

“The College with No Courses or Credits: The Electoral College” A Lesson to Accompany *Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws That Affect Us Today*

Rationale:

Americans don't vote directly for our president. Instead, we vote for individuals who represent our voting preferences—we hope—in an organization informally called the Electoral College.

We vote for the members of this group at the state level (not the national level), but the number of members in each state does not exactly reflect the size of its population. Some states count more than others—literally.

States also handle the results of their Electoral College votes differently. Presidential elections can indicate which candidate voters across the country prefer. But the Electoral College sometimes prevents the more popular candidate from becoming president.

There are reasons the Framers did not choose to pick our chief executive through direct election, which is the way we elect other leaders and the way other countries with presidents choose their chief. Even when the Constitution was drafted, this process was controversial. But [we are now] in the twenty-first century, and reasons that might have seemed logical in 1787 do not necessarily make sense more than two centuries later.¹

Essential Questions:

- Would abolishing the Electoral College repair a “fault line” in the Constitution?
- To what extent would abolishing the Electoral College change the electoral process?

Objectives: *After this lesson, students will be able to:*

- Discuss why the Framers' established the Electoral College.
- Explain the Electoral College's role in deciding presidential elections throughout US history.
- Identify the benefits and detriments of the Electoral College.
- Analyze arguments for changing the Electoral College's role.
- Assess whether the Electoral College is a relevant institution in the twenty-first century.

¹ Cynthia Levinson and Sanford Levinson, *Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws That Affect Us Today*, 3rd Edition (Atlanta: Peachtree Publishing Company, 2025), 141.

Common Core Standards:

Middle School:

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.8

Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

High School:

Key Ideas and Details:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.3

Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

Resources

D) The Electoral College: A History

Despite their fears of establishing another monarchy, it took only a few weeks for the majority of the Framers to determine that the country should be led by a single individual. Over the next three months, they voted at least sixty times on different ways to choose that person. Methods varied in part depending on which powers delegates felt the leader should have.

Roger Sherman of Connecticut argued that the legislative branch should carry more weight than the executive. Therefore, Congress should choose the leader.

Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts, Gunning Bedford of Delaware, and others worried that under Sherman's scheme, the national government would overshadow the states. They contended that state legislatures should do the picking.

James Wilson of Pennsylvania proposed direct election—a system in which the president would be selected by eligible voters. *But no one agreed with Wilson.*

There was a somewhat understandable reason for the opponents' view. America was a very different place in 1787.

The roughly three and a half million Americans were dispersed across a vast terrain—as much territory as Britain, France, Germany, Ireland, and Italy combined. Fewer than one hundred newspapers were published in the country, and none was widely distributed. Papers contained only four pages, half of them devoted to advertisements and the other half to local news. Ordinary people in South Carolina, say, would probably know nothing about a candidate from Pennsylvania.

In September, after months of wrangling, the Framers were all set to adopt Sherman's idea for Congress to elect the president. At that moment, John Dickinson of Delaware, who had been absent for much of the previous five weeks, reappeared, heard the proposal, and expressed his alarm. Such a plan would give too much power to Congress. In any case, he warned, people would never ratify the Constitution unless they were somehow involved in choosing the president. Yet again, the Convention was in disarray.

James Madison of Virginia took pen and paper and wrote out a complicated alternative, calling for a system of presidential electors. Each state's legislature would decide how to select a group of trustworthy and knowledgeable individuals. These electors would exercise their independent judgment to vote for the person they considered most worthy of serving as president. To account for the differences in sizes of the states, each would be allowed as many electors as the sum of its representatives plus its two senators.

By now, the Framers, who had rejected every other notion, were ready to accept this one. They signed on to the plan ten days before adjourning and spent the next several days cranking out the details.²

Question:

- *Why did the Framers create the Electoral College?*

² Levinson and Levinson, *Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws That Affect Us Today*, 129-130.

II) The Constitution and the Electoral College

Article II

Section 1. The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the Term of four Years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same Term, be elected, as follows

Each State shall appoint, in such Manner as the Legislature thereof may direct, a Number of Electors, equal to the whole Number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress: but no Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector.

Twelfth Amendment (1804*)

The Electors shall meet in their respective states, and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President... The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority... the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote....

