



LEVEL  
**2**

# What is an Election?



**Packed with FACTS you need to READ!**

**Caryn Jenner**



# What is an Election?

By Caryn Jenner





Penguin  
Random  
House

**US Senior Editor** Shannon Beatty  
**US Editor** Margaret Parrish  
**Senior Editor** Carrie Love  
**Project Editor** Kritika Gupta  
**Assistant Editor** Gunjan Mewati  
**Project Art Editors** Polly Appleton, Roohi Rais  
**Assistant Art Editor** Bhagyashree Nayak  
**Jacket Co-ordinator** Issy Walsh  
**Senior Jacket Designer** Dheeraj Arora  
**DTP Designers** Sachin Gupta, Nand Kishor Acharya  
**Picture Researcher** Rituraj Singh  
**Senior Production Editor** Jennifer Murray  
**Production Controller** Basia Ossowska  
**Managing Editors** Penny Smith, Monica Saigal  
**Managing Art Editors** Mabel Chan, Ivy Sengupta  
**Delhi Team Head** Malavika Talukder  
**Publishing Manager** Francesca Young  
**Publishing Director** Sarah Larter

**Reading Consultant** Dr. Barbara Marinak  
**Subject Consultant** Julius Sen

First American Edition, 2020  
Published in the United States by DK Publishing  
1450 Broadway, Suite 801, New York, New York 10018

Copyright © 2020 Dorling Kindersley Limited  
DK, a Division of Penguin Random House LLC  
20 21 22 23 24 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1  
001-318675-Jul/2020

All rights reserved.

Without limiting the rights under the copyright reserved above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise), without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.  
Published in Great Britain by Dorling Kindersley Limited.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

ISBN: 978-1-4654-9986-8 (Paperback)  
ISBN: 978-0-7440-2154-7 (Hardcover)

DK books are available at special discounts when purchased in bulk for sales promotions, premiums, fund-raising, or educational use. For details, contact: DK Publishing Special Markets,  
1450 Broadway, Suite 801, New York, New York 10018  
SpecialSales@dk.com

Printed and bound in China

The publisher would like to thank the following for their kind permission to reproduce their photographs:

(Key: a-above; b-below/bottom; c-center; f-far; l-left; r-right; t-top)

**1 iStockphoto.com:** E+ / SDI Productions (b). **1-48 Dreamstime.com:** Macrovector (hand icons). **5 iStockphoto.com:** Photodisc / Image Source. **6-7 Alamy Stock Photo:** 506 collection. **8-9 Alamy Stock Photo:** dpa picture alliance. **10-11 Alamy Stock Photo:** Gordon M. Grant. **12 Alamy Stock Photo:** Classic Image (c). **13 Alamy Stock Photo:** Ian Dagnall (cb); Lebrecht Music & Arts (tr). **14-15 Alamy Stock Photo:** Philip Game. **16 123RF.com:** rawpixel (t). **17 Alamy Stock Photo:** Joseph Gaul (b). **Dreamstime.com:** Amanda Lewis (c). **18 Getty Images:** DigitalVision / Hill Street Studios (b). **19 Dreamstime.com:** Smandy (t). **20 Alamy Stock Photo:** Phil Wills. **21 Dreamstime.com:** Georgesheldon (b). **22-23 Alamy Stock Photo:** World Image Archive. **24-25 Alamy Stock Photo:** dpa picture alliance. **26 Alamy Stock Photo:** Cliff Hide Local News (cb). **27 Alamy Stock Photo:** Mark Kerrison (t). **28 Alamy Stock Photo:** Colin young-wolff (t). **Dreamstime.com:** Robot100 (cl). **29 Alamy Stock Photo:** ZUMA Press Inc (cla). **Dreamstime.com:** Robot100 (crb). **30-31 Dreamstime.com:** Mistervlad. **31 Alamy Stock Photo:** robertharding / Adam Woolfitt (t). **32 Alamy Stock Photo:** IanDagnall Computing (b). **33 Alamy Stock Photo:** Ian Dagnall. **35 Dreamstime.com:** Ekaterina Brazhnikova (crb). **38-39 Getty Images:** The Image Bank / Dirk Anschutz. **40-41 Alamy Stock Photo:** © Bill Bachmann. **42 iStockphoto.com:** Photodisc / Image Source **Endpaper images:** *Front:* Alamy Stock Photo: Hero Images Inc. ; *Back:* Alamy Stock Photo: Hero Images Inc.

**Cover images:** *Front and Back:* Dreamstime.com: Macrovector

All other images © Dorling Kindersley

For further information see: [www.dkimages.com](http://www.dkimages.com)

For the curious

[www.dk.com](http://www.dk.com)



# Contents

- 4 Chapter 1: What is an election?
- 12 *Election history*
- 14 Chapter 2: Voting
- 22 *The right to vote*
- 24 Chapter 3: Elections around the world
- 34 *Election facts*
- 36 Chapter 4: Let's elect!
- 44 Quiz
- 46 Glossary
- 47 Index





# Chapter 1

## What is an election?

An election is when a group of people vote for someone to represent them or do something for them. Voting means choosing the person you want. The person with the most votes is the winner.

You might have an election to choose a class president or a team captain.



Students during school elections



Elections are often held to choose the people in government. A government makes the laws for a country or local area.

Former US president Barack Obama meets with members of Congress in 2012.



For example, Americans vote to elect people to Congress and to elect the president of the United States. The people who are elected must promise to do what is best for the country.





People who run for election are called candidates. Each candidate wants voters to think that they are the best person for the job.



