

Topic II

The Campaign: Issues and Strategies



TOPIC II

THE CAMPAIGN: ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

LESSON 1

CANDIDATE'S POSITIONS ON THE ISSUES

LESSON OBJECTIVES

The student will

- identify issues being discussed and debated in the gubernatorial, congressional, and local campaigns.
- distinguish among positions that candidates take on selected issues.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Activity 1

- Handout 1.1 "Issue Comparison"
- Handout 1.2 "Decision Making Chart"
- Handout 1.3 "Problem Solving Format for Research"

STRATEGIES

Activity 1

"Where do the candidates stand on the issues?"

The selection of one candidate for office over another candidate should be based on that individual's opinions on issues. People vote for the candidate whose beliefs are closest to their own views.

Distribute copies of Handout 1.1, "Issue Comparison" to individuals or groups of students. Ask them to identify four issues they consider to be the most important in the campaign and write those issues in the space provided in the chart. [Issues students might examine include taxes, health care, gun control, crime, hazardous waste disposal, education, foreign investment, etc.] Students should use the newspaper, television news broadcasts, and campaign literature to record candidate positions on each of the issues. Space is also provided for the student to record his/her position on each issue .

Have students select one of these issues for further research. Ask students to analyze positions that various candidates have taken using the Decision Making Chart (Handout 1.2). Finally, have students write an essay which proposes their own solutions to the problem (Handout 1.3). Students should reexamine their initial position in light of having gone through the decision making process.

The Campaign: Issues and Strategies, Lesson 1 (continued)

Activity 2

"How well do the candidates address the issues?"

Watch a television interview or debate. How well do the candidates answer the questions they are asked? Do the candidates offer specific solutions to the issues raised? Check your newspaper for an analysis of the candidates' performances.

Hold a mock press conference with students assuming the roles of the candidates. Ask the rest of the class to prepare questions to ask the candidates based on the issues. Those assuming the role of a candidate should write and deliver an issues speech and then submit to questioning from student reporters. Their answers should be based on the information they have obtained about the candidates.

Activity 3

"How do the candidates respond to special interest groups?"

Evaluate the position of a chosen candidate on a specific issue. Does the candidate appeal to special interest groups or avoid taking a stand that might anger some groups? Can you detect campaign statements that are designed to appeal to special interest groups?

Members of some special interest groups have, in the past, selected one issue and put all their efforts into electing or defeating candidates based on whether the candidates agreed with the group's position. Are there any examples in Georgia in 2014?

Activity 4

"How do the issues facing Georgia today differ from previous elections?"

