

On the Campaign Trail

Examining the U.S. Election System Through a Mock
Political Campaign



About the Buck Institute for Education

Founded in 1987, the Buck Institute for Education works to expand the effective use of Project Based Learning throughout the world. BIE is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization based in Novato, California and is a beneficiary of the Leonard and Beryl Buck Trust. In addition, BIE has received grant support from the Fund for the Improvement of Post Secondary Education (FIPSE), the US Congress Office of Technology Assessment (OTA) and the US Department of Education Dwight D. Eisenhower Professional Development State Grant Program. BIE provides PBL professional development services and curriculum materials to school districts, state departments of education, foundations, and other clients in the United States and abroad.

Project Based Government Primary Author: John Larmer

Project Based Government Series Editor: Greg Timmons

©2012 Interact
10200 Jefferson Blvd • P.O. Box 802 Culver City, CA 90232
Phone: (800) 359-0961 • www.teachinteract.com
ISBN# 978-1-56004-754-4

All rights reserved. Interaction Publishers Inc. grants permission to reproduce activity sheets and student handouts for classroom use. No other part of this publication may be reproduced in whole or in part, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise—without prior written permission from the publisher.

Table of Contents

Foreword	1
Introduction	3
Chapter One	3
Teaching Government With Project Based Learning	8
Chapter Two	8
Teaching Strategies for <i>Project Based Government</i>	12
Chapter Three:	
Sample Lesson—Can We Believe This?	18
Guidelines for Conducting the “Live” Phone Interview and Playing Chris Blair	23
Memo From Representative Gina Amadeo	25
What Makes a Poll Believable?	26
Chapter Four: <i>On the Campaign Trail</i>	27
Purpose and Overview	27
Step-by-Step Teaching Guide	37
Teacher Materials	57
Campaign Management	57
Campaign Finance Reform	72
Who Votes?	73
Campaign Slogans and Themes	73
Direct Mail	75
Writing Pieces	77
Assessment Tools	80

Table of Contents

Table: The Stand the Candidate Should Take on the Issues Answer Key	80
Scoring Guide for the Table	82
Checklist: Statement Describing the Campaign Message	83
Scoring Guide For Final Media Pieces and Presentation.....	84
Test for <i>On the Campaign Trail</i> Answer Key	86
Student Materials.....	91
Entry Document: Memo From Governor Brown	91
First Memo from Dario Martinez: Watts Campaign	92
First Memo from Dario Martinez: Gonzales Campaign.....	95
Table: The Stand the Candidate Should Take on the Issues.....	98
Second Memo from Dario Martinez: Watts Campaign	100
Second Memo from Dario Martinez: Gonzales Campaign.....	102
Press Release	104
Sample Press Release	106
Test for <i>On the Campaign Trail</i>	107
Teacher Feedback Form.....	113
Release Form for Photographic Images	114

Foreword

Students learn more when they care about what they are learning. Students understand concepts better if they see how these concepts apply to the world outside of school. Students retain information longer if they are actively engaged in the discussion and demonstration of what they are learning.

Too many American classrooms never utilize these principles. But *Project Based Government (PBG)* is built upon them. It addresses the concepts and content defined by the *National Standards for Civics and Government* from the Center for Civic Education, grades 9–12, and the *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies*, developed by the National Council for the Social Studies for high school, in such a way that the material becomes meaningful and engaging to students. *PBG* reverses the traditional method of “teach the concepts first, then give students the opportunity to apply them.” Instead, *PBG* places students in an interesting scenario with an open-ended problem and asks them to arrive at a justifiable solution using civics concepts. The project thus “pulls” students through the content. The teacher’s role is to clarify, facilitate, and guide rather than “push” unmotivated students toward the learning objectives.

Research has shown project-based curricula to have positive effects on student learning. *PBL* methodology helps teachers build valuable interdisciplinary “21st-century skills” in students, including collaboration, critical thinking/problem-solving, and presentation making. Studies have shown that there are important cognitive benefits with the *PBL* methodology. We have found that *PBG* works well for diverse students in a variety of school settings. Skilled teachers in alternative education programs, continuation high schools, and other settings have reported success with these materials.

These units were developed by the Buck Institute for Education and pilot-tested and critiqued by a group of energetic, insightful teachers throughout California. Although too many teachers have been involved to thank each one by name, we are extremely grateful for their time, insight, and contributions to making these units successful. In addition, there have been a number of university professors, nonprofit organization staff, and school district leaders who have contributed to unit development. We have benefited from their observations and suggestions, and we offer a collective “Thank you!”

Please visit the Interact website (www.teachinteract.com) to find out about professional development offerings and conference presentations.

John Mergendoller, Ph.D. *Executive Director, Buck Institute for Education*

John Larmer, M.A. *Director of Product Development, Buck Institute for Education*

Introduction

Chapter One

What is Project Based Learning?

Project Based Learning (PBL) is an instructional method in which students:

- Engage in a rigorous, extended process of inquiry focused on complex, authentic questions and problems
- Work as independently from the teacher as possible and have some degree of “voice and choice”
- Demonstrate in-depth understanding of academic knowledge and skills
- Build 21st-century skills such as collaboration, presentation, and critical thinking/problem-solving
- Create high-quality products and performances which are presented to a public audience

PBL is often cited as a valuable method by educators promoting differentiated instruction, multiple intelligences theory, learning-styles theory, 21st-century skills, and the “new 3 Rs” of rigor, relevance, and relationships.

In PBL, the project *drives* the curriculum—it provides the structure for teaching and learning. A project is not just an “applied learning activity” that follows a traditionally taught unit of instruction. Nor is it discovery learning in its most basic form, in which students are provided with tools and activities that allow them to “discover” knowledge and skills with minimal guidance from a teacher. Instead, PBL challenges students to solve a problem through the application of content knowledge and collaborative resource-gathering, investigation, discussion, and decision-making.

