



DENISE W. MERRILL
SECRETARY OF THE STATE
CONNECTICUT



Elementary Lessons for Connecticut Election Project 2012

Creating meaningful experiences for our youngest citizens



Presenters

Lorene Flansbury



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Agenda

- Elementary Lessons their nature and design
- Electoral Math
 - Electoral College vs. Popular Vote
- *Break for Q&A*
- Electoral Literacy
 - Why is it important to participate in our elections
 - Why use electoral process
 - The importance of truth in the Media
- *Break for Q&A*
 - Media in Elections
- Electoral History
 - Incumbency
- *Break for Q&A*



Elementary Lessons

Designed to:

- Introduce vocabulary and background knowledge associated with the Election Process
- Focus on both Local and National Races
- Easily completed in no more than four, 20-30 minute lessons
- Provide all links, resources and evaluations needed to successfully integrate into existing lessons.






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Elementary Lessons

We hope to provide:

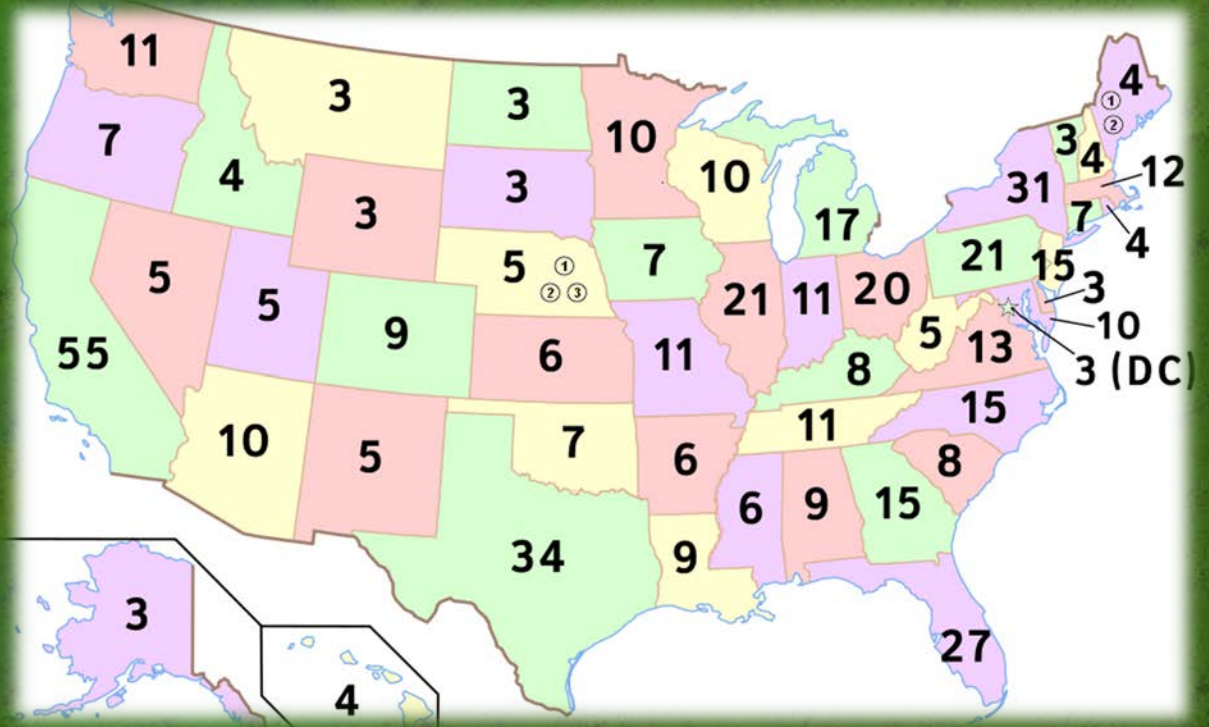
- Engaging learning experiences for a variety of learners
 - Project based lessons that connect students to information
 - Easy to use and free resources
 - Common Core aligned lessons
- 



Lesson design

QUESTIONS?

Election Math



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Electoral College vs. Popular Vote

- Why and how is the Electoral College in existence?
- Why is 270 a significant number?
- What is the difference between a local election and the Presidential one?
- How can someone win the Popular Vote but lose an election?





