



## NONVOTER SIMULATION

(45-60 minutes over the course of a week)

### OBJECTIVE

Students understand the concept of suffrage – the right to vote.

### MATERIALS

No materials are necessary for this activity.

### GET READY

- ✓ Have three students volunteer to form a committee. Assign them to:
  - ✓ Choose three issues to vote on over the next three days that will directly affect the class, such as “We will study math all morning today” or “We will do extra homework tonight, but none tomorrow.”
  - ✓ Choose unfair criteria to determine the right to vote on each of the issues such as “those with birthdays from January to June.” Have different criteria for each of the three days. On the third day of voting you may want the voter criteria to be those who have not yet voted, so that everyone gets a chance to vote.
- ✓ Prepare a ballot box, ballots, a voting site, and voting issue signs.
- ✓ Supervise the ballot box and get ready to turn away students who do not have the right to vote.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- ✓ Have the committee announce the voting issue each day and display it next to the ballot box. Do not display the voting criteria.
- ✓ Invite the students to vote one at a time by writing “Yes” or “No” on a ballot and placing it in the box.

- ✓ Instruct the members of the committee to quietly turn away those who do not meet the voting criteria.
- ✓ Announce the outcome and implement it. Repeat the process for the next two days.
- ✓ Inform the class that there will be a meeting held at the end of the week for complaints and discussion.
- ✓ Hold a class meeting to discuss the feelings of the students.

### QUESTIONS FOR THE CLASS MEETING

- ★ *Did those with the right to vote have more power than those without? Do you know that the right to vote is called suffrage?*
- ★ *When you did not get to vote, how did it feel to be powerless?*
- ★ *Do you think the process of granting suffrage has always been fair? Why or why not?*
- ★ *Do you have a say in the decisions our government makes? If yes, how?*
- ★ *Does everyone use their voting privilege? Why or why not?*
- ★ *What other powers do you have in this community, this state, this country?*
- ★ *How did U.S. citizens achieve suffrage? Do citizens of other countries have the right to vote?*