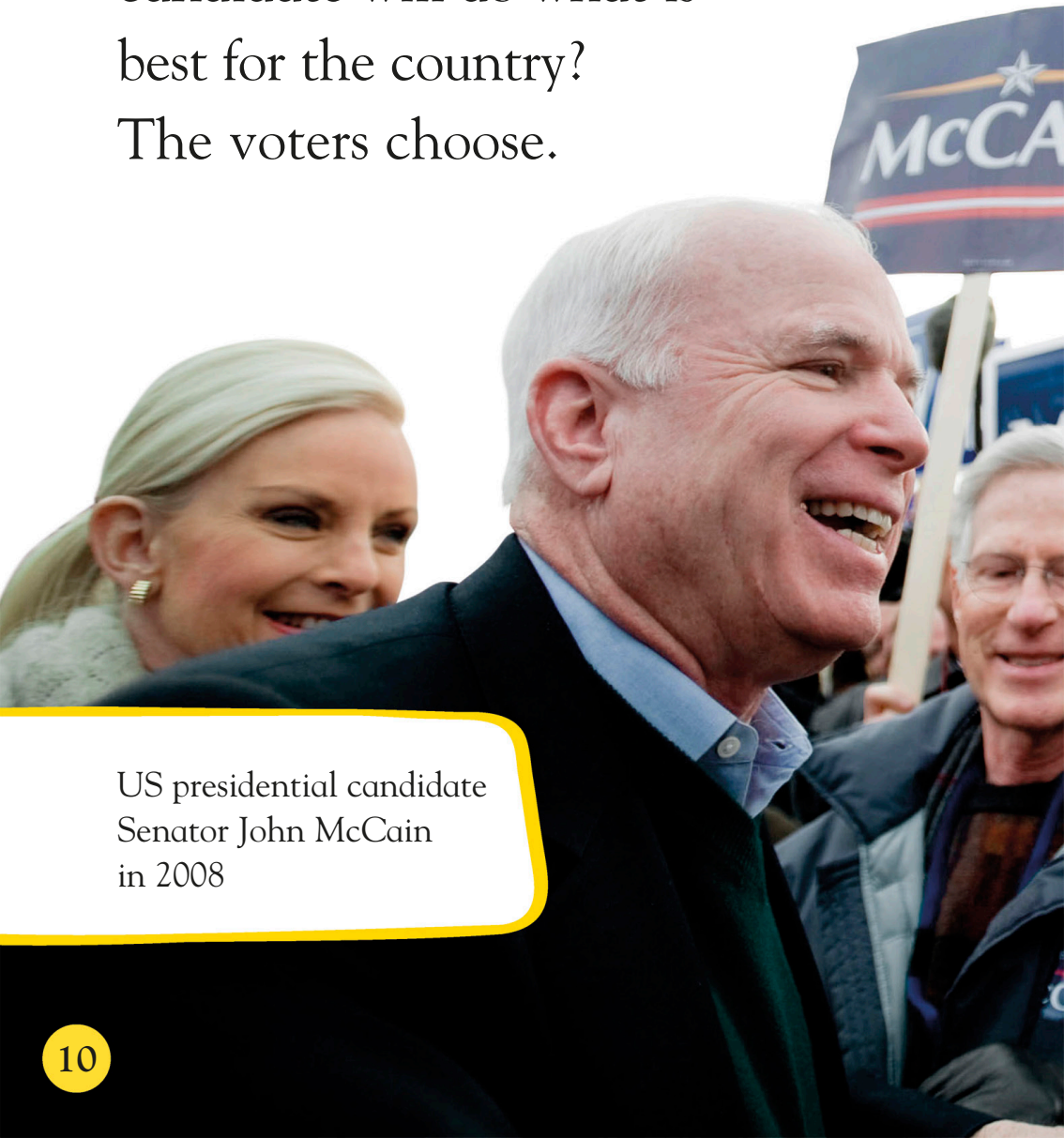
Candidates hope that lots of people will vote for them. They travel around and speak to as many voters as they can. This is called a campaign.



Veena George talks to voters in India about what she will do for people if she wins.



The candidates tell voters what they will do if they are elected. Voters use this information to decide who to vote for. Which candidate will do what is best for the country? The voters choose.



US presidential candidate  
Senator John McCain  
in 2008







# Election history

The idea of voting a person or a group into power has been around for a long time.



## Ancient Greece

The idea of elections comes from ancient Greece. Elections in the city of Sparta were decided by who could shout the loudest.



## Europe

Before the 1600s, mainly upper-class men voted in elections in Europe. Many people had to fight for their right to vote.



## United States

The United States Constitution was written in 1787. It set out the first rules for the American government and its elections.

# Chapter 2

## Voting



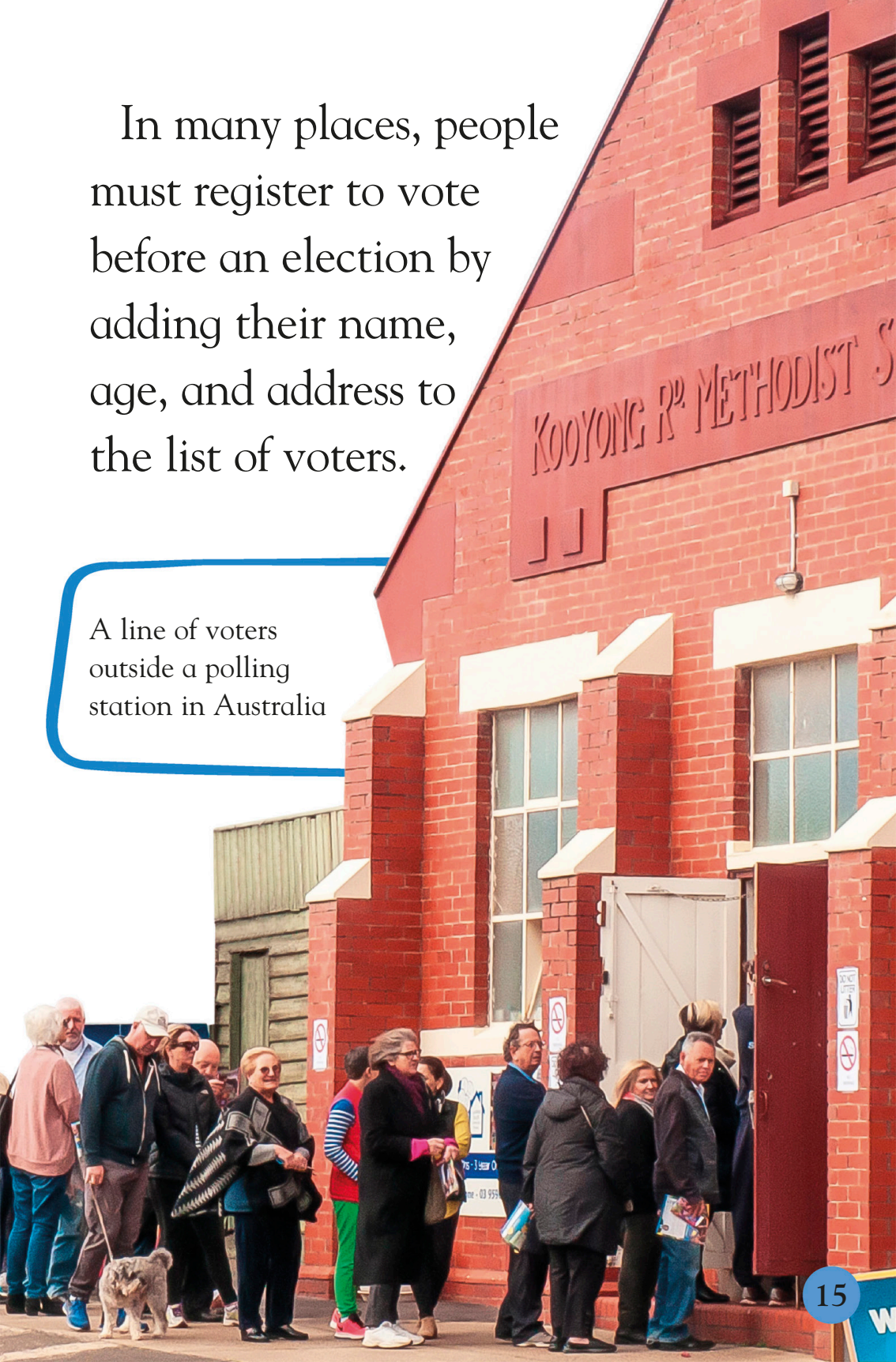
Who can vote in an election? Voters usually live in the place where the election is held. In most countries, voters also have to be at least 18 years old.





