

**2016 Election Portfolio Project**

This year, in order to become an informed citizen, we will monitor and discuss the Presidential Race for 2016. On Election Day we will conduct an election based on this year’s candidates. Here are the tasks you will be asked to complete for the portfolio.

1. Candidate selection
2. Personal Candidate Biography
3. Research Key Campaign Issues
4. Watch the Presidential debates
5. Participate in an in-class mock debate
6. Election symposium preparation
7. An in-class election symposium
8. Analyze campaign ads

**Important Due Dates**

**October 24th –** Candidate Profile and Key Issues

**October 26th** – Mock Debate

**October 27th** – Research for Symposium

**October 28th** – Team reviewed by peers

**October 31st & November 1st** – Symposium

Candidate Profile

**Directions:** Using PBS News Hour information available at <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/> with other internet resources and print sources, answer each of the questions below and create a candidate profile that describes one of the people campaigning to be president.

The final product will be a typed report that will be formatted as a mixed media (images and print material) report.

**Research Questions:**

1. Which candidate are you profiling?
2. Which political party does this candidate represent?
3. What other political offices has this person had in his or her career?
4. What prior political and/or leadership experience does this candidate have that makes him/her qualified to be the next president?
5. What is this candidate’s point of view on the major issue of:
   1. National Security
   2. Healthcare
   3. Education
   4. The economy and jobs
   5. Taxes
   6. Terrorism
   7. Energy and Environment
   8. Immigration
6. Create a “my point of view” section (1-2 pages length) and answer:
   1. Do you agree with candidate and his/her point of view about important topics?
   2. Would you vote for this candidate? Why or why not?

**Analyzing a Campaign Ad**

**Directions:** Watch ***two*** short television commercials, one representing each campaign. The YouTube channels of Secretary Clinton and Mr. Trump are probably the best place to find current ads.

**For each commercial, write down what images you see in the ad.**

1. Are there photographs of people or places?
2. Are they in color or black and white?
3. Are they vivid or grainy?
4. If there are words written on the screen, what do they say?
5. Watch the commercial again. What sounds do you hear?
6. Is there a speaker or narrator? Is there music?

**Then think about this:**

* What do the producers of the commercial want you to feel and think?
* What makes you say that? Do you think the commercial is effective?
* Why or why not?

Student Symposium and Resulting Action

**Summary**: At a student-led symposium, students will present an outreach method to address a topic pertaining to the election. Through the symposium process, students will debate the most effective method of addressing the topic. Based on the knowledge gained at the symposium, students will work to make their outreach method more effective; the process concludes with students taking authentic action to impact that aspect of the campaign and election process

**Objectives:**

* Students use the information gained from C-SPAN resources and their field research/community involvement to take direct action
* Students use the knowledge gained for C-SPAN resources and their field research to craft questions to pose to different actions groups. Students also create evaluation criteria for which to assess each action method.

**Symposium Procedure:**

Step 1: Introduce students to the selected theme/topic

* Weekend Homework: Candidate Bios and Issue Analysis
  + Resources to use
    - C-SPAN Classroom’s *Campaign 2016* page provides a table of contents with relevant clips and a range of election-related topics
    - Search C-SPAN’s broader Video Library website for background videos on the topic
    - Students should take notes on key concepts related to each key topic

Step 2: Isolate and break down key issues of the election

* As a class, re-watch the C-SPAN debate clips and pause to discuss the vocabulary in context.
* Students should be preparing to select which key issues they would like to research

Step 3: Reflection and Symposium Preparation

* Students reflect on what they learned from the supporting C-SPAN clips, other background information presented in class.
* In their teams, students decided on the side of the topic they are representing or person/group of people they are representing. Students also decide on the authentic action they will take.

Step 4: Teams Conduct Research specific to their stance/team and Design their outreach method

* Research methods may include: C-SPAN video clips and other sources that present up-to-date information and perspectives on the topic
  + Students will note their source on the organizer so that they can reference it, if questioned during the symposium
* After you have completed the research graphic organizer they should design their outreach method.
  + Methods can be a website, campaign ad, social media account or any similar format in order to allow students to reach a large audience.

Step 5: Prior to the symposium students review the other teams’ outreach methods and prepare questions to ask the other teams

* Each team reviews other teams’ outreach methods and craft questions
* Student-created questions should evaluate
  + The effectiveness of the actual outreach method
  + The accuracy of information
  + How the team will attract a following and communicate effectively to spread their message
* Provide teams with feedback so that they can prepare to answer questions and defend their position

Step 6: Answer preparation and search for position defense

* Students should refer to their prior research notes and conduct further research as necessary.

Step 7: Conducting the Symposium

* Students use the knowledge gained from C-SPAN resources and their field research to argue which direct action is most effective.

**Symposium Agenda**

1. The first presenting team will share their outreach method
   1. The other teams will ask the presenting team questions
2. The remaining presenting teams will share their outreach method
   1. Each team will present and share their stance and outreach method one team at a time
      1. The team will support their answers with their research
      2. The other teams will ask the presenting team questions (See Step 5)

**Symposium Wrap-Up:** Revisit the purpose of the symposium, debrief, and next steps

1. Students will discuss which outreach method would be most likely to have an effect on the particular election topic that the class is attempting to address.
2. Students will also discuss, based on what they’ve learned at the symposium, their next steps are to improve their method and work to achieve their team’s particular goal.

Step 8: Students take an Authentic Action to impact the election-related topic

* Students will use the feedback and knowledge gained from the symposium to take direct action.
* Additionally, if students were persuaded by a particular team’s performance during the symposium, they may choose to switch and implement a different outreach method.
* Students can modify and update their action or website as election events unfold that impact their course of action.