

A.II.55

Business communication: speaking

The U.S. presidential elections – How they vote in the United States of America

Nach einer Idee von Paul Jenkinson

Illustration von Julia Lenzmann



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Trump oder Biden? Republikaner oder Demokraten? Und wie funktionieren die Wahlen überhaupt? Die Präsidentschaftswahlen am 3. November 2020 in den USA werden nicht nur einen Einfluss auf die Vereinigten Staaten, sondern auf die ganze Welt haben – und somit auch auf die Lebenswelt Ihrer Lernenden an den beruflichen Schulen. Die Schülerinnen und Schüler lernen anhand einer Postervorlage das amerikanische Wahlsystem kennen und erarbeiten mithilfe eines Textes, wofür die beiden großen Parteien stehen. Die Materialien der Reihe fördern interkulturelle Kompetenzen und ermöglichen, komplexe Sachverhalte besser zu verstehen und einzuordnen.

KOMPETENZPROFIL

Niveau:	A2/B1
Dauer:	3–4 Unterrichtsstunden
Kompetenzen:	1. Sprechen: sich über das amerikanische Wahlsystem austauschen und darüber diskutieren; 2. Leseverstehen: einem Poster und einem Informationstext relevante Informationen entnehmen; 3. Medienkompetenz: eine Internetrecherche durchführen
Thematische Bereiche:	USA, Wahlen, Wahlsystem, Politik
Medien:	Texte, Video
Zusatzmaterialien:	Poster(vorlage)



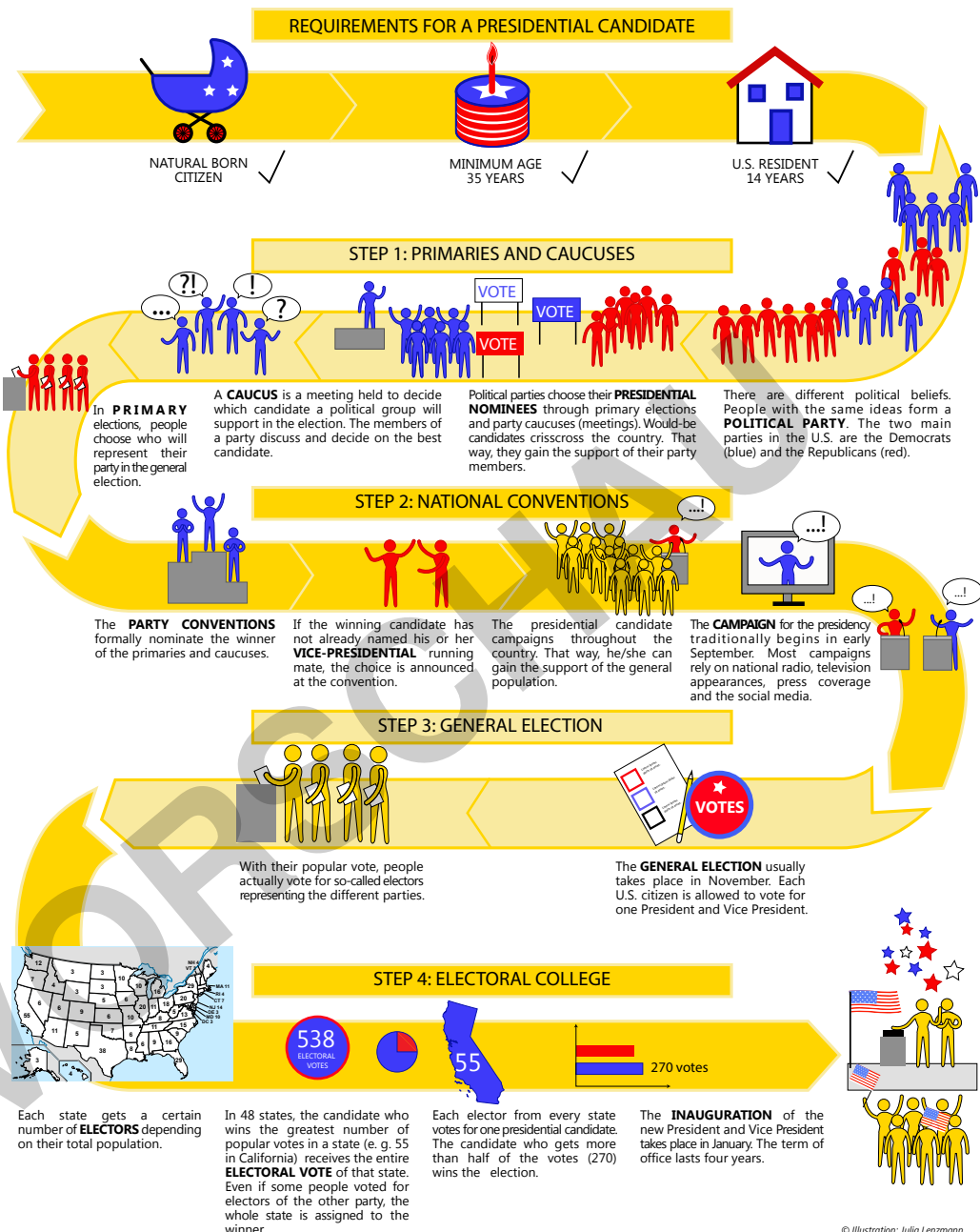
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Part A – The road to presidency in the United States

