Exploring Civic Data

Subject: Government
Topic: Social Studies Research
Grade Level: 12th
Time: 90-120 minutes, two-three 45 minute class periods
Materials:

- Cardstock or large index card
- Whiteboard or blackboard
- Crayons or colored pencils
- Defining Civic Health Cards (for Defining Civic Health)
- Civic Health data graphics (for Gallery Walk)
- Butcher or chart paper
- Markers
- Exit Slip
- Computers with internet access for students to work in pairs
- WebQuest Worksheet
- Community Issues Frame Worksheets

Learning Objectives

Students will:

1. define civic health
2. review Texas civic health data
3. research civic data in their own community
4. develop an action plan for how to address the problem

TEKS

Government
14 A-D, 20 B, 20E, 21C, 22A, 22B

Warm-up (5 minutes)

1. At each desk, provide each student with a piece of card stock or a large index card and crayons or markers for them to draw.
2. Ask students as they enter the classroom to begin by drawing a symbol or picture that best symbolizes their city or town.
3. Give students approximately five minutes to draw their symbol. Quickly, go around the room and ask students to describe their symbol or picture in one word.
4. As you listen to the students offer their descriptive words, begin to put the students into groups of five or six, where individuals with similar depictions will be grouped together. Groupings could include: Arts and Culture, Political or Civic, Natural Environment, Architecture, and/or Activities. You may want to use the blackboard to aid in organizing the groups.
    a. Ask your students to write their names on the cards. They will return to this card at the end of the activity.
5. Describe that today we're going to explore aspects of our state and community that you may or may not already be aware of – the civic health of Texas.
6. Ask students what they think civic health might mean. Describe that it includes measures of civic, political and social connectedness such as voting, volunteering, and connecting with family, neighbors and friends.

Defining Civic Health (15 minutes)

1. Working in their respective groups, provide each group with a set of "defining civic health cards."
    a. Note: Each image will depict some type of civic engagement – political participation, civic involvement, or social connectedness.
2. Give your students about 5-7 minutes to sort their cards into **three** "like" groups. They should spread all of the cards out in front of them and then look for similarities. Each grouping does not (and should not) have the same number of cards.
3. Ask you students to describe, what they think the three groups might be.

Defining Civic Health cont.

4. Guide the conversation toward the three groups below and share the three types of civic engagement:
    a. **Political participation** – Voter registration, voter turnout, contacting public officials, and discussing politics.
    b. **Civic involvement** – Activities outside the sphere of government and politics, including donating to charities, volunteering, and belonging to community organizations.
    c. **Social connectedness** – Interacting with and trusting one's neighbors and family.
4. Describe that these activities and types of engagement, all are different ways that a person can be engaged in improving their communities. Not all people engage in all activities and some people don't participate at all. Today we're going to explore whether or not Texans engage in these activities.

Gallery Walk (30 minutes)

1. Before class begins post up the six Civic Health data graphics (provided) around the classroom. Next to each data point, post two sheets of butcher or chart paper. One sheet of paper will ask, "What is the problem in the graph?" The second sheet of paper will ask, "Why do you think that the condition in the graph is a problem?" (Hint: There are no wrong answers and an educated guess is just fine.) To give participation points, you may want to ask students to initial their responses.
2. Ask students to circulate. Ask them to review the data at each station. They should respond to each to each question on the butcher paper and initial their responses.
    a. If your class is too large to do a "walk," you may opt to have students remain seated for the activity. To make the activity seated, create a couple of sets of the "Civic Health Data Graphics" and number them 1-6. Ask students to work individually and pass the graphics around the room, switching every 5-7 minutes. They should reference the graphics' number and answer the questions on paper.
3. Students should take about 5-7 minutes per data graphic.
4. As soon as they've finished the "walk," they should return to their card from the "warm-up" and on the back of the card they should draw another symbol that describes what they think the level of community engagement is like in their town. Ask them to reflect and answer how this new symbol is similar or different from the one that they drew at the beginning of class.
5. For homework, you could ask your students to select what they feel is the most important data point or problem and complete the "community issues frame" worksheet on the topic.

