



COMMUNITY CLASSROOM: VOTE DEMOCRACY! EDUCATOR GUIDE

Educators can use the VOTE DEMOCRACY! Educator Guide to support viewing of PLEASE VOTE FOR ME, IRON LADIES OF LIBERIA, CHICAGO 10 and AN UNREASONABLE MAN while engaging students in discussions about democracy abroad, elections, third-party politics, gender, the role of dissent in democracy and media literacy. These lessons and activities also provide a context for understanding and further investigating the changing nature of democracy around the world.



KQED
education network



Activity 2

Third-party Voices
(90-120 minutes + assignments)



“We really need multiparty development in this country, because we don’t have a government of, by, and for the people. We have a government of the Exxons, by the General Motors, for the Duponts.”

—Ralph Nader



Third-party Voices

(90-120 minutes + assignments)

Grade Level: 9–12, College

Subject Areas: Government, Political Science, Social Studies, Current Events, Language Arts, Debate, Sociology

Objectives: Students will:

- learn about the political party system in the United States
- analyze and critically view film as text
- discuss in groups and as a class
- exercise collaborative group skills

Skills: stating and supporting opinions in class discussion and in writing, critical reading and viewing, researching, note taking, oral presentation

Materials: board/overhead, chart paper, **AN UNREASONABLE MAN “Third Parties” Video Module, Student Handout B, AN UNREASONABLE MAN Discussion Guide**

The dominant, two-party system of political parties in the United States is ripe for classroom investigation. This lesson provides an opportunity for students to consider the role and possibilities for independent parties in a democracy. The lesson also opens up the lens to view the political systems in other countries.

Procedures:

1. Distribute this anticipation guide to students to complete as a warm up:

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Were you correct? Yes	No
1. There are two major political parties in the U.S.				
2. A candidate from a third party has never won a Presidential election.				
3. A candidate from a third party has never won an election for state governor.				
4. Independent or third party candidates may participate in the Presidential Debates.				
5. There are other democratic countries with a greater number of political parties represented in their government.				

NOTE: See **Student Handout B: Anticipation Guide**

Have the class share with a “thumbs up/thumbs down” and then call on a few students from each perspective to add other views or information.

2. Have students form small groups to read and discuss the speech by Howard Ditkoff, “Third Parties: Bringing Color and Flavor to American Politics,” (<http://www.systemsthinker.com/writingscreative/speeches/thirdparties.shtml>) using these guiding questions:

- How would you feel if you could only choose between two flavors of ice cream or colors of cars?
- How do you think some other countries are able to have more political parties represented?
- Do you agree or disagree with Ditkoff? Why or why not?



3. View the **AN UNREASONABLE MAN “Third Parties” Video Module** in which Nader is denied entry to the Presidential Debates in Boston. Debrief with these questions:
- Why was Nader excluded from the debate? Why was he denied entry as a spectator?
 - Why might Nader's Raiders for Gore and the Commission on Presidential Debates want to prevent Nader from campaigning for president?
 - How did Nader respond? Was his response effective? How else might he have responded?

Present the following quotations from AN UNREASONABLE MAN as a vehicle for discussion. Use the quotes to provide context and opposing viewpoints to the previously mentioned scene.

- *“If you look at the numbers in Florida alone, I think it's safe to say that Ralph Nader denied Al Gore a clean victory in Florida. It may be true in other cases as well. But, uh, he has had a consequential impact on this presidential election.”*—Tom Daschle, Senator (D-South Dakota)
- *“You can invent all kinds of excuses, uh, as to why other people are responsible. Bill Clinton is responsible because he didn't carry Arkansas. Al Gore is responsible because he didn't carry Tennessee. One man could have stopped it. That's Ralph Nader. He chose not to....I think Nader intended to be a spoiler. I think Nader is a Leninist. He thinks things have to get worse before they get better.”*—Eric Alterman, Columnist, *The Nation*

