



Introductory Lesson

HIGH SCHOOL

Essential Question: What is Project Vote Smart and what information can be found at the Vote Smart website?

Objective: To acquaint students with the Project Vote Smart Web site and its contents.

National Standards Addressed: National Standards for Civics and Government, (9-12):

- I. A. What purposes should government serve?
- II. B. What are the distinctive characteristics of American society?
- II. C. What is American political culture?
- III. E. How does the American political system provide for choice and opportunities for participation?
- IV. C. How has the United States influenced other nations, and how have other nations influenced American politics and society?
- V. D. What civic dispositions or traits of private and public character are important to the preservation and improvement of American constitutional democracy?
- V. E. How can citizens take part in civic life?

Materials:

Computer access for students
Introductory hand out/questions

Teacher Instructions:

1. Provide students with some background information on Project Vote Smart

- Established in 1988 in order to provide voters with accurate, unbiased information on candidates, issues and legislation.
- Does not accept money from any groups that have any kind of political affiliation.
- Comprised primarily of volunteers who spend their days tracking and inputting information for public access.
- Headquartered in Philipsburg, Montana.

2. Direct students to www.votesmart.org
3. Have students complete the worksheet as they explore the web site.

Modification:

- Organize the activity as a scavenger hunt, with the teacher giving a direction or asking a question and awarding a small prize to the student who finds the information first.