Extension

1. Again, using the same intentional groupings from the "warm-up" yesterday, ask students to begin exploring what is happening with the civic health of their own communities.
    a. **Note:** The primary source for getting community level civic health data is through an online Census data application called Data Ferret. For more advanced students, you may opt to have students pull the data for themselves, otherwise, please follow the "Data Ferret addendum" below to pull the data for your community. You may want to have the "Civic Health Data Graphics" from the Gallery Walk on hand so that students can refresh their memories about how Texas ranks on these civic health indicators.
2. Distribute the WebQuest, review its contents, and model some of the instructions for each team.
    a. Note: You may also need to assist with breaking students into their respective pairs – political participation, civic involvement, and social connectedness.
3. The product that is due at the end of the period is the community issues frame.

Assessment

Students may be assessed on:

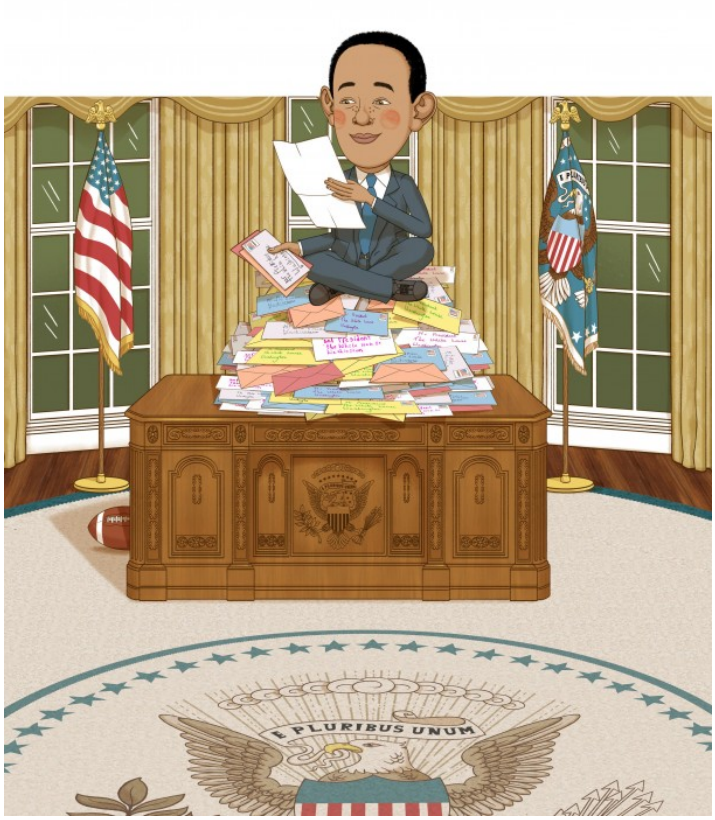
- Community Issues Frame
- Class participation in the Gallery Walk and WebQuest
- Symbol or picture
- Gallery Walk exit slip

Defining Civic Health Cards

“Hi, Grandma!”

