VOTE

POWER TO THE POLLS
SERVICE LEARNING ACTION PROJECT

Organized & Sponsored by the
National Council for the Social Studies
Human Rights Education Community

This service learning project can be and is encouraged to be adapted to any learning setting. Educators are welcome to use and amplify these learning materials to their particular instructional needs. Please contact the designers below for additional assistance.

Project Designers:

Noelle Prignano-
Noelle Prignano is a Social Studies Teacher with twelve years of classroom practice experience. She has taught in various settings, including New York Public Schools, Nashville Schools and Manchester Public Schools in Connecticut. She is also the founder and serving content creator of Teach Hungry Movement, a new community of practice for solution oriented social justice focused educators.

Jake Skrzypiec-
Jake Skrzypiec is a Social Studies Teacher with eight years of classroom practice experience.   He teaches at Manchester High School in Manchester, CT where he teaches a variety of courses including Human Rights. He is adjunct faculty with the University of Connecticut, serves on the CT Human Rights Partnership steering team and the NCSS HRE Community leadership team. He is also the Connecticut regional representative for HRE-USA.

"Power to the Polls"
Service Learning Action Project Overview

Service Learning Action Project Overview:
You will be designing a project that works to further members of our school, local, and state community that involves research and volunteerism. We will complete this project as a class. You will have the opportunity to choose the action you want to take for the project, however, everyone will have the same goal and topic. You need to stay focused and turn the assignments in when they are due. While we will be working on elements of this project in class, you will learn about other topics related to the course for the rest of the semester.

Power to the Polls:
Despite some meaningful progress on increased enfranchisement, voter turnout has decreased dramatically over the past several decades. Your job as a class will be to investigate why voter turnout has decreased, the challenges & factors that have led to this decrease, and create a plan to help address this issue. Throughout the rest of the semester, we will explore political socialization, voter behavior, political parties, and types of civic engagement. We will also research voting results from local, state, and national elections in an effort to determine why people aren't voting and find ways in which to encourage them to vote. You will then create an action project to address these issues.

- **Objective**:
  Students will help increase education on the importance of voting as well as increase voter registration & turnout in their local communities.
- **Problem**:
  How can students increase voter education, registration & turnout in their communities?

Requirements:
1. Research Paper
2. Proposal
3. Design and Creation of action
4. Implementation of action
5. Reflection
6. You may work individually or in small groups for the action portion of this project.
   a. You can only work with people in our class.

Service Learning Project
Proposal Paper Instructions & Organizer

Power to the Polls:
Despite some meaningful progress on increased enfranchisement, voter turnout has decreased dramatically over the past several decades. Your job as a class will be to investigate why voter turnout has decreased, the challenges & factors that have led to this decrease, and create a plan to help address this issue. Throughout the rest of the semester, we will explore political socialization, voter behavior, political parties, and types of civic engagement. We will also research voting results from local, state, and national elections in an effort to determine why people aren't voting and find ways in which to encourage them to vote. You will then create an action project to address these issues.

- **Objective**:
  Students will help increase education on the importance of voting as well as increase voter registration in their local communities.
- **Problem**:
  How can students increase voter education and registration at their school and in their community?

Directions: Research your topic and prepare a 2-page paper (double spaced). The paper should focus on the following questions:
1. *What is the problem? What should people know about this problem?*
2. *What is the cause (or causes) of this problem?*
3. *What is the effect of this problem on our country, state, local community and/or school?*
4. *How have people tried to respond to this problem in the past? Have they been successful in using these methods?*
5. *What can you (or your group) do to improve the situation?*

For each question, you must use information from at least TWO of the provided sources.

Question 1: *What is the problem? What should people know about this problem?*

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Source:

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Question 2: *What is the cause (or causes) of this problem?*

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Question 3: *What is the effect of this problem on our country, state, local community and/or school?*

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Question 4: *How have people tried to respond to this problem in the past? Have they been successful in using these methods?*

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Source:

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Question 5: *What can you (or your group) do to improve the situation? (You don't need sources for this).*

Question 1: *What is the problem? What should people know about this problem?*

[U.S. Trails Most Developed Nations](#)
[Why So Many Americans Don't Vote](#)
[Vanishing Voters](#)
[Why is Voter Turnout So Low in the United States?](#)