**Originally the candidate with the most Electoral College votes became the president and the candidate with the second highest number of votes was the vice president. This arrangement led to problems almost immediately, leading to the passage of the Twelfth Amendment during Jefferson's first term.*

III) The Framers and the Electoral College

Federalist 68 (Hamilton), March 14, 1788 (excerpts)

It was desirable that the sense of the people should operate in the choice of the person to whom so important a trust was to be confided. This end will be answered by committing the right of making it, not to any preestablished body, but to men chosen by the people for the special purpose, and at the particular conjuncture.... A small number of persons, selected by their fellow-citizens from the general mass, will be most likely to possess the information and discernment requisite to such complicated investigations.

The process of election affords a moral certainty, that the office of President will never fall to the lot of any man who is not in an eminent degree endowed with the requisite qualifications. Talents for low intrigue, and the little arts of popularity, may alone suffice to elevate a man to the first honors in a single State; but it will require other talents, and a different kind of merit, to establish him in the esteem and confidence of the whole Union, or of so considerable a portion of it as would be necessary to make him a successful candidate for the distinguished office of President of the United States.

Antifederalist Paper 72 (Republicus), March 1, 1788 (excerpt)

Is it then become necessary, that a free people should first resign their right of suffrage into other hands besides their own, and then, secondly, that they to whom they resign it should be compelled to choose men, whose persons, characters, manners, or principles they know nothing of? And, after all (excepting some such change as is not likely to happen twice in the same century) to intrust Congress with the final decision at last? Is it necessary, is it rational, that the sacred rights of mankind should thus dwindle down to Electors of electors, and those again electors of other electors? This seems to be degrading them even below the prophetic curse denounced by the good old patriarch, on the offspring of his degenerate son: "servant of servants". . .

Question:

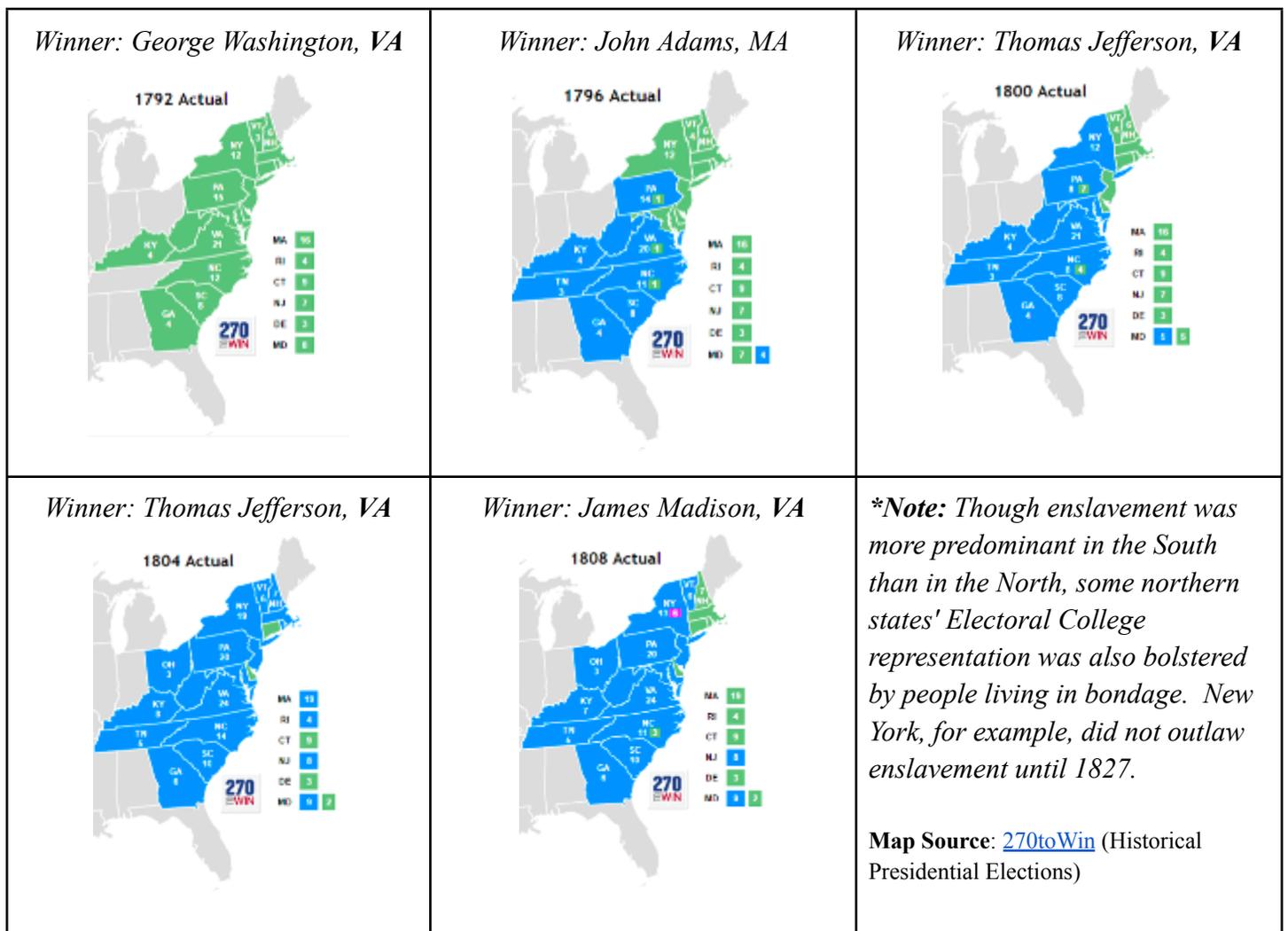
- *What were the Framers' arguments for and against the Electoral College?*

