United States History

Simulation: The Election of 1912

In small groups, you will be advertising the candidates for the 1912 election, giving the class a chance to vote on which candidate they would prefer.

Roles:

There are four\* main roles in this election:

1. One of you will take on the role of the candidate for president.
   1. Your job is to present your ideas to the class.
   2. You rely on your advisor to give you information about the issues of the day.
   3. You communicate with your media advisor and speech writer to make sure they are getting your message across.
2. One of you will take on the role of advisor to the candidate.
   1. Your main job is to do research about what issues are important to the public.
   2. You advise the presidential candidate, the media director, and speech writer on key issues that are important to the candidate and the public.
3. One of you will take on the role of media and publicity director.
   1. Your primary job is to make posters, create songs, and come up with slogans to help advertise the candidate.
   2. You rely on the advisor and the candidate to make sure that you get the message across accurately.
4. One of you will take on the role of speech writer.
   1. You will write the candidate’s main speech (2-3 minutes) to be delivered to the class.
   2. You will rely on the advisor and the candidate to make sure that the speech reflects the candidate’s views accurately.
5. \*Some groups will have a fifth member – the spy. The job of the spy is to \**quietly*\* listen to the other groups as they prepare their campaign strategy and report back to the campaign advisor what the other campaigns are doing. The spy may NOT interact with the other groups.

# Getting Started:

1. Decide what role everyone in your group will play. Don’t waste too much time on this part of the process. (Take no more than 5 minutes to decide this).
2. Research your candidate in the election of 1912. Find out:
   1. What was your candidate’s political party?
   2. What was your candidate’s platform? Did it have a name?
   3. What kind of campaign did your candidate run? (advertisements, slogans, traveling the country giving speeches, staying at home)
   4. To what groups did your candidate appeal during the election?
   5. What kind of support (money, groups backing him) did your candidate have?
3. Together, the candidate, advisor, media director, and speech writer should:
   1. Come up with a poster advertising the candidate. Can you come up with a slogan or a catchy song to sell your candidate to the public?
   2. Write a 2-3 minute speech outlining your candidate’s principal ideas. The candidate will deliver this speech in class.

Suggested Websites:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election,_1912>

<http://library.duke.edu/exhibits/sevenelections/elections/1912/>

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/wilson/portrait/wp_election.html>

<http://uselectionatlas.org/RESULTS/national.php?year=1912>

Grading:

Your grade will come from two components:

Self-Grade – 50 points

* You will fill out a self-evaluation of how well you did your job during the campaign. You will award yourself points for much you contributed to the success of the campaign. You will grade yourself on:
  + How well you do your specific job;
  + How much you contribute to the group; and
  + How well you work with your team.
* Please be advised that I will be watching you as you work. If, when I observe you, I notice that you seem to be hardly working and then you turn in a self-evaluation giving yourself 50 points, we will be having a conversation about your lack of integrity.

Group Product Grade – 50 points

* This grade will come from the in-class delivery of your campaign. Each group will have 6 minutes to present their campaign to the class, including delivery of the candidate’s speech (2-3 minutes).
* I will grade the poster and the speech.
* For the poster, I will be looking for:
  + Creativity – how creatively does it express the candidate’s views?
  + Accuracy – how accurate is the poster in explaining the candidate’s platform?
* For the speech, I will be looking for:
  + Accuracy – how well does the speech explain the major ideas of the candidate?
  + Delivery – how well does the candidate convince the class to vote for him/her?

Voting

After the candidates deliver their campaigns and speeches, you each will cast a vote for the candidate that you think offers the best solutions to America’s problems and whose platform offers the best ideas. Voting will be done by secret ballot and results will be announced the next school day.