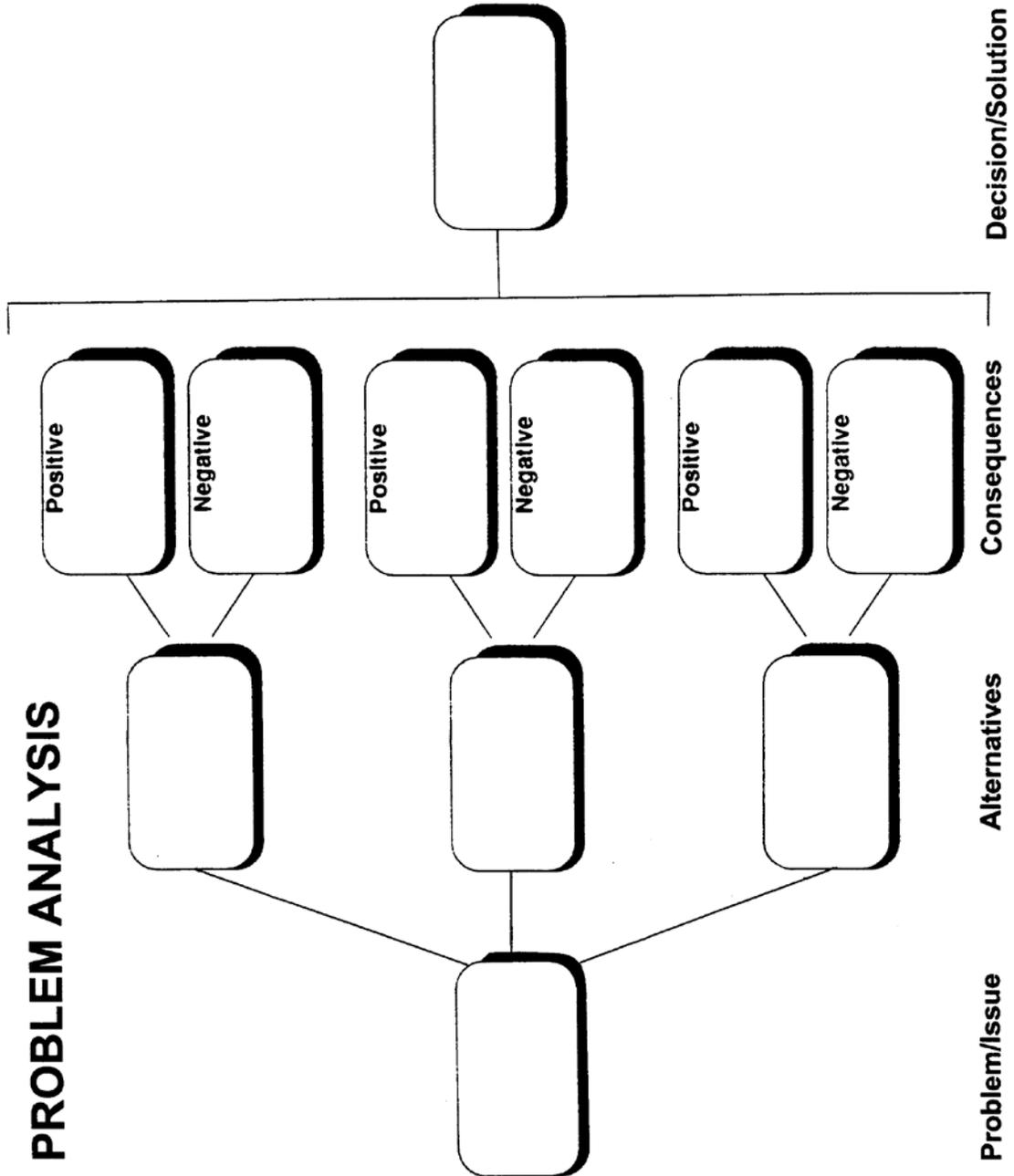
How do the major issues of the 2014 gubernatorial election differ from those in 2010? From 2006? Check newspaper files at your local library and ask parents and family members about the issues most important to them in previous elections and in the current election.

ISSUE COMPARISON

Directions: Write the names of the candidates seeking office in the chart below. You may choose to focus on candidates for governor, lieutenant governor, state senate, superintendent of schools, or any other office. Next, select three major campaign issues and list them in the space provided. For the next several weeks, pay close attention to newspaper reports, television coverage, campaign literature and commercials, and other sources. Based on the information collected, determine and record each candidate's opinion or position on each issue. Finally, record your position in order to determine which candidate is closest in agreement with your beliefs.

	Position of Candidate 1 _____ Candidate's Name	Position of Candidate 2 _____ Candidate's Name	Your Opinion _____ Your Name
Issue Number 1: _____			
Issue Number 2: _____			
Issue Number 3: _____			
Do the candidates always agree on the issues? Did you agree with either candidate? For what reason did you agree or disagree? Based on your examination of these issues for which candidate would you vote?			

DECISION MAKING CHART



PROBLEM SOLVING FORMAT FOR RESEARCH

Using magazines, books, the Internet and other appropriate resource materials, interviewing techniques and/or contacting government agencies the student will address the following points .

I. Statement of the Problem

- A. State the issue to be addressed.
- B. Describe the causes or historical background of the problem.

II. Alternative Courses of Action

- A. Propose three or four different solutions for solving the problem.
- B. State each course of action in terms of the positive and negative consequences of each course of action.

III. Solution to the Problem

- A. Describe what will happen if this problem is not solved.
- B. Select the "best" solution (or combination of solutions) that solves the problem.
- C. Why do you think this is the best solution?

TOPIC II

THE CAMPAIGN: ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

LESSON 2

PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUES

LESSON OBJECTIVES

The student will

- distinguish among common propaganda techniques.
- identify examples of propaganda techniques in campaign literature and campaign speeches.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Activity 1

- Handout 2.1 "Propaganda Techniques"

Activity 2

- Handout 2.2 "Campaign Literature Analysis "

STRATEGIES

Activity 1

"What is propaganda?"

Candidates attempt to influence potential voters in a variety of ways. Review with students the various types of propaganda techniques found in Handout 2.1 and then have students work in small groups to complete the activity sheet.

Next, explain to students that sometimes the person covered in news stories will use propaganda techniques. For example, a candidate for office may make a speech in which one of the techniques is used. The newspaper reports the speech and identifies the speaker. By reporting the speech, most newspapers are not employing propaganda techniques, but are factually stating who said what. Find examples of news reports of a candidate using a propaganda technique in a speech.