In many places, people must register to vote before an election by adding their name, age, and address to the list of voters.

A line of voters outside a polling station in Australia

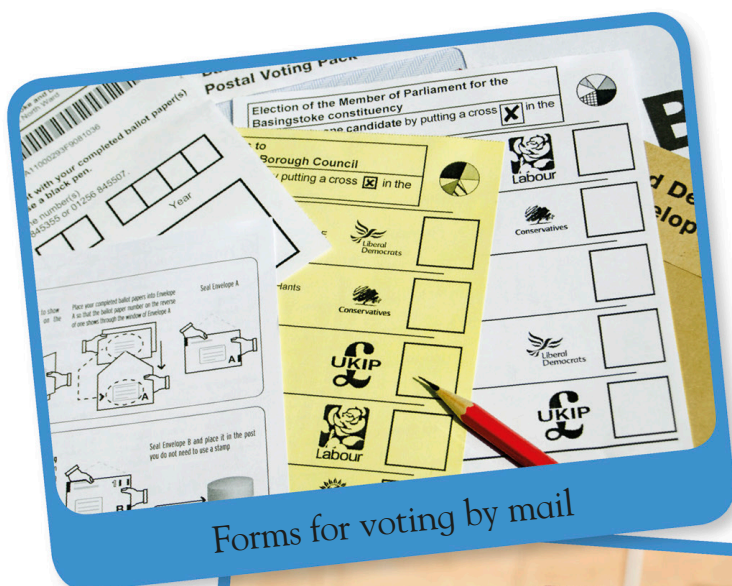




In some countries voters must register before voting.

Each voter can vote only once. Most voters go to a special polling station to vote in government elections. Who you vote for is secret. No one should tell you which candidate to choose.

Some people use their computer to vote online. Others send their vote through the mail.



