

## Teacher Notes



# The Electoral College

## Activity 2 Electoral College Trends

### Activity at a Glance

- ◆ **Subject:** Social Studies
- ◆ **Subject Area:** American Government
- ◆ **Category:** The Constitution
- ◆ **Topic:** The Electoral College
- ◆ **Grade Level:** 11 - 12
- ◆ **Prerequisites:** Students need to be able to enter numerical data into the CellSheet™ application and link the file to the teacher.
- ◆ **Total Teaching Time:** 45 minutes

### Materials

- ◆ TI-83 Plus or TI-83 Plus Silver Edition
- ◆ CellSheet™ Application
- ◆ CellSheet™ File: **STATES.8xv**
- ◆ Student Work Sheet: **States Data, States Electoral Votes**
- ◆ Internet Access for student research

### *Activity Overview*

In this activity, students will identify trends for different states in awarding their Electoral College votes. Students will collect voting data from the Internet on how each state's Electoral College votes were awarded in the last ten presidential elections. Students will look for patterns in different states and project a winner in the next election based on these trends at different confidence levels.

### *Directions*

#### *Before the Activity Begins*

Review the students' responses to the homework questions. Answer any other questions the students have.

#### *Warm-up Activity*

1. Begin by asking the students which presidential candidate won their home state in the 2000 election.
2. Follow this by discussing the presence or absence of a voting trend in this particular state.
3. Discuss why some states might or might not have this type of trend.

***During the Activity***

1. Assign each member of the class two different states. If all 50 states have not been assigned in this manner, split up any remaining states among the students.
2. Pass out the **States Data** work sheet. Also transmit the **STATES.8xv** file to the class.
3. Each student should visit the National Archives Web site at: [http://www.archives.gov/federal\\_register/electoral\\_college/votes\\_index.html#state](http://www.archives.gov/federal_register/electoral_college/votes_index.html#state) to find the voting results for their assigned states, beginning in 1964.
4. On the **States Data** work sheet, each student should complete the rows for his or her assigned states. For each presidential election year, 1964 – 2000, the students should assign a 0 for a Democratic victory, 1 for Independent, and 2 for Republican for each state.
5. Each student will enter their states' information into the **STATES.8xv** file on the TI-83. When data entry is complete for all assigned states, each student will transmit the file to the teacher by whatever means the teacher instructs them to use. Data files can be exchanged using unit-to-unit cables (to transmit files between devices), the TI Connectivity cable (to transmit files between the teacher's computer and devices), or via the TI-Navigator™ System.

The teacher should consolidate the students' data in one of the following ways:

- ◆ The teacher can collect the students' files during class and then consolidate the information into one complete file later, but prior to working Activity 3.
- ◆ Each student can read their states and values aloud to the class so that each student can enter the data into their own file.
- ◆ The teacher can solicit the information for each state during class and update the teacher file. Then this completed file can be transmitted to the class.

***After the Activity***

1. After students finish linking their results to the teacher, introduce the last activity for the lesson, **Electoral College and Political Strategy**.
2. In this activity, students will become a team of political strategists for either a Democratic or Republican candidate for president in the 2004 election. Their job will be to devise a campaign strategy that will help them win the electoral college vote in the most efficient means possible, focusing on states that will be projected winners for their candidate.
3. Pass out to students the **States Electoral Votes** handout.

4. Discuss how the 538 electoral votes are divided among the states (by population from the most recent census).
5. Point out the wide discrepancy in number of votes awarded, from most (California with 54) to least (six states with 3).
6. Discuss how this might impact how candidates campaign.
7. Divide the class into teams of three and record their political party of choice.
8. The remaining time can be used for the students to begin strategizing.

**Student Work Sheet**  
**States Data**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Highlight the name of the states assigned to you to research.

State	'64	'68	'72	'76	'80	'84	'88	'92	'96	'00
Alabama										
Alaska										
Arizona										
Arkansas										
California										
Colorado										
Connecticut										
Delaware										
D.C.										
Florida										
Georgia										
Hawaii										
Idaho										
Illinois										
Indiana										
Iowa										
Kansas										
Kentucky										
Louisiana										
Maine										
Maryland										
Massachusetts										
Michigan										
Minnesota										
Mississippi										

State	'64	'68	'72	'76	'80	'84	'88	'92	'96	'00
Missouri										
Montana										
Nebraska										
Nevada										
New Hampshire										
New Jersey										
New Mexico										
New York										
No. Carolina										
No. Dakota										
Ohio										
Oklahoma										
Oregon										
Pennsylvania										
Rhode Island										
So. Carolina										
So. Dakota										
Tennessee										
Texas										
Utah										
Vermont										
Virginia										
Washington										
W. Virginia										
Wisconsin										
Wyoming										

***Student Work Sheet***  
***States Electoral Votes***

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>State</b>	<b>1981-1990</b>	<b>1991-2000</b>
Alabama	9	9
Alaska	3	3
Arizona	7	8
Arkansas	6	6
California	47	54
Colorado	8	8
Connecticut	8	8
Delaware	3	3
D.C.	3	3
Florida	21	25
Georgia	12	13
Hawaii	4	4
Idaho	4	4
Illinois	24	22
Indiana	12	12
Iowa	8	7
Kansas	7	6
Kentucky	9	8
Louisiana	10	9
Maine	4	4
Maryland	10	10
Massachusetts	13	12
Michigan	20	18
Minnesota	10	10
Mississippi	7	7

<b>State</b>	<b>1981-1990</b>	<b>1991-2000</b>
Missouri	11	11
Montana	4	3
Nebraska	5	5
Nevada	4	4
New Hampshire	4	4
New Jersey	16	15
New Mexico	5	5
New York	36	33
No. Carolina	13	14
No. Dakota	3	3
Ohio	23	21
Oklahoma	8	8
Oregon	7	7
Pennsylvania	25	23
Rhode Island	4	4
So. Carolina	8	8
So. Dakota	3	3
Tennessee	11	11
Texas	29	32
Utah	5	5
Vermont	3	3
Virginia	12	13
Washington	10	11
W. Virginia	6	5
Wisconsin	11	11
Wyoming	3	3