Activity 2

"How is propaganda used in a political campaign?"

Provide students with copies of campaign literature distributed by the candidates. Also, distribute copies of Handout 2.2 and have students work in groups to analyze campaign literature in terms of the Propaganda Techniques defined in Handout 2.1. Each group should examine campaign literature of several candidates. To provide closure to this activity, ask students such questions as: In their ads, do candidates deal with issues, or do they appeal strictly to your emotions? Do they gain your sympathy? Do they make you suspect their opponents' character or abilities? Do they arouse anger?

The Campaign: Issues and Strategies, Lesson 2 (continued)

Students may wish to analyze real ads published in newspapers, on television, or in campaign literature before they begin this activity. Students should ask themselves, "As a candidate, would you attack an opposing candidate, stress achievements while in office or make campaign promises?" Then, students can compare their ad with what is actually running in the newspaper, on television, or being distributed by the candidates.

Have students design a political ad for a candidate of their choice using one of the propaganda techniques on Handout 2.1. Tell students that their ad will be competing for readership with many other ads in the newspaper so they should consider how they will catch the readers attention when designing the ad.

Activity 3

"What does political advertising cost?"

Have students assume the role of advertising manager for a **statewide** candidate. They have allotted \$10,000 in campaign funds to spend on newspaper advertising in the Atlanta Journal/Constitution. During the next few weeks, clip all the ads for your candidate which run in the newspaper. Compute the column inches of the ads by multiplying the number of columns wide by inches deep of each ad. Then multiply by \$255.00 per column inch to find the cost of each ad. [The cost of an ad on a Sunday is \$356.00 per inch.] Keep a running total of your expenses and save each ad until you have used your entire budget. How far did your money go?

Count the frequency and measure the size of political ads run in the newspaper for a designated time. Notice who is paying for the ads. Determine which candidate or political party advertises the most.

Ask students to think of other types of campaigning advertising (billboards, Internet sites such as Facebook, television, radio), and how much each costs.

PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUES

Bandwagon - Giving the impression that everyone is supporting this issue, or voting this way, and so should you if you want to be like everyone else.

Glittering Generalities - Associating positive symbols, slogans and vague phrases with an idea or person.

Testimonial - Getting some well-known person to endorse an idea or candidate in an attempt to get a favorable reaction from you.

Transfer - Shifting the attraction of strong positive symbols or the repulsion of strong negative symbols to some person, group or idea for which they were not intended.

Plain Folks - Claiming to be "just one of the folks". Sometimes voters are convinced of the worth of a candidate because that candidate acts "folksy" by using simple English, kissing babies or posing with a fishing rod in their hand.

Name Calling - Using labels or attaching a negative symbol to someone or something instead of discussing the facts.

Cardstacking - Presenting only one side of a situation or using only part of the facts.

IDENTIFYING PROPAGANDA TECHNIQUES

Directions: You have studied seven basic propaganda techniques that are used to influence public opinion. Below are twelve statements or situations. Read each one and place in the answer space the name of the propaganda technique which best applies.

- _____ 1. "If you believe in freedom and justice, Edward Jones is the man you want as Governor."
- _____ 2. "A recent public opinion poll indicated over 90 percent of the people favored Edward Jones for Governor. Where do you stand?"
- _____ 3. "It is a fact that my opponent has attended meetings of, the Communist party and has worked for the Socialist party. He is a dangerous radical."
- _____ 4. "America must remain the land of freedom and equality. Elect Edward Jones Governor."
- _____ 5. "It is always a pleasure to come to Small town. I too come from a small community and know its values."
- _____ 6. "Quarterback Len Eason supports Edward Jones for Governor."
- _____ 7. "Let me introduce a man who has twenty years of public service, has the unanimous support of the state party, has the personal endorsement of Senator Billings, and has the leadership qualities we need in Atlanta. Our next Governor, Mr. Ed Jones."
- _____ 8. "It is impossible for me to understand how an individual can support such un-American activities. "
- _____ 9. "Let me read you a portion of a letter I received from our senior senator. I quote, 'Dear Edward: I want you to know that I support your candidacy 100%.'"
- _____ 10. "I remember those Depression days when my poor father couldn't find work. I remember going to bed with an empty stomach."
- _____ 11. A congressional candidate hires a sound truck draped with the American flag and with a record playing "God Bless America."
- _____ 12. A newspaper editorial is sprinkled with "half-truths" about student unrest in the state university.

adapted from: John J. Patrick, *American Political Behavior*, Allyn and Bacon, 1972.