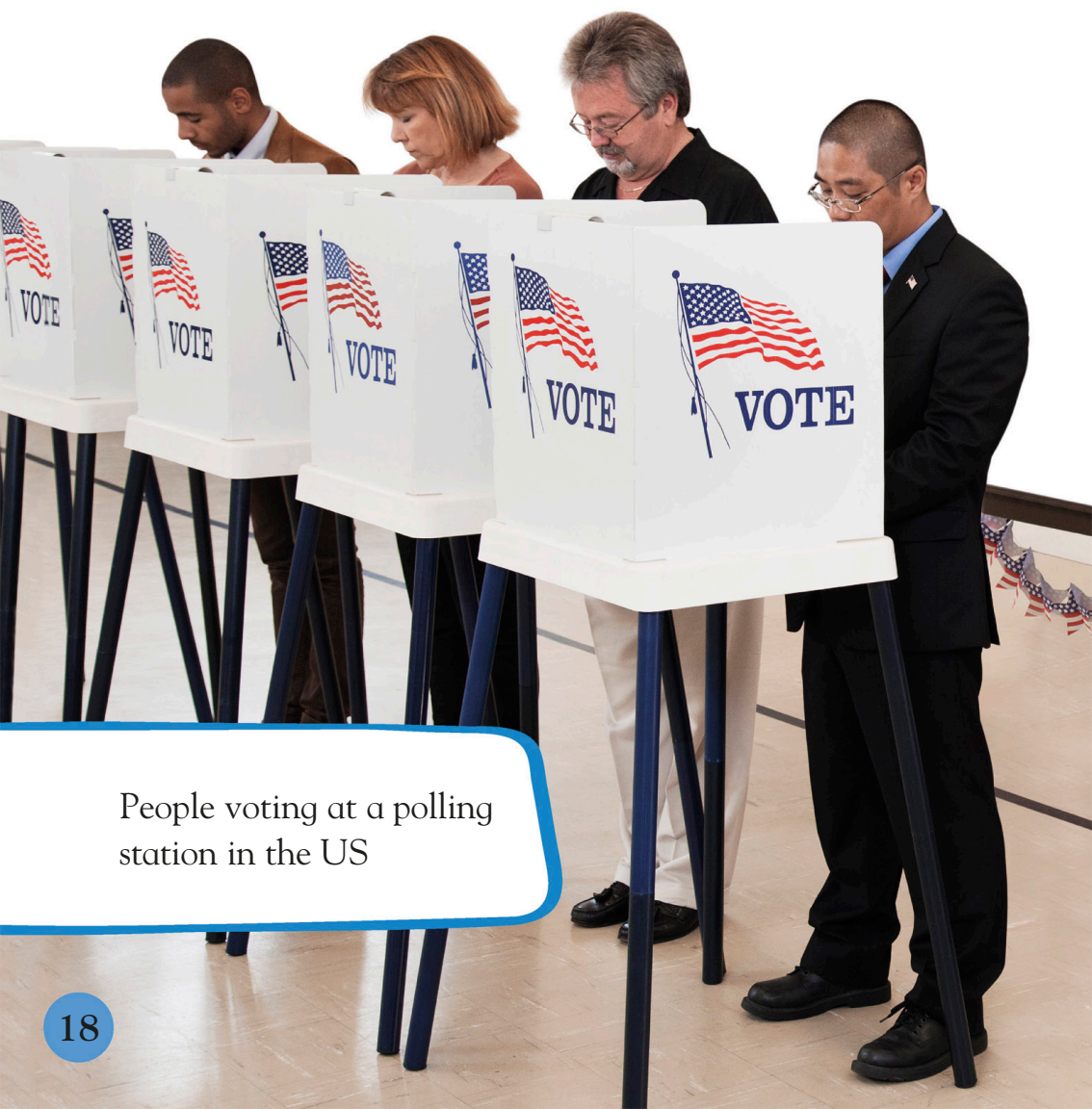
Forms for voting by mail



Mailing a postal vote



At a polling station, voters cast their ballots in a private booth. Some polling stations have voting machines that count the votes for each candidate.



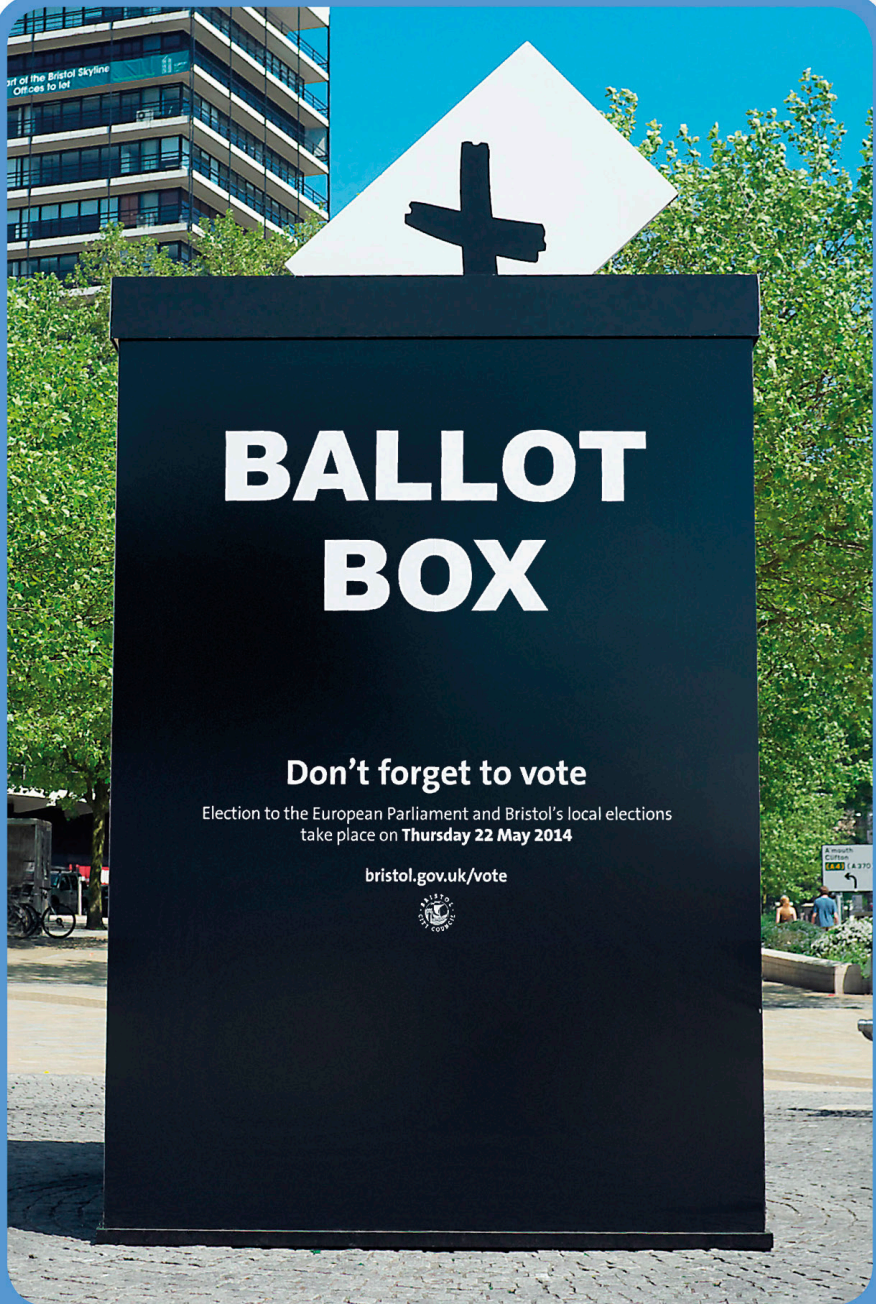
People voting at a polling station in the US





A woman puts her ballot in the ballot box at a polling station in Zambia.

Others list the candidates on a paper ballot. Each voter picks the name of their chosen candidate.