IV) Slavery and the Electoral College

Enslaving states liked the Electoral College as well. Under the terms of the Three-Fifths Compromise, these states got to count not only white citizens as part of their population, but also three-fifths of their enslaved persons. As a result, they received both more representatives in Congress and more electors. This deal expanded their influence in choosing the president. Four of the first five presidents were enslavers who hailed from Virginia; they served a total of eight terms over thirty-two years. The one president who did not hold people in bondage, John Adams from Massachusetts, served a single term of four years.

Of course, enslaved people, like women and children, couldn't vote. Southern gentlemen claimed they would keep the best interests of women and children in mind when they voted, but none cared about the desires or opinions of the people they owned. The Electoral College, however, made the actual numbers of voters in a given state irrelevant.³

Presidential Elections 1792-1808



³ Levinson and Levinson, *Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws That Affect Us Today*, 3rd Edition, 146.

Constitutional Law Scholar Akhil Reed Amar on the [Rationale Behind the Electoral College](#)

I learned in school that it was a balance between big and small states. But the real divisions in America have never been big and small states; they're between North and South, and between coasts and the center.

The House versus Senate is big versus small states, but from the beginning big states have almost always prevailed in the Electoral College. We've only had three small-state presidents in American history: Zachary Taylor, Franklin Pierce, and Bill Clinton. All of the early presidents came from big states. So that theory isn't particularly explanatory.

Then there's the theory that the framers really didn't believe in democracy. But they put the Constitution to a vote, they created a House of Representatives that was directly elected, they believed in direct election of governors, and there are all sorts of other democratic features in the Constitution. So that theory isn't so explanatory.

There is an idea that democracy doesn't work continentally because there are informational problems. How are people on one part of the continent supposed to know how good someone is on another part of the continent? But once political parties appear on the scene, they have platforms. And ordinary people know what they stand for, and presidential candidates are linked to local slates of politicians. So that problem is solved.

So what's the real answer? In my view, it's slavery. In a direct election system, the South would have lost every time because a huge percentage of its population was slaves, and slaves couldn't vote. But an Electoral College allows states to count slaves, albeit at a discount (the three-fifths clause), and that's what gave the South the inside track in presidential elections. And thus it's no surprise that eight of the first nine presidential races were won by a Virginian. (Virginia was the most populous state at the time, and had a massive slave population that boosted its electoral vote count.)

This pro-slavery compromise was not clear to everyone when the Constitution was adopted, but it was clearly evident to everyone when the Electoral College was amended after the Jefferson-Adams contest of 1796 and 1800. These elections were decided, in large part, by the extra electoral votes created by slavery. Without the 13 extra electoral votes created by Southern slavery, John Adams would've won even in 1800, and every Federalist knows that after the election.

And yet when the Constitution is amended, the slavery bias is preserved.⁴

Question:

- *To what extent did the Electoral College allow slavery to thrive in the early 1800s?*
- *What conclusions can you draw about national leaders' priorities based on this perspective on the Electoral College?*

⁴ Sean Illing, "The real reason we have an Electoral College: to protect slave states," Vox, November 12, 2016.

V) Controversy and the Electoral College, Part I-- Congress Decides

1) Election of 1800- Jefferson and Burr Tie!