Each project in *Project Based Government (PBG)* is a complete unit of instruction centered on a scenario that presents students with an engaging, realistic problem with more than one possible reasonable solution. To resolve the problem successfully, students realize they need to understand civics concepts and how government operates. This increases their motivation to learn the curriculum. Coaching students to resolve the problem posed in each unit requires a teacher to weave together a number of instructional components while remaining focused on the civics concepts around which the project is organized.

Phases of a Project Based Government unit: how learning unfolds

Although structured flexibly enough to allow for student discovery and independent learning, all *PBG* projects follow a series of steps or phases. These phases may sometimes overlap, but can generally be defined as follows:

Project launch—the Entry Event

At the start of each *PBG* project, students either receive some type of authentic correspondence or have an authentic experience intended to engage them in the project scenario. The “Entry Event” provokes interest and generates curiosity, leading naturally to the next phase.

Framing the inquiry—Driving Question and Knowledge Inventory

To begin the inquiry and problem-solving process, students as a class analyze their task and write a “Driving Question” that guides the project. The teacher coaches students in the construction of a Driving Question that summarizes the problem to be resolved, which in *PBG* is written according to the model:

How can we, as _____, do _____ so that _____?

The teacher also leads the class through a discussion and recording of knowledge that the students already have (know) and information that they still require (need to know) in order to arrive at an answer to the Driving Question. This process is repeated periodically throughout the lesson.

Problem-solving and learning activities

The project scenario unfolds as students receive additional information about the problem to be solved. Students work in teams to conduct independent investigation and complete project tasks while the teacher provides resources and lessons guided by the students’ “Need-to-Know List.” A Project Log is used to check for student understanding of key civics terms and concepts. The class revises the knowledge inventory periodically and revisits the Driving Question to help stay on track toward a reasonable resolution to the scenario. The teacher monitors students’ progress and watches for “teachable moments” when students recognize their need to know more about civics.

Presentation, assessment, and debrief

The project culminates as students finalize their solution to the problem posed in the scenario. Students prepare authentic products and present them to an audience and/or publicly discuss each group’s work. The

teacher uses a rubric to evaluate the students' work and may also choose to administer a test to assess learning. The last step is to debrief the project with students, discussing both civics content and the process by which it was learned.

Teaching in the PBL environment

Although Project Based Learning is designed to foster active, engaged learning, students do not work completely on their own or exclusively with their peers when addressing the problem presented in a scenario. PBL is most effective when accompanied by *project-based teaching*.

In PBL, the teacher guides students through the process of collaborative problem-solving and the creation of high-quality products and performances. Teachers are an important provider of subject-area knowledge and remain responsible for monitoring and assessing student learning, clarifying content-related concepts and misconceptions, assigning students to work groups, and managing what goes on in the classroom. Although traditional tools such as lectures, homework, and quizzes still have a place in this setting, they are used in the meaningful context of solving a problem. The role of the teacher using PBL is to make learning “inevitable” by carefully managing the learning process and promoting a spirit of inquiry.

Make it a collaborative effort

The timing and extent of a teacher's instructional interventions differ from those used in traditional approaches. Effective teachers in PBL wait for teachable moments, when students are interested and ready to learn, before intervening or providing the necessary content explanations; they present or clarify concepts once students realize they need to understand subject-area content in order to solve the problem. Project Based Learning is most effective when it is a collaborative effort between the teacher and students, with the teacher as the senior partner.

This collaboration begins by engaging students in the problem to be solved. As you launch the unit, it is important not to reveal too much about the problem that students are about to encounter and not to pre-teach the content and take away the motivation to learn that comes after students are “hooked” by the Entry Event. Take the problem seriously. While acknowledging that it is a scenario, point out that the problem is closely modeled on what happens in the real world. Heighten student interest and motivation by emphasizing the important effects their decisions will have (summarized in the “so that” part of the Driving Question written by the class). Model genuine interest and enthusiasm for students to take on the challenge of exploring several possible solutions.

The “teacher-as-coach” metaphor applies as students go about the tasks of conducting research, understanding the problem’s complexities, and preparing to present their solutions. Like a good coach watching athletes practice, the teacher needs to observe, diagnose, and guide without doing students’ work for them. Anticipate some needs before they arise, be prepared to meet them, and watch for new needs as they emerge—but wait until they emerge.

One of the biggest challenges for many teachers is to step back and wait for the “need to know” to arise in students. Instead of answering all questions right away, ask, “How could you find that out?” and offer suggestions and resources for further inquiry. If students get stuck at a certain point, act as a “cognitive coach” by modeling thinking strategies. Offer process-oriented comments such as, “How would I approach that issue/task? Well, I might break it down into steps, or I might want to talk with my group about ____ or make sure I understood _____. Or maybe I’d go back to my Need-to-Know List...”

Build classroom culture

Establishing the classroom culture is also important for successful PBL. Students must know that it is all right to take intellectual risks and offer creative solutions for critiques by their classmates and teacher without fear of ridicule. A healthy spirit of give-and-take needs to be fostered in a PBL classroom, as does the habit of reflection. Both students and teacher need to constantly ask: “What are we learning? How are we learning? And what does it mean?”

Another vital part of classroom culture is collaboration. In PBL students work in small groups, and the key to their success is the ability to work together comfortably and productively. If students are not used to group work, these skills must be taught. If students are not working well together, the teacher needs to know how to intervene and smooth things out. And when students share ideas, ask questions, and present their work, whether it is to their own classmates or a public audience, a serious and respectful tone should be the norm.

Invest in planning

A teacher using PBL should be skilled in planning and organization. Before beginning a unit, make sure to read all instructions and prepare materials carefully, but do not over-plan and feel bound by a predetermined timetable. It is hard to predict exactly how each class will approach a project and what needs will arise. A certain amount of flexibility is required, as is the willingness to let go of some expectations and control. Students may propose solutions that you had not considered, or they may want to explore issues in greater depth and breadth.

