



# *Let's Get Out the Vote!*

---

## **Facilitator's Guide**

This upcoming election is arguably the most important election in the lifetimes of young people around the world in relation to racial justice and climate change, and the communities most impacted by it -- the same communities most impacted by COVID-19 and by racism and white supremacy in America. So, let's get out the vote!

Volunteering with a campaign or voter turnout organization is way more fun when we do it together! Added bonus: we get more people civically engaged and more people out voting. Hurray for democracy!

This guide is intended to enable *anyone* to facilitate the Civics & Swing States program for a group of friends, family, or peers. If you have questions along the way, please contact Jenny Cooper ([jenny.cooper@northwestschool.org](mailto:jenny.cooper@northwestschool.org)).

---

*Civics & Swing States was developed by Jenny Cooper, Director of Environmental Education & Sustainability at The Northwest School (Seattle, WA) and Jackson Leadership Fellow through the Henry M. Jackson Foundation. Prior to joining Northwest, Jenny spent seven years working on climate change policy at the international and local scales, including roles in nonprofits, city government, and the private sector.*



## THIS GUIDE INCLUDES:

- **An overview of the program objectives, role of a facilitator, and tips for facilitating online group engagement.**
- **[Program overview](#) and outline of talking points, activities, slides, worksheets and other supporting materials for each of the 8 sessions of the Civics & Swing States program**
  - [Day 1](#) - Who Am I? Who Are We?
  - [Day 2](#) - Who Represents Me? What Do I Care About?
  - [Day 3](#) - Voter Justice & Swing States
  - [Day 4](#) - Voter Justice & Swing States, part 2
  - [Day 5](#) - Volunteering & Skill Building
  - [Day 6](#) - The Electoral College & Campaign Finance
  - [Day 7](#) - Communication & Framing
  - [Day 8](#) - Growing the Movement
- **Google Slides for the entire program are [here](#).**
- **Google Site, with supporting materials and structure, [here](#).**
- **Resources for learning more about:**
  - [Racial justice and personal identity](#)
  - [Climate change](#)
  - [Government and elections in the United States](#)
  - [How to choose a campaign or voter turnout organization to volunteer with](#)
- **Program description and sample email to friends, family, and peers to invite them to join you in the program.** (Click [here](#).)
- **Email template for inviting local elected officials and/or civic leaders to be guest speakers in your program.** (Click [here](#).)

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 1 of 26



## How Do I Facilitate a *Civics & Swing States* Group?

- 1) Understand your role.** As a facilitator of a Civics & Swing States group, your role is to convene your group, get folks excited about joining you in this adventure, walk the group through the program materials (8 sessions), lead discussions, and communicate with the group to ensure everyone knows the plan. Note: You do not need to be an expert! The Civics & Swing States program is intended to be accessible to *anyone* interested in learning more about government and elections in the US and volunteering to help get out the vote in the November 2020 election. It's designed to enable folks to learn and engage together.
- 2) Form your group! Invite friends, family and/or peers.** See below for an email template to reach out to them. Create an email or text thread with the folks who decide to join you, and set your days/times for the group to meet. Hurray! (When2Meet.com or WhenIsGood.net are useful tools in finding available times among a group.)
- 3) Download, or copy to Google Drive, the resources in this guide, familiarize yourself with them, and tailor them to your group.** The Facilitators Guide for Civics & Swing States includes everything you'll need to bring a group of friends, family, or peers together and dive into learning about civics in the US and engage meaningfully in the November 2020 election. Throughout the guide, there are areas in **[square brackets, highlighted in yellow]**. These are for you to fill in to be relevant to your particular group.
- 4) (Optional) Invite local elected officials/civic leaders to be guest speakers in your group.**
- 5) Dive in together, have fun, and get out the vote!** Meet regularly as a group to move through program materials and create a fun learning and volunteering atmosphere.
  - Decide on a platform for your group meetings (Zoom, Google Hangout, dining room table, etc.). Create and share links (if needed) for your participants to join meetings.
  - Be sure you're able to share your screen to move through PPT slides, or be sure all participants know how to have slides on their screens while also on the call.
  - Meet regularly with your group to move through the program materials, learn from and with each other, and share your volunteering experiences.
  - Send reminder and follow-up emails before or after each session, reminding folks what exercises they should do for the next session. (Copy and paste from the Prep and Follow-Up sections of each Session Guide.)
- 6) Facilitators: contact [Jenny Cooper](#) if you have any questions.**



## Civics & Swing States: Let's Get Out the Vote!

### Program Description

This upcoming election is arguably the most important election in the lifetimes of young people around the world in relation to racial justice and climate change, and the communities most impacted by it - the same communities most impacted by COVID-19 and by racial injustice. So, let's get out the vote!

The Civics & Swing States program is a free, 4-week program aimed at inspiring and mobilizing young people to spend time this Fall engaging in the 2020 election. It is developed by [Jenny Cooper](#), Director of Environmental Education & Sustainability at The Northwest School (Seattle, WA). While designed with young people in mind, the program is open and suitable to all who are interested. Jenny has facilitated Civics & Swing States this year to more than 130 people, ranging in age from 12-79, and is excited for other folks to pull together a group of friends, family, peers, or students to engage in the program.