Question 2: *What is the cause (or causes) of this problem?*

[U.S. Trails Most Developed Nations](#)
[Why So Many Americans Don't Vote](#)
[Vanishing Voters](#)
[Why is Voter Turnout So Low in the United States?](#)
[Why does the U.S. have such low voter turnout?](#)
[Why Americans Don't Vote](#)
[The Myth of the Lazy Voter](#)
[We Make it Difficult to Vote](#)
[More Than 1,000 US Polling Sites Closed](#)
[Coronavirus Closures and Confusion in US Polls](#)
[USPS May Not Be Able to Meet Election Mail Demands](#)
[Despite virus threat, Black voters wary of voting by mail](#)

Question 3: *What is the effect of this problem on our country, state, local community and/or school?*

[Where does America's low voter turnout matter the most?](#)
[Expected Low Voter Turnout Would Give Incumbents the Edge](#)
[Low Voter Turnout Has Consequences](#)
[Consequences of Not Voting](#)
[Looking for Alternatives to Mail In Voting](#)

Question 4: *How have people tried to respond to this problem in the past? Have they been successful in using these methods?*

[Letting People Vote From Home](#)
[Increasing Voter Turnout](#)
[Increasing Voter Turnout is Tougher Than You Think](#)
[How To Increase Voter Turnout](#)
[How Oregon Increased Voter Turnout More Than Any Other State](#)
[Increasing Voter Turnout in 2018 and Beyond](#)
[How to Increase Turnout in Low-Turnout Communities](#)

"Power to the Polls" Service Learning Project:
Action Planning & Implementation

Directions: Now that you have identified and researched both the problems behind voter registration and turnout and have brainstormed an initial list of solutions, it is time to put those solutions into action.

Your job with your team is to develop a PLAN on how you can increase voter registration and turnout in your community, AND TAKE ACTION on this plan with your team. Use the planning guide to below to sketch out your ACTION IDEA

PLANNING GUIDE

Team Members Names:

Category	Explanation	Your Planning Notes
THE PROBLEM	Identify ONE problem from your research that you would like to focus your action plan on Ex: Lack of knowledge on when and where to vote	
YOUR SOLUTIONS	Describe the brainstorm solutions you created to address your problem	
ACTION STATEMENT	Narrow down your solutions into ONE major action idea you can take to address this problem. This should be phrased as "I/We would like to…" Ex: "I/We would like to develop a voter registration drive at our school in the month of September"	
ACTION STEPS	List out each step your team will need to take to make your ACTION IDEA come to life	1) 2) 3) 4) 5) …
TEAM ROLES & STRENGTHS	Who will take on which tasks/action steps to make your project happen? In the box to the right, put each team's members name, their particular role on this project, and any talents/strengths they may have to support this action project	
ALLIES & ADVOCATES	Who are the youth/adults around you that are your allies in making this idea possible? Who will be your cheerleaders? How can they specifically help you? (be specific here) --- (Alternatively...Who did not support you? What did they say? Why do you believe they said that? How did you respond?)	

CHALLENGES	Are there any challenges or barriers to making this idea possible/actually happen? How might you overcome those challenges?	
PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS	How will you know that your action project was a success? How will you measure that success?	

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION CHECKLIST:

PROJECT TEAM LEADER (point person from your team)	
ACTION PROJECT TEAM CONTACT (this should be	
ACTION PROJECT TIME LOG	
SERVICE EVIDENCE (This can and should include any materials created, photos taken while conducting your service, written signoff by outside officials/authorities you partner with etc.)	

FINAL PRESENTATION CHECKLIST:

Presentation Category:	Completed/Not Completed:
Your Problem Restated	
Overview of problem research	
Brief overview of process for action project	
Final results of action taken	
Success of Project (How do I know my project was successful, what evidence demonstrates that it was successful?)	
What did we learn about our school, community, state or country by taking on this service learning action project?	
Evidence (this can include photos, materials, first-hand accounts from people you interacted with to demonstrate the effectiveness of this action project)	

"Power to the Polls" Service Learning Project Reflection

Directions: *Answer the following questions in complete sentences. Each question should be answered in a FULL paragraph. This response will be calculated into your overall Service Learning Project Grade. Use a color other than black.*

1. Evaluate your contributions to the project. What did you do? How well did you do it? What else could you have done to help with the project?

2. Overall, what were the strengths of the project? Explain.

3. Overall, what were the weaknesses of the project? Explain.

4. If you did this again, what parts should you keep? Explain.

5. If you did this again, what should you change? Explain.

6. Describe what you learned from this project? Explain.

Voting Service Learning Project-ACTION LOG

Description of Action/Date completed.	Date Completed	Number of Hours

Student Signature: I fully affirm that the above time log is complete and that I completed the above tasks in the time stated.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Supervisor Signature: I fully affirm that the above student has accurately represented their amount of work completed in the above time log.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Phone and/or Email Contact: _____