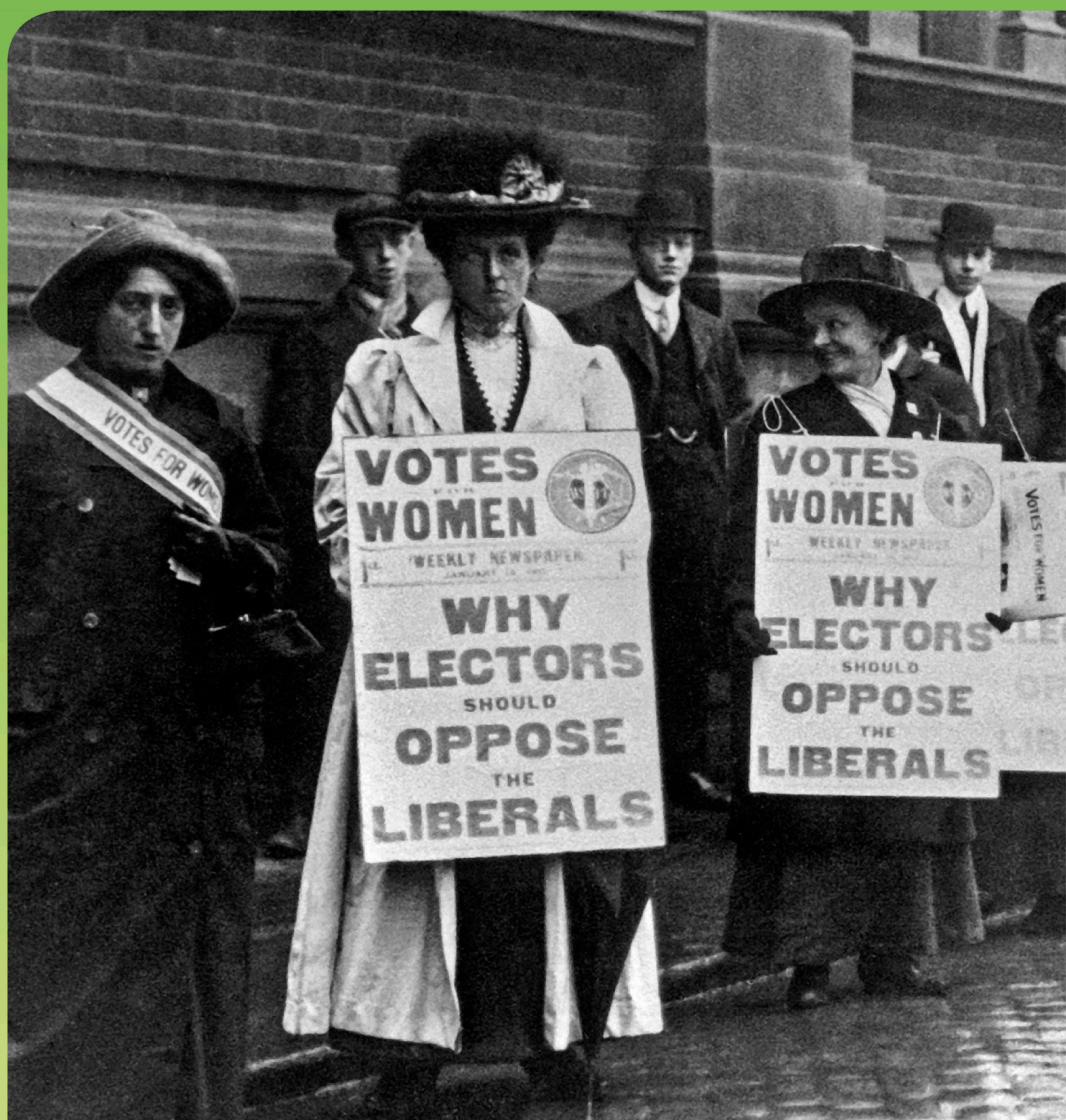
A giant ballot box in the United Kingdom urges people to vote.

It is very important to vote in elections. No one knows which candidate will win the election, but every vote counts. People who don't vote lose the chance to have their say in how the government is run.



A sign reminds people in the US to use their voting power.



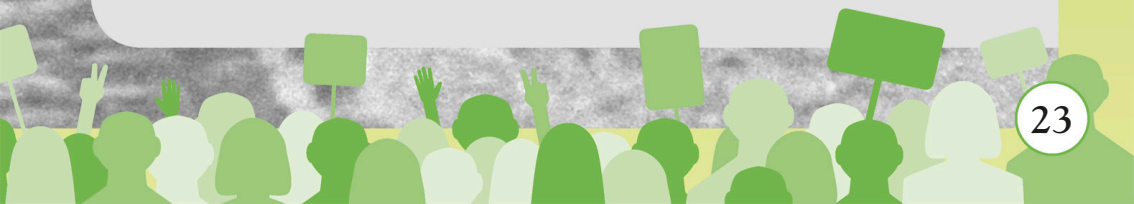



This picture shows women in the United Kingdom marching for the vote in 1910. British women over the age of 30 were granted the vote in 1918. They were given equal voting rights with men in 1928.



# The right to vote

All adults should have the right to vote, but in many places some people have not always been allowed to vote. These include women, poor people, and people who belong to a minority religion or race.






# Chapter 3

## Elections around the world

A government elected by the people of a country is called a democracy. A democracy gives power to voters to elect the government.



Members of the Liberal Democratic Party in Tokyo, Japan, in 2018



In return, the government must do what is best for the people. If they don't, they will lose votes in the next election.



In most countries, candidates belong to a political party. This is a group of people with similar ideas on how to run the country.



The Conservative Party campaigns in the United Kingdom.





The Green Party in the United Kingdom has ideas on how to help save the environment.

A political party campaigns by holding up posters, handing out leaflets, and giving interviews.



Democratic National  
Convention in 2008



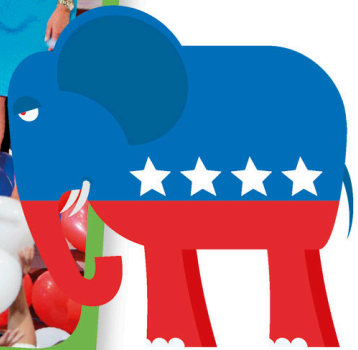
Symbol of the  
Democratic Party

The main political parties in the United States are the Democrats and the Republicans. They each have their own election, called a primary.

In the primary, they choose their party's candidate for president. The Democrats and the Republicans then compete against each other to get their candidate elected.



