

Middle School Resource Guide 2008



**Indiana State
Bar Association**
One Indiana Square, Suite 530
Indianapolis, IN 46204
www.inbar.org

**Indiana Secretary of
State's Office**
302 W. Washington St.
Indianapolis, IN 46204
www.in.gov/sos

**Indiana Department of
Education**
State House, Room 229
Indianapolis, IN 46204
www.doe.state.in.us

Indiana Bar Foundation
230 E. Ohio St., Suite 400
Indianapolis, IN 46204
www.inbf.org

Table of Contents

GRADES 6-8 THEME: WHERE IN THE WORLD IS YOUR CANDIDATE?

Lesson 1:	Traveling the Campaign Trail	3
Lesson 2:	Tracking the Campaign Through the Media	8
Lesson 3:	Political Debates	12

Grade Level 6 - 8

Lesson 1: *Traveling the Campaign Trail*

INTRODUCTION / MAIN IDEA

This lesson is designed to introduce students to national and state candidates through the monitoring of the campaign trail.

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Social Studies: 8.2.2, 8.2.8, 8.4.4

Math: 6.6.1, 7.6.1

Language Arts: 6.7.11, 6.7.17, 7.7.3, 7.7.10, 8.7.15

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify state and national candidates.
2. Identify the issues associated with each region.
3. Identify the audiences addressed by each candidate.

VOCABULARY

Electoral College – the group of people who are elected to cast the official votes for president and vice president

swing vote – a small block of votes that can change the outcome of an election

MATERIALS:

Indiana and U.S. political maps; handouts – “Travel Log,” “Mileage” and “Regions Graph”; current daily newspaper – one per group; review questions

National Archives and Record Administration, Electoral College: <http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/>

STRATEGIES

1. Divide the class into groups representing each candidate for president and governor. Additional offices may be included if desired.
2. Ask each group to monitor the travel of the designated candidate by plotting on the map and completing the charts and graph daily.
3. Have each group regularly report results to the entire class.
4. Discuss the role of the vice president and lieutenant governor in a campaign.
5. Discuss questions on the review sheet.
6. Ask students to use visuals to share their findings with classmates and parents.

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

- Weekly news magazines.
- Almanacs and atlases.

Grade Level 6 - 8

Lesson I

- Radio and TV newscasts including Channel One and C-Span.
- *Let's Talk Politics* and *Here is Your Indiana Government*, available from the Indiana Chamber of Commerce, 115 West Washington Street, Suite 850 South, Indianapolis, IN 46244-0926. Phone 317-264-6885 or 800-824-6885; www.indianachamber.com
- Internet news.

EVALUATION

The ongoing presentations of each group may be used as an assessment of the success of the activity based on teacher observation and student response. Students may do a self-evaluation.

EXTENSIONS

This lesson may also be used to teach:

1. Fact and opinion.
2. Primary and secondary resources.
3. Persuasive speeches.
4. Math skill of averaging.
5. Map skills of scale, longitude/latitude, and location.

Grade Level 6 - 8

Lesson I _____

Travel Log

Candidate _____

date	city — region	audience	issue(s)
(example) Sept. 1	Detroit – Midwest	UAW	foreign trade

Grade Level 6 - 8

Lesson I

Mileage

Candidate

date	city of origin / city of destination	miles traveled today	total miles traveled to date (aggregate miles)
(example) Sept. 1	Indianapolis-Chicago-	160 + 100 = 260	260

Region Graph

	number of times visited			
10				
9				
8				
7				
6				
5				
4				
3				
2				
1				
	West	Midwest	South	Northeast

Candidate _____

REGIONS

West: AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

Midwest: IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI

South: AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, OK, SC, TN, TX, VA, WV

Northeast: CT, DC, DE, MA, MD, ME, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT

Grade Level 6 - 8

Lesson 2: *Tracking the Campaign Through the Media*

INTRODUCTION / MAIN IDEA

This lesson is designed to help students observe, interpret, analyze, and evaluate campaign ads throughout the media.

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Social Studies: 8.2.2, 8.2.8, 8.2.9

Language Arts: 6.4.3, 6.4.7, 6.7.8, 6.7.11, 7.5.3, 7.5.5, 7.7.1, 7.7.7, 8.4.1, 8.4.4, 8.7.1, 8.7.8, 8.7.9



OBJECTIVES

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify negative and positive campaign advertising.
2. Analyze the major issues of the campaign.
3. Discuss the strategy for campaign ad decisions.
4. Identification of advertising techniques. See lessons from grades 2-3 and high school on this subject.