A teacher also needs skill in the use of performance-based assessment. This means knowing how to assess skills such as collaboration, communication, and time and task management. You can enhance student development of these skills by providing exemplars, well-written rubrics, and chances to practice with helpful feedback.

Teaching in a PBL environment differs from many traditional classrooms in two other ways. First, it can be noisy. That means a teacher (and his or her school neighbors and administrators) must be willing to accept occasional apparent disorder as the inquiry process at work. Second, a teacher must be willing to personally engage with students in ways other than standing in front of the room, delivering content knowledge as the “sage on the stage.” A degree of intellectual and sometimes emotional connection with individual students is often needed to meet the challenges of PBL.

Teaching Government With Project Based Learning

Chapter Two

Project Based Learning (PBL) is an ideal methodology for teaching young people about democratic government and citizenship. Every level of government, and every citizen who affects or is affected by government, solves problems in the course of fulfilling their duties. Governments must raise and spend money, set policies, create laws, and perform services, all while balancing the needs of a complex, changing society. Usually there is no single “right answer” upon which everyone can agree. Citizens voting in elections, communicating with their government, or working in government must solve problems that are complex and open-ended. And the duties of government and citizens are often accomplished in collaboration with others. The skills built by PBL provide good training for what students will need in their lives as members of a democracy.

In *Project Based Government*, students learn how the terms, concepts, and processes described in textbooks apply to the real world. By solving problems rooted in real life, students are able to grasp a fundamental truth about how democracy works—it is “messy.” They see firsthand that each solution to a governmental or political problem almost always has its drawbacks, its winners and losers; that democracy requires debate, disagreement, and ultimately compromise in order to get things done; and that government and politics adapt to changing times that require leaders and citizens to revisit certain basic principles again and again. These themes circulate throughout all the Buck Institute of Education’s *PBG* units. Additionally, the units feature glimpses of ways that students, as future citizens, can take part in the process of governing—including serving on the staff of a political officeholder, working on a campaign team, and joining an organized interest group.

Preparing Students for PBL

Before launching the first *PBG* unit, we recommend introducing students to the concept of Project Based Learning. This can be accomplished with a 45-minute activity: **Can We Believe This?** (See Chapter Three). In this activity students encounter a civics-related situation. As they set about solving the problem, they learn the process for how PBL works. In one class period, they gain experience analyzing an Entry Document, writing a Driving Question, and conducting a Knowledge Inventory—learning how to think and act in different ways than they might be used to in more traditional forms of learning.

The *PBG* units may be taught in a sequence, forming the backbone of an entire semester-long course surveying U.S. government and civics, or more commonly, they may be interspersed with other lessons and activities.

By reviewing the *Content Standards* within each unit, and your own state standards documents, you will see that most major standards are addressed by the *PBG* units. What is not addressed may be taught by adding extensions or exploring topics of particular interest and local emphasis. As you plan the order in which the units will be taught, and determine the prerequisite knowledge students will need, consider the following points about each unit:

A Government for Xlandia

In this unit students are placed in the role of representatives of various democratic nations on a United Nations Task Force. They are asked to advise the leaders of a new nation, just emerging from a dictatorship, about what form of constitutional democracy they ought to build. This unit would be useful near the beginning of a course to provide an overview of constitutional democracy. Alternatively, it could be used near the end of a course to summarize and more deeply reflect upon key points about constitutional democratic government. The unit builds understanding of the basic functions of a constitution, how government power can be limited, and how the U.S. system compares with other democracies. It also asks students to consider the conditions under which democracy takes root and flourishes, and it connects to the study of economics and world history.

The Better Budget

Students in this unit, acting as a focus group for a congressional representative, are asked to recommend cuts in the federal budget, balancing the views of liberals and conservatives about the proper role of government. Teachers find this unit useful near the beginning of the course since it provides actual examples of the basic services and programs funded by government. It also explores the historical and philosophical roots of liberal and conservative ideology, forming a sound basis for discussion of many issues that typically arise in a high school government course.

LegiQuest

In this unit students take the role of lobbyists for an interest group representing young people, investigating ways in which legislation might be steered through Congress. The issues under consideration include school bullying, death penalty, teen steroid use, and gun control. This unit can be used to teach the legislative branch of the federal government. It also touches on the roles of the executive branch, the courts, and the states in enacting public policy. By framing the traditional “how a bill becomes law” lesson in the context of actual issues, and by starting farther back in the law-making process, this unit gives students a deep understanding of the realities of legislation.

Fighting Chance

In the role of first-year associates at a law firm, students are asked to recommend whether their firm ought to take a case heading to the Supreme Court. The case involves a qualified woman who was barred from joining the U.S. Army Special Forces and is challenging the rule as discriminatory based on the right to equal protection guaranteed by the 5th and 14th Amendments. This unit may be taught in the context of the Bill of Rights, and/or as a vehicle for learning about the judicial branch of U.S. government, and the Supreme Court in particular.

On the Campaign Trail

This unit could fit into a course at various points, and it is especially relevant during election years. Students act as media consultants for a local political campaign and must decide how to best “market” a flawed candidate, given local issues and voter characteristics. Ethical dilemmas arise as students learn about the realities of campaigning for office today, providing the teacher and students with an opportunity to critically examine the U.S. election system.

Not In My Backyard

In this unit on local government, students acting as a city manager’s staff must choose the best site for transitional housing for the homeless. They must also defend the city’s policymaking process and balance the demands of various interest groups—learning important lessons about how municipal government works. Since the topic of local government is often neglected, or shoehorned into typical high school government courses, this unit offers a way to teach the content effectively while engaging students with its high-interest topic of homelessness. NIMBY could fit at the beginning, middle, or end of a semester. Some teachers may wish to start a course with the study of local government and/or use this unit to launch an exploration of actual local issues in their community.

What is provided in this unit?