abitat
for Humanity

I'm going to post a blog on Facebook and Twitter that supports my candidate!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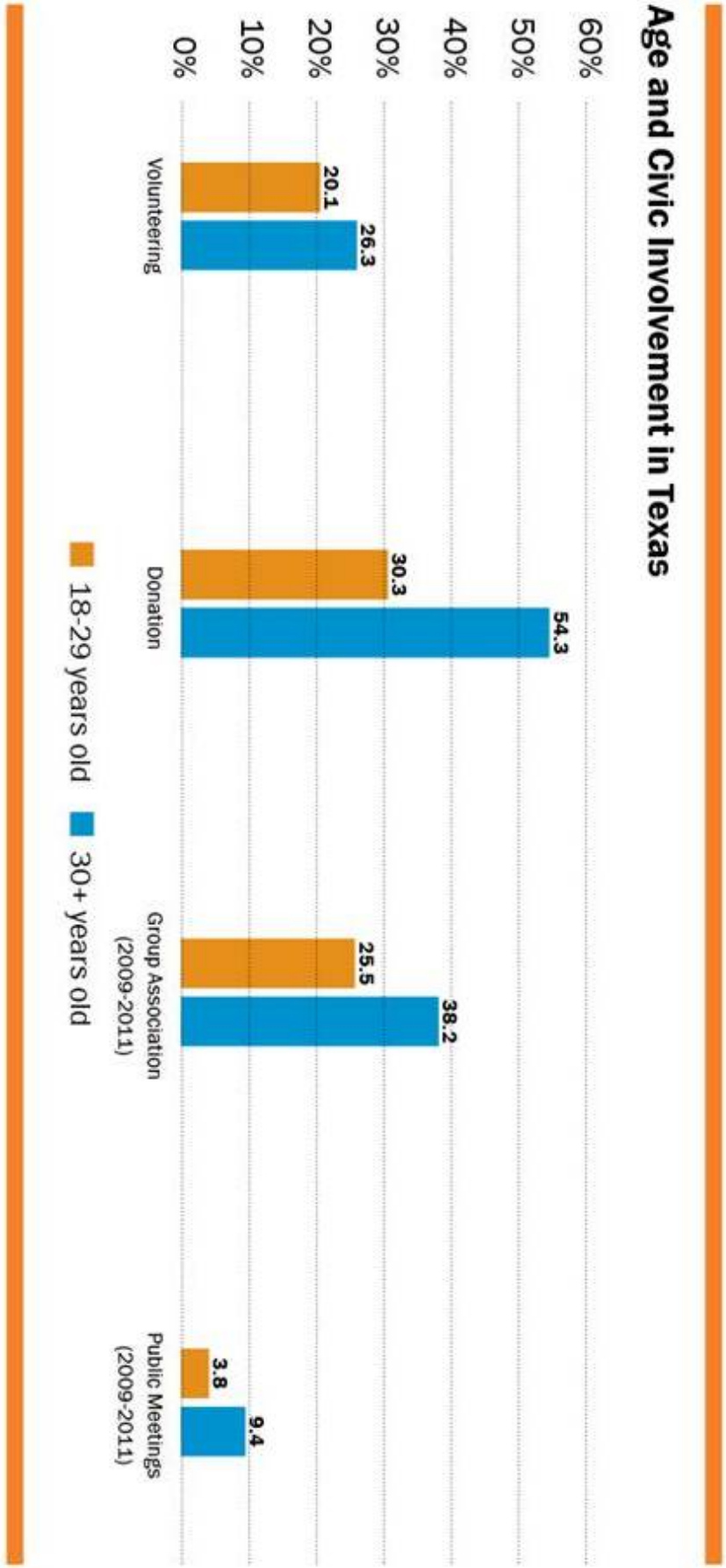
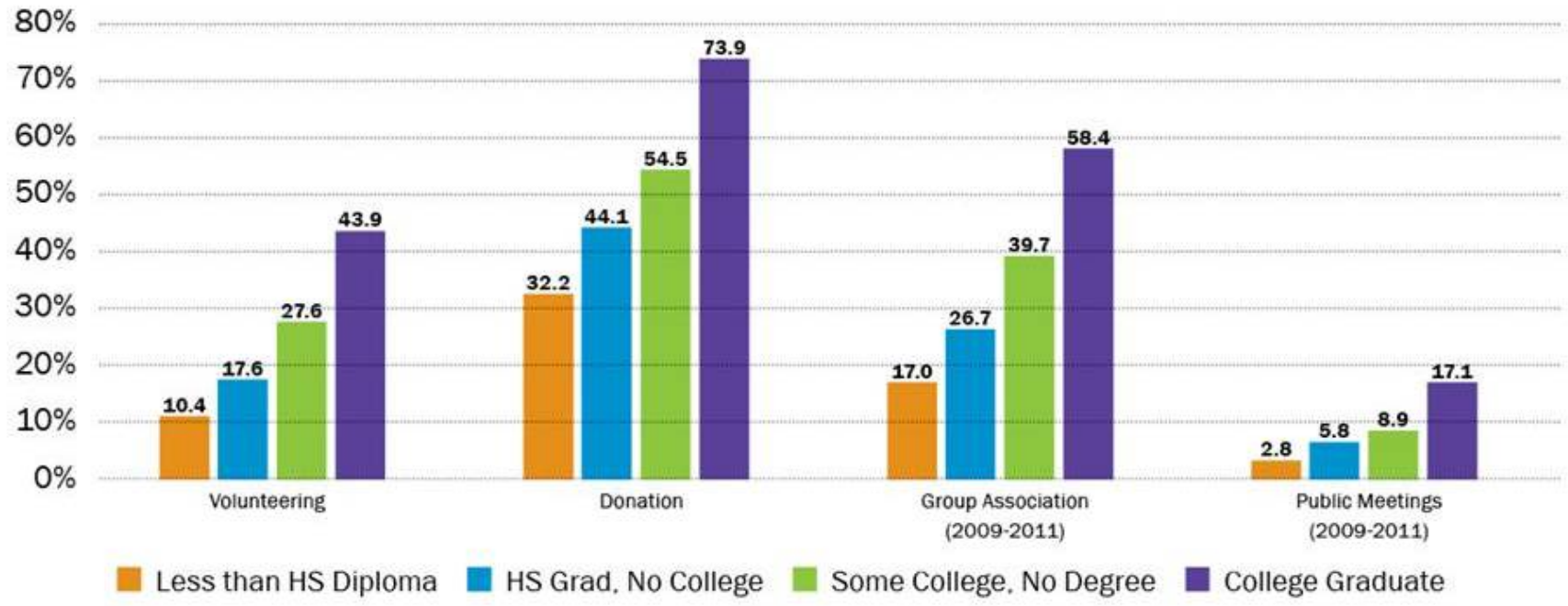
Defining Civic Health Answer Key

