

LESSON PLAN: A Child's Guide to Voting

I VOTED

Making a Choice Makes a Difference

by Mark Shulman, illustrated by Serge Bloch

I Voted: Making a Choice Makes a Difference is a witty, nonpartisan book that will help explain the concept of voting to the very youngest readers.

From the time we are very young, we begin to make choices. Some choices are easy to make and some harder. As we get older our choices have more impact on others in our world. What do the choices we make say about who we are? And how can we make a difference?

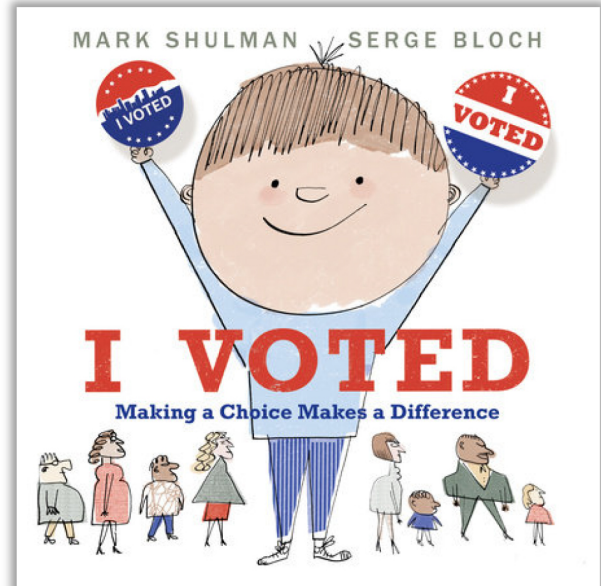
Learning Objectives: Students will learn about the voting process and what their role is as a citizen. Students will determine the author's purpose and identify national, state, and local officials. Students will participate in authentic voting situations.

Guided Reading Level: M

Grade Level: 2 / **Interest Level:** K-4

BEFORE READING

1. Discuss the title, subtitle and cover illustrations.
2. Write "I voted" on the board. Brainstorm what this means with the group. (Who or what could the boy be voting for?)
3. Ask students to find other words in the subtitle that mean the same thing as "I voted." (Making a choice)
4. How is the boy on the cover feeling? Why do you think the boy on the cover looks happy and proud?
5. Why do people vote? (They are citizens. It's fair. It is the rule.)
6. What kinds of things do you vote for?
7. When there is a vote, who wins and who loses? Why?
8. Write MAJORITY on the board. Discuss "the majority wins."



9780823445615 / Ages 4-8 / NEAL PORTER BOOKS

★ "With the 2020 election around the corner, this simple yet edifying book will help younger kids understand what all the excitement's about."
—*Booklist*, Starred Review

Visit [HolidayHouse.com](https://www.holidayhouse.com) for A CHILD'S GUIDE TO VOTING CLASSROOM KIT

Conduct a “Classroom Cookie Vote.”

- Create a chart on the board with the headings “Chocolate Chip Cookie” and “Sugar Cookie.”
- Ask students to vote on whether they would like a chocolate chip or a sugar cookie for a snack.
- Tell the students that they can only choose one type of cookie. The cookie with the most votes will win. (Majority)
- Ask students who would like to have a chocolate chip cookie to raise their hands.
- Count the responses and add tally marks to the chart.
- Repeat with sugar cookie.
- Write Classroom Cookie Winner is _____.
- Discuss the outcome with the group.
- If you had some time, how could you have possibly changed the outcome of the vote? (Create posters, campaign speeches, try and persuade voters to vote your way.)

READ THE BOOK

Read *I Voted: Making a Choice Makes a Difference* to find out ways that individuals have the power to change outcomes and make a difference.

DURING READING

1. Read/listen to the story—What statement is author, Mark Shulman making about the importance of voting? Why do children need to know about voting if they cannot vote until the age of 18?
2. As you read, make text-to-self and text-to-world connections-
 - When is it easy to make a decision?
 - When is it difficult to make a decision?
 - When do you vote?
 - Describe a time you voted by yourself.
 - Describe a time you voted with others.
 - What can you do to make sure your choice wins?
 - Why is voting fair?
 - How does voting seem unfair at times?
 - If you don’t vote, you don’t get to _____!
 - What do grown-ups vote for?
 - Why is voting important?
 - Why do we need to choose our leaders carefully?
 - How do people get informed about candidates running for election? (**Listen, read, talk, ask**)
3. Read the Vocabulary words below, in and out of context.
 - Go back to the story and find examples of how Mark Schulman uses new vocabulary through pictures and words.

VOCABULARY

ballot	the system of voting
candidate	person running for a government office
decision	act of reaching a conclusion or making up one's mind
election	the act of choosing or deciding through a vote
informed	knowing enough about something to make a decision
majority	at least one more than half of a group
register	to enter on an official list
responsibility	task that you should do
vote	to make a formal choice

4. Essential Questions: Understanding Power, Authority & Governance

1. What choices do you make each day?
2. What do you vote on?
3. How do the choices you make affect you?
4. How do your choices affect others at home, at school, or in your community?
5. What is a positive choice or decision? Give examples.
6. What is a negative choice or decision? Give examples.
7. What have you learned about yourself from making wrong decisions?
8. How can our choices influence how others see us?
9. How do other people's decisions impact you and your community? School, family, and neighborhood communities?
10. What is a citizen in a community?
11. What are some of the responsibilities of citizens?
12. How do good citizens participate in their government and community?
13. What are things about you that show you are a thoughtful friend and neighbor?
14. How are individual choices different from making choices as a group?
15. What is voting?
16. Why do people vote?
17. Why is voting "fair"?
18. What are some things people vote for in your classroom, family and neighborhood communities?
19. What different kinds of elections are there?

AFTER READING**Questions**

Go back to the book, *I Voted: Making a Choice Makes a Difference*, to answer the following questions. You may need to do some further research to find out about your local elected officials.

1. What are the five easy steps for voting in the U.S.?
2. What is the responsibility of a kid under the age of 18?
3. What are the three branches of our national government?
4. How many political parties do we have?
5. What are the two main political parties?
6. Who leads our national government?
7. Who is the current President of the U.S.? The Vice President?
8. Who leads your state government?
9. Who is your governor?
10. Who leads your local government?
11. Who is your mayor?

Hold a Mock Election Using Literary Characters.

1. Brainstorm fictional characters from stories the class has read. The Tortoise and the Hare fable is the perfect starting point.
2. Create candidate profiles, posters and campaign ads: _____ for President!
3. Create voter registration forms and ballots.
4. Have a mock debate about issues in the classroom.
5. Create newspaper articles, TV and radio ads, and social media activity about the candidates. (Instagram posts, Tweets, etc.)
6. Set an Election Day.
7. Create "I Voted" pins or stickers.
8. Plan and design a proper polling station.
9. Have someone report the winner.

Guide written by Marla Conn, reading/literacy specialist and educational consultant