List of Concepts Taught: Each unit provides a list of key concepts students should be learning and provides guidance on how to ensure that they do.

Objectives: Each unit contains a list of objectives outlining what students will learn and experience.

Content Standards: Each unit charts the applied content standards of the *National Standards for Civics and Government* from the Center for Civic Education and *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies*, developed by the National Council for the Social Studies.

Unit Overview: Each unit contains an overview that includes the time required, a summary of the problem to be resolved in a scenario, the civics concepts to be learned, the placement in the curriculum of a typical high school civics course, and the Center for Civics Education standards addressed.

A section on how to teach each unit contains:

- A section of **Student Materials** with all student handout masters.
- A section of **Teacher Materials** with a detailed review of the economic concepts and terminology within the unit, which may be used to guide the preparation of lessons for students, plus a glossary of concept definitions, answer keys for unit assignments, and rubrics for major unit products.
- **Sequence of the Unit**, a quick reference list of each step.
- A **Step-by-Step Teaching Guide**, with detailed instructions about how to manage each step, plus **Resources**, sample **Driving Questions** and **Know/Need-to-Know Lists**, **Content Notes**, prompts for **Project Log** entries, and **Potential Hurdles**.

At various points within each unit, you will see two types of special **Notes to the Teacher** on effective implementation:

Content Notes: The Content Standards section of each unit identifies key concepts students should be learning and provides guidance on how to ensure that they do.

Potential Hurdles indicate certain points during the unit when students might become confused or sidetracked and explain how to help them.

Teaching Strategies for *Project Based Government*

Scaffold learning activities

Students are supported in a variety of ways in the *PBG* units. In addition to “soft scaffolds” such as conversations with a teacher, “hard scaffolds,” such as charts, tables, or worksheets, are provided in each unit to help students learn concepts and organize their ideas. Students practice using civics concepts through oral or written exercises that build knowledge and skills necessary for the culminating task in the unit.

Efficient project-based teaching generally involves selecting content resources for students to use before they embark on solving the problems presented and creating products. These can include civics textbooks, specially prepared handouts, newspaper articles, videos, and online resources. Students should be encouraged to grapple on their own or in small groups with civics concepts and find their own answers to content-related questions as much as possible. Consequently, it is generally best not to assign specific resources but rather to tell students what they can easily access to find the information they need to complete project tasks. It is then up to students and their groups to decide what content resources they are going to pursue.

Provide clarifying lessons at “teachable moments”

PBL is most effective with continual dialogue between the teacher (as a coach) and students. Effective project-based teachers must actively direct students toward the curriculum goals by asking probing questions in class discussions, circulating and listening to discussions in group work, and taking advantage of teachable moments when students are ready to learn. When these moments arise, the teacher has a key role to play in explaining content-related concepts and clarifying misconceptions. The teacher may offer a quick explanation to individuals or small groups, or recognize when all or most of the class needs to be taught something as a whole via direct instruction.

When lectures are given, they should be short (hence the term used in these materials, “*mini-lecture*”) and organized. Limit lectures to the information students need at that point in the problem-solving process. A mini-lecture should be introduced by talking about it as part of the teacher’s role as “coach” for the students’ problem-solving process. It is a good idea to refer to the “Need-to-Know” list and say something like, “Many of you said yesterday that you had questions about _____, so I have some information that will answer those questions.” And, as in all cases when lectures are used, you should use the techniques of good lecturing: engage students by speaking in an interesting style, ask questions, give examples, use visual aids, and pause to have students think, talk, or do some activity.

Use formative assessments

A key part of your job in project-based teaching is to monitor whether students are learning the concepts the project is designed to teach. A variety of formative assessments will help with monitoring, including individual questioning, pop quizzes, checks for understanding with peers, and Project Logs. Here are strategies for using formative assessment tools:

- Listen to student discussions in small groups or as a whole class, and ask questions to provide a window into students' thinking and reveal confusion or misunderstandings.
- Administer a short pop quiz requiring students to demonstrate their understanding of an economic concept.
- Arrange for peers to check each other's understanding by pairing up to explain an economic concept to another student. Follow this by asking students for a show of hands to report how well they thought they explained and how well they (honestly) thought their partner explained the concept. If this check reveals a knowledge gap or misunderstanding, conduct a short whole-class discussion or mini-lecture to consolidate understanding of the idea or concept.

Project Logs provide a structured way of assessing student understanding and are included in *PBG* units at significant points during the project. You may have students record many things in a Project Log or journal, including notes on the process of learning, comments on how well they or their groups are working, or reflections on content-related topics. Project Logs provide for individual accountability for learning the material and allow you to assess the understanding of each student when students work in groups.

Project Log entries *must be checked soon after they are written* if they are to be used effectively as a diagnostic tool. You need to find out what students do and do not know in order to plan the next day's instruction. Apart from skimming them all, one way to do this quickly is to select a small number of representative samples from a range of students in the class. Or, students could be asked to raise their hands according to how well their entries—or their peer's, if they have swapped and read each other's logs—matched the criteria provided.

Once Project Log entries have been reviewed to assess the degree to which individual students understand the conceptual material being addressed, you can plan further instructional actions such as:

- Talking with the class about the concepts in question by giving another mini-lecture

- Talking with certain students or groups to address their misconceptions and misunderstandings
- Giving additional textbook reading assignments, and/or directing students to online resources and explanations
- Arranging peer teaching between students who are confused about the concept and those who have a solid understanding of it

Manage small-group work

Although the problems posed in project scenarios can be resolved entirely by individuals or entirely through whole-class effort, Project Based Learning is most effective when students are required to work in small groups. Consequently, all *PBG* unit scenarios place students in the role of a team with three to six members. This gives students the opportunity to discuss their ideas and questions with peers and develops the skills of stating a position, listening to others' positions, respectfully disagreeing with others, and collaborating and compromising. There is no always-applicable guidance for forming groups, and you will have to think about your students and decide who works well together. Generally, we encourage teachers to include students with different interests and abilities in the group so that a range of talents and skills can be applied to the project. It is generally *not* a good idea for students to choose their own groups based on friendship alone.

