



2014 Georgia Elections

*2014 Yearbook of the
Georgia Council for the Social Studies*

Glen Blankenship, Editor

We are fortunate to live in a democratic society where we have many freedoms. One of the most sacred is the privilege to vote for the candidates of our choice in local, state, and national elections. Teaching our young people about the election process and instilling in them the desire to take part are important aspects of citizenship education. I encourage your participation in the electoral process as a role model for students.

The Georgia Council for the Social Studies has taken the lead in providing **Georgia Elections 2014** as a resource to help educators teach students about state government, the importance of making informed and reasoned decisions, and the process of registering and voting. Georgia students must learn more about political, economic, and social issues which face our state.

Citizenship education is a lifelong process and an important part of the public school curriculum. Good citizenship must not be limited to the classroom. We must urge students to become involved in practicing good citizenship character traits in every area of their lives.

The first step toward the development of responsible citizen participation is to stimulate interest in public affairs. In the words of Thomas Jefferson, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be."

Citizenship education in Georgia must include active involvement in public affairs, ranging from the act of voting to the heightened commitment of seeking election to public office. This collection of lessons is aimed at stimulating interest in the gubernatorial and other elections for state and local offices in Georgia. It moves beyond the explanation of the powers and responsibilities of a governor and involves students in the planning of a mock election. Students conduct research to learn about the issues and investigate the positions of the candidates on these issues. Students role-play the candidates and simulate the voting process.

As Thomas Jefferson has taught us, our free and democratic way of life does not happen in a state of ignorance. It requires that our citizens, young and old, take on the responsibility of being informed and reasoned decision makers for the public good.

Glen Blankenship, Editor and Writer
Georgia Elections 2014

Dear Colleague:

We are fortunate to live in a democratic society where we enjoy many freedoms. One of the most sacred is the privilege to vote for individuals to lead our communities, our state, and our nation. Historically, many citizens have not applied this right by going to the polls to express their opinion about the individuals who will lead us into the future. The Presidential election of 2008 provided a glimmer of hope as record numbers turned out to vote, pressed by issues such as overseas conflict, health care, and an economy on the brink of disaster. Without the national attention of a Presidential election, experts predict the usual midterm drop in voter turnout. In addition to pressing global concerns, we need to instill in our students the importance of the election of leaders not to be living at 1500 Pennsylvania Avenue.

The Georgia Council for the Social Studies has taken the lead in promoting civic education by providing **Georgia Elections 2014** as a resource to help educators teach students about state government, the importance of making informed and reasoned decisions, and the process of registering and voting. GCSS member and Board Historian Glen Blankenship has updated and expanded these popular instructional materials for GCSS members to use with state and national elections, and we hope you continue to find them fresh and meaningful to student learning.

As Thomas Jefferson taught us, "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be." Our free and democratic way of life does not happen in a state of ignorance. It requires that our citizens take on the responsibility of being informed and reasoned decision makers about public policy issues for the common good. The manner in which our students perceive the necessity of an informed and politically active citizenry is crucial to the future survival of our nation. More often than not, student perceptions of those vital topics begin in our classrooms.

GCSS is pleased to provide you the enclosed copy of the lessons as part of your membership benefits. Additional copies for colleagues may be obtained using the order form found at www.gcass.net.

Debbie Kelly
GCSS President, 2013-2014

Acknowledgements

Georgia Elections 2014 represents the involvement of many individuals whose contributions are greatly appreciated. This fourth edition reflects activities adapted from *Georgia Elections '82* and *Campaign 88* published by the Georgia Press Educational Foundation. A hearty thanks is extended to them for permission to adapt the lessons. Other activities were adapted by permission from the *Improving Citizenship Education Secondary Handbook* of the Fulton County Schools, Dr. Helen Richardson, Project Director. In addition, Emily Honigberg, Publications Editor, originally provided permission to include documents produced by the Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia. Those permissions have been continued and expanded by Mary Stakes and Ed Jackson.

Georgia Elections 2014 also contains a set of lessons for the elementary classroom written by Emmett Mullins, Gwinnett County Schools. These lessons were updated and expanded by Julie Blankenship.

The editor gratefully acknowledges the insight and creativity of all these individuals to improve the education materials by making them useful to teachers and relevant to students. All shortcomings of this document are the responsibility of the editor alone.

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Each lesson in **Georgia Elections 2014** begins with an outline for teaching which includes instructional objectives, a list of needed materials, and sequenced list of procedures for implementing the lessons. This set of lessons provides the teacher with most of the materials needed for classroom implementation. Many of the lessons contain “Teacher Resources” which may be beyond the reading level of some students. This information is provided for the purpose of increasing the knowledge base of the teacher. The information may be shared with students by selecting from a variety of instructional strategies which are developmentally appropriate (e.g., the information from a reading may be recorded on tape for non-readers; heterogeneous cooperative learning groups may be used; a teacher-led discussion activity can provide background information needed to complete a project).

