

American Elections



All Things With Purpose: allthingswithpurpose.com
Julia Forshee and Sarah Lemp

Elected Positions

Q. Who Do We Vote For?

A. The highest position in our government is the President of the United States. Currently, his name is Barak Obama. President Obama is our 44th President. He was elected in November of 2008 to serve a four year term. Now he is up for re-election, on November 6, 2012, meaning the citizens will vote to see if more Americans want him to serve another four years or not.

Other offices where elected officials serve include:

- A City Sheriffs Office
- The State Senate
- The United States House of Representatives
- Your City's School Board
- District, State and Supreme Courts

Elected Positions

Q. Why do people run for office?

A. To serve their community in hopes of making it a better place, or because the position is a stepping stone to hopefully get to a better, higher up position.

Q. What happens if they don't do their job well?

A. They are not **re-elected** [people do not vote for them again]. In rare instances they are fired from their positions or **impeached** [removed from their job].

The Election

Q. What is an election?

A. During an election, the **candidates** [people who want to be elected] tell us about their past, their ideas, their beliefs, and their plans for the future. Typically the field narrows from many people who want to be elected, to two candidates. Those candidates often have very different **ideas and beliefs**.

Over the years the names of the two main **political parties** [groups of people who believe differently] have changed. Today the names are **Republicans and Democrats**. Each of these groups have what is called a **platform** [a set of ideas that most people in the group agree with].

Each American **citizen** over the age of 18 has to decide who they think will do the best job and cast their vote. Voting takes place on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November, every year. We vote for a president every 4 years.

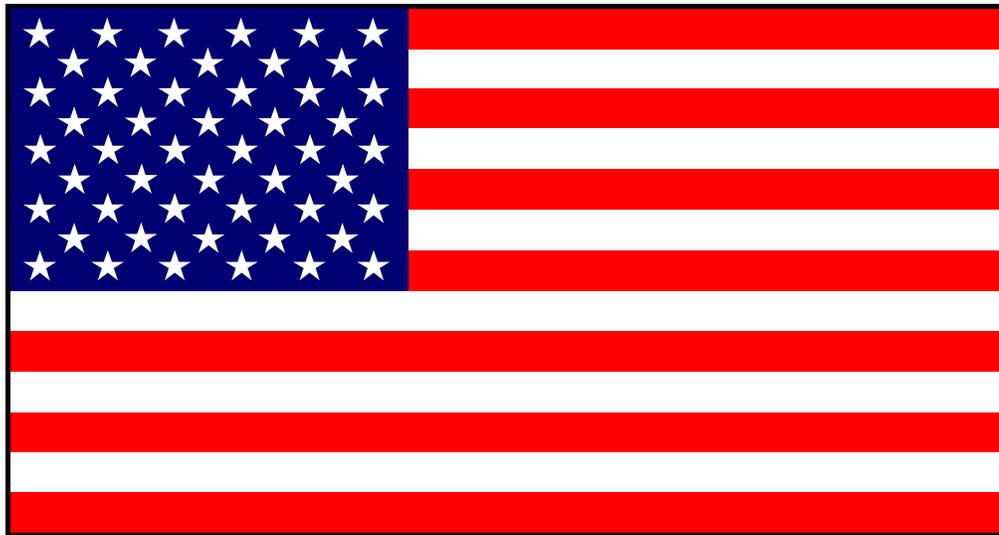
The Election

Q. Why did elections start in America?

A. Presidential elections started after the Revolutionary War in 1788 with George Washington becoming our first President. Our country did not want one person (like a king) to be able to tell us what to do. Our founding fathers developed a **constitution** and formed a **democracy** [meaning the people vote to decide who rules our country] to protect the **citizens** [people of the country].

Just as in Bible times, one King, like Josiah, may choose to love God and keep His commandments. Another King, like Ahab, may choose to ignore what God wants and do what makes him happy. Our sin nature desires to take power and use it selfishly. Meaning, it is difficult to have power and use it to benefit others instead of thinking of ways to benefit yourself.

When so many people have the opportunity to vote it helps provide **accountability** to those elected officials. *Meaning: if someone knows that he is being watched, someone is much more likely to do right.* God says that true **character** is determined by *what we do when no one is watching.* God is always watching. Proverbs 15:3, “The eyes of the Lord are on every place keeping eyes on the evil and the good.”