4. As a class, read the Douglas Amy article “Voting System Reform Can Solve the Spoiler Problem,” (<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/polit/damy/articles/spoiler.htm>). Discuss using these guiding questions:
- What does it mean for a third-party candidate to play a “spoiler” role?
 - Why does Amy think plurality voting is unfair? Do you agree or disagree? Why or why not?
 - What is the difference between instant-runoff voting (IRV) and proportional representation (PR)?
 - How have some countries successfully used alternative voting systems?
 - Should the U.S. adopt voting systems such as IRV or PR? Why or why not?
5. Assignment: In small groups have students select a country to research that uses other forms of voting and representation in government. For example, IRV in Ireland and Australia, PR in Germany, Brazil, the Czech Republic, Sweden and Denmark. They could also research countries that predominantly use plurality voting such as Great Britain, Canada and Hungary. Some good resources online include Instant Runoff Voting's In the News page (<http://www.instantrunoff.com/news.php>), which provides links to several news and opinion pieces, and FairVote's links pages to International Full Representation Organizations (<http://www.fairvote.org/links.htm#International%20PR%20Organizations>) and IRV in Practice (<http://www.fairvote.org/irv/links.htm>) for articles featuring many countries.

Extension Activities:

1. Research independent political parties in the U.S.: their platforms, constituencies, impact and representation in local and national politics.
2. Develop proposals for how presidential debates should be conducted. They should include details such as who can participate, location and number of debates. They should also include information about format, such as the agenda, timing, moderation, panel selection, and questions. The text resource is from Open Debates, a non-profit committed to reform of the presidential debate process (<http://www.opendebates.org/theissue/strengthenmajorparties.html>).
3. Research local elections in the U.S. in which third parties have been successful in winning or securing a large percentage of the vote.
4. The format for presidential debates continues to evolve and adapt, especially with the rise of such media sources as political weblogs, YouTube, MySpace and other somewhat more traditional venues as National Public Radio. Research how current presidential candidates are getting their message across and analyze the impact and usage of technology. Write an opinion editorial evaluating the pros and cons of the rise of technology in election campaigns and predict how campaigns and debates will be conducted in the future.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Student Handout B: Anticipation Guide (Activity 2: Third-party Voices)

Directions: Read each statement below carefully and mark Agree or Disagree based on your own knowledge, previous learning, experience or best educated guess. After sharing, we will read an article that discusses these ideas and you will be able to find out which statements you correctly identified:

Statement	Agree	Disagree	Were you correct? Yes	No
1. There are two major political parties in the U.S.				
2. A candidate from a third party has never won a Presidential election.				
3. A candidate from a third party has never won an election for state governor.				
4. Independent or third party candidates may participate in the Presidential Debates.				
5. There are other democratic countries with a greater number of political parties represented in their government.				



RECOMMENDED NATIONAL STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards for English Language Arts National Council of Teachers of English and the International Reading Association

1. Students read a wide range of print and non-print texts to build an understanding of texts, of themselves, and of the cultures of the United States and the world; to acquire new information; to respond to the needs and demands of society and the workplace; and for personal fulfillment. Among these texts are fiction and nonfiction, classic and contemporary works.
3. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies and their understanding of textual features.
4. Students adjust their use of spoken, written, and visual language to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes.
5. Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communication with different audiences for a variety of purposes.
6. Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language, and genre to create, critique, and discuss print and non-print texts.
7. Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and non-print texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that suit their purpose and audience.
8. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
12. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion and the exchange of information).

Curriculum Standards for Social Studies Expectations of Excellence, National Council for the Social Studies

Performance Expectation 1: Culture

- Predict how data and experiences may be interpreted by people from diverse cultural perspectives and frames of reference.
- Interpret patterns of behavior reflecting values and attitudes that contribute or pose obstacles to cross-cultural understanding.
- Construct reasoned judgments about specific cultural responses to persistent human issues;

Performance Expectation 4: Individual Development and Identity

- Identify, describe, and express appreciation for the influences of various historical and contemporary cultures on an individual's daily life;
- Describe the ways family, religion, gender, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status and other group and cultural influences contribute to the development of a sense of self;
- Examine the interactions of ethnic, national or cultural influences in specific situations or events;
- Analyze the role of perceptions, attitudes, values and beliefs in the development of personal identity;
- Compare and evaluate the impact of stereotyping, conformity, acts of altruism and other behaviors on individuals and groups;
- Work independently and cooperatively within groups and institutions to accomplish goals;

Performance Expectation 6: Power, Authority, and Governance

- Examine persistent issues involving the rights, roles and status of the individual in relation to the general welfare;

Performance Expectation 9: Global Connections

- Analyze or formulate policy statements demonstrating an understanding of concerns, standards, issues and conflicts related to universal human rights;
- Identify and describe the roles of international and multinational organizations.
- Illustrate how individual behaviors and decisions connect with global systems.