Coaching and monitoring groups is important. Most groups will need some assistance maintaining a task focus. Groups may also need help maintaining a positive attitude or dealing with group members who are not carrying their weight. Although PBL is predicated on students taking charge of their own learning, teachers need to monitor this process continually and pull groups into impromptu conferences when their process bogs down.

Communicate standards of excellence

Rubrics that specify the characteristics of quality work and exemplars of finished products are included in each *PBG* unit. Students should be given the rubric midway through the project, to guide them as they prepare the required major products and performances. Students should not be given the rubric at the same time they receive the Entry Document at the beginning of the project, as part of a "complete packet of materials" for the whole unit. They need some time to define for themselves what they have to learn to resolve the problems posed by the scenario, and receiving the rubric or other materials too soon short-circuits that process.

Manage presentation and critique of answers to the Driving Question

All *PBG* units include the preparation of some sort of tangible product and/or performance to communicate an answer to the Driving Question. Students will need guidance in the preparation of these products, as well as the opportunity to practice and receive feedback on their work as much as possible from their peers and teacher. After students' solutions have been presented, the class should compare and discuss them as explained in the debrief phase of each unit.

Oral presentations to the class or a panel are a valuable component of many *PBG* units. As teachers know well, you're often not really sure if you understand something until you explain it to others. However, managing oral presentations well presents several challenges. Student groups need time to prepare and practice. The expectations for a good oral presentation should be made very clear, including presentation techniques and proper attire, posture, attitude, and group member participation. The rubrics accompanying each unit provide guidance to students on the use of content knowledge as well as oral presentation skills.

To help ensure proper participation by all group members, experienced teachers use several strategies. One is to explain that everyone will be held responsible for understanding all parts of an oral presentation and the visual aids that accompany it—and the rubric and grading criteria will reflect this goal. In addition, groups could be informed that even if they have decided in advance who will say what during the formal part of a presentation, *anyone* may be asked a question about *any part* of the presentation. Or, a teacher could tell students they will be picked at random just before the presentation to deliver various parts of it, thereby putting group members on notice that they each need to be prepared to fully participate.

On the day of presentations, if the number of groups is not too large, there may be time for each group to make a presentation. However, a potential problem with this approach is that groups tend to repeat themselves, and by the time the fourth or fifth group has made its presentation there is very little new left to say, and there are very few new questions to ask the group. Also, students in groups presenting nearer the end may have an advantage by hearing previous presentations. This can be avoided if it is possible to send the rest of the class to the library or another room, or have presenting groups go to another location, so each group can present only to the teacher or panel. If all students need to remain together, give student audience members a task. Have them listen to other presentations and make notes of good points made and good answers to questions, as well as how they might have done it differently. Some classes may be ready to assess their peers' performance, using a rubric or other set of criteria while they observe and listen.

Practice 21st-century skills

To meet the challenges of the changing economy in the United States and across the world, and become participating citizens in a democracy, students need to learn more than basic skills and acquire subject-area knowledge. Accordingly, all *PBG* units provide opportunities for students to learn and practice 21st-century skills, such as collaboration (e.g., working well with others, sharing resources, arriving at consensus), critical thinking (e.g., gathering relevant information, generating and evaluating solutions to problems), and communication (e.g., discussing ideas, writing, making an oral presentation, using technology). You can discuss, teach, and even assess these skills before, during, and at the end of every project.

Establish group and individually based grading procedures

As students usually work together to create the products and/or performance that culminate a project, you may need to assign a single grade for that product, given to all students working in the group. Of course some students—like some adults—will freeload and allow others to do their work for them. Self-reports, combined with group self-evaluation and group leader reports, can provide some information on how much each student may have worked but not how much each has learned. Students will take more responsibility for their learning, and learn more, if they know their content understanding will be assessed individually; so let them know the group product is not the only component of their grade. Instead of relying on one speaker to make a presentation, they should be asked to divide up the task—and be ready for questions about *any* part of it, not just the part they did. But since time is usually short, questioning students during oral presentations can only be a partial assessment strategy. Consequently, teachers may want to create multiple-choice or short-answer tests that can be used to assess individual student understanding at the conclusion of each *PBG* unit. Additionally, or alternatively, you could require students to turn in individual written assignments along with their group-developed product. You will have to work out what is most appropriate for your own grading system, but the fundamental idea holds: Make sure to assess students on their content knowledge individually in addition to any group assessment you conduct.

Allow for several possible “right answers”

Part of what engages students in Project Based Learning is knowing that they can make choices and are not simply “doing what the teacher wants.” All *PBG* unit scenarios are built around problems for which there can be multiple reasonable solutions. There are also solutions that are clearly wrong; not *every* solution will work. Guidance on evaluating reasonable and unreasonable solutions for each unit is offered in the **Step-by-Step Teaching Guide**.

Stay within the project scenario

Since the scenarios are hypothetical, students often want to add details, modify what is known, or otherwise *change* the scenario so that it is easier to resolve the problem presented. Such creativity will sabotage the core purpose of the project—it has been carefully developed as a vehicle to teach specific content. All *PBG* units have been developed in close consultation with U.S. high school teachers. It has been tested in their classrooms and revised based on their feedback to ensure that the project, although enjoyed by most students, does not become merely a “fun activity.” The project has been created to achieve a serious instructional purpose, and deviating from the project scenario’s storyline tends to focus students’ attention on irrelevant or less important learning objectives.