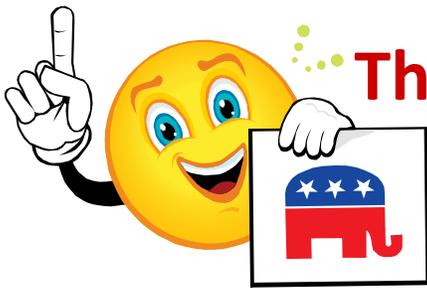
The Election

Q. Who Gets to Vote?

A. When our country was first founded, only male land-owners were able to **vote**. Then, all white men were able to vote. Next, African-American men were able to vote throughout America in 1870. Finally, women obtained the right to vote in 1920. Today, anyone over the age of 18, who was born in America or has been granted **citizenship** [a person born in another country, who has been approved to be an American] can vote.

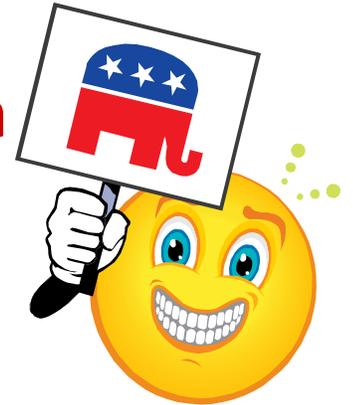
God has established governments to protect their people or citizens (Romans 13:1-7). America is set up as a **democracy**, which means that the people all have a say in who leads the government. The way that American's say what they want is by **voting**. While God does not need us to accomplish His will, He can use us to be part of His will. We have a responsibility to be involved and vote while we have that **liberty**.

Political Parties



The Republican Platform

Mascot: The Elephant



Republicans want a **smaller government**, believing that people can make the best decisions for their families.

Republicans believe that if you work hard and earn money that you should be able to keep what you have earned. By allowing people to keep the money they earn, it will encourage them to work harder.

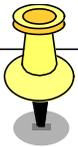
God wants us to be **cheerful givers** (2 Cor. 9:7) but often the government does not value what God values. As a result, Republican's believe that the individual who earned the money should be able to give it away. Not give it to the government for them to give it away.

Republican's want a **strong military** to protect Americans and our **allies** [countries who are our friends] from other countries that may want to harm us.

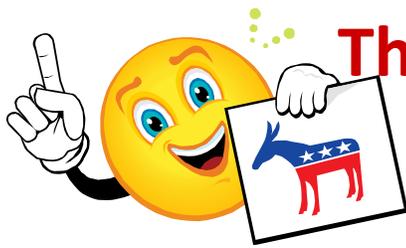
Talk About It!

Name some other things you know about Republicans.

Ask a parent, read more about it in a book or on the internet at a site like kids.usa.gov. Do you know the facts about this parties beliefs, or just the opinions?

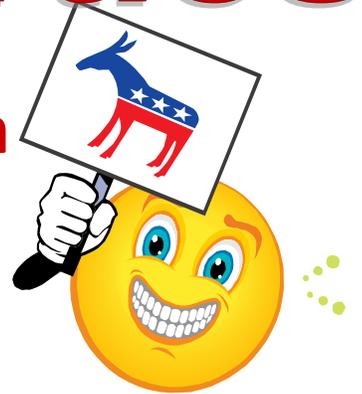


Political Parties



The Democrat Platform

Mascot: The Donkey



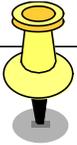
Democrats desire a **larger government**, believing that people are unable to make the best decisions and need the government to make decisions for them.

This idea results in more **taxes** because they need to take money from those who have more, to give to those who have less. God wants us to take care of widows and orphans (James 1:27). God also says that if you do not work you do not eat (Proverbs 20:4).

The Democratic platform also says that until a baby is born, it is not a baby and the mother has to decide if she wants her baby to live or die. In fact, the Democratic Party believes that a baby is not a baby until a baby takes their first breath. God says, I knit you together in your mother's womb. You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:13-16).

Talk About It!

Name some other things you know about Democrats. Ask a parent, read more about it in a book or on the internet at a site like kids.usa.gov. Do you know the facts about this parties beliefs, or just the opinions?



What is God's View of Government?

Regardless of who is elected as our Country's leader, it is important to remember that God is in absolute control. Whether we agree with the person who is in authority over us or not, God tells us how we should respond.

In Titus 3:1-2, the Bible Says:

Remind the people to be subject to their rulers and authorities. To be obedient to be ready to do whatever is good. To slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate and to show true humility to all men.