Republican US presidential candidate  
Mitt Romney in 2012

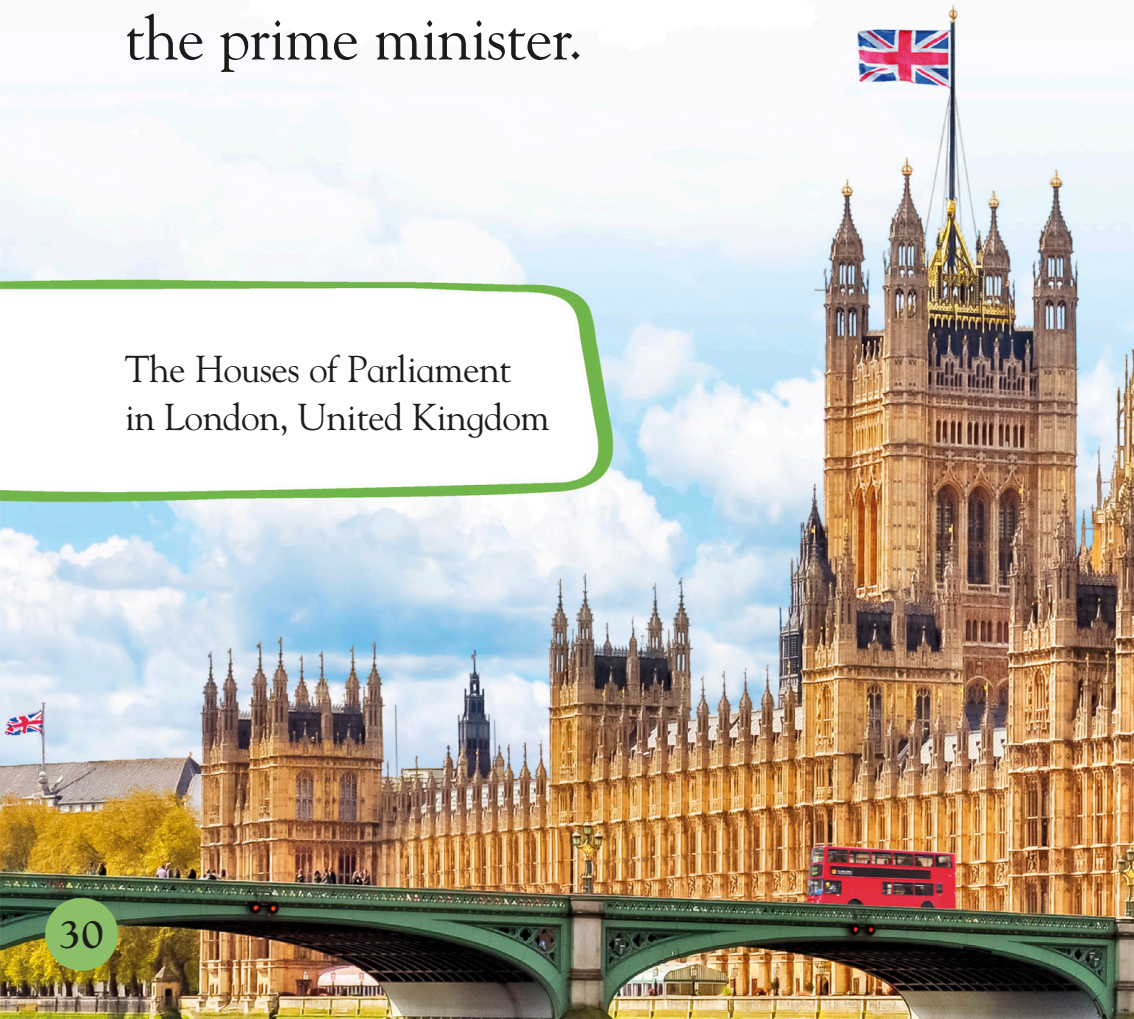


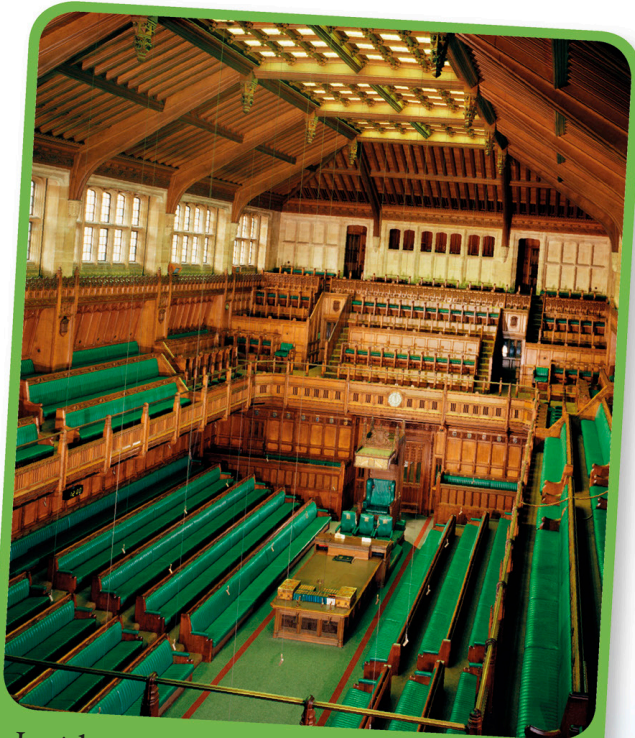
Symbol of the  
Republican Party



Some countries are governed by a group of representatives who meet in a parliament. Voters elect a Member of Parliament (MP) for their local area. The leader of the party with the most MPs becomes leader of the whole country. This leader is called the prime minister.

The Houses of Parliament  
in London, United Kingdom





Inside view of the House of Commons  
in London, United Kingdom





Not all countries have elections. In some parts of the world people do not have a chance to vote. One person holds the power and makes all of the decisions for everyone.



Emperor Nero reigned as leader of the Roman Empire from 54 CE to 68 CE.



King Louis XIV ruled France  
from 1643 to 1715.

# Election facts

Here are some fun facts about elections.

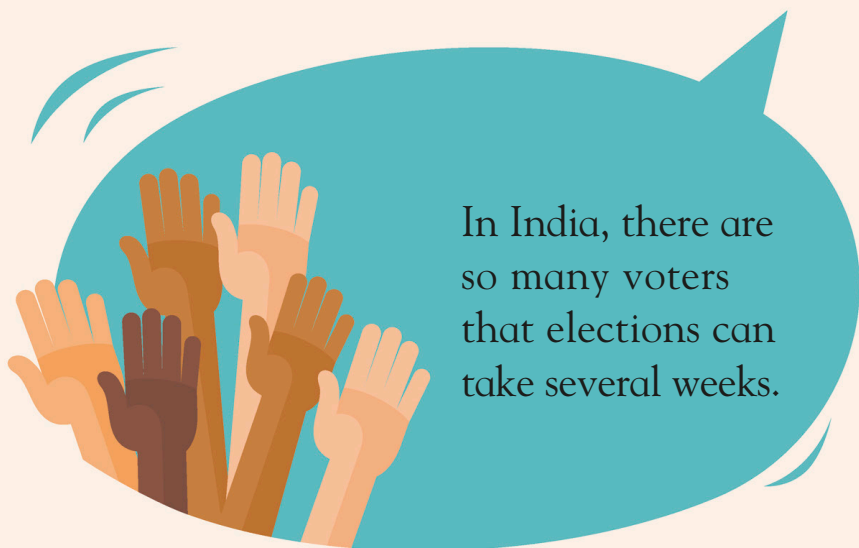


Many countries hold elections on a weekend so people have more time to vote.