Candidate	Party	Electoral Votes*
Thomas Jefferson*	Democratic Republican	73
Aaron Burr	Democratic Republican	73
John Adams	Federalist	65
Charles C. Pinckney	Federalist	64

**Each elector casts two votes in the era before the 12th Amendment*

Democratic-Republican Jefferson defeated Federalist [John Adams](#) by a margin of seventy-three to sixty-five electoral votes in the presidential election of 1800. When presidential electors cast their votes, however, they failed to distinguish between the office of president and vice president on their ballots. Jefferson and his running mate [Aaron Burr](#) each received seventy-three votes. With the votes tied, the election was thrown to the House of Representatives as required by Article II, Section 1 of the [U.S. Constitution](#). There, each state voted as a unit to decide the election.

Still dominated by Federalists, the sitting Congress loathed to vote for Jefferson—their partisan nemesis. For six days starting on [February 11, 1801](#), Jefferson and Burr essentially ran against each other in the House. Votes were tallied over thirty times, yet neither man captured the necessary majority of nine states. Eventually, Federalist James A. Bayard of Delaware, under intense pressure and fearing for the future of the Union, made known his intention to break the impasse. As Delaware’s lone representative, Bayard controlled the state’s entire vote. On the [thirty-sixth ballot](#), Bayard and other Federalists from South Carolina, Maryland, and Vermont cast blank ballots, breaking the deadlock and giving Jefferson the support of ten states, enough to win the presidency.⁵

⁵ [“Today in History - February 17,”](#) Library of Congress, accessed July 29, 2025.

2) Election of 1824- The Corrupt Bargain

Candidate	Party	Electoral Votes	Popular Vote
John Quincy Adams*	Democratic Republican	84	113,122
Andrew Jackson	Democratic Republican	99	151,271
William H. Crawford	Democratic Republican	41	40,856
Henry Clay	Democratic Republican	37	47,531

131 votes needed to win

Speaker [Henry] Clay was excluded from the House vote because he did not finish in the top three. The wily Kentuckian, however, still played a decisive role by supporting Adams, whom he knew to share his nationalist agenda. On the appointed day, each state delegation got one vote. On the first ballot 13 state delegations—a majority—chose Adams as President. Jackson received seven votes; Crawford got four. Later, President Adams nominated Clay as his Secretary of State, reigniting rumors that a deal had been struck before the vote. Convinced that the election had been stolen from him, Jackson stormed, “the Judas of the West has closed the contract and will receive the thirty pieces of silver . . . Was there ever witnessed such a bare faced corruption in any country before?”⁶

3) Election of 1876- The Compromise of 1877

Candidate	Party	Electoral Votes	Popular Vote
Rutherford B. Hayes*	Republican	185	4,036,298
Samuel Tilden	Democrat	184	4,300,590

By midnight on Election Day, [Tilden] was ahead of his opponent, Rutherford B. Hayes, a Republican, by 250,000 votes and had amassed 184 of the 185 necessary Electoral College votes. But the counts in three Southern states were in dispute, partly because many thousands of Black people had been violently kept away from polling places. For five months, Hayes refused to concede. Finally, in March 1877, the parties reached a compromise. Policies that were carried out after the end of the Civil War, such as stationing troops throughout the South to protect Black Americans, ended. In exchange, the presidency was handed to Hayes who became known as “His Fraudulency.”⁷

Question:

- *How did the Electoral College contribute to political controversy in the 1800s?*

⁶ “[The House of Representatives Elected John Quincy Adams as President](#),” History, Art, & Archives: United States House of Representatives, accessed July 29, 2025.

⁷ Levinson and Levinson, *Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws That Affect Us Today*, 134.