THE ROAD TO **PRESIDENCY** IN THE **UNITED STATES**



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DEFINITION
Elector/Electoral College: This is the institution through which Americans elect the President and Vice President. Americans are voting for officials called electors who are assigned to each presidential candidate. The U.S. Constitution gives only one requirement for serving as an elector: "No Senator or Representative, or Person holding an Office of Trust or Profit under the United States, shall be appointed an Elector". It is generally taken to mean that members of the Cabinet or other high-ranking executive branch members cannot serve as electors. The number of electoral votes displayed here is based on the 2010 Census.
Congress: the elected group of politicians in the U.S. who are responsible for making the law, consisting of the Senate and the House of Representatives; the Senate consists of two Senators per state; the number of Representatives (electors) depends on the total population of each state

Vocabulary

requirement: die Voraussetzung – **party:** die Partei – **primary election:** die Vorwahl – **caucus:** das Gremium, die Fraktionssitzung – **to crisscross sth.:** etw. durchkreuzen – **to gain sth.:** etw. gewinnen – **formally:** offiziell – **running mate:** der/die Kandidat/in für die Vizepräsidentschaft – **to announce sth.:** etw. bekannt geben – **to campaign:** Wahlkampf führen – **popular vote:** die Volksabstimmung, landesweites Ergebnis einer Präsidentschaftswahl in der Bevölkerung – **elector:** der Wahlmann – **electoral vote:** Ergebnis einer Präsidentschaftswahl im Wahlmännergremium – **inauguration:** die Amtseinsetzungszeremonie

to limit possession of assault⁸ weapons. Democrats are against the death penalty preferring it to be replaced by life sentences.

Education: *“Democrats know that every child, no matter who they are, how much their families earn, or where they live, should have access to a high-quality education, from preschool through high school and beyond.”* Improving public education through reforms and the raising of standards is a major aim along with making education available and affordable to everyone: their proposals include having pre-schools for all, reducing university tuition fees and making student loans⁹ cheaper.

The environment: *“[We believe] climate change poses a real and urgent threat to our economy, our national security, and our children’s health and futures, and that Americans deserve the jobs and security that come from becoming the clean energy superpower of the 21st century.”* Democrats are supportive of measures to protect the environment and respond to climate change. Increasing alternative energy sources from solar parks to wind farms is high on their agenda, together with reducing emissions through stricter controls. However, they also want to balance taking environmental action with developing the economy, not at the cost of it. In addition, they wish to expand conservation areas.

Immigration: Democrats see a need to control immigration but they want to make obtaining¹⁰ American citizenship easier for immigrants.

Foreign policy: Democrats tend to adopt a softer approach to foreign policy and are less inclined¹¹ to use military action. Consequently, they would reduce military spending. There are concerns that democracy is at risk through poor leadership: this needs to be addressed in order for America to regain respect.

Author: Paul Jenkinson; all quotations are from the Democratic Party Platform

Vocabulary

1 **to foster:** etw. fördern – 2 **minimum health care system:** das grundlegende Gesundheitssystem – 3 **voluntary paid-in:** freiwilliges Einzahlen – 4 **to intervene:** einschreiten – 5 **to advocate sth.:** etw. unterstützen, befürworten – 6 **incentive:** der Anreiz – 7 **to uphold sth.:** etw. aufrechterhalten – 8 **assault weapon:** die Handwaffe – 9 **student loan:** das Studiendarlehen – 10 **to obtain sth.:** etw. bekommen, erhalten – 11 **inclined:** geneigt, bereit

Partner B: What do the Republicans stand for?

The **Republican Party** – also referred to as the Grand Old Party, or GOP – is conservative and strongly adheres¹ to the concept that individuals and companies control their own destinies² without undue support or interference from the government. Economic success is believed to be gained from having free markets, without imposed³ minimum wages, for example, or other restrictions.

5 Core beliefs

Health care: *“While a safety net should exist for those Americans that desperately need it, a free market system is the best solution to providing the greatest possible care to the most amount of Americans.”* Republicans are against a universal health care system, instead they believe people should pay for their own health care insurance. They see government rules being responsible for high costs, therefore relaxing them would reduce these costs benefitting everyone.

The economy: *“Central to our economic agenda is a commitment to revive jobs and industry here in the United States. [...] We want to make it easier for businesses to open up in America, and to encourage, not punish, American innovators.”* Republicans believe economic growth is fostered⁴ through low taxes; subsequently, they are against the rich being taxed more. The wealthy and entrepreneurs⁵ are more likely to invest in businesses and, therefore, indirectly contribute to job opportunities for everyone. They believe that businesses should have the freedom to decide on

