Nalewaja, Monticello, Minn.

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Hopkins.

—Kenneth J. Dumas.

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Monticello, Minn.

—I. Nalewaja.

St. Paul Pastors Jailed in Selma

Six Minnesotans were arrested in Selma, Alabama while “praying and picketing” at the home of Selma Mayor Joseph Smitherman. The Minnesotans were among more than 300 civil rights demonstrators arrested that day. The article below was published in the St. Paul Pioneer Press on March 21, 1965.

4 St. Paul Pastors Go to Jail in Selma

St. Paul Pioneer Press, March 21, 1965.

Six Minnesotans, including four St. Paul clergymen, were among the more than 300 civil rights demonstrators arrested in Selma, Ala., the Associated Press reported Saturday. They were in a group praying and picketing at the home of Mayor Joseph Smitherman of Selma when they were taken into custody.

They are the Rev. David W. Benson, assistant pastor at St. John the Evangelist Episcopal church; the Rev. John Metzger, pastor of Hamline Methodist church; the Rev. Richard Tice, associate minister of Central Park Methodist church, and the Rev. Thomas Payne, pastor of Arlington Hills Methodist church. Also arrested were Mrs. Ann Goodwin, Crystal, and the Rev. Rollin Norris, vicar of Christ Episcopal Mission, Spring Lake Park.

Mrs. Goodwin is devotional chairman for the Episcopal Church Women of Minnesota.

Wilson Baker, Selma public safety director, told the demonstrators, “We have had trouble with you folks before, and we are taking you into custody to protect you.”

Those arrested were held about 3 hours and spent the night in a community center behind the city hall.

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Senate Passes Voting Rights Act

On May 26, 1965, the United State Senate passed the Voting Rights Act, 77 to 19, with support from both of Minnesota's U.S. Senators, Eugene McCarthy and Walter Mondale. The Senate's passage of the bill made the front pages of the Minneapolis Tribune and St. Paul Pioneer Press on May 27, 1965.



Voting Right Bill Passed By Senate

1 KILLED, 24 INJURED

More Tornadoes Batter Midwest

Pioneer Press Wire Services
More than 40 tornadoes and vicious winds raked sections of nine central states Wednesday, injuring at least 24 persons and killing one.
More than 30 funnel clouds were spotted in and around Grand Rapids, Mich., and at least five tornadoes slammed through the Chicago area. The weather onslaught hit parts of Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Ohio.

Cloture Rule Chokes Off Opposition

Pioneer Press Wire Services
WASHINGTON — An overpowering coalition of Democratic and Republican senators passed President Johnson's far-reaching voting rights bill Wednesday, 77 to 19. Southern opposition was routed under a cloture rule that choked off debate.

St. Paul Pioneer Press

Twins Take First Place
Defeat Boston, 8-7, as Chicago Loses

Senate Passes Voting Rights Bill, 77 to 19

(DETAILS in Sports Section)



John John's Class John F. Kennedy, circled, 4-year-old son of the late president, is a member of the nursery class at St. David's School, New York City, operated by Roman Catholic laymen. A school official said, "He's a great kid and likes school very much."

Southerners Overridden by Coalition

WASHINGTON, D.C. — (UPI)—An overpowering coalition of Democratic and Republican senators passed President Johnson's far-reaching voting rights bill Wednesday, 77 to 19. Southern opposition was routed under a cloture rule that choked off debate.

The vote sending the precedent-setting measure to the House came after five weeks of Senate debate. A similar but somewhat stronger bill already has been approved by the House Judiciary Committee. Congressional approval this session seems certain.

Upon becoming law, the bill would provide federal guarantees of Negro rights to register and vote in Southern states if it is established that such requirements as literacy tests have been used to discriminate.

IT WOULD BE the first federal legislation to nullify state qualifications for voters in state and local elections.

On the final Senate passage, 47 Democrats and 30 Republicans voted for the legislation, which had the backing of both party leaders. The "no" votes were

Minneapolis Tribune

Letters to Members of Congress

During the debate over the Voting Rights Act of 1965, it was common for Minnesotans to write to members of Congress. A Duluth resident sent a letter to Congressman John A. Blatnik, who represented Minnesota's 8th District, urging him to support voting rights for all Americans. Below is Congressman Blatnik's response, which was sent on July 8, 1965, one day before the United States House of Representatives passed the Voting Rights Act, 333-85.

Dear Mr. Chagnon:

Thank you for your recent communication concerning the voting rights of Americans. Certainly this is a cherished privilege of every American and one that must be zealously protected. The Mississippi situation has focused attention on this vital matter.

CHAGNON, Raymond
Jud-rights

We in Congress are charged with the responsibility of insuring our citizens the privilege of voting. Please know that I will be restless until this responsibility is fully discharged.

July 8, 1965

Mr. Raymond Chagnon
2811 E. Superior Street
Duluth, Minnesota #55812

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We in Congress are charged with the responsibility of insuring our citizens the privilege of voting. Please know that I will be restless until this responsibility is fully discharged.

The current voting rights legislation is presently being considered on the floor of the House where I have been giving it my full support. A total of 13 days of public hearings have been held on this subject and a total of 121 bills were introduced on voting rights. I remain hopeful of early enactment of the strongest possible voting rights legislation.