### Participants in Civics & Swing States will:

- Tangibly engage in the 2020 election by volunteering with an election-oriented organization (campaign, voter registration, etc.) of their choosing.
- Meet twice weekly on Zoom **[recommended, but you could decide to meet once per week]** to engage in individual and group activities to:
  - Develop an understanding of how local/state/federal government and elections work, voter demographics in the US, voter suppression, swing states, and how the 2020 election will impact issues you care about (e.g., racial justice, climate change);
  - [Have conversations with guest speakers who are elected and appointed government officials, candidates, policy advocates, etc.]
  - Explore our personal identities and histories and how they influence our understanding of and engagement in democracy in the US.
  - Learn how to be an effective volunteer with an elections-oriented organization.

### Expectations

- Participate in your designated cohort time on **[insert your days/dates/times here]**.
- Volunteer 3-5 hours per week for a voter registration organization or campaign on your own. (This could take the form of online engagement, phone calls, or texting, depending on the organization/campaign).
- Participants will need access to a computer, wifi, and phone for this program.

### Logistics

- Dates: **[insert your dates here]**
- We will meet **[X times]** per week for 60-90 minutes, **[insert your days/dates/times here]**.
- Participants will volunteer independently on their own time or we will do it together and volunteer alongside one another on Zoom.

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 3 of 26



## Email Template to Invite Family/Friends/Peers to Join You

*(Can be adapted to text too.)*

Hi \_\_\_\_\_!

The upcoming election is SUPER important. [Insert sentence about why YOU care about this election.]

Will you join me in getting out the vote?

There's a great program that I learned about called Civics & Swing States, which enables folks to pull together a group of family/friends/peers to learn about elections and government, and volunteer for a campaign or voter turnout organization of their choosing. I would love to lead a group and would love for you to join!

The program is free, 4 weeks long, and includes learning about civics in the US in relation to our personal identities and family histories, issues we care about, and key elements of how elections and government work. We would meet 1-2 times per week to work through program material, and then each of us would volunteer 3-5 hours a week for a campaign or voter turnout organization of our choosing. Full details are below.

Will you join me? Please reach out with any questions, and let me know if you're game to join me in this Get Out The Vote adventure by [insert your deadline date].

Hope to hear from you soon!

Yours in getting out the vote,

[insert your name]



## How Do I Invite Local Elected Officials to Be Guest Speakers in Our Group?

**Email template for inviting local elected officials and/or civic leaders to be guest speakers in your program.**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

I'm facilitating Civics & Swing States, a program aimed at mobilizing young people to engage in the 2020 elections. I have XXX friends/family/students in the group, and we are excited to Get Out The Vote! We'd like to have local elected officials and civic leaders join us as guest speakers, and I'm wondering if you would be open to joining us during one of our sessions [via Zoom]?

I've attached the Civics & Swing States program description for reference.

The overall structure of your time with us would be 10-15 mins on your journey, your experiences in political organizing, what's at stake in this election, and what you think the most effective ways are for people--particularly young people who aren't of voting age--to engage in elections; and then 15-20 mins of Q&A. So, ~30 mins total.

Are you interested in joining us as a guest speaker?

If so, these are the days/times you could choose from; let me know what might work for you:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

I'm happy to hop on the phone if easier to coordinate that way.

Many thanks for considering and hope to hear from you soon,

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Civics & Swing States at a Glance

Day: Topic	Objectives
<a href="#">DAY 1</a> - WHO AM I? WHO ARE WE?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin to develop a community of learning and engagement within your section</li> <li>• Become familiar and comfortable with the tools we'll be using to learn together</li> <li>• Explore our personal identities and histories and how they influence our understanding of and engagement in democracy in the US</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of what government is and how it impacts your life.</li> <li>• Become familiar with the "on your own" exercises for the next session</li> </ul>
<a href="#">DAY 2</a> - WHO REPRESENTS ME? WHAT DO I CARE ABOUT?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to develop a community of learning and engagement within your section, and continue to build confidence using Google Sites, Google Docs, and JamBoard</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of the three branches of government and how they function</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of who represents us, and the demographics of US elected officials</li> <li>• Identify issues that you care deeply about and explore why you feel drawn to them</li> </ul>
<a href="#">DAY 3</a> - VOTER JUSTICE & SWING STATES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess potential to collectively engage in 1-3 swing states together</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of Voting Rights Act, voter turnout, and voter demographics in US</li> <li>• Review what swing states are</li> <li>• Choose a campaign and/or organization to volunteer with</li> <li>• Continue to build a community of learning and engagement</li> </ul>
<a href="#">DAY 4</a> - VOTER JUSTICE & SWING STATES (con't)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deepen our understanding of voter suppression and gerrymandering in the US</li> <li>• Reflect on experience of choosing a campaign/organization to volunteer with</li> <li>• Continue to build a community of learning and engagement</li> </ul>
<a href="#">DAY 5</a> - VOLUNTEERING & SKILL BUILDING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on content we've touched on thus far</li> <li>• Reflect on volunteering and/or process of choosing a campaign/organization</li> <li>• Practice phone banking</li> </ul>
<a href="#">DAY 6</a> - THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE & CAMPAIGN FINANCE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a basic understanding of the electoral college and campaign finance in the US</li> <li>• Reflect on experience of volunteering thus far</li> </ul>
<a href="#">DAY 7</a> - COMMUNICATION & FRAMING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an understanding of political framing, cognitive science, and its impact on politics</li> <li>• Reflect on experience volunteering - What's going well? What's a challenge?</li> </ul>
<a href="#">DAY 8</a> - GROWING THE MOVEMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Celebrate our time together</li> <li>• Reflect on the past 4 weeks as a means of solidifying learning</li> <li>• Brainstorm ways to build momentum to take us through November 2020 and beyond</li> <li>• Provide feedback on the program to help improve it for future groups</li> </ul>

Google Slides for the program are [here](#).

