GET OUT THE VOTE!

Using MimioStudio™ and MimioVote™
This Election Season

It’s election year – a great year to teach social studies, and a great time to use MimioStudio™ classroom software and MimioVote™ assessment to support that teaching. MimioVote assessment is a student response system (SRS) that works with the MimioTeach™ interactive whiteboard. It’s an excellent assessment tool that lets you:

• Get real-time results and eliminate manual test correction.
• Chart your students’ progress anytime.
• Quick-poll students during a lesson to see who’s getting it and who needs a little more help.
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You can also use MimioVote assessment as an integral component of your social studies lessons, with students using their handsets to make choices in conjunction with your MimioStudio lessons. You will be able to see how particular students are doing, and you can guarantee 100 percent involvement by ensuring that all students click in. That’s another great strength of the system: the voice of the shy student or the one with learning challenges can be heard as they use their MimioVote handsets.

Using MimioVote assessment is particularly appropriate when teaching about the 2012 elections. The Presidential and Congressional elections are in the news, in the media, and in everyday conversations, so even the youngest students are motivated to learn about them. Teaching about the elections is also a fresh way to cover state and local standards.

The lessons below focus on essential social studies topics for state standards: citizenship, rights and responsibilities, civic participation, characteristics of government, and democracy. Through these lessons, students can develop social studies skills such as problem solving, critical thinking, communicating, using graphs and charts, and supporting a position with data and other evidence. There’s also the opportunity for cross-curricular integration with language arts through vocabulary development, and with math through graphing and numerical operations.
Lesson Plans for the 2012 Elections

KINDERGARTEN–GRADE 4

Lesson 1: Election Vocabulary

Learning social studies vocabulary is key to understanding many social studies concepts. Primary children can be particularly challenged by the unfamiliar terms they hear during the election season.

1. Introduce the vocabulary. Using MimioStudio software, create lessons that include each vocabulary term and its definition. Ask for volunteers to read each word and its definition aloud for the class. You may want to use the two-column chart from MimioStudio Gallery. Write the vocabulary terms in one column and put the definitions in random order in the second column. Invite students to come to the board to draw a line from the term to its correct definition. You might also ask students to draw a picture illustrating the vocabulary.

SAMPLE CONTENT:

K-2
Candidate: someone who wants to be elected to a government job.
Citizen: an official member of a country, state, or community.
Election: when a group makes a choice by voting.
Elect: to choose a person for a job.
Government: an organization that keeps a community, state, or nation in order.
President: the leader of the United States.
Vote: make a choice

Grades 3-4
Campaign: the competition for public office.
Democracy: a government in which the people make political decisions by voting and the majority rules.
Representative: someone chosen to speak or act for the group; a member of the U.S. House of Representatives.
Poll: a sampling or collection of opinions on a subject or choice.
Congress: the branch of the government of the United States that makes laws.
Media: a way of communicating, such as television and the Internet.
2. To assess student mastery of vocabulary, use one or both of the following vocabulary challenges.

- **True/False.** Using MimioStudio software, create a lesson that includes statements with election vocabulary words. Use the MimioStudio Quick Vote feature, and ask students to use their handsets to vote on whether each statement is true or false.

  **SAMPLE STATEMENTS:**

  **Elect:**
  - We elect a new President every four years.
  - ✓  ❌
  - She elected a building near mine.
  - ✓  ❌

  **Congress:**
  - Members of Congress are appointed by the President.
  - ✓  ❌
  - Congress passed many laws this year.
  - ✓  ❌

  **Candidate:**
  - The candidate promised to lower taxes.
  - ✓  ❌
  - The Supreme Court candidate wrote the court’s decision.
  - ✓  ❌

- **Team Challenge.** Divide the class into two teams.

  Assign a “leader” for each team, who will use his or her MimioVote handset to record that team’s choice. Have each team take turns using their MimioVote handsets to choose the correct definitions. The team with the most correct answers wins.

  Alternately, you can set up special group “classes” in MimioStudio Gradebook, assigning the team members for each group to a different class. Students can respond when you ask their team/class to vote. Compare the number of correct responses for each team/class to award that team a point. At the end of the Team Challenge, the team with the most points wins.
Lesson 2: Polling – Finding Out What People Think

Much of the news during the campaign season is based on public opinion polls that try to predict how people will vote on Election Day. Help primary students understand that these surveys are not the actual vote, and they don’t count in the same way that the election results do. Help all students understand that candidates use these poll results to know which groups support them and which groups they need to convince to support them.

1. Start by polling your students. You can have them choose one of the Presidential candidates, or you could create an election for “principal for a day” of your school.
   - Poll students using the MimioStudio Quick Vote feature. The nice thing about using MimioVote assessment for a poll is that all votes are anonymous, so students should feel comfortable making their selections.
   - If you don’t have MimioVote assessment, you can select a chart from the Gallery to list candidates. Have students raise hands to make their selections. Or, for an anonymous poll, have students mark their votes on a piece of paper that a volunteer collects and reads aloud. Chart the results and discuss them with the class. Have them consider what the candidates would think if they looked at these results.

2. Now divide the class into different groups – for example: girls vs. boys, where their desks are (front, back, sides of room), clothing (types of shoes, colors, etc.), short vs. long hair. Poll by group (ask for a show of hands or have them fill out paper slips) and create a table similar to the following on the board to capture the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th></th>
<th>Front of Class</th>
<th>Back of Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Candidate 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Candidate 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Candidate 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Candidate 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Ask students to compare the graphs and discuss any differences between the groups.
Lesson 3: Who Can Vote?

Election season is a good time for students to learn who is eligible to vote in United States elections and to consider the link between voting and the essential social studies concepts of rights and responsibilities.

