

Maggie's Civics Corner

Lesson #47 – Choices & Voices - Elections



Maggie says ...

In these difficult times, as our nation and the world pull together, it is more important than ever to understand our role as a citizen.

Today's lesson is about the PURPOSE OF ELECTIONS. When I was laying in my doggy bed at home, my ears perked up as I heard my family talking about who they should vote for in an upcoming election. An election is the process of voting to select a person to serve as a leader or representative in the

government. Elections are very important because they allow citizens to vote and have their voices heard. When citizens vote in elections, they can choose leaders that can best represent the citizens' interests in the government and promote the common good for all people.

Sticky Situation: Every year, the 5th grade class at Ferguson Elementary School must decide which student will serve as the Class President. This year, two 5th-grade students want to campaign for Class President – John and Elizabeth. John believes that he would be the best person for the job and should automatically be declared Class President, without holding a class vote. Elizabeth thinks the only fair way to determine who should be Class President is to allow ALL 5th-grade students a chance to vote in an election. This way each student would have the opportunity to cast a ballot for the candidate they believe would be best.

Do you agree with John or Elizabeth regarding elections? Why do you think it is important to have a fair process for people to select their government leaders? What do you think would happen if a person came along and declared themselves the leader of your city/town? No election was held; no town halls were assembled for citizens to have their voices and opinions heard. How do you think your fellow citizens would respond?

Activity: Imagine that your class at school is having an election for Class President next month. Make a list of issues that would be important to you when you vote in the upcoming election. For example, maybe you think that students should be given more time to play at recess. Next, think of the characteristics of your ideal Class President. What traits does this Class President have? Make a list of which traits you think are most important for a person serving as the Class President. For example, you may think that the Class President should be honest, kind, and trustworthy.

Civics Resources: Check out this Kids Academy video [Voting for Kids | Why Voting is Important? – Election day](#)