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 6 of 26



## Day 1 - Who Am I? Who Are We?

### Objectives for the Day

- Begin to develop a community of learning and engagement
- Become familiar and comfortable with the tools we'll be using to learn together (Google Slides, Docs, JamBoard)
- Explore our personal identities and histories and how they influence our understanding of and engagement in democracy in the US
- Develop an understanding of what government is and how it impacts your life
- Become familiar with the "on your own" exercises for the next session

### Resources

- Program [website](#) (All the links below are also on this website)
- [Slides](#)
- Journal [Template](#)
- Personal Social Identifiers [Worksheet](#)
- Google JamBoard is a great tool to use to facilitate online discussion, idea generation, and reflection.

### Participant Prep for the Day

- Watch the documentary [13th](#). As you watch, consider these questions:
  - How does the 13th Amendment, our current police practices, and racism past and present impact voter turnout in the United States?
  - How do you see this play out locally, where you live and elsewhere in the United States?
- Create a Civics & Swing States journal using this template. **Click and copy.**

### Facilitator's Prep for the Day

- Watch the documentary [13th](#). As you watch, consider these questions:
  - How does the 13th Amendment, our current police practices, and racism past and present impact voter turnout in the United States?
  - How do you see this play out locally, where you live and elsewhere in the United States?
- Complete the Personal Identity Worksheet ([click and copy](#)) in preparation for leading discussion on it.
  - Reflect on the questions in the instructions. Write your thoughts in your journal.
  - Reflect on the question: How might your social identifiers, and the experiences you've had based on those, influence your engagement in the 2020 election?

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 7 of 26





- Reflect on the following questions in prep for leading a discussion on them:
  - What is government? What does government do?
  - What purpose does it serve?
  - How does government impact your life?
  - Does representation in government reflect our country's demographics?
- Send note to participants reminding them of meeting time and prep.

### Notes for Facilitation

- Review objectives of the program and share why you're bringing people together to engage in the election.
- Review group discussion and participation agreements, and why you're using them.
  - Listen actively; listen to understand.
  - Speak for yourself; share your experience.
  - Share airspace: WAIT → Why am I talking? Why aren't I talking?
  - Name a dynamic.
  - My normal may not be your normal.
  - Assume best intentions in others; and understand and take responsibility for your impact.
  - Be open to feedback, and ask clarifying questions.
  - What's said here, stays here. What's learned here, leaves here.
  - Be open, be engaging, be vulnerable, be honest.
- Group discussion and participation agreements are a critical step in building an inclusive, open, agile community. Intentionally structuring the way we collaborate with one another is a critical step in mitigating implicit and racial bias in everything we do.
- Collaborative agreements enable us to grow as individuals and teams, professionally and personally as they provide avenues for feedback, reflection, and engagement
- We are learning together, in community. No one is an expert. We are here to share ideas, learn how to effectively engage in democracy, reflect and grow together. We are also all doing this during a pandemic and a civil rights movement. We come with different experiences, histories, capacities. And we need to all respect one another.
- Ground the group in the current state of the world, locally and globally, and rationale for the need for civic engagement.
- Facilitate introductions if the group doesn't know each other (see slides for suggestions).
- Guide the group in doing the individual personal identity worksheet; create breakout rooms for small group discussion. Consider asking participants in advance if they would like to be in affinity groups and then create breakout rooms or small groups accordingly.
  - Please note: the worksheet is intended to provide you with a tool or loose framework in which to reflect on your perceptions of government and engagement in elections.

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 8 of 26



It's not intended to divide people or make you feel like you need to choose one column or the other. Each of these identifiers is in many ways a continuum. Most of us don't necessarily fall into one space or another.

- Once back in the larger group, invite a few folks to share out.
- Transition the conversation from personal identity and family history to “What is government?” “What purpose does it serve?”
- Group or small group discussion on:
  - What is government? What does government do?
  - What purpose does it serve?
  - How does government impact your life?
- Close out the session with reflection and a review of what folks should do in preparation for next time. (See below.)
  - Reflection - write in your journal:
    - What are 1-3 things that you learned, or that struck you, from our time together today?
    - What follow up questions do you have, or what questions arose from our time together?

### **Participant At-Home Exercises (To Do Before Next Session)**

- **Family History & Voting. Talk to members of your immediate family and extended family (grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles, etc.).**
  - Are they eligible to vote in the US?
  - Have they voted in prior elections? (If they aren't currently eligible to vote in the US, why not? Have they voted in elections elsewhere or in the US at other points in their life?)
  - If so, are they registered to vote and are they planning to vote in upcoming elections?
  - If they are eligible and not registered, or aren't sure if they are registered, ask them to go [here](#) or [here](#) to find out.
  - If they're not registered to vote, and are eligible, look up the voter registration process for their state [here](#).
  - Call or talk with the oldest family member you know. Ask them the following questions:
    - Have you voted in elections over the course of your lifetime? Why or why not?
    - How have you observed elections and the voting process shift over the course of your lifetime?
    - Have you lived in different states of the US or different countries? If so, how have the voting and election processes differed or been the same in the various places that you've voted?