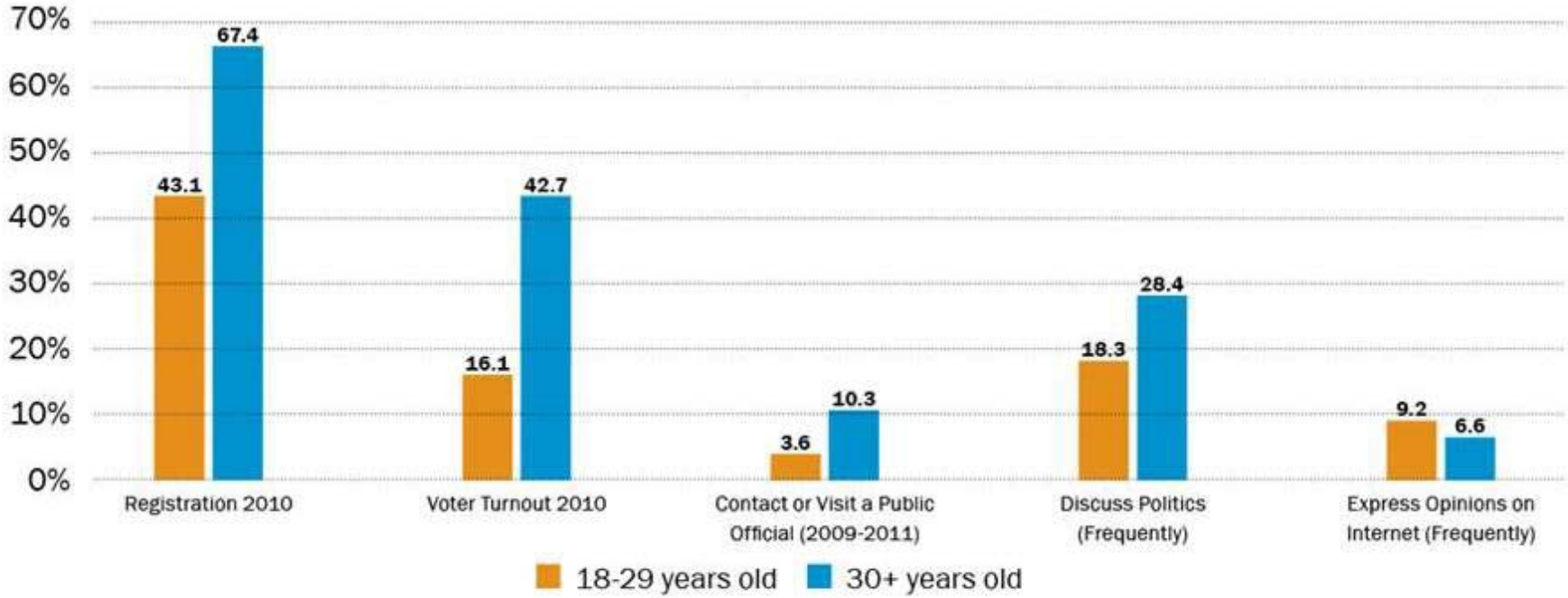
Political Participation	Civic Engagment
Political Participation	Civic Engagement
Political Participation	Social Connectedness
Political Participation	Social Connectedness
Political Participation	Social Connectedness