This collection of lessons should be adjusted by the teacher to meet the needs, interests, and performance levels of students in the classroom. Some of the lessons may be used as enrichment and/or remediation for selected students rather than as basic information for all students. Basic skills such as map reading, interpretation of charts and graphs, and time and chronology relationships are infused into the lessons. Teachers are encouraged to select from the many activities. The materials are designed so that the teacher may either (1) integrate individual lessons into the existing curriculum at appropriate points across the fall campaign, or (2) use the lessons as a comprehensive stand-alone unit.

Please send your suggestions for revisions to future editions of these lessons to:

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LESSONS FOR THE MIDDLE AND SECONDARY CLASSROOM

TOPIC I	THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR	
Lesson 1	<i>Georgia's Previous Governors</i>	1
	Activity 1 Who were Georgia's recent governors?	
	Activity 2 What makes a person a "great" governor?	
	Activity 3 What were some of Georgia's most exciting and controversial elections?	
Lesson 2	<i>Powers of Georgia's Governor</i>	14
	Activity 1 What is an executive?	
	Activity 2 What is the role of the governor in the system of checks and balances?	
	Activity 3 How is the executive branch of government organized?	
	Activity 4 What are the formal and informal powers of the governor?	
	Activity 5 What are the qualifications a person must meet to serve as governor?	
Lesson 3	<i>Georgia's Next Governor</i>	26
	Activity 1 Who are the candidates for governor?	
 TOPIC II	 THE CAMPAIGN: ISSUES AND STRATEGIES	
Lesson 1	<i>The Candidate's Positions on the Issues</i>	30
	Activity 1 Where do the candidates stand on the issues?	
	Activity 2 How well do the candidates address the issues?	
	Activity 3 How do the candidates respond to special interest groups?	
	Activity 4 How do the issues facing Georgia today differ from previous elections?	
Lesson 2	<i>Propaganda Techniques</i>	35
	Activity 1 What is propaganda?	
	Activity 2 How is propaganda used in a campaign?	
	Activity 3 What does political advertising cost?	
Lesson 3	<i>The Candidate's Image</i>	40
	Activity 1 How does a candidate's image influence voters?	
	Activity 2 What characteristics influence a candidate's image?	

Table of Contents *(continued)*

TOPIC III	THE MEDIA AND PUBLIC OPINION	
Lesson 1	<i>Campaign Press Coverage</i>	47
	Activity 1	What is the impact of media coverage on a candidate?
	Activity 2	How do candidates attract media coverage?
	Activity 3	How are decisions made by the media related to covering candidates?
Lesson 2	<i>Public Opinion Polls</i>	54
	Activity 1	How are polls constructed?
	Activity 2	How do candidates use polls to their advantage?
Lesson 3	<i>What Do You Think?</i>	59
	Activity 1	How do newspapers inform and influence voters?
	Activity 2	Who do you believe will win the election?
TOPIC IV	VOTING AND ELECTIONS	
Lesson 1	<i>The Importance of Voting</i>	63
	Activity 1	Who can vote?
	Activity 2	Who ought to vote?
	Activity 3	Who is responsible for elections in Georgia?
	Activity 4	Can one vote make a difference?
Lesson 2	<i>Political Parties and the Election Process in Georgia</i>	76
	Activity 1	What are the major functions of political parties in the United States?
	Activity 2	What is the election process in Georgia?
	Activity 3	How are the two major political parties in Georgia alike and different?
Lesson 3	<i>The Legislative Branch</i>	82
Lesson 4	<i>Voter Turnout Comparisons</i>	90
	Activity 1	How does voter turnout in Georgia and the Southeast compare to the nation?
	Activity 2	How can voter turnout be encouraged in Georgia?
Lesson 5	<i>Ballots and Elections</i>	100
	Activity 1	How does a citizen register to vote?
	Activity 2	What is a ballot?
	Activity 3	What is a polling place?
TOPIC V	MOCK ELECTION	
Lesson 1	<i>Holding a School Election</i>	108

LESSONS FOR THE ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM

TOPIC I	THE OFFICE OF GOVERNOR	
	<i>Primary Lesson</i> <i>Georgia's Previous Governors</i>	1
	Activity 1 What is a governor?	
	Activity 2 What city is the capital of Georgia?	
	Activity 3 Where is the Georgia capitol?	
	Activity 4 What are some symbols of Georgia?	
TOPIC II	THE CAMPAIGN: ISSUES AND STRATEGIES	
	<i>Primary Lesson</i> <i>Why do People Vote?</i>	12
	Activity 1 What is an issue?	
	Activity 2 What is an opinion?	
	Activity 3 What would I do if I were governor?	
TOPIC III	MEDIA AND PUBLIC OPINION	
	<i>Primary Lesson</i> <i>Learning About the Candidates</i>	16
	Activity 1 Why do candidates advertise on television?	
	Activity 2 What information is in newspaper political advertisements?	
	Activity 3 What do YOU think?	
	Activity 4 Why do citizens write letters to newspaper editors?	
TOPIC IV	VOTING AND ELECTIONS	
	<i>Primary Lesson</i> <i>What is a "vote"?</i>	20
	Activity 1 Why do Americans vote to choose their leaders?	
	Activity 2 How does a citizen register to vote?	
	Activity 3 How do citizens select the person they will vote for in an election?	