- **Watch the video, “How is power divided in the United States government?”** - Please jot down notes in your journal during or after you’ve watched it. We will be discussing this in small groups at our next meeting.
- **Who are your elected officials?**
  - Who are your representatives in local, state, and national government? Go to <https://myreps.datamade.us/> to find out. Make a list in your journal.
  - Write an email or letter, or call, one of your representatives to share your thoughts on an issue you care about (racial justice, climate change, public health, or anything you care deeply about).
  - [Extra: What elections are happening in your electoral districts this year? When are they? Who are the candidates?]

## Day 2 - Who Represents Me? What Do I Care About?

### Objectives for the Day

- Continue to develop a community of learning and engagement within your section, and continue to build confidence using Google Sites, Google Docs, and JamBoard.
- Develop an understanding of the three branches of government and how they function.
- Develop an understanding of who represents us, and the demographics of US elected officials.
- Identify issues that you care deeply about and explore why you feel drawn to them.

### Resources

- Program [website](#) (All the links below are also on this website)
- [Slides](#)
- Journal [Template](#)
- Google JamBoard is a great tool to use to facilitate online discussion, idea generation, and reflection.

**Participant Prep for the Day** - See “At Home” for Day 1.

### Facilitator’s Prep for the Day

- Watch the video, “How is power divided in the United States government?”
- Skim over the following documents; jot notes if you’d like to include additional detail in talking through the graphics pulled from these, which are included in the program Google Slides.  
*Reminder: We’re all learning together; you do not need to be an expert.*
  - “[The Electability Myth: The Shifting Demographics of Political Power in America](#),” Reflective Democracy Campaign, August 2019.
  - “[For the fifth year in a row, the new congress is most racially and ethnically diverse ever](#),” Pew Research, February 2019.

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 10 of 26



- [Fact sheets on women in elected office across scales of government](#) - Rutgers University, 2020.
- [“Only 0.1 percent of elected officials are LGBTQ, new report finds.”](#) NBC News, June 2018.
- [“These Black Queer Politicians Are On Their Way to Federal and State Government.”](#) Them., June 2020.
- [“5 facts about the religious makeup of the 116th Congress.”](#) Pew Research, January 2019.

### Notes for Facilitation

- Revisit the group discussion and participation agreements.
- Reminders:
  - As we move into more mechanical and intellectual understandings of government, please develop a practice of returning to your social identifiers worksheet and feeling into how and if your various social identifiers are impacting your approach to government and elections.
  - We are not here to take deep dives on issues, debate issues, etc. We are here to learn about how to *engage* in democracy--how to get out the vote, how to turn out for elections. Debates can be great, in the right time and place. If you find yourself debating an issue during our four weeks together, please ask yourself: is this constructive? Is this serving our purpose of getting people around me excited about engaging in the election?
- Tee up questions for folks to keep in the back of their mind as they move through the program:
  - What does it mean to have a democracy on stolen land?
  - What does it mean to have a democracy built on the backs of slaves?
  - How might your identities impact your perception of government and your engagement in elections?
- Small group breakout discussions sharing voting-related conversations with family (from At Home exercises)
- Review as a group: what are the three branches of government? What are their roles? At the federal level? At the state level?
- Note: Throughout this program, we will be covering topics quickly. To really do them justice we would need a year or a lifetime to truly dive in. This program is intended to pique your curiosity, get folks thinking and engaging.
- Talk through the graphics on the Google Slides about “Who represents us?”
- Close session with tee up question of “What issues do you care about? Why?” and move into reflection for the day. (See slides for daily reflection prompts.)

### Participant At-Home Exercises (To Do Before Next Session)

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 11 of 26



- **Be sure you have a solid grasp of the three branches of government.** In your journal, respond to these three questions:
  - What is the US Senate? Who does it represent?
  - What is the US House of Representatives? Who does it represent?
  - What challenges, drawbacks, or injustices of this system do you see?
- **What positions do your elected officials have on the issues you care most about? How have they engaged in the issues you care about?**
  - What issues do you care deeply about (choose 1-2)? Why do you care about them?
  - Choose 1-3 of your elected officials, research their positions on these issues, and write them a letter (or email, Tweet, etc.) or call them, either thanking them or asking them to shift their position.
  - Add a sticky note this JamBoard with:
    - The name and title of the elected official you contacted
    - The issue you communicated with them about
    - Your first name and last initial
- **What are swing states? What swing states are in play this year?** Explore at least one website that examines swing states.
  - [The New York Times](#)
  - [NPR](#)
  - <https://electoralvotemap.com/2020-battleground-states/>
  - [Common Power](#)
  - [Vote Save America](#)
  - [Swing left](#)
  - Journal reflection: What swing states do you think are most important in the November 2020 election? Why? What swing state(s) are you most drawn to or interested in volunteering on? Why?
- **Watch *Selma: Bridge to the Ballot*. Questions to reflect on (in your journal):**
  - What struck you in watching this film?
  - What role did young people, and particularly high school students play in the fight for voting rights for African Americans?
  - How does the movement for the right to vote relate to what we're experiencing today? What parallels do you see between the movie and today?

## Day 3 - Voter Justice & Swing States

### Objectives for the Day

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 12 of 26



- [Optional: Assess potential to collectively engage in 1-3 swing states together]
- Develop an understanding of Voting Rights Act, voter turnout, and voter demographics in the US
- Review what swing states are
- Choose a campaign and/or organization to volunteer with
- Continue to build a community of learning and engagement

## Resources

- Program [website](#) (All the links below are also on this website)
- [Slides](#)
- Google JamBoard is a great tool to use to facilitate online discussion, idea generation, and reflection.