VI) Controversy and the Electoral College, Part II-- Not a Popularity Contest

**THE ELECTORAL COLLEGE HANDED
THE WHITE HOUSE TO THE
LESS POPULAR CANDIDATE
3 TIMES AFTER TILDEN**

IN 1888



IN 2000



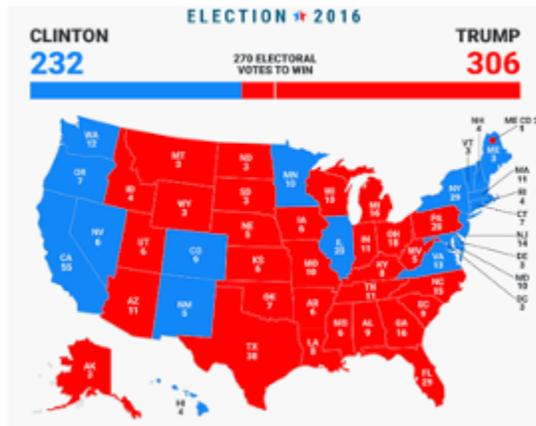
IN 2016



**GROVER CLEVELAND
GOT 90,000
MORE VOTES THAN
BENJAMIN HARRISON,
BUT HARRISON WON**

**AL GORE JR.
GOT 500,000
MORE VOTES THAN
GEORGE W. BUSH,
BUT BUSH WON**

**HILLARY RODHAM
CLINTON
GOT 2,800,000
MORE VOTES THAN
DONALD J. TRUMP
BUT TRUMP WON**



Graphic credit: Cynthia Levinson and Sanford Levinson, *Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws That Affect Us Today*, 3rd Edition, 153.

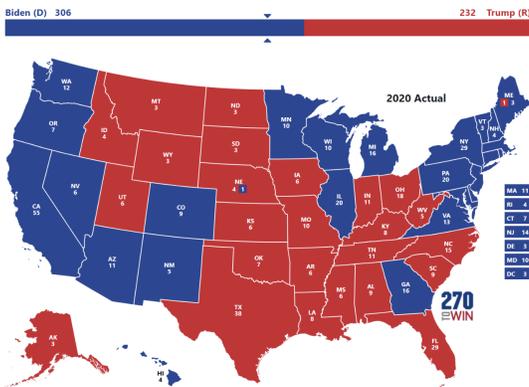
Question:

- *How has the Electoral College determined elections' outcomes? Why might those outcomes undermine people's faith in presidential elections?*

VII) Controversy and the Electoral College, Part III- The 2020 Election

In 2020, amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the economic crisis that it caused, and an increasing recognition of systemic oppression and racism, Donald Trump ran for a second term against former vice president Joe Biden. The election saw the highest voter turnout since 1900, with many Americans voting by

mail and absentee ballot. Though Election Day was on Tuesday, November 3rd, days passed until enough states counted and certified their votes to determine the winner. On Saturday, November 7th, Pennsylvania declared that its 20 Electoral votes would go to Biden, and he was officially declared the winner and the 46th president. Ultimately, Biden won the popular vote by four percentage points and the Electoral vote 306-232.



As the ballots were counted and after the results of the election were announced, Trump and his allies raised the possibility of widespread voter fraud, filing lawsuits in multiple states to have ballots recounted or thrown out. These lawsuits were not successful; nevertheless, among some conservatives, accusations that the election was “stolen” continued. In 2022, a group of prominent Republicans including senators, judges, and appointed officials published a report condemning election fraud claims and making clear that, after reviewing the evidence, Trump’s claims had no merit. These claims, though, led directly to the insurrection at the Capitol on January 6, 2021 as Congress met to certify the vote and were a persistent topic in Trump’s 2024 presidential campaign. (Map Source: [270toWin](#))

Mischief in the Electoral College

Some Republicans tried to change the Electoral College outcome in 2021, after Joe Biden won both the popular vote and 306 electoral votes.

On January 6, seven states sent a total of eighty-four "fake" electors, who had not been voted on the previous November, to the joint session of Congress. They hoped to persuade Vice President Mike Pence to cast ballots for Donald J. Trump rather than Biden. He refused to do so. Along with Trump, many of them have been charged with fraud and other crimes in some states; many have not.

The Framers surely did not foresee—and could not have prevented—this method of undermining the Constitutional process they put in place.⁸

Question:

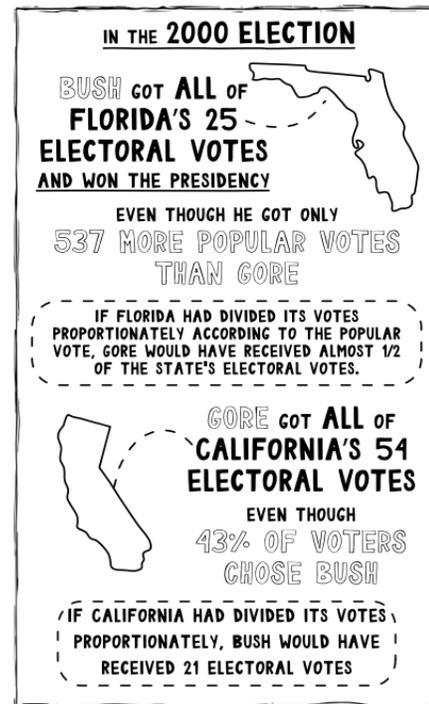
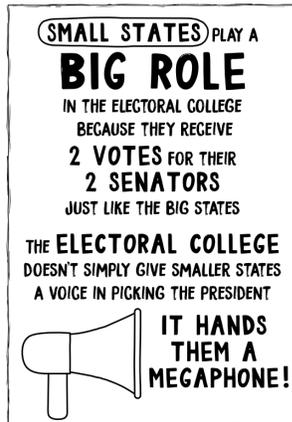
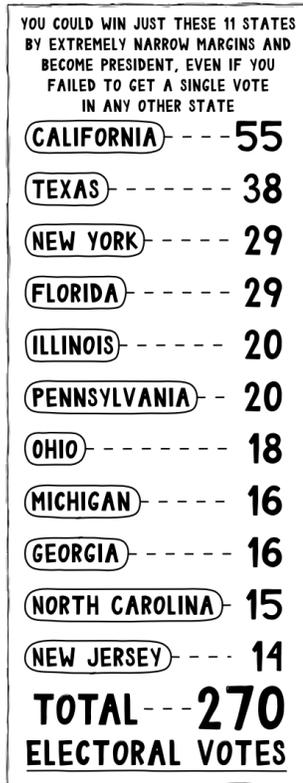
- *Based on the 2020 election, how might the Electoral College become a source of controversy even when the popular and Electoral votes align?*

⁸ Levinson and Levinson, *Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws That Affect Us Today*, 3rd Edition, 158.

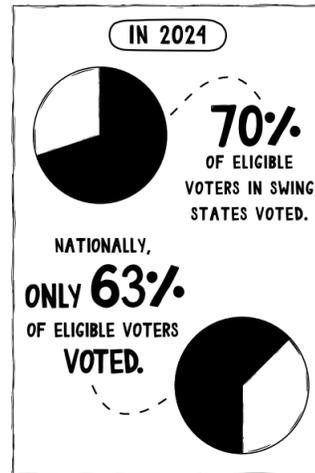
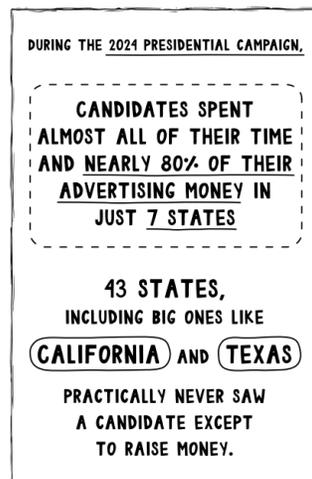
VIII) The Electoral College Today in Graphics⁹

“Big” States v. “Small” States

Winner Take All



The Power of the Swing State



Question:

- To what extent is the Electoral College problematic today?

⁹ All graphics from: Levinson and Levinson, *Fault Lines in the Constitution: The Framers, Their Fights, and the Flaws That Affect Us Today*, 3rd edition, clockwise from top left: 154; 152; 153; 155, and 155.

VIII) The Debate Over the Electoral College

Pro:

- The Electoral College ensures that all parts of the country are involved in selecting the President of the United States.
- The Electoral College was created to protect the voices of the minority from being overwhelmed by the will of the majority.
- The Electoral College can preclude calls for recounts or demands for runoff elections, giving certainty to presidential elections.

Why We Need the Electoral College

By Peter J. Wallison, [Real Clear Politics](#), December 06, 2016

The most important is that we want the presidential election to settle the question of legitimacy—who is entitled to carry on the office of the president. Under the Constitution, the person who receives the most electoral votes becomes the president, even if he or she does not receive either a plurality or a majority of the popular vote.

In the election of 1992, Bill Clinton received a majority of electoral votes and was the duly elected president, despite the fact that he received only a plurality (43 percent) of the popular votes. A third party candidate, Ross Perot, received almost 19 percent. In fact, Bill Clinton did not win a majority of the popular vote in either of his elections, yet there was never any doubt—because he won an Electoral College majority—that he had the legitimacy to speak for the American people.

This points to the reason why the Electoral College should remain as an important element of our governmental structure. If we had a pure popular vote system, as many people who are disappointed with the 2016 outcome are now proposing, it would not be feasible—because of third party candidates—to ensure that any candidate would win a popular majority. Even in 2016, for example, although Hillary Clinton won the popular vote, she only received a plurality (48 percent)—not a majority; third party candidates took the rest.

