

SOCIAL STUDIES · GRADES 4–6

How Elections Work

From candidate to ballot to result

Key terms

1

Election

A process where people choose who will represent them.

Example: School president, local council, national government.

2

Candidate

A person who is hoping to be chosen.

Example: Each candidate usually represents a party with a set of ideas.

3

Voter

Anyone who is eligible to vote. Usually adults who are citizens.

Example: Voting age varies — usually 16, 17 or 18.

4

Ballot

The paper or screen where you cast your vote — in private.

Example: A 'secret ballot' means no one knows who you voted for.

5

Polling station

Where you go to cast your vote on election day.

Example: Often a school or community center.

6

Constituency

An area of the country whose voters elect ONE representative.

Example: Your local town might be one constituency.



7

Majority

More than half of the votes cast.

Example: Some elections need a simple majority; others need 2/3.

Apply

1. Why do you think votes are SECRET?
2. What if you don't vote? Is that itself a kind of choice?
3. Should people who aren't citizens be allowed to vote in the place they live? Discuss.
4. Some countries make voting COMPULSORY — every adult must do it. What might be the pros and cons?