**Participant Prep for the Day** - See “At Home” for Day 2.

## Facilitator’s Prep for the Day

- What are swing states? What swing states are in play this year? Explore at least one website that examines swing states.
  - [The New York Times](#)
  - [NPR](#)
  - <https://electoralvotemap.com/2020-battleground-states/>
  - [Common Power](#)
  - [Vote Save America](#)
  - [Swing left](#)
  - Journal reflection: What swing states do you think are most important in the November 2020 election? Why? What swing state(s) are you most drawn to or interested in volunteering on? Why?
- Watch [Selma: Bridge to the Ballot](#). Questions to reflect on (in your journal):
  - What struck you in watching this film?
  - What role did young people, and particularly high school students play in the fight for voting rights for African Americans?
  - How does the movement for the right to vote relate to what we’re experiencing today? What parallels do you see between the movie and today?
- Skim/watch a few of these resources to prepare for walking group through discussion and infographics
  - [The Economist Podcast, “Where does power lie in America?” interview with Stacey Abrams](#) (October 2019).
  - [“Suppressed: The Fight to Vote,”](#) (2019 film).
  - [All In: The Fight for Democracy](#) (2020 film).

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 13 of 26



- Pew Research Center: “[Historic highs in 2018 voter turnout extended across racial and ethnic groups.](#)” May 2019.
- NYT: “[Voter Registrations Are Way, Way Down During The Pandemic.](#)” June 2020.
- NYT: “[‘I Refuse Not to Be Heard’: Georgia in Uproar Over Voting Meltdown.](#)” June 2020.
- “[Voter Suppression Is Back, 55 Years After the Voting Rights Act.](#)” Politico, August 2020.

## Notes for Facilitation

- Open with objectives of the day
- In welcoming everyone to Day 3, restate some of the guiding questions:
  - What does it mean to have a democracy on stolen land?
  - What does it mean to have a democracy built on the backs of slaves?
  - How might your identities impact your perception of government and your engagement in elections?
- [5 mins] Begin with small group discussion of Selma: The Bridge to the Ballot film. Discussion prompts:
  - What struck you in watching Selma: The Bridge to the Ballot?
  - What role did young people, and particularly high school students play in the fight for voting rights for African Americans?
  - How does the movement for the right to vote relate to what we’re experiencing today? What parallels do you see between the movie and today?
  - If no one in your group watched the film, discuss: What prevents eligible voters from voting in this country? What questions come to mind when you think about voting rights and voter turnout in the US?
- Do a brief share out in the larger group (2-3 people share their reflections or trends in their small group discussions.
- Move the group in to thinking about who actually shows up to vote in the United States.
  - Who votes in US elections? Who tends not to? Why?
  - What percent of eligible voters in the US actually vote? ~55%-60%!
  - Move through voter demographic slides (see Google Slides)
- Why are these trends the way they are?
  - When did African American men get the right to vote? ....In theory, 1870, but not really until 1965.
  - When did white women get the right to vote? ....1920
  - When did African American women get the right to vote? ....1965
  - When did Native Americans gain the right to vote across *all* states? ....1962
  - SO, many folks in this country have had voting rights for 1-2 generations. That is not very long at all!
- Disenfranchisement - What does it mean? What are the ways in which voting rights have been threatened or limited in the US? Historically and today?
  - ID requirements



- Poll closures, hours, etc.
  - Gerrymandering
  - Intimidation
  - Misinformation
  - Defunding the US postal service?
- We will dive into many of these in more detail in subsequent sessions.
- Pivot to discussion of swing states. Large group discussion:
  - What are swing states?
  - What are swing districts?
- Breakout group discussions [5 mins]
  - What swing states do you think are most important in the November 2020 election? Why?
  - What swing state(s) are you most drawn to or interested in volunteering on? Why?
- Close out session by asking folks to dive in on reflection. (See slides for daily reflection prompts.)

### Participant At-Home Exercises (To Do Before Next Session)

- **Listen to The Economist Podcast, “Where does power lie in America?” interview with Stacey Abrams** (October 2019) **OR watch “Suppressed: The Fight to Vote,”** (Free, 2019) **OR watch All In: The Fight for Democracy** (Amazon Prime, 2020).
- **Decide what campaign or organization you’d like to volunteer with**--use the "Choosing a Campaign..." page to help guide your thinking.
- **Start volunteering** + logging your hours in your journal.
  - If you haven’t heard back from the campaign or organization yet, that is ok--be patient. In the meantime, spend your time researching the states/candidates/organizations you’re planning to work with.
  - Come prepared to discuss in small groups your experiences. (It may be the process of choosing a campaign or organization to volunteer with and what you're nervous about or what questions you have. Or, it may be that you’ve been phone banking all week long.)
- **Watch "Gerrymandering Explained."**

## Day 4 - Voter Justice & Swing States

### Objectives for the Day

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 15 of 26





- Deepen our understanding of voter suppression and gerrymandering in the US
- Reflect on experience of choosing a campaign/organization to volunteer with
- Continue to build a community of learning and engagement

## Resources

- Program [website](#) (All the links below are also on this website)
- [Slides](#)