VOCABULARY

campaign advertising – media messages in support of a candidate

campaign issues – topics that candidates express their views about

media – print and electronic communications (newspapers, magazines, radio, movies, television, billboards, posters, etc.)

propaganda - spreading of ideas, information, or rumor for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution, a cause, or a person

MATERIALS

Handouts – “Issues Chart,” “Media Tracking Chart”; daily newspaper – one per group; media outlets – TV/radio; campaign journal – one per group

STRATEGIES

1. Divide the class into groups representing each candidate for president and governor. Additional offices may be included if desired.
2. Ask each group to chart the media findings of the previous day on the issues and media tracking charts. Media coverage includes news stories and advertising.
3. Ask each group to create a daily entry in a journal about the candidate’s media campaign.
4. Exhibit the charts and journal for fellow students, teachers and parents.

Grade Level 6 - 8

Lesson 2

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

- Weekly new magazines.
- Radio and TV newscasts including Channel One and C-Span.
- Dictionary
- Internet

EVALUATION

The ongoing presentations of each group may be used as an assessment of the success of the activity based on teacher observation and student response. Have students do a self-evaluation.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

The following are suggested questions to be used daily, weekly, or as a culmination to the study. This is merely a partial listing of the possibilities.

1. Why did the candidate choose to visit this locale?
2. Why did the candidate revisit the locale?
3. Where should the candidate visit and why?
4. Does the candidate appear to focus on certain regions more than others? What could be a reason for this emphasis? (swing vote state?)
5. What determines a swing vote state? Is the state being visited a swing vote state?
6. What effect does this state have on the Electoral College?
7. Is it possible to identify a trend in the campaign?

POST ELECTION QUESTIONS

1. Why were candidate _____'s strategies successful/unsuccessful?
2. Which region had the greatest influence on the outcome of the election?
3. Did this swing the election? Why or why not?
4. Which issues had the greatest effect on the outcome of the election?

Issues Chart

Candidate _____

number of times mentioned	7					
	6					
	5					
	4					
	3					
	2					
	1					
	Issues					

Media Tracking Chart

date – media	issue	negative/positive	intended audience
(example) Sept. 1 – C-Span	environment	positive	Sierra Club

Grade Level 6 - 8

Lesson 3: *Political Debates*

INTRODUCTION / MAIN IDEA

This lesson is designed to help students evaluate, understand, interpret and observe political debates that take place before a major election.

INDIANA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Social Studies: 8.2.7, 8.2.8, 8.2.9, 8.2.10

Language Arts: 6.4.3, 6.4.7, 6.7.8, 6.7.11, 7.5.3, 7.5.5, 7.7.1, 7.7.7, 8.4.1, 8.4.4, 8.7.1, 8.7.8, 8.7.9

OBJECTIVES

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to:

1. Identify debate techniques.
2. Evaluate the success of debating strategies.
3. Analyze the importance of appearance and body language.
4. Compare and contrast style versus content.

VOCABULARY

platform – a document stating the aims and principles of a political party

plank – an endorsed policy in the platform of a political party

stump speech – the “standard” speech of a candidate running for office - that he or she is likely to use, perhaps with slight variations, on normal occasions

message - the general point(s) conveyed in a candidate’s communication

STRATEGIES

1. Divide the class into groups representing each candidate for president and governor. Additional offices may be included if desired.
2. Ask each group to watch a political debate with their designated candidates and then summarize by answering the following questions:
 - What were the main issues addressed by the candidates?
 - What was the stance of each candidate in relation to the main issues addressed?
 - Did the candidates stance reflect the platform of their political party?
 - Identify the plank of each candidate.
 - Which candidate had the best appearance and style during the debate?
 - Which candidate had the best content during the debate?
 - Who do you think won the debate? Explain why.
3. Ask your students to share their summary with classmates and parents.

Grade Level 6 - 8

Lesson 3

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

- Examples of style versus content
- The 1960 Nixon versus Kennedy debate. In this particular debate, television audiences thought Kennedy had won the debate while radio audiences thought Nixon had won the debate.
- Examples of technology advancements in political debates
- Radio and TV
- Newspaper, magazines and the Internet
- The Commission on Presidential Debates <http://www.debates.org>.