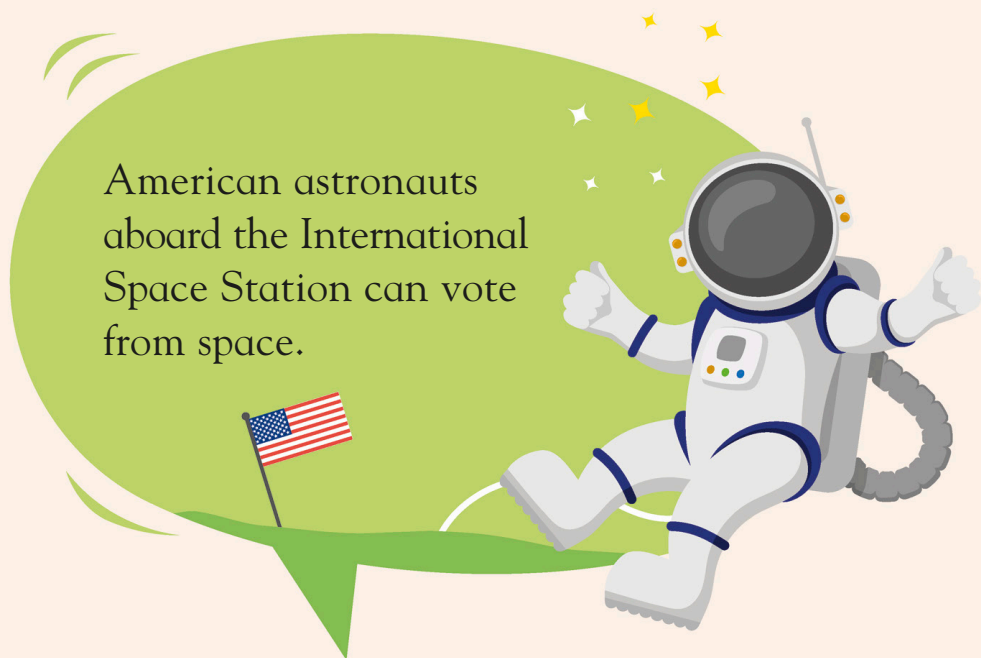
In Australia, all citizens over the age of 18 are required by law to vote.







In India, there are  
so many voters  
that elections can  
take several weeks.



American astronauts  
aboard the International  
Space Station can vote  
from space.



## Chapter 4

### Let's elect!



You could hold an election for class president or for student council member. The voters are all the people in your class. Choose a date for the election. Then find out who wants to be a candidate.



# Sign up to be a candidate!

The job of the class president or student council member is to make your school a better place.

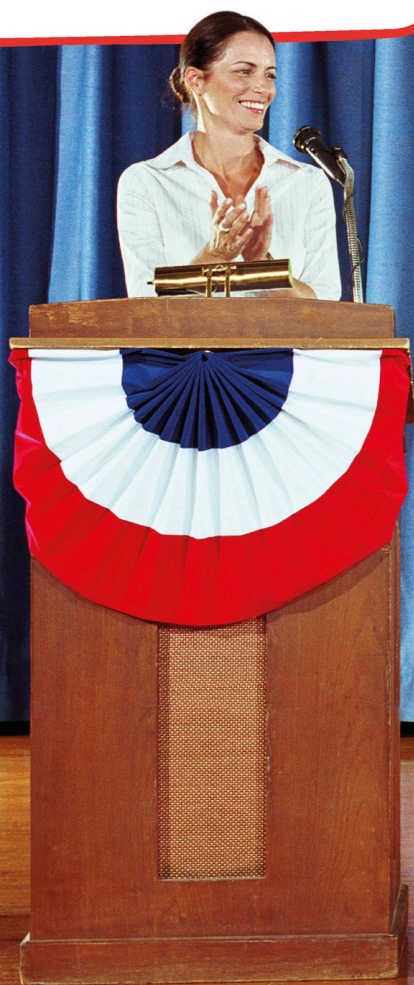
You would need to:

- ☒ Be friendly with everyone in the class.
- ☒ Listen to ideas from others.
- ☒ Have lots of your own ideas, too.
- ☒ Work with your teachers.



Candidates make posters asking the class to vote for them. They give speeches to the class, too.