Age and Civic Involvement in Texas
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
Volunteering
20.1
26.3
Donation
30.3
54.3
Group Association (2009-2011)
25.5
38.2
Public Meetings (2009-2011)
3.8
9.4
18-29 years old
30+ years old

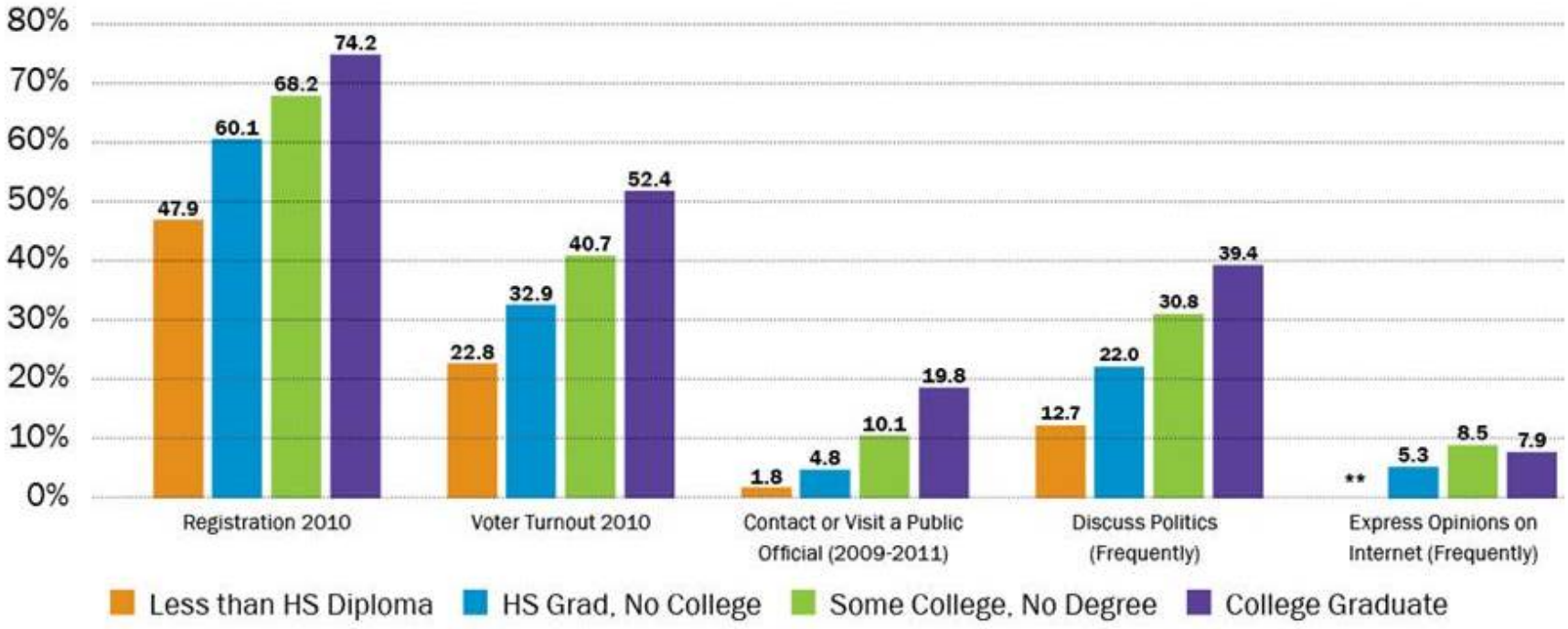
Civic Involvement by Education Level in Texas