Consider needs of English language learners

Students who are learning to speak, read, and write English can benefit greatly from Project Based Learning, but special scaffolding may be necessary. They may need more time to complete tasks, more vocabulary-building, and more peer-to-peer support. Some of the authentic-sounding documents presented in *PBG* scenarios may contain jargon, slang, or cultural references that will need to be explained. When forming small groups, care should be taken to assign students learning English to teams with supportive and skilled members. Finally, oral presentations may present special challenges—ELL students may be allowed to participate to a lesser extent than other group members and/or be given questions to answer later in writing, rather than “on the spot.”

Can We Believe This?

Chapter Three

*An Activity to Introduce Students to the
Project Based Learning Methodology*

Overview

In this activity, students are presented with a problem-solving task focused on a potentially misleading public opinion poll that worries a fictitious congressional representative. In the role of a team of summer interns working for the representative, students investigate the facts surrounding the poll, learn about proper polling methods, and recommend a reasonable solution.

Although this activity teaches something about the political system in the United States today, it is primarily designed for another purpose—to demonstrate the instructional methodology of Project Based Learning. It may be used with two groups of participants: high school students in the classroom and their teachers in professional development workshops. The Buck Institute for Education (BIE) has field-tested this activity successfully with both groups. With students, we recommend using it prior to beginning the first unit a teacher has chosen from BIE's *Project Based Government* materials. The instructions below are written with this use in mind. If the activity is to be used with an audience of teachers, they should experience it in a similar manner to the students, in order to best learn how to implement it.

Project Based Learning may be an unfamiliar process for many students and teachers. In this activity, which requires less than a typical class period to complete, students will become familiar with many of the key elements of the methodology as designed by BIE for its government units. Like the *PBG* units, the **Can We Believe This?** Activity begins with a problem-solving scenario (not all projects in PBL begin this way, but it is an effective option). Since Project Based Learning is an inquiry-based process that springs from what students identify they need to know in order to solve the problem, it is important not to “frontload” any information before starting the activity. Do not conduct a discussion, assign reading, or give a lecture about public opinion polling in advance, nor tell students about project-based learning. It is sufficient to simply explain, “Now we’re going to do an activity that will introduce you to one of the ways we’re going to learn about government in this course.” Then let the first thing students see be the Entry Document, the memorandum that launches the scenario. After the scenario has run its course, the debriefing time is when to discuss the principles and features of Project Based Learning, along with any content-related issues or further work on the topic that the teacher would like.

Project Based Learning has proven effective in teaching content knowledge as well as or better than a traditional lecture/textbook approach. It improves

retention of knowledge and contributes to the acquisition of skills such as collaboration, presentation, and problem-solving. Moreover, it increases student engagement and interest in the subject of civics and government, which is an important building block of democratic citizenship.

Content Standards Addressed

National Standards for Civics and Government:

III.E.2. Public opinion and the behavior of the electorate.

Explain how public opinion is measured, used in public debate, and can sometimes be manipulated

Materials Needed

- One copy for each student or pair of students of the Entry Document, the memo from Congressional Representative Gina Amadeo
- One copy for each student or pair of students of the handout, "What Makes a Poll Believable?"
- Chart paper, overhead transparency, or whiteboard/chalkboard

Procedure

40–50 minutes



1. **Read the Entry Document aloud as a whole class** (memo from Gina Amadeo)
2. **Write an initial "Driving Question"** as a whole class (recorded on an overhead, chart paper, or board)

Sample:

How can we, as summer interns for Representative Gina Amadeo, find out if we can believe the results of this poll so that we can decide how to respond and help the reelection campaign?

3. **Write a list of "What We Know" as a whole class** (recorded on an overhead, chart paper, or board)

Sample:

- We are summer interns for congressional representative Gina Amadeo
- There was an item in a newspaper column about a poll saying that 80% of the people in the district believe the voting age should be raised to 20



Whole class

- The columnist is Chris Blair
- The poll results have Ms. Amadeo worried about reelection
- The last election was close, and 18–19-year-old voters gave Ms. Amadeo strong support
- We need to tell her if these numbers are believable
- We need to tell her what we think she should do about it

4. Write a list of “What We Need to Know” as a whole class (recorded on an overhead, chart paper, or board)

Sample:

- What is a Congressional Representative?
 - What is a poll?
 - Does Blair think the voting age should be raised?
 - Who did the reporter talk to, exactly?
 - How many people did s/he talk to, when and where?
 - What makes poll results believable? **
 - What political party does Amadeo belong to?
 - What party does Blair belong to?
 - How soon is the election?
 - Where is this district and what is it like?
 - How many 18–19 year olds voted for Amadeo in the last election?
- Discuss what resources could provide answers to our “Need to Know” questions. For example, some answers could be found in textbooks or be given by a teacher, some could be researched elsewhere, and some might need to come from actually talking to people.
 - Answer briefly any questions about terminology that students might need to know before moving on, such as what a congressional representative is.
 - Distribute the “What Makes a Poll Believable?” handout for students to read, explaining that it will answer some of their “Need to Know” questions. Discuss the handout if necessary for clarification.

5. Revisit “Know/Need to Know” Lists as a whole class

Point out that we now have more information that can help us solve the problem; you may add items from the “What Makes a Poll Believable?” handout to the “Know” list if it helps students stay focused

Important!

** Elicit this or something like it from students.



6. Ask the class: How else can we find out what we need to know?

Answer: Talk to Blair ("Well, we can! You're going to be able to have a phone conference call...")

- 7.** Students take 2–3 minutes to plan questions to ask Blair, working in pairs or small groups



Pairs

or



Small group

- 8. Students have a "live conference call" with Chris Blair and ask questions.** Blair is reluctant to talk, but eventually reveals details about the poll (for suggested responses to questions see, "Guidelines for Conducting the 'Live Phone Interview' and Playing Chris Blair" in these materials)

- 9.** Revise Driving Question as a whole class



Whole class

Sample:

How can we, as summer interns for Representative Gina Amadeo, respond to the fact that the results of this poll should not be believed so that we can help the reelection campaign?