What is the Electoral College

- A group of electors from individual states
- Each state gets a number of electors equal to its number of members in the U.S. House of Representatives plus one for each of its two U.S. Senators.
- The Electoral College system was established in the Constitution and amended by the 12th Amendment in 1804
- There are currently 538 electors and the votes of a majority of them -- 270 votes -- are required to be elected.



Electoral College Math

- California
 - Florida
 - Ohio
 - North Carolina
 - New York
 - Pennsylvania
 - Michigan
 - Georgia
 - Texas
 - Illinois
 - New Jersey
 - Virginia
- There are 538 total votes in the Electoral College and a presidential candidate must win a majority -- 270 -- electoral votes to be elected. Since 11 of the 12 states in the chart above account for exactly 270 votes, a candidate could win these states, lose the other 39, and still be elected.



Election Math: Electoral College vs. Popular Vote

QUESTIONS?



Election Literacy

- Why is it important to participate in our government?
- Why use electoral process?
- What is the importance of telling the truth in the Media?

Why is it important to participate in our government?

- **Citizenship Rights**

- Freedom to express yourself.
- Freedom to worship as you wish.
- Right to a prompt, fair trial by jury.
- Right to vote in elections for public officials.
- Right to apply for federal employment requiring U.S. citizenship.
- Right to run for elected office.
- Freedom to pursue “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

"USCIS-Citizenship Rights and Responsibilities." *USCIS*. N.p., n.d. Web. 19 July 2012.





Why is it important to participate in our government?

- **Citizenship Responsibilities**

- Support and defend the Constitution.
- Stay informed of the issues affecting your community.
- Participate in the democratic process.
- Respect and obey federal, state, and local laws.
- Respect the rights, beliefs, and opinions of others.
- Participate in your local community.
- Pay income and other taxes honestly, and on time, to federal, state, and local authorities.
- Serve on a jury when called upon.
- Defend the country if the need should arise.



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Why use Democratic Elections?

Democratic Elections are:

- Competitive
- Periodic
- Inclusive
- Definitive
- Cast in secret

"Democratic Elections." *Democratic Elections*. N.p., 03 May 2008. Web. 19 July 2012.



The importance of truth ...

“The closer the United States gets to its November elections, the more heated the rhetoric between the candidates becomes, and the temptation to distort or even invent “facts” to disparage an opponent or enhance their own standings increases.”

Read

more: <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/article/2012/06/201206056820.html#ixzz2152genwp>

"IIP Digital | U.S. Department of State." *Journalists Check for Lies, Half-Truths, Omissions in Campaigns*. N.p., 05 June 2012. Web. 19 July 2012



Election Literacy: Who, What, When, Where and How

QUESTIONS?

Media in Elections

“Instead of examining issues, reporters tend to describe **campaign hoopla**: the size of crowds, surges and declines in the polls, organizational triumphs and failures, endorsements won and lost, and above all the ebb and flow of momentum. Elections are likened to horse races in which attention centers on who is ahead, who is behind, who is gaining, who has dropped out.³ What gets lost in the excitement is why the race is being run at all.” Michael Robinson and Margaret Sheehan, *Over the Wire and on TV* (New York: Russell Sage, 1983) pp. 147-48.

For more information:

<http://www.udel.edu/htr/American/Texts/campcov.html>





Election History

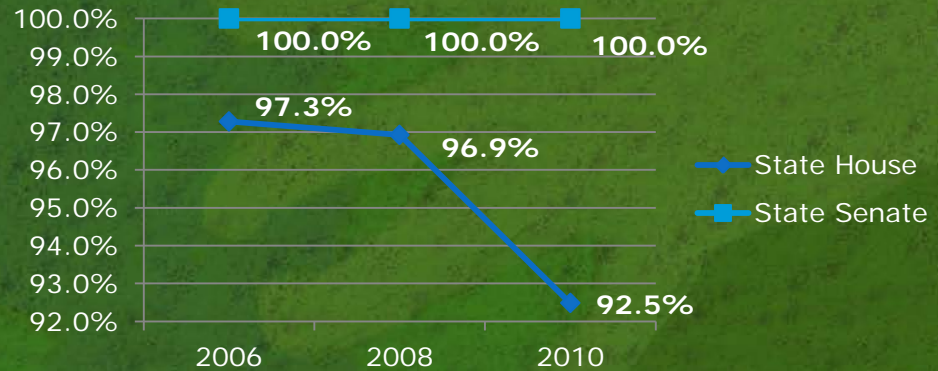
- Who are incumbents and why are they important in an election?
- What are the pros and cons to being or electing an incumbent candidate?
- How does the lack of an incumbent in our senate race change the nature of that race?
- What is media's role in an election?
- Why is it important for citizens to be aware of the media sources that report on elections?