**Participant Prep for the Day** - See “At Home” for Day 3.

## Facilitator’s Prep for the Day

- **Listen to The Economist Podcast, “Where does power lie in America?”** interview with Stacey Abrams (October 2019) **OR watch “Suppressed: The Fight to Vote,”** (Free, 2019) **OR watch All In: The Fight for Democracy** (Amazon Prime, 2020).
- **Decide what campaign or organization you’d like to volunteer with**--use the "[Choosing a Campaign...](#)" page to help guide your thinking.
- **Start volunteering** + logging your hours in your journal.
  - If you haven’t heard back from the campaign or organization yet, that is ok--be patient. In the meantime, spend your time researching the states/candidates/organizations you’re planning to work with.
  - Come prepared to discuss in small groups your experiences. (It may be the process of choosing a campaign or organization to volunteer with and what you're nervous about or what questions you have. Or, it may be that you’ve been phone banking all week long.)
- **Watch "Gerrymandering Explained."**
- **Read or skim a few of these resources on voter suppression**
  - [“The New Voter Suppression,” The Brennan Center for Justice](#), 2020.
  - [“Voter Identification Requirements | Voter ID Laws,”](#) National Conference of State Legislatures, 2020.
  - [“Block the Vote: Voter Suppression in 2020,”](#) ACLU, 2020.
  - [“Group Files Federal Lawsuit Against Wisconsin Student Voter ID Laws,”](#) Wisconsin Public Radio, 2019.
  - [“Felony Disenfranchisement: A Primer,”](#) The Sentencing Project, 2019.
  - Podcast: [“Desmond Meade and Dale Ho on Restoring the Right to Vote,”](#) ACLU, 2020.
  - [“Judge rules against Florida on felons paying fines to vote,”](#) PBS News Hour, 2020.
  - [“Supreme Court Deals Blow to Felons in Florida Seeking to Regain Right to Vote,”](#) The

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 16 of 26



Washington Post, July 2020.

- **Read or skim a few of these resources on gerrymandering**
  - [“How to Steal an Election, A Visual Guide: Gerrymandering Explained.”](#) *The Washington Post*, 2015.
  - [National Democratic Redistricting Committee](#)
  - [“The Atlas of Redistricting.”](#) NYT FiveThirtyEight, 2018.
  - [“Gerrymandering Explained.”](#) CGP Grey. 2011.
  - [“North Carolina’s Legislative Maps Are Thrown Out by State Court Panel.”](#) NYT, 2019.
  - [Gerrymandering Typeface](#)

### Notes for Facilitation

- Review process for choosing a campaign or organization to volunteer with, and the impact if we all devote time to this.
- Warm-up, small group conversations
  - 30-60 seconds per person; please share airtime.
  - Name + pronouns + if your mood were a color right now, what color would it be?
  - What were 1-2 takeaways for you from listening to The Economist interview with Stacey Abrams or watching the film, “Suppressed: The Fight to Vote”?
  - [Each person, add 1 sticky note to the JamBoard with 1 of your takeaways + your name.]
- Transition to discussion about voting and disenfranchisement, and walk through the slides on voter disenfranchisement.
  - How do we all vote? It’s different in every state. Some are by mail, some have strict rules about who can vote absentee, most are in person voting.
- Walk through slides on voter ID laws + discuss
  - “Overly burdensome photo ID requirements block millions of eligible American citizens from voting.”
  - “As many as 11 percent of eligible voters do not have the kind of ID that is required by states with strict ID requirements, and that percentage is even higher among seniors, minorities, people with disabilities, low-income voters, and students.”
  - “Likewise, Texas permits voters to use a handgun license to vote, but not a student ID from a state university.”
  - “More than 80 percent of handgun licenses issued to Texans in 2018 went to white Texans, while more than half of the students in the University of Texas system are racial or ethnic minorities.”
- Felony disenfranchisement
  - Walk through slides + discuss
- Gerrymandering
  - Review definition, walk through slides, and discuss
- Transition to Let’s Get Out The Vote! What is phonebanking and what makes an effective phonebanking volunteer?

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 17 of 26



- Full group discussion:
  - What is phone banking? - Phone banking is the act of making phone calls on behalf of an organization or campaign.
  - You're usually given a list of people, their phone numbers, and a script, and asked to call them to encourage them to take a particular action (e.g., voting for a particular candidate).
  - What makes you effective at phone banking? How should you conduct yourself on the phone? → Add THREE sticky notes to the JamBoard. → Synthesize these comments add them to the next slide.
- Close out session with reflection. See slides for daily reflection prompts.

### **Participant At-Home Exercises (To Do Before Next Session)**

- **Watch phonebanking videos:**
  - [Phone Banking 101 - Swing Left Academy, 2018](#)
  - [How to Phone Bank - Activism 101, 2018](#)
- **Volunteer for your campaign/organization(s). (~3-5 hrs)**
  - Log your hours in your journal.
  - Reflect in your journal:
    - What has been the hardest part of volunteering thus far?
    - What have you learned about yourself?
    - What have you learned about the election/area you're engaging with?
  - Come prepared to discuss your experiences.