- 10.** Wrap-up: whole-class discussion; students suggest solutions to the problem

Sample of possible solutions:

- Issue a press release or write a letter to the editor to explain why Blair was wrong
- Ask the editor to write a retraction or at least reprimand Blair
- Ignore it—don't give it more publicity
- Conduct our own poll and publicize the results

- 11.** Debrief: discuss what this activity demonstrates about Project Based Learning (PBL):

- There is no single **right** answer to this problem—it is "open-ended"—but there are **wrong** answers. For example, agreeing with Blair about the poll would not be supportable by evidence.
- **It is important to be persistent.** During the "phone call," encourage students to find different ways to ask Blair the same question. During the debriefing, point out that persistence is an important "habit of mind" for Project Based Learning.

- ***Frustration is OK—it is an important part of PBL.*** Ask students if they were frustrated at any time during the process. This often leads to a discussion of how students become frustrated during research assignments when they cannot find the answers easily. Just as BIE trainers do during this exercise, teachers in the classroom should allow for some frustration but should also offer coaching if students are getting too far off track. Focus students back on the “Need to Know” list when they are having difficulty thinking of questions to ask Blair.
- ***The “Driving Question” and the “Know/Need to Know” lists are important tools*** for keeping on task and focused on the problem as it evolves.
- ***Good PBL gets students to ask questions about content.*** It often helps to write down questions as they come up and have students investigate, rather than give students the answers too quickly. Having students ask questions demonstrates that they are open to learning, and it can lead to “teachable moments.” In this activity, the information on scientific polling methods was handed out, but it could have easily been researched by students if there was more time. Additional assignments about the role of public opinion polling in American politics may be given after this activity has sparked students’ interest.
- ***New information leads to shifts in perspective—and new questions.*** For example, learning that Blair has used unscientific polling methods creates a major shift in the way students think about the problem, and new “Need to Knows” could be identified.
- ***Decisions are often made under conditions of uncertainty.*** Just like people in the real world, students do not always have complete information on which to base decisions. Some of the items on the “Need to Know” list in the “Can We Believe This?” activity may not be answered, but that doesn’t mean solutions to the problem can’t be proposed.

Guidelines for Conducting the “Live” Phone Interview and Playing Chris Blair

- The role of Chris Blair may be played by a male or female—the teacher, another adult, or a competent student who has been rehearsed.
- Since this should be a mock phone interview, block the students’ view of Chris Blair if possible (by standing behind a partition, turning his/her back, etc.), so facial expressions cannot be seen. If the teacher plays the role and is not facing the class, it may be necessary to appoint a student facilitator who calls on other students to ask questions.
- The first student to speak on the “conference call” should introduce the group and state why they are calling, using proper phone manners.
- Blair should be reluctant to provide information at first. He should avoid admitting details of his polling process by saying things like:
 - “I write a weekly column of anecdotes, opinions, and local news items for the ‘City Gazette,’ which is the biggest daily paper in the district”
 - “I’d rather not discuss details of how I write my column—journalists have the right to privacy, you know”
 - “How about you write me a letter or send me an email—I’m pretty busy right now”
 - “I see where your questions are heading, and please understand I have nothing against young people”
 - “What do you want me to do, hire an expensive polling organization?”
 - “Before I answer that, let *me* ask *you*—why are you so concerned about this anyway? Is Representative Amadeo that worried about reelection?”
 - “I have no particular opinions on this issue—just heard some talk, you know, and thought it might be interesting to take a poll...”
 - “What, do you think I’m out to get Ms. Amadeo? Why would you think that?”
 - “I asked a lot of people”
 - “They were from all walks of life—a real cross-section”
 - “I just asked them what they thought about raising the voting age”
- After 4–5 minutes of questioning and mounting frustration among students, Blair should eventually provide information about how the poll was conducted, but remain defensive until ending the call.

Details about the poll to eventually reveal:

- I talked to about 40 people
- I asked them at a mall in a new suburban area, from 3:30–5:00 on a Monday afternoon
- I didn’t ask them any other questions, including where they lived or voted
- I asked people of all ages, down to about age 14, but didn’t note how many of each
- I didn’t keep track of the people’s education level, whether they have voted in the past, their race, sex, employment, or anything else (“But it was a variety of people, I could tell!”)
- I told them I was with the newspaper and did not try to hide my opinion by my tone of voice or facial expressions (“Oh, I’m sure they could tell how I felt about this!”)
- My exact question was, *“If you knew that 18- and 19-year-olds want to lower the driving age to 14 and do away with laws requiring attendance in high school, would you want the voting age to be raised to 20?”*

Memo From Representative Gina Amadeo



HONORABLE GINA AMADEO

To: My summer interns
From: Congressional Representative Gina Amadeo
Subject: Troublesome poll results

Did you see Chris Blair's column in yesterday's paper? It said, "According to a poll I took, over 80% of the people in our district believe the voting age should be raised to 20."

If this is true, it's going to have a serious effect on my reelection campaign. In the last election, which was a close race, I got strong support from 18–19-year-old voters, so this has me worried! How am I going to support their right to vote without angering the "80%" who believe the voting age should be raised to 20? I can't afford to anger either of these groups.

I want to know—can we believe Blair's poll? Then tell me what you think we should do!

What Makes a Poll Believable?

A “public opinion poll” is a way to collect information about public opinion by asking people questions. The most accurate, or “valid,” polls are based on the following scientific polling methods:

1. The sample of people polled is representative of the total population of voters in the city, district, state, or other group that is of interest.
 - For example, imagine a high school principal wanted to know how many parents in a school of over 1000 students supported a schedule change. The principal would have to report the results from a percentage of parents of students from each grade level, each ethnic group, each academic achievement level, and so on, *in proportion to* the percentage of these students in the whole school.
 - The principal should also be sure to only ask parents and *not* other members of the community.
2. The sample of people polled is **random**—they have not been selected because they are a certain type or have certain opinions.
 - For example, the high school principal should not ask *only* those parents who come to football games.
3. The number of people polled must be **large enough**.
 - For example, the high school principal would need to ask *more* than 10 parents out of 1000.
4. The questions must be **worded carefully** so people aren’t influenced one way or another.
 - For example, the high school principal should not word the question, “If you knew it would totally disrupt sports and extracurricular activities, and possibly lower test scores, would you support the small group of people who want to change the school schedule?”
5. The **way** in which the question is asked must be **controlled** or “neutral”.
 - For example, if the high school principal asked people their opinion when meeting them at Back-to-School Night, she would need to be sure her tone of voice, facial expressions, and body language did *not* influence people.