CAMPAIGN LITERATURE ANALYSIS

Directions: Analyze campaign literature for competing candidates for the same office. Look for evidence of one or more of the propaganda techniques. In the space below, evaluate each brochure, newspaper advertisement, or television commercial by listing the candidate, the office sought, identifying the technique applied, and giving examples of how the technique is used.

CANDIDATE'S NAME:	
OFFICE SOUGHT:	
Propaganda Technique(s) Used:	Example(s)
CANDIDATE'S NAME:	
OFFICE SOUGHT:	
Propaganda Technique(s) Used:	Example(s)
CANDIDATE'S NAME:	
OFFICE SOUGHT:	
Propaganda Technique(s) Used:	Example(s)

TOPIC II

ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

LESSON 3

THE CANDIDATE'S IMAGE

LESSON OBJECTIVES

The student will

- identify various factors which compose a candidate's image.
- discuss the importance of a candidate's image.

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Activity 2

- Handout 3.1 "How to See Through Images and Distortions"
- Handout 3.2 "What's In an Image?"
- Handout 3.3 "Image"

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Explain to students that in many elections, the "image" a candidate projects plays a crucial role in determining the outcome of the political contest. Voters are frequently influenced by such intangible factors as a candidate's personal appearance, charisma and perceived sincerity, integrity and leadership abilities. A candidate's image can be as important or more important than his or her stand on the issues.

The information in Teacher Resource 3.1 acquaints students with how candidates attempt to portray their own image as well as that of other candidates. Study it as a review of propaganda techniques and as preparation for completing further activities.

STRATEGIES

Activity 1

"How does a candidate's image influence voters?"

For one week have students pay close attention to all mentions of each gubernatorial and/or congressional candidate in the newspaper and on radio and TV. Include news articles, opinion pieces and paid advertisements among the items they listen to, read, or watch. Make a chart to record perceptions of each candidate's "image." Consider such factors as his/her physical appearance, sincerity, integrity, charisma, "toughness" in dealing with difficult issues, compassion, leadership abilities and devotion to family. After the data are collected ask students such questions as:

The Campaign: Issues and Strategies, Lesson 3 (continued)

- What is emphasized in newspaper ads? radio ads? TV ads? In which medium does image play the largest role?
- What influences your opinion of a candidate? Discuss with your classmates what they consider to be the most important aspects of a candidate's image.
- What role does a candidate's family play in promoting his or her image? Which candidates have family members actively involved in their campaigns?
- Discuss what is meant by "charisma." Is it something tangible? Is a candidate's charisma equally evident in the coverage given by all forms of the media?

Activity 2

"What characteristics influence a candidate's image?"

During a political campaign, the public sees images of the candidates daily in newspapers and on television engaged in a variety of activities. These images of how the candidate looks and acts creates an "image" with voters.

Have students complete Handout 3.2, "What's In an Image?" After they finish the activity, tell them that the actual occupations of the four people are: A - attorney; B - secretary; C - director of a government institution; D - law school professor.

Say to students, "Imagine yourself as a political consultant to one of the candidates running in the gubernatorial election. Your job is to provide advice to the candidate on the image he or she projects to voters. Choose one of the candidates as a subject for your advice. Suggest at least two things you think the candidate could do to improve his or her image. Use Handout 3.3 to record your information."

HOW TO SEE THROUGH IMAGES AND DISTORTIONS

As students monitor the campaign, they may find that they are bombarded with information about candidates, yet they may find it very difficult to pin down candidates' positions. Slogans, name recognition and personality are often all that comes through in the 30 to 90 second prepackaged messages offered through the media. Even news programming often shows us the "photo opportunity" rather than any discussion of the issues. Have students take a good, objective look at the following campaign information:

TV and Radio Commercials - What did you learn about the candidate from the ad? Did you find out anything about issues or qualifications? Did the ad affect your attitude or feelings about the candidate? How important was the music, the setting, the script? Was the ad designed to appeal to a certain segment of the electorate?

Party and Candidate Materials - Campaign workers try hard to distribute leaflets and pamphlets about their candidates as widely as possible. They are left on front porches, pushed under doors and distributed at transit stops and grocery stores. Read these materials carefully. Do they tell you more about the candidate's devotion to dog and family than about qualifications for office? Be on the lookout for accusations or other statements about opponents, especially so close to election day that such statements cannot be answered or denied.