For specific content standards on subjects such as social sciences, ethics and media literacy, please refer to your respective State Standards.



GUIDE CREDITS

CURRICULA WRITER

David Maduli

David Maduli is an independent educational consultant who has contributed many curriculum guides and conducted various workshops for PBS programs. He has a master's in teaching and curriculum from Harvard Graduate School of Education and continues to work as a veteran Bay Area public school language arts and social studies teacher.

COMMUNITY CLASSROOM CONTENT MANAGER

Susan Latton

Susan Latton is an independent consultant specializing in public health and public media collaborations. Latton develops campaign strategies, resources and national partnerships for ITVS COMMUNITY programming.

ITVS STAFF

Director of Communications

Dennis Palmieri

Associate Director of Communications

Duong-Chi Do

National Community Relations Coordinator

Caiti Crum

KQED STAFF

Supervisor School Services

Ken Garcia-Gonzalez

Project Supervisor

Maxine Einhorne

COMMUNITY CLASSROOM National Advisors

Carole Lester: American Association of Community Colleges

Renee McKee: 4-H

Joyce E. Harris: National Association for Multicultural Education

Garland F. Pierce: National Council of Churches

Wendell Bourne & Michael Yell: National Council for the Social Studies

Dale Allender: National Council of Teachers of English

Donelle Blubaugh & Jenny Bradbury: PBS



About COMMUNITY CLASSROOM:

COMMUNITY CLASSROOM is an exciting resource for educators providing short video modules drawn from the Emmy® Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens*. *Independent Lens*, a 29-week series airing Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS stations across the country, features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community or moment in history. Drawn from the U.S. and abroad, these stories reflect the diversity of our world through the lens of contemporary documentary filmmakers. The CLASSROOM video modules are supported with innovative, resource-rich curricula for high school, college and youth educators. Video modules are 5-10 minutes in length and can be viewed online or on DVD-ROM. Content is grouped into subject specific segments that correspond to lesson plans and are standards-based.

COMMUNITY CLASSROOM is a product of the Independent Television Service and KQED Education Network, with support from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Educational content was developed with guidance from PBS Teachers, National Association for Multicultural Education, National Council of Churches, American Association of Community Colleges, 4-H, National Council for the Social Studies, and National Council of Teachers of English.

About ITVS:

The Independent Television Service (ITVS) funds and presents award-winning documentaries and dramas on public television, innovative new media projects on the Web and the Emmy Award-winning weekly series *Independent Lens* on Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS. ITVS is a miracle of public policy created by media activists, citizens and politicians seeking to foster plurality and diversity in public television. ITVS was established by a historic mandate of Congress to champion independently produced programs that take creative risks, spark public dialogue and serve underserved audiences. Since its inception in 1991, ITVS programs have revitalized the relationship between the public and public television, bringing TV audiences face-to-face with the lives and concerns of their fellow Americans. More information about ITVS can be obtained by visiting itvs.org. ITVS is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, a private corporation funded by the American people.

About *Independent Lens*:

Independent Lens is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS. Hosted this season by Terrence Howard, the acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community or moment in history. Presented by ITVS, the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. Further information about the series is available at www.pbs.org/independentlens. *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS, and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

About KQED Education Network:

KQED Education Network engages with community and educational organizations to broaden and deepen the impact of KQED media to effect positive change. Through parent education and professional development workshops, public screenings, multimedia resources, and special events, Education Network reaches more than 200,000 Bay Area residents a year and serves people of all ages, with a particular emphasis on reaching underserved communities. Learn more about its three unique services, Early Learning, Educational Services, and Community Engagement, at kqed.org/HistoryEd.

About PBS:

PBS is a media enterprise that serves 354 public noncommercial television stations and reaches almost 90 million people each week through on-air and online content. Bringing diverse viewpoints to television and the Internet, PBS provides high-quality documentary and dramatic entertainment, and consistently dominates the most prestigious award competitions. PBS is a leading provider of educational materials for K-12 teachers, and offers a broad array of other educational services. PBS's premier kids' TV programming and Web site, PBS KIDS Online (pbskids.org), continue to be parents' and teachers' most trusted learning environments for children. More information about PBS is available at pbs.org, one of the leading dot-org Web sites on the Internet.