## **Day 5 - Volunteering & Skill Building**

### **Objectives for the Day**

- Reflect on content we've touched on thus far
- Reflect on volunteering and/or process of choosing a campaign/organization to volunteer with and/or campaigns you're interested in
- Practice phone banking

### **Resources**

- Program [website](#) (All the links below are also on this website)
- [Slides](#)

**Participant Prep for the Day** - See "At Home" for Day 4.

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 18 of 26



## Facilitator's Prep for the Day

- Video: [Phone Banking 101 - Swing Left Academy, 2018](#)
- Video: [How to Phone Bank - Activism 101, 2018](#)

## Notes for Facilitation

- This is a day to take stock of where we've been thus far, and where we're going.
- [10 mins] Small group discussion to kick things off:
  - 1.5 minutes per person total for all Qs - each person gets 1.5 mins airtime, then group discussion
  - Of the topics we've touched on thus far (identity, family history of voting, demographics of elected officials in the US, voter turnout, vote by mail vs. in person, voter ID laws, felony disenfranchisement, gerrymandering, and systemic racism throughout) which has most piqued your interest or stood out to you?
  - Why? What draws you to that topic?
  - What questions have arisen for you in exploring this content?
  - \*One person from the group add 1-3 sticky notes to the JamBoard sharing themes that arose in your group.\*
- [10 mins] Small group discussion II:
  - 1.5 minutes per person total for all Qs - each person gets 1.5 mins airtime, then group discussion
  - What campaign or organization did you choose to volunteer with?
  - What has been the hardest part of volunteering thus far?
  - What have you learned about yourself?
  - What have you learned about the election/area you're engaging with?
  - [If you haven't chosen a campaign/org to volunteer with, which election or element of elections are you most interested in contributing volunteer time to in the future?]
  - \*Everyone add a sticky note to the JamBoard with the campaign/org(s) you're volunteering with or interested in (if you're not currently volunteering).\*
- Small groups phonebanking practice
  - Groups of three
  - One person is phone banking (Person A)
  - One person is being called on the phone (Person B)
  - One person is observing (if you have a group of 4, two people are observing)
  - Observer reflect on and then share: What are 1-2 things the phone banker did well? What are 1-2 things they could improve on?
  - (See Google Slide for script)
- Come back together as a group; ask for reflections on that process; remind folks of what makes an effective phone banker (from synthesized notes from previous session).
- Close out session with reflection. (See slides for daily reflection prompts.)



## Participant At-Home Exercises (To Do Before Next Session)

- **Watch a short video:** "[Electoral College Explained](#)" or "[Why the Electoral College Exists](#)" + "[The Bad Map We See Every Presidential Election](#)"
- **Start or continue volunteering for your campaign/organization(s)**
  - Aim for 3-5 hrs/week; log your hours in your journal.
  - Reflect in your journal:
    - What have you observed about political organizing thus far?
    - What frustrates you?
    - What inspires you and/or gives you hope?
  - Come to the next session prepared to discuss your thoughts and/or experiences.

## Day 6 - The Electoral College & Campaign Finance

### Objectives for the Day

- Develop a basic understanding of the electoral college and campaign finance in the US
- Reflect on experience of volunteering thus far

### Resources

- Program [website](#) (All the links below are also on this website)
- [Slides](#)

**Participant Prep for the Day** - See "At Home" for Day 5.

### Facilitator's Prep for the Day

- **Read or skim a handful of these resources on the electoral college**
  - "[Explained: What's the Deal With the Electoral College?](#)", KQED, 2016.
  - "[Does your vote count? The Electoral College explained - Christina Greer,](#)" TED-Ed, 2012.
  - "[Why the Electoral College Exists,](#)" CNBC, 2020.
  - "[The Bad Map We See Every Presidential Election,](#)" Vox, May 2016.
  - "[Supreme Court Rules on Faithless Electors in the Electoral College,](#)" CGP Grey, YouTube, 2020.
  - "[The Electoral College Misrepresents Every State, But Not as Much as You Think,](#)" The Washington Post, December 2016.
  - "[How the Electoral College Is Tied to Slavery and the Three-Fifths Compromise,](#)" Teen Vogue, July 2020.
  - "[The Electoral College's Racist Origins,](#)" The Atlantic, November 2019.
  - "[Trump's victory another example of how Electoral College wins are bigger than](#)

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 20 of 26



[popular vote ones.](#)” Pew Research, December 2016.

- [“Oregon Just Joined the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact.”](#) Sightline Institute, June 2019.
- **Read or skim a handful of these resources on campaign finance**
  - [“Citizens United Explained: The 2010 Supreme Court decision further tilted political influence toward wealthy donors and corporations.”](#) The Brennan Center, 2019.
  - [“Tracking the 2016 Presidential Money Race.”](#), Bloomberg, December 2016.
  - [“As more money flows into campaigns, Americans worry about its influence.”](#) Pew Research Center, 2015.
  - [“An Intimate Dinner With President Trump.”](#) *Trump, Inc.*, WNYC, 2020.
  - [“Meet The Billionaire Oil, Gas And Coal Tycoons Donating To Donald Trump.”](#) Forbes, June 2020.
  - [“Money Tracker: How Much Trump And Biden Have Raised In The 2020 Election.”](#) NPR, September 2020.
  - [Biden Is Outspending Trump On TV, And Just 6 States Are The Focus Of The Campaign](#), NPR, September 2020.
  - National Institute on Money in Politics - <https://www.followthemoney.org/>

### Notes for Facilitation

- Review objectives for the day
- Begin with warm-up, small group discussion
  - Each person gets at least 1 minute to share. Once everyone has spoken, have a more free flowing conversation.
  - Do you listen/watch/read the news? If so, from what sources?
  - Have you seen content we’ve discussed in this program, in the news recently? If, so what topics and what stories?
- Large group share out of a few examples
- Review and walk through electoral college slides, and discuss:
  - What is the electoral college?
  - What impact does it have on our national election?
  - What justice issues arise in terms of representation?
- Begin discussion on campaign finance
  - Why do campaigns need money?
  - What expenses do they have?
  - Where do campaigns get money from?
- Walk through slides on campaign finance and discuss
- Close out with reflection. (See slides for daily reflection prompts.)