Thank you again for expressing your interest in this most important matter. As you know, the Senate on May 26th passed a voting rights bill by a 77-19 margin.

With warm personal regards.

Sincerely yours,

John A. Blatnik, M. C.

JAB:ac

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Sincerely yours,

John A. Blatnik, M. C.

On August 2, 1965, thousands of Minnesotans (teenagers, college students, ministers, etc.) attended a voting rights rally at the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, to hear 25-year-old John Lewis, national chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, speak. The event was previewed that day in the Minneapolis Star.

Lewis, who has been a member of Congress since 1987, said at the rally that after three days of traveling in Minnesota that "this is perhaps the only state in the country that is dramatizing in a massive way its concern for the people in the South," according to a St. Paul Pioneer Press article that ran the following day. The rally launched a three-day statewide sales campaign for brotherhood buttons, which pictured a "black and white handclasp...intended as symbols for racial understanding."

MINNESOTA TASK FORCE Civil Rights Rally Tonight

An estimated 3,000 persons, primarily teenagers, are expected to attend a Minnesota Task Force orientation rally at 8 p.m. today in the athletic stadium at the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul.

The rally will launch a three-day state-wide sale of "brotherhood buttons" to current civil rights activities in the South. Freedom activities in the South and songs will be led by folk singer Cyril Paul.

Also scheduled to appear are Bishop James Shannon, St. Thomas president; the Rev. Roland Robinson of Calvary Methodist Church; Rabbi Marc Reibhaber of Tifereth Jacob Congregation, and the Rev. Mordeau Williams of St. James A.M.E. Church.

RALLY AT ST. THOMAS

Orientation Held By Rights Group

By JERRY MONTGOMERY
Staff Writer

The only thing Thursday night's thundershower damped at the Minnesota Task Force civil rights rally at the College of St. Thomas was the lawn.

Nearly a thousand teenagers, college students, ministers, teachers, nuns and politicians gathered in the St. Thomas gymnasium to sing civil rights songs and listen to John Lewis, 25, national chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

The occasion was billed as an orientation rally for the Task Force before launching a statewide sales campaign for brotherhood buttons. They hope to raise \$32,000 through the efforts of 3,000 young people and adults in 75 Minnesota communities to support civil rights projects in the South.

After three days of traveling in Minnesota, Lewis said "this is perhaps the only state in the country that is dramatizing in a massive way its concern for the people in the South."

"What you do in Minnesota by participating in the Brotherhood button drive is to give the Negroes of the South a sense of hope," he said.

"The Negroes of the South are saying now they want to register and vote, to participate in the democratic process," Lewis said. "Nothing can stop the movement because people have made up their minds to have freedom now."

"We have come a long way," he said, "but it will ..."

Final Bill Passage and Signing

On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law surrounded by Congressional and civil rights leaders, such as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks. On August 7, the Department of Justice filed suit in Mississippi to strike down the state's poll tax. On August 10, the Department of Justice filed suits in Texas, Alabama, and Virginia.



Yoichi R. Okamoto / Lyndon B. Johnson Library

Johnson to Sign Vote Bill Tomorrow

Picture on Page 2A

By EDMOND LEBRETON

WASHINGTON, D.C.—(AP)—President Johnson will go to the Capitol Friday to sign into law his Negro voting rights bill.

Press Secretary Bill D. Moyers announced today that Mr. Johnson will sign the bill at noon with his cabinet on a ceremony in which President Abraham Lincoln signed at the Capitol a bill giving freedom to slaves employed by Confederates in carrying out the Civil War.

Mr. Johnson says "the bill brings within our immediate vision the day when every American can enter a polling booth without fear or hindrance."

President went to the Capitol to extend congratulations in person.

Mr. Johnson, in a formal statement, thanked on behalf of the country the members of Congress of both parties who voted for the measure.

"Their action honors them as much as it perfects our country," he said, and later

Minneapolis Star, August 5, 1965

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U.S. Filing Suits to Enforce New Negro Vote Law

LBJ Presses Polling Machinery; Long Road to Ballot for Negroes; Page 2A

By MARTHA COLE

WASHINGTON, D. C.—(AP)—The Department of Justice presses the button today to start enforcement of the new law against obstacles to Negro voting.

The department was to go into court at Jackson, Miss., to challenge that state's poll tax. Federal voting registration machinery

it is now possible for a good many thousand Negro citizens to be registered by the end of the year.

Joe T. Patterson, Mississippi's attorney general, said he was surprised by the speed of the Justice Department suit.

He said the voting rights bill and the planned suit could affect the outcome of an Aug. 17 referendum on a state constitutional amendment easing voter registration

Minneapolis Star, August 7, 1965

LBJ Picks Capitol for Vote Signing

Enforcing Vote Rights Act Planned; King Sees 900,000 Negroes Registering; Page 2A

WASHINGTON, D.C.—(AP)—President Johnson went to the Capitol to sign the voting rights bill today and said that with this action "we strike away the last major shackles of those fierce and ancient bonds" of the Negroes.

Mr. Johnson announced that at 1 p.m. Saturday at his direction, Atty. Gen. Nicholas Katzenbach will file a law suit challenging the constitutionality of the Mississippi poll tax.

"This," he said, "will begin the legal process which, I confidently believe, will very soon prohibit any state from requiring the payment of

Minneapolis Star, August 6, 1965