1. **Select a two-column chart from MimioStudio Gallery.** With the class, create a chart of rights and responsibilities. Make sure that students understand that voting is both a right and a responsibility.

2. **Create several lesson pages with three answer-choice options (ABC) that include the following data sets.** Use MimioVote assessment to check students’ understanding of who can vote.

   1. Men / Women / Both
   2. Age 16 and older / Age 18 and older / Age 21 and older
   4. People who own property / People who have a job / No income requirement

3. **After each data set, discuss why the groups may or may not be able to vote.**

4. **For older students, discuss how the vote has been broadened over time:** in the past women could not vote, voting age was 21, and people often needed to be property owners or have money to qualify. Ask students how they might change who is eligible to vote.
GRADES 5-8

Lesson 1: Election Vocabulary

Mastering vocabulary is a key component of learning social studies concepts. The election season is a wonderful time to reinforce many terms, since students are hearing them on a regular basis. Invite students to add terms to the list we’ve provided.

- Campaign
- Congress
- Conservative
- Democracy
- Liberal
- Media
- Poll
- Primary
- Representative
- Trend

1. **Introduce the vocabulary.** You can provide the definitions or have volunteers look them up in a dictionary.

2. **To assess student mastery of vocabulary,** use one or both of the following vocabulary challenges:

   **Call My Bluff.** Choose one of the vocabulary terms and label three volunteers A, B, and C. Secretly assign one of the volunteers the real definition and ask the other two to make up a definition. Then have them present their definitions to the class. Ask the class to use the Quick Vote feature to choose the correct definition.

   **College Bowl.** Use MimioStudio software to create a lesson that presents a set of sentences using a vocabulary term, only one of which uses the term correctly. Then divide the class into two teams. Students within each team should vote on which sentence uses the term correctly.

   - You can assign each team one “leader” who uses his or her MimioVote handset to record that team’s choice. Have each team take turns using a MimioVote handset to choose the sentence that uses the term correctly. Team members should discuss and agree on their response before the “leader” votes. The team with the most correct answers wins.

   - Alternately, you can simply hold two different Quick Votes without setting up special classes. In this case, have half the class answer the first Quick Vote and the other half of the class answer the second Quick Vote (using the same vocabulary term and sentences).
Lesson 2: Public Opinion Polls

During the election season, there are many reports on the results of public opinion polls. Ask students about public opinion polls that they know about, and discuss who might be interested in the results of those polls. Help students understand that candidates use poll results to direct their campaigns: to keep their supporters strong and to win over the undecided voters.

1. **Start by polling students using MimioVote assessment**, asking whom they would vote for. The candidates could be the Presidential candidates, Congressional candidates, or local candidates. Or, you could create an election for “principal for the day.” Be sure to include “Undecided” as a possible answer. Chart the results and discuss them with the class.

2. **Brainstorm the important issues of the election with the class.** Select a chart from the Gallery and create a list of these issues on the whiteboard. Choose the top four issues and create a quiz or poll, labeling the key issues “A” through “D.”

3. **Now divide the class into different groups** – for example: girls vs. boys, or where their desks are (front, back, sides of room). Create a table. Then ask students in each group to choose the issue they feel is most important. Chart the results.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Boys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Front of Class</th>
<th>Back of Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Issue A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue D</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Have the class consider how strategists for the candidates might use this information.** Should the candidate spend more time trying to keep supporters’ backing strong, or more time trying to convince the undecided? What would be the best way to do that? You may want to divide the class into campaign-strategy committees for each candidate, and have the committees determine their candidate’s strategy.
Lesson 3: Understanding How the Electoral College Works

One of the biggest challenges in following election-night coverage during a Presidential election is understanding the role of the Electoral College. This simulation will help students see the difference between the popular vote and the Electoral College vote.

1. Create a poll and ask students to use MimioVote assessment to vote for Barack Obama or Mitt Romney for President. (If the class is close to unanimous in their choice, assign some students to vote for the opposing candidate.) Chart the results and explain that this is the popular vote of the class.

2. Next, divide the class into five uneven groups. Each group will represent a different state. Group 1 should consist of one student, Group 2 should consist of three students, Group 3 should be a medium-sized group, and Groups 4 and 5 should be very large. NOTE: Try to have an uneven number of students in each of these groups.

   These five groups are states. Have each group vote for President and determine which candidate won each “state.”

3. Create a classroom Electoral College. The two small groups have two representatives each in your classroom Electoral College, the two large groups have six representatives each, and the medium group has four representatives (twenty votes total). Based on which candidate won in each state, add up the Electoral College votes. Chart the results.

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4. Using MimioStudio software, compare the popular vote with the Electoral College vote. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Electoral College system with the class.

Lesson 4: Deciding Congress
Choosing the President is not the only important election this year. All members of the House of Representatives and one third of the Senators will also be elected. Help students understand that the numbers of Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate have tremendous influence on the U.S. government and politics.

1. Assess student knowledge of the number of Representatives and Senators and the party affiliations of Congress using MimioVote assessment.

100 senators, 2 from each state
435 Representatives, the number from your state
The 112 Congress: Senate—51 Democrats, 2 Independents, 47 Republicans
House of Representatives—193 Democrats, 242 Republicans

2. Assess student knowledge of the Representative from your school’s district and your state’s Senators.

3. Share information about who is running in this election from your district and whether there is a Senatorial election in your state. Discuss what the students know about the candidates.
   - Using MimioStudio software, create a straw poll on the Congressional elections (and the Senatorial election, if appropriate). Then have students use MimioVote assessment to conduct the poll.
   - Alternately, you can poll students by asking for a show of hands or by having them respond anonymously on paper. Ask volunteers to tally the results. Discuss results.
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