Incumbent Candidates

- An incumbent is any candidate who currently holds the office and is running for re-election
- Incumbents hold significant advantages in most elections
 - Known to voting public
 - Established professional presence
 - Money and support
- 33 senate seats up for election in 2012
 - 22 will be sought by incumbents
 - 11 are open races (including Connecticut)



CT General Assembly Incumbency Rates



State House				
	% Re-elected	# Running	# Lost	# Won
2006	97.3%	147	4	143
2008	96.9%	130	4	126
2010	92.5%	133	10	123

State Senate				
	% Re-elected	# Running	# Lost	# Won
2006	100.0%	32	0	32
2008	100.0%	30	0	30
2010	100.0%	32	0	32



CT Federal Officeholder Incumbency

U.S. Senator	Years served in Senate	Reason for leaving
Chris Dodd	1980-2010	Retired
Richard Blumenthal	2010-Present	Still in office

U.S. Senator	Years served in Senate	Reason for leaving
Lowell Weicker	1971 - 1989	Lost reelection in 1988
Joe Lieberman	1989 -2013	Retiring

Connecticut's U.S. Representatives		
District	# of U.S. Reps in last 35 years	# of Incumbents who lost a race
1	3	0
2	4	2
3	4	1
4	3	1
5	7	4





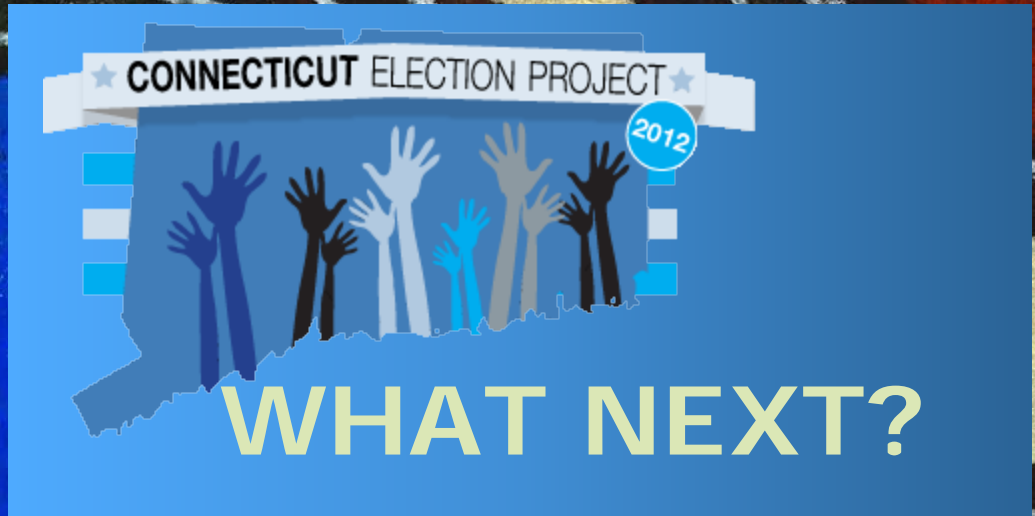
Connecticut Senate Race

- Senator Joseph Lieberman has decided not to seek re-election
 - Lieberman previously elected the last 4 times he ran for office
- Several challengers now seek the open seat
 - Democrats: Susan Bysiewicz, Chris Murphy, William Tong, Lee Whitnum
 - Republicans: Linda McMahon, Chris Shays, Brian Hill, Jason McCoy
- CT and the 10 other states electing new senators play an important role in national politics



Election History: Incumbency and Media in Elections

QUESTIONS?