Age and Political Participation in Texas

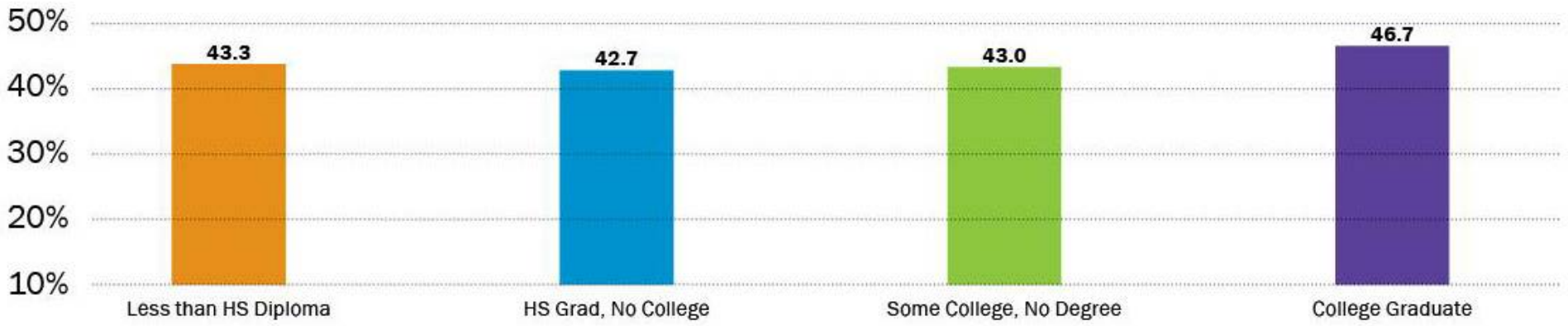


Education Levels and Political Participation in Texas

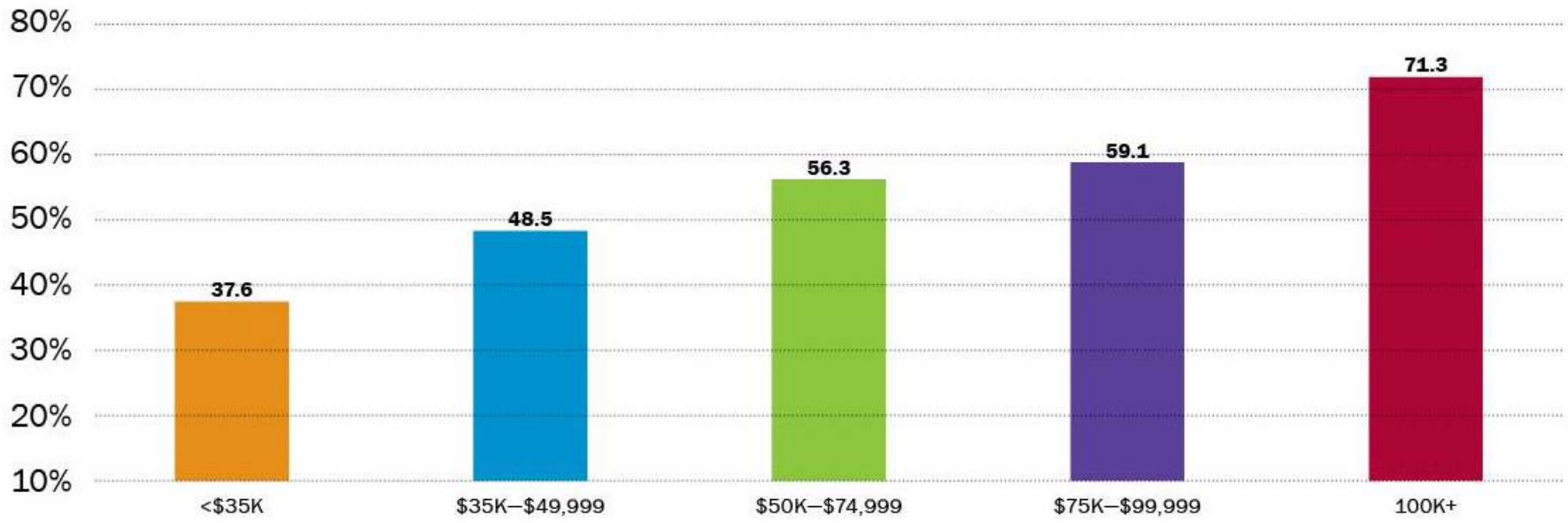


***No data available*

Talk with Neighbors (Frequently), by Education Level



Trust People in Neighborhood (All or Most), by Income



Data Ferrett Addendum, Pulling Data for your Community

1. Go to Dataferrett.census.gov/
2. Click on “Launch DataFerrett” on the far right side of the web page.
    a. Many browsers block pop-ups by default. While using Data Ferret, you must allow them so the application can run.
    In Mozilla Firefox go to Tools->Options, select Content, uncheck Block pop-up windows.
3. Enter your email address. Click ok.
4. Click “Get Data Now.”
5. In the “Select Datasets to search field,” select the Current Population Survey.
6. Select “Voting and Registration” and open folder
7. Right click on most recent data (Nov 2012) and select “View variables”
8. Check boxes “Geography Variables” and “Voting and Registration Supplement Variables”, and click on the magnifying glass.
9. Double click on the Variable Label “Metropolitan Statistical Area FIPS Code.”
    a. A pop-up window called “Ferret Browse Variable” will open.
    b. Make sure that your variable has been highlighted in the “Your highlighted variable” box at the top of the pop-up window
    c. Check the “Select” box
    d. Click “Deselect all values”
    e. Select your area of interest
    f. Click Okay
    g. Click Okay
10. Double click on “CPS PES1 Vote-Vote in the November Election”
11. Click the check box “Select” your variable
12. Click Okay
13. Click Okay
14. Click Step Two in the top navigation bar
15. Currently Query variables, you’ll see your variables
16. Click “Make a Table”
17. On the right, you will see your variables
18. Click and drag your variables
    a. Drag your voting or civic engagement variable into c2
    b. Drag you first variable (MSA) into r2
19. If you get a pop-up notification that you need to assign a particular weight, then you will:
    a. Select options in the menu and then weighting
    b. Select the weight that’s already selected
20. Then select, “Go Get Data”
21. Copy data to Excel and begin your analysis.

Community Problem Solving Frame

Describe the community need or issue:

How long do you think that it has been like this?

Key stakeholders and interested parties:

Who is affected by this community need or issue?

What more could be done to address this community need or issue?

What has caused this community need or issue?

Why do you think that this matters?

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