



Voting and Elections:  
SS.7.CG.2.6  
Election Processes  
READING #1

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

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



**SS.7.CG.2.6 Benchmark Clarification 1:** Students will explain how elections and voting impact citizens at the local, state and national levels.

This material is adapted from resources developed by CPALMS and the Learning Systems Institute at Florida State University.

The government structure in the United States reflects the will of the people. Citizens can elect representatives at each level of government to represent their interests. These representatives are elected through a process called elections. **Elections** are formal processes in which **voters** pick the candidates of their choice. Voters are people who are legally able to submit a vote in an election.

Elections are held in Florida for members of the national, state, and local levels of government. At the **national** level, Florida citizens can vote for the President, Vice President, and U.S. Congress members, including the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. At the **state** level, Florida citizens can vote for Governor and Lieutenant Governor, three members of the executive cabinet, and members of the state legislature. At the **local** level, Florida citizens can vote for the mayor, city council members, county and circuit court judges, and other local officials.

Before any voting can occur, citizens must officially register to vote; this is important to make sure that everyone who casts a vote is doing so legitimately. When you register to vote, you will be asked to choose a **party affiliation**, or the political party of which you want to be a member, although registering “No Party Affiliation,” or as an independent are also options. **Political parties** are groups of people who share similar political views and work together to achieve common political goals. The two major political parties in the United States are the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

Participating in elections is one of the key liberties of American life. Many citizens in countries around the world do not have the same freedom, nor did many Americans in the past. No matter what your beliefs are or what candidate you support, exercising your constitutional right to vote is important.

**election** - formal process in which voters pick the candidates of their choice.

**local government** - the government of a municipality (city) or county

**national government** - the government of the United States

**party affiliation** - the political party of which you want to be a member.

**political party** - an organization that tries to get political power by electing members to public office so that their political ideas can become laws or policies

**state government** - the government of an individual state

**voter** – a person who is legally able to submit a vote in an election.

**Source:**

Furgione, A., & Gordon, R. (2020). *Election time in tutorial town*. CPALMS. Retrieved November 2022, from <https://www.cpalms.org/PreviewResourceStudentTutorial/Preview/126031>