Visit www.ct.gov/sots for supplemental materials

Lesson plans
Resources
Helpful links

Participate in upcoming Election Math webinar

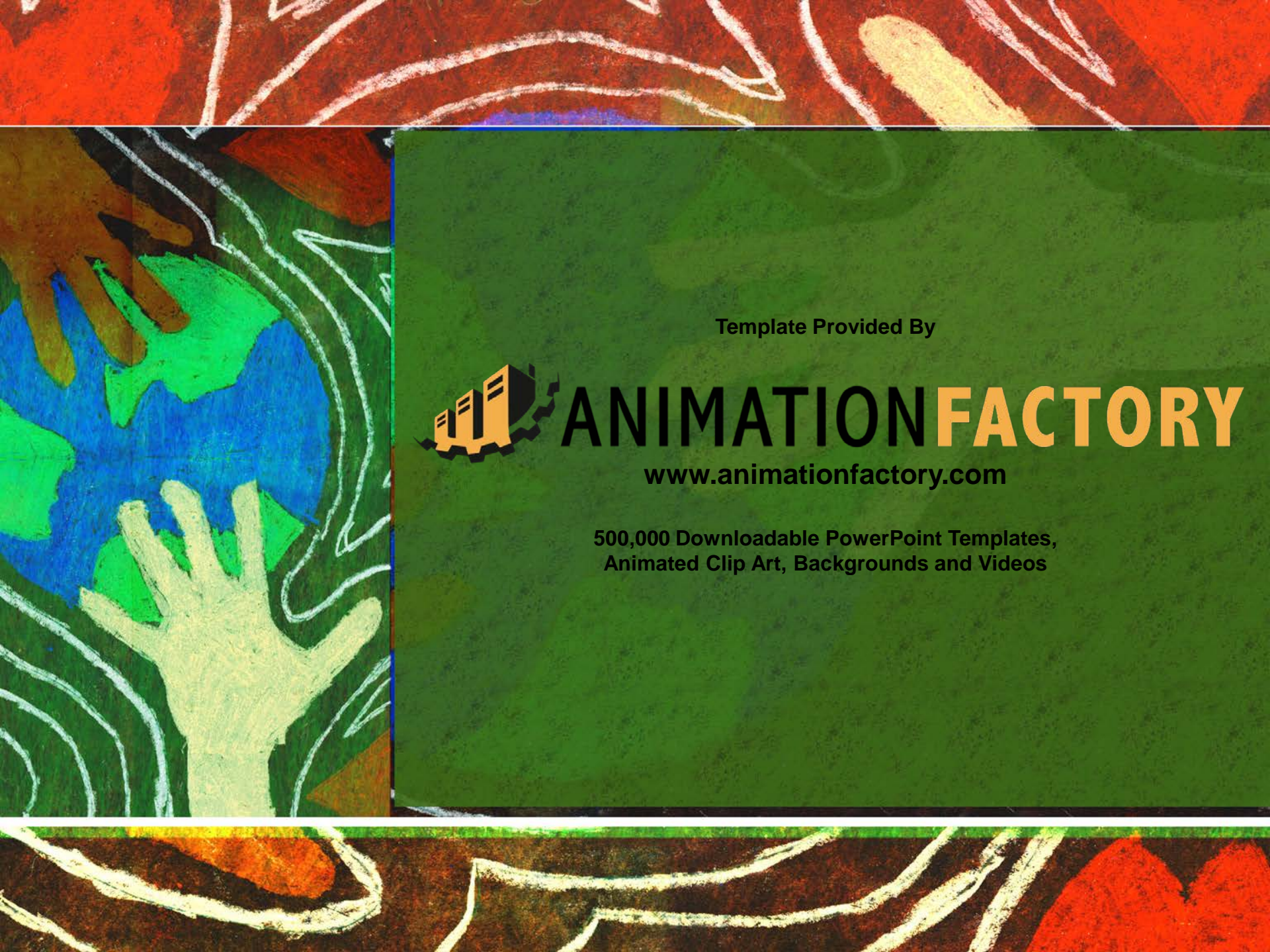
Thursday, August 16, 2012 @ 10:30 a.m.

Email CTelectionproject@ct.gov

Call 860.509.6212



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