Government [A system of rules and leaders that govern a city or state]

TITUS 3:1-2



Remind the **people** to be **subject** to



their **rulers** and **authorities**. To be



obedient to be **ready** to do what-



ever is **good**. To **slander no one**, to



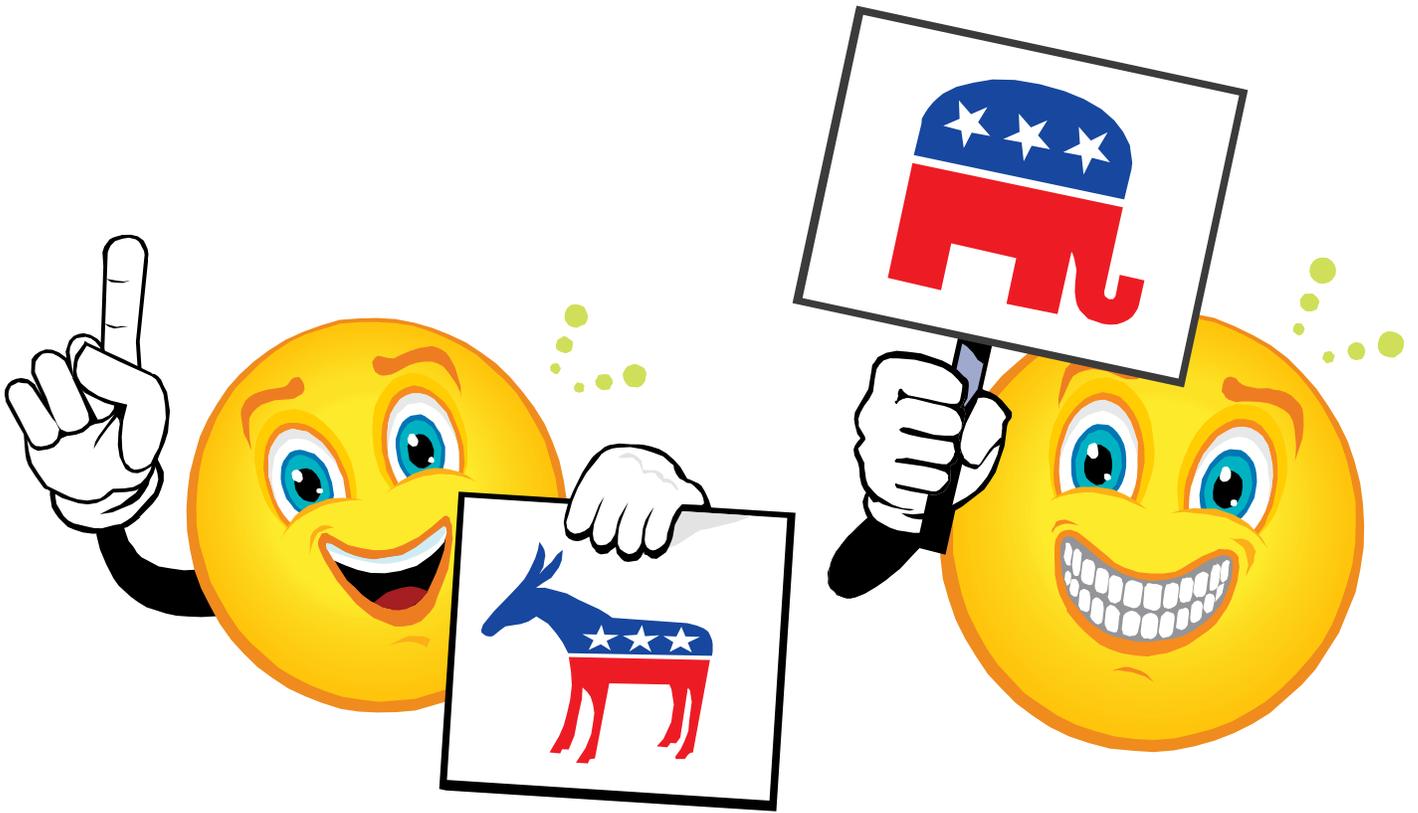
be **peaceable** and **considerate** and



to show **true humility** to **all men**.