A pupil giving a speech at a school election



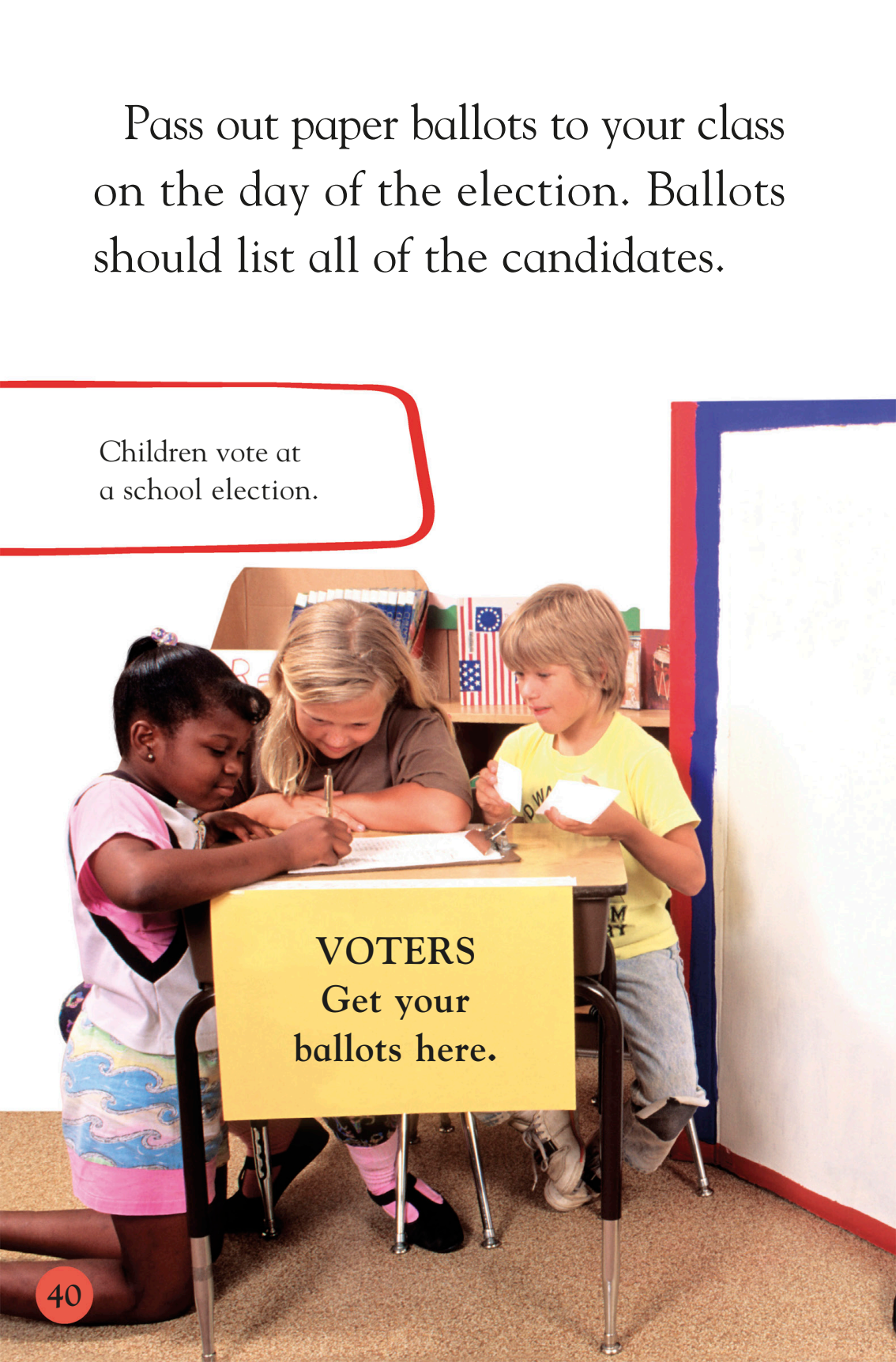


Candidates tell voters why they would be a good class president or student council member. What would they do for the class or school?



Pass out paper ballots to your class on the day of the election. Ballots should list all of the candidates.

Children vote at a school election.

A photograph of three children at a school election table. A girl with dark skin and a pink shirt is writing on a ballot. A girl with blonde hair is also writing. A boy with blonde hair is holding a ballot. The table has a yellow sign that says "VOTERS Get your ballots here." In the background, there are boxes with American flags and a large whiteboard with a red and blue border.

**VOTERS**  
Get your  
ballots here.



Remember, everyone has just one vote. Each voter secretly marks an “X” by the name of their favorite candidate. They then put their paper ballot into a ballot box.





Carefully count the votes. The person with the most votes wins the election. Congratulations!

Winning the election is just the first step. The voters think that the new class president or student council member will do a good job for the class. That's why they won the election. Now it's time for them to get to work!

Counting the votes  
for class president



# Quiz

- 1 What is a government elected by the people of a country called?
- 2 What is someone competing in an election called?
- 3 How old do voters need to be in most countries to vote?
- 4 How many times can a voter vote in an election?
- 5 Where do most voters go to vote?
- 6 Which country did the idea of elections come from?



When was the United States Constitution written?



What are the two main political parties in the United States called?



When did women in the United Kingdom first get to vote in an election?



Answers to the quiz:  
1. Democracy; 2. Candidate; 3. 18 years old;  
4. Once; 5. A polling station; 6. Ancient  
Greece; 7. 1787; 8. Democrats and  
Republicans; 9. 1918.



# Glossary

## **ballot**

An official list of candidates in an election.

## **convention**

A large meeting of a political party.

## **democracy**

A government chosen by the people.

## **government**

Representatives of the people who make the laws in a country.

## **parliament**

A type of elected government.

## **president**

A name for the leader of a country.

## **prime minister**

The leader of a country and of a parliament.



# Index

- ballot 19, 20, 40, 41
- campaign 9, 21, 27
- candidate 8, 10, 16, 18, 19, 21, 26, 29, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41
- class president 4, 36, 37, 39, 43
- constitution 13
- convention 28
- democracy 24
- Democrat 28, 29
- government 6, 13, 16, 24, 25
- parliament 30
- political party 26, 27, 28
- polling station 15, 16, 18, 19
- president 4, 5, 6, 7, 29, 36, 37, 39, 43
- prime minister 30
- register 15, 16
- Republican 28, 29
- vote 4, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 32, 34, 35, 38, 40, 41, 42, 43
- voter 8, 9, 10, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 24, 30, 35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 43



## A LEVEL FOR EVERY READER

This book is a part of an exciting four-level reading series to support children in developing the habit of reading widely for both pleasure and information. Each book is designed to develop a child's reading skills, fluency, grammar awareness, and comprehension in order to build confidence and enjoyment when reading.

### **Ready for a Level 2 (Beginning to Read) book**

A child should:

- be able to recognize a bank of common words quickly and be able to blend sounds together to make some words.
- be familiar with using beginner letter sounds and context clues to figure out unfamiliar words.
- sometimes correct their reading if it doesn't look right or make sense.
- be aware of the need for a slight pause at commas and a longer one at periods.

### **A valuable and shared reading experience**

For many children, reading requires much effort, but adult participation can make reading both fun and easier. Here are a few tips on how to use this book with a young reader:

*Check out the contents together:*

- read about the book on the back cover and talk about the contents page to help heighten interest and expectation.
- discuss new or difficult words.
- talk about labels, annotations, and pictures.

*Support the reader:*

- tell the child the title and help them predict what the book will be about.
- give the book to the young reader to turn the pages.
- where necessary, encourage longer words to be broken into syllables, sound out each one, and then flow the syllables together; ask the child to reread the sentence to check the meaning.
- encourage the reader to vary their voice as they read; demonstrate how to do this, if helpful.

*Talk at the end of each page:*

- ask questions about the text and the meaning of some of the words used—this helps develop comprehension skills.
- read the quiz at the end of the book and encourage the reader to answer the questions, if necessary, by turning back to the relevant pages to find the answers.

Reading consultant: Dr. Barbara Marinak, Dean and Professor of Education at Mount St. Mary's University, Maryland.