If we abandoned the Electoral College, and adopted a system in which a person could win the presidency with only a plurality of the popular votes we would be swamped with candidates. Every group with an ideological or major policy interest would field a candidate, hoping that their candidate would win a plurality and become the president.

There would candidates of the pro-life and pro-choice parties; free trade and anti-trade parties; pro-immigration and anti-immigration parties; and parties favoring or opposing gun control—just to use the hot issues of today as examples.

We see this effect in parliamentary systems, where the party with the most votes after an election has to put together a coalition of many parties in order to create a governing majority in the Parliament. Unless we were to scrap the constitutional system we have today and adopt a parliamentary structure, we could easily end up with a president elected with only 20 percent-25 percent of the vote.

Of course, we could graft a run-off system onto our Constitution; the two top candidates in, say, a 10-person race, would then run against one another for the presidency. But that could easily mean that the American people would have a choice between a candidate of the pro-choice party and a candidate of the pro-gun party. If you thought the choice was bad this year, it could be far worse.

Con:

- The Electoral College gives too much power to "swing states" and allows the presidential election to be decided by a handful of states.
- The Electoral College is rooted in slavery and racism.
- The Electoral College undermines representative democracy and the notion of one person, one vote.

These 3 Common Arguments For Preserving the Electoral College Are Wrong

[*Time Magazine*](#), November 15, 2016 (Excerpted)

Myth #1: Electors filter the passions of the people

College students first learning about the Electoral College will often defend the system by citing its original purpose: to provide a check on the public in case they make a poor choice for president.

But electors no longer work as independent agents nor as agents of the state legislature. They're chosen for their party loyalty by party conventions or party leaders....

There have been scattered faithless electors in past elections, but they've never influenced the outcome of a presidential election. Since winner-take-all laws began in the 1820s, electors have rarely acted independently or against the wishes of the party that chose them. A majority of states even have laws requiring the partisan electors to keep their pledges when voting....

Myth #2: Rural areas would get ignored

Since 2000, a popular argument for the Electoral College made on conservative websites and talk radio is that without the Electoral College, candidates would spend all their time campaigning in big cities and would ignore low-population areas.

Other than this odd view of democracy, which advocates spending as much campaign time in areas where few people live as in areas where most Americans live, the argument is simply false. The Electoral College causes candidates to spend all their campaign time in cities in 10 or 12 states rather than in 30, 40 or 50 states.

Presidential candidates don't campaign in rural areas no matter what system is used, simply because there are not a lot of votes to be gained in those areas....

Even in the swing states where they do campaign, the candidates focus on urban areas where most voters live....

Myth #3: It creates a mandate to lead

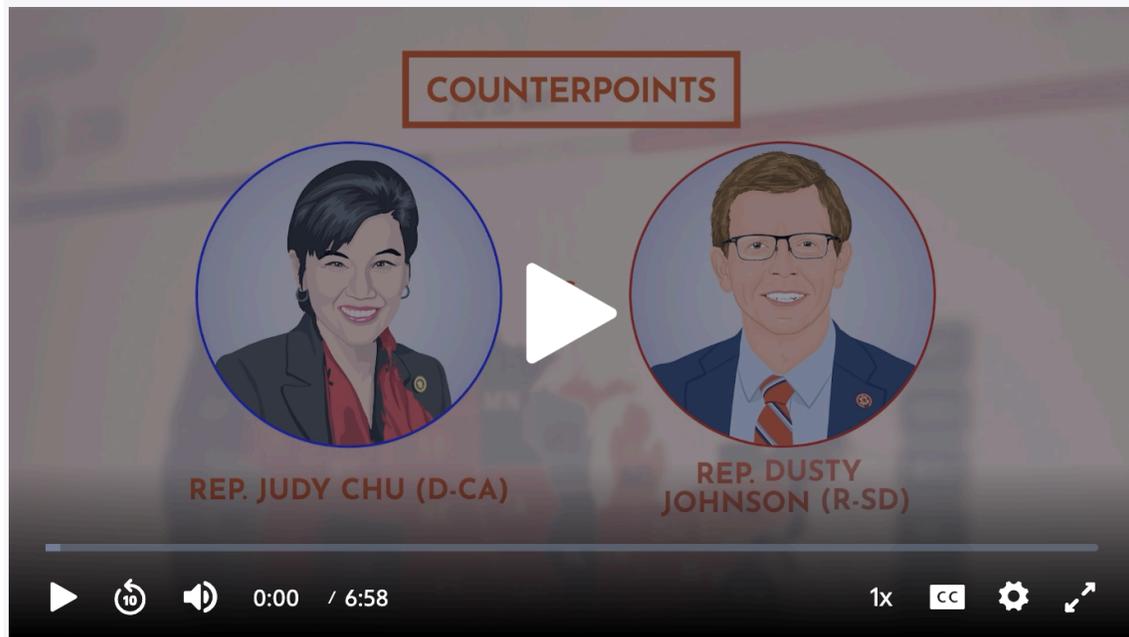
Some have advocated continuation of the Electoral College because its winner-take-all nature at the state level causes the media and the public to see many close elections as landslides, thereby giving a stronger mandate to govern for the winning candidate.