Direct Mail - More and more candidates are using direct mail to solicit funds or votes. Computerization has made it possible to send apparently personalized appeals to selected groups of voters. Members of women's groups, for example, may receive one message and members of veterans' organizations another. The direct mail letter may, however, help you to understand the candidate's stands on issues most important to you.

Speeches - Analyze a candidate's public statements. Are the appeals and arguments aimed at your emotions or your intellect? Is the candidate trying to make you angry at the opponent or incumbent or playing on your sympathy? Focus on those parts of a candidate's presentation that will have a bearing on how and what decisions are made if that candidate achieves office.

Other tactics to be wary of:

Name Calling - Beware of labels. A candidate might call an opponent "wishy-washy" or "two-faced" for positions that could just as well be described as flexible or responsive. Don't be influenced by attacks on a candidate based on family, ethnicity or other matters that will not affect performance in office.

Rumor Mongering - Beware of candidates who protest too much. Statements such as "Everyone says my opponent is a crook, but I have no personal knowledge of any wrongdoing" or "I've heard that Jones is soft on Communism" may technically be legal, but they are really dirty campaigning.

Loaded Statements - Beware of statements that imply an opponent's stand such as "I oppose wasteful spending." Loaded questions such as "What did you do to prevent the bankruptcy of the Social Security system?" have the same effect.

Guilt by Association - Beware of criticism of a candidate based on the candidate's supporters. "We all know Smith is backed by big money interests." Every candidate needs support from a wide range of people including groups who may not share the candidate's views on all the issues. Look at and judge the candidate's own words and deeds.

Catchwords - Beware of repetitious phrases designed to trigger a knee jerk emotional reaction such as "Law and Order" or "un-American." Try to translate such words into what the candidate is really trying to say.

Baiting - Beware of candidates who try to make their opponents look weak or lose their tempers in a face-to-face confrontation.

Passing the Blame - Beware of candidates who blame the major ills of the country on their opponents. Must one person take responsibility for everything from economic problems to bad weather? Was the incumbent or the party in power really in a position to solve the problem?

Promising the Sky - Beware of promises that no political power can fulfill. Candidates are expected to pledge that they will tackle important problems, but they should strive toward realistic goals.

Evading Real Issues - Beware of the candidate who avoids answering direct questions. Watch out for candidates who offer only vague solutions or call for a

study or those who talk about the benefits of proposed programs but can't be pinned down on costs or problems of implementation.

ROLE OF MEDIA IN AFFECTING PUBLIC OPINION

Analyzing Campaign Advertising

Television, radio and newspaper advertising are used to project a personal and political image of the candidates. It is the image the candidate wants you, the voter, to accept. Although they are designed to place the candidate in the best possible light, advertisements can also reveal important information on the candidates. Even the slickest advertising reflects a candidate's basic personality and approach to the issues of the election. Examine advertising critically. As you watch, keep the following questions in mind:

- Does the ad help you understand the candidate's stand on the issues? Does it talk about the candidate's record? Or does it concentrate on the candidate's personal attributes such as "leadership qualities" or "family life"?
- Which type of commercial do you feel is more effective, the "issue-oriented" or the "personality-oriented" ad? Which gives you the most information? Do they change your attitude toward a candidate positively or negatively? Do they reinforce views you already held? Was the ad paid for by the candidate's reelection committee, political party or by another group, such as a political action committee? Does the sponsor of the ad affect the ad's message? Do ads by political action committees take positions or make claims the candidate does not hold?

From Social Education, February 1984.

WHAT'S IN AN IMAGE?



A



B



C



D



E

During a political campaign we see the faces of candidates daily in newspapers, on television and on billboards. How much effect can a person's picture have on your voting decision? What are the features in a photo of a candidate that can influence your estimate of that person? In other words, what's in an image?

Directions: This experiment with photos of anonymous individuals may make you aware of how people can be influenced by the way a candidate looks. Look at each one of the photos. Assume these people are all candidates for Congress. Think about what the picture conveys to you about each person. Then rate each candidate's photo for each of the traits listed below.

	<i>Candidates</i>				
<i>Characteristics</i>	A	B	C	D	E
Honesty					
Leadership					
Caring					
Sense of Humor					
Knowledge					
Sincerity					

Which candidate(s) would you vote for? Why?

This activity based on a lesson developed by Dr. Mary Hepburn, Carl Vinson Institute of Government, The University of Georgia, 1988.

IMAGE

Candidate and Office Sought	Image Currently Projected	Suggestions for Improving Image

Compare your image-improving suggestions to those of your classmates. Did any of them make comparable suggestions for the same candidate? Did any of them make contrasting suggestions for the same candidate?