Romans 13:1-7 Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ² Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴ For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

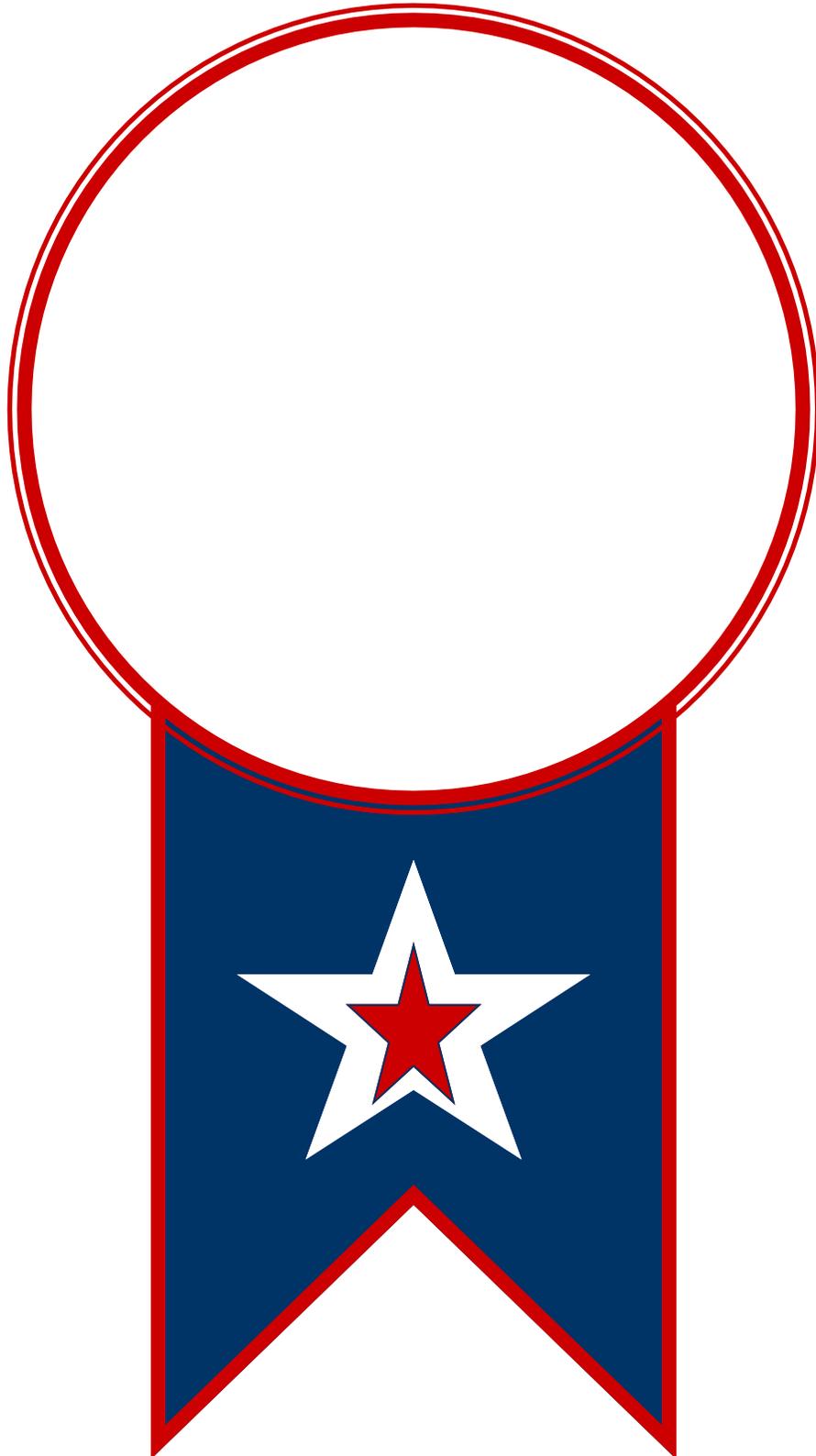
⁶ This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷ Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.



Election Activities



Create Your Own Campaign Button





Draw Your Own Campaign Banner

Vote for Me!

Vocabulary Match-Up

Draw a line to connect a word with its correct definition

- **Term**
 - **General Election**
 - **Office**
 - **Slogan**
 - **Primary Election**
- A. An election held to determine the candidates for each party before the general election.
 - B. The number of years an elected official hold office.
 - C. A phrase to help you remember the candidate.
 - D. An election held between candidates of different parties.
 - E. The position the candidates are hoping to fill.

Answers: Term B, General Election D, Office E, Slogan C, Primary Election A

Voting Game



Help young children grasp the concept of voting by cutting out the pictures above and gluing them onto popsicle sticks. Give one of each to each child.

➔ Say “We’re going to play a voting game!” Ask questions like: “What flavor of ice cream is your favorite? Hold up the star if it is chocolate and the circle if it is vanilla.” Or “What should we have for lunch? Hold up the star for PB&J or the circle for mac and cheese.” Allow kids to vote for their favorites. Count how many votes each option gets and declare a winner! For very young kids, you may omit that last step and simply allow them to hold their stick up and declare their favorites for fun.