In 1980, Ronald Reagan won 51 percent of the national popular vote but 91 percent of the electoral vote, giving the impression of a landslide victory and allowing him to convince Congress to approve parts of his agenda....

In 2016, Trump won by a large margin in the Electoral College, while winning fewer popular votes than Clinton nationwide. Nonetheless, former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani announced that Trump's Electoral College victory gives him a mandate to govern.

Perhaps for incoming presidents, this artificial perception of landslide support is a good thing. It helps them enact their agenda....

Video: [Should the Electoral College Be Eliminated? | A Starting Point](#), PBS LearningMedia



Question:

- *What are some of the most significant arguments for and against the Electoral College?*

Students should also see...

- Allen Guelzo and James Hulme, "[In Defense of the Electoral College](#)," *Washington Post*, November 15, 2016.
- Cynthia & Sanford Levinson, "[Can't We Just Get Rid of the Electoral College?](#)" *Fault Lines in the Constitution*, January 28, 2020.
- Natalie Proulx, "[Should the US Get Rid of the Electoral College?](#)," *The New York Times*, March 28, 2019.

Student Resources

Directions: Students will fill in the following graphic organizer using the information in these resources.

<p>Three reasons the Framers created the Electoral College</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>Key moments in Electoral College history</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>Three arguments FOR the Electoral College</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>Three arguments AGAINST the Electoral College</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>
<p>This information influenced my opinion on the Electoral College because...</p>	<p>This information influenced my opinion on the Electoral College because...</p>	<p>This information influenced my opinion on the Electoral College because...</p>	<p>This information influenced my opinion on the Electoral College because...</p>

I believe we should **KEEP/ ABOLISH/ CHANGE** the Electoral College. (Circle one)

Explain your response:

Activity #1:

Using the resources and their graphic organizers, students will respond to the following questions:

- To what extent should the Electoral College be considered a “fault line” in the Constitution?
- What suggestions would you make to resolve the debate over the Electoral College?

Students can respond to the questions in one of the following ways*: essay; newspaper editorial or letter to the editor; speech (recorded on video); PowerPoint presentation/Google slides; captioned illustration; song (recorded on video); poem; or iMovie. (Other presentation methods at the teacher’s discretion.)

All work must meet the following requirements:

- Clearly state an opinion on the Electoral College.
- Thoughtfully respond to both questions.
- Use evidence from the resources to support claims.
- Acknowledge both sides of the debate.
- Include information on past events and current issues.
- Evaluate information to draw an original conclusion.
- Remain focused on the topic and task assigned.

**The recommended activities refer to work students will complete independently. Teachers may also choose to use this information to prepare students for a debate, Socratic seminar, philosophical chairs activity, or any other large group activity where circumstances allow.*

Activity #2:

In Chapter 22 of *Fault Lines in the Constitution* Cynthia and Sanford Levinson grade the Constitution based on the way that it fulfills the goals asserted in the Preamble:

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

The authors divide their report card into the following categories--form a more perfect union; establish justice; insure domestic tranquility; provide for the common defense; promote the general welfare; secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity—and assign composite grades based on the various aspects of the Constitution they evaluate in their book.

After studying the Electoral College, including the material in *Fault Lines* and outside sources, it's your turn to grade the Constitution! Based on what you learned and the ideas you formed about the Electoral College, please grade the Constitution in the following categories. Don't forget to add comments!

The Constitution's Report Card

Subject	Grade	Comments
Form a More Perfect Union		
Establish Justice		
Insure Domestic Tranquility		
Promote the General Welfare		
Secure Blessings of Liberty to Ourselves and Our Posterity		
Average		