

A Matter of Age



Title: A Matter of Age
Subject: Civic Education, Government
Topic: Campaigns and Elections
Grade Level: 9-12
Time: 90 minutes

[View how this lesson plan fits state standards](#)

[View the video](#) or [read the transcript](#)

Materials:

- Computer with internet access, external speakers, and a LCD projector OR access to a computer lab with Internet access and headphones for each student
- Updated Media Player recommended. [Download QuickTime](#). Problems playing? [Check our Media Help page!](#)
- Student Worksheets ([Word](#), [PDF](#))
- Optional: colored paper, glue, scissors, and other materials to create visual aids
- Lesson Plan ([Word](#), [PDF](#))

Learning Objectives:

Students will

1. locate specific information in print and online sources;
2. integrate information from various sources to create a biographical sketch; and
3. distinguish between particular points in an argument

PRE-VIEWING (45 minutes)

1. Arrange the class in small groups of 3-5 students.
2. As a class, brainstorm a list of elected public offices (for example: city council, mayor, judge, state representative, United States Senator, etc.).
3. Have each group pick one office and discuss what they know about the requirements or limitations for people running for that office. Ask for a volunteer from each group to

report their group's findings. As groups report, write down their answers on the board.

NOTE: If you have textbooks or Internet access available, allow 8-10 minutes for students to do the search and create a list on a bulletin board or construction paper.

4. After each group has presented its findings, ask the class to think about the age of the candidates running for office. Would students prefer/recommend a younger or older person for a particular office? Ask students why age matters for a politician or elected official.

NOTE: It is important not to reinforce stereotypes about older politicians. In order to prevent overemphasis of these negative attitudes, do not spend too much time on this question and try to guide the discussion away from these types of observations.

5. Ask students what issues are important to them, how they are being addressed (if at all), and how they can be or are being addressed by elected officials.
6. Next, pose a question to the class:
 - Do you have to be young to care about youth issues?

Elicit brief answers from the class and tell them they are going to watch a video clip about a high school student who ran for city council.

VIEWING & DISCUSSION (15 minutes)

1. As a class, watch the brief Charles Clymer video about his run for city council in Round Rock, Texas. The video can be accessed online at www.americantrusteesproject.org. If you have difficulties accessing the videos, please visit our [Media Help page](#). Have your students complete **WORKSHEET 1** as they watch the video.
2. Have students share their responses briefly (a two minute timeframe is suggested) in their small groups, then discuss as a class the issues posed by Clymer and his peers in the video. Have they found more similarities or differences? What do these results teach them?

APPLICATION (20-25 minutes)

1. Ask students to work in pairs to investigate young elected officials in their local, state, or national community. Explain that they should focus on one person in particular that captures their interest. If you have access to computers, distribute **WORKSHEET 2A** with possible links for them to check.
2. Once students have found a young elected official to investigate, have them (individually or with a partner) create a short biographical presentation for the class. To guide them through a data collection process and facilitate presentation, distribute **WORKSHEET 2B**.
3. Have students give short, five minute presentations about their elected official for the class that includes some type of visual aid. You might want to post these visual aids

to publicize civic participation and encourage a larger, school-wide discussion about youth involvement in the political process.

ASSESSMENT

Student may be assessed on:

1. WORKSHEET 1;
2. presentation skills; and
3. research skills.