### Participant At-Home Exercises (To Do Before Next Session)

- **Framing & News Comparison**

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 21 of 26



- Watch this [2008 George Lakoff video](#). (Still VERY relevant today.)
- Read two articles about a topic you're interested in from TWO different news sources that approach things from different angles. (For example, find an article about something you're interested in from The New York Times and an article about the same topic/event/issue from Fox News.)
- In your journal, answer the following questions:
  - What words jump out at you in each article? Why?
  - How do the articles differ in the way they describe the topic/issue/event?
  - How might the way the topic/issue/event is described influence how a reader understands it?
- **Volunteer!**
  - Aim for 3-5 hrs/week; log your hours in your journal.
  - Reflect in your journal: What are your observations? Highlights? Lowlights? Insights?
  - Come prepared to discuss and share your experiences.

## Day 7 - Communication & Framing

### Objectives for the Day

- Develop an understanding of political framing
- Reflect on experience volunteering - What's going well? What's a challenge?

### Resources

- Program [website](#) (All the links below are also on this website)
- [Slides](#)

**Participant Prep for the Day** - See "At Home" for Day 6.

### Facilitator's Prep for the Day

- Read or skim these resources on political framing and communication
  - [2008 George Lakoff video](#). (Still VERY relevant today.)
  - *Metaphors We Live By*, George Lakoff 1980
  - ["The shift in the American public's political values: Political Polarization, 1994-2017,"](#) Pew Research 2017.
  - ["Democrats and Republicans speak different languages — and it helps explain why we're so divided,"](#) Business Insider, 2017.
  - ["Cable news applies 'far-left' framing 6 times more often than 'far-right' framing,"](#) Media Matters, 2019.
  - ["Which party is more to blame for political polarization? It depends on the measure,"](#) Pew Research Center, 2017.
  - ["How to Evaluate Media Frames,"](#) The Arthur Page Center, Penn State University.

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 22 of 26



## Notes for Facilitation

- Review objectives for the session
- [10-15 mins] Warm-up, small group discussion and sharing
  - Groups of 3-4; each person with 2 mins to share, then open discussion.
  - What articles and news sources did you choose?
  - How do the articles differ in the way they describe the topic/issue/event?
  - How might the way the topic/issue/event is described influence how a reader understands it?
  - How might this relate to elections and politics?
- Large group share-out
- Move into discussion around framing
  - What is framing?
  - Why is it important in relation to elections?
  - What is a metaphor?
  - Why are metaphors important in this conversation?
- Walk through slides on framing, cognitive science, and communication
  - Along the way, be sure to have discussion with the group--where do you see this arising in your life? In politics? In media? What impact does it have on our *actions*?
- Close out session with reflection. (See slides for daily reflection prompts.)

## Participant At-Home Exercises (To Do Before Next Session)

- **Volunteer!**
  - Aim for 3-5 hrs/week; log your hours in your journal.
  - Reflect in your journal: What are your observations? Highlights? Lowlights? Insights?
  - Come prepared to reflect on and share your experiences.

## Day 8 - Growing the Movement

### Objectives for the Day

- Celebrate our time together
- Reflect on the past 4 weeks as a means of solidifying learning
- Brainstorm ways to build on this group and momentum to take us through November 2020 and beyond
- Provide feedback on the program to help improve it for future groups

### Resources

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 23 of 26





- Program [website](#) (All the links below are also on this website)
- [Slides](#)

**Participant Prep for the Day** - See “At Home” for Day 7.

### **Facilitator’s Prep for the Day**

- **Create a program feedback form so you can refine the program for months or years to come.** (Add link to the slide.)
- **Consider the reflection questions below, and revise as needed for your group.**

#### *Content*

1. What are 2-3 things that you learned over the past 4 weeks in relation to the *content* (three branches of government, voter suppression, electoral college, campaign finance, framing, etc.) we covered that you’ll take with you and remember?
2. What are 2-3 questions that you still have about how government and politics work?

#### *Volunteering*

1. What organization/campaign(s) did you volunteer with?
2. Why were you drawn to them?
3. In what ways did you grow as a person through your experience volunteering?
4. The November 2020 election is 15 weeks from now. How would you like to stay involved for the next 15 weeks? What do you commit to doing between now and then?

#### *Course Structure*

1. What was it like to work cross generationally?
2. What was it like to meet new people and develop relationships online via Zoom?

### **Notes for Facilitation**

- Review objective for the day
- Group discussion: How might we grow this movement? How might we scale this program?
- Ask participants to spend 20 mins writing their final program reflection
- Ask participants to spend 5-10 minutes contributing a gratitude JamBoard
  - Add 1-3 sticky notes to the JamBoard to express gratitude for...
    - someone you interacted with in this program
    - a particular experience you had during this program
    - a great question....
    - Etc.
- Ask participants to spend 5-10 minutes completing the program feedback form (if you made one).

[Click here to return to table of contents.](#)

Page 24 of 26



**TIME TO GET OUT THE VOTE...**

**...AND THEN KEEP ENGAGING IN DEMOCRACY.**

**IT'S A LIFELONG ENDEAVOR.**