On the Campaign Trail

Chapter Four

Purpose and Overview

Purpose and Rationale

This unit is designed to help students become educated political consumers. By working on a fictional State Assembly or County Board of Supervisors race, students use the marketing strategies common to political campaigns. As a result, students will be better able to critically evaluate candidates and campaign issues by separating the marketing from the substance. Students may find it difficult to participate in a process whereby candidates are “sold” to the public in a competitive arena. However, our leaders and policies are not chosen for us. Candidates compete for public approval—and therefore, for our votes. As voters, we must evaluate and debate competing beliefs, ideas, solutions, and candidates. It is a messy, often aggressive process, but it is democracy. In fact, representative democracy requires competition.

Students may find it difficult to confront, much less participate in, a process in which candidates compromise their points of view on issues. But candidates must often compromise their favored stance in order to get elected. In fact, this is just the beginning. If elected, representatives are called upon to compromise with other representatives and to create solutions that a majority will accept. It cannot be overemphasized that representative democracy requires compromise, just as it requires competition. Political leaders cannot remain entrenched in their political beliefs because nothing would get done. We want students to understand that candidates often shift or entirely change their position on an issue in order to garner votes and to find compromise. It is up to the student, and the voters, to determine how much of that is an acceptable political necessity and how much is a lack of vision and integrity.

Recognizing that there can be a disparity between who makes a good candidate and who makes a good officeholder is an important lesson in this unit. As such, it is important that students see how effective marketing strategies can often mask—or expose—a candidate’s character flaws. Some of these flaws may or may not affect the candidate’s ability to be an effective public servant.

Unit Overview

Through this unit, students will learn firsthand how the media is used to market political candidates and how campaign staff spins information to create a positive image for their candidate and a negative image for their candidate’s opponent. By creating an image and marketing a candidate,

Purpose and Overview

students have an opportunity to critically analyze the pros and cons of using marketing strategies to get candidates elected. This unit can also serve as a launching point for studying campaign reform in general and campaign finance reform specifically.

Students, working in teams, play the role of campaign media consultants. Each team must design a series of marketing pieces that address specific campaign issues for a less-than-perfect candidate. Through a twist in the problem, the candidate becomes less appealing. As revealed in the twist, the possibility also exists to retaliate with a negative campaign about the opponent. Students must decide what spin to put on revelations about their candidate and their opponent. The unit concludes with a visual presentation of direct mail pieces, media advertisements, and/or press releases that the consultant teams feel will salvage their candidate's campaign. This campaign literature serves as the evaluation portion of the problem. At the end of this unit, students should be able to make educated value judgments about current campaign practices.



Seven 45- to 60-minute periods

Time Required

7 days (45- to 60-minute periods)

Placement in the Curriculum

This unit is designed to teach students about the campaign process. Prior to undertaking this unit, students should be familiar with the fundamental principles of democracy as expressed in the U.S. Constitution and other essential documents. These concepts can be taught using the Buck Institute for Education (BIE) "Project Based Government" units. The BIE unit about enacting policy change (*LegiQuest*) and the unit on comparative forms of democracy (*A Government for Xlandia*) should precede *On the Campaign Trail*. Another BIE unit, *The Better Budget*, may also serve as a prerequisite, as it illustrates why politicians and citizens disagree about public priorities.

A complete listing of content standards associated with each unit can be found in the **Project Based Government Overview**. The tables under Content Standards show the standards addressed by this unit.

Concepts to be Learned

On the Campaign Trail is designed to teach the following concepts:

- Candidate Image Building
- Campaign Issues
- Campaign Organization
- Campaign Strategy

- Media as a Campaign Tool
- Negative Campaigning
- Press Leaks
- Pseudo-Events
- Spin
- Voter Demographics

Teachers can also cover the following concepts using this unit:

- Campaign Funding
- Campaign Finance Reform
- Nominating Conventions
- Primaries
- Voter Turnout

Objectives

- Understand constituency profiles, candidate strengths and weaknesses, and resultant candidate marketing strategies
- Recognize that candidates respond to the perceived priorities of their constituents via their statements about campaign issues
- Identify the factors that build a positive image for a candidate
- Recognize the use of spin
- Identify candidate vulnerabilities and how they are addressed in a campaign
- Demonstrate an understanding of campaign organization
- Demonstrate an understanding of campaign strategy
- Recognize how the media is used in the campaign process
- Recognize that candidates are marketed to specific constituencies
- Understand that campaign consultants generally work for causes and candidates they favor
- Produce and critique appropriate and effective campaign literature
- Recognize that candidates and their staff make moral decisions that weigh attention to issues against personal characteristics

- Realize that the campaign process is subject to much debate
- Read, write, listen, and make oral presentations more effectively

Content Standards

A democratic system requires that citizens participate in campaigns as staff, volunteers, candidates, and informed voters. Performing these functions requires a sound understanding of the campaign process and the controversies that surround campaigning. This content, which is central to *On the Campaign Trail*, addresses the following National Standards for Civics and Government, Center for Civic Education, 1994, for grades 9 through 12.

Standard Concept

I.A.	Definition and Purpose of Government	*
II.C.	American Political Culture	*
II.D.	American Constitutional Values and Principles	*
III.C.	Organization of State and Local Governments	*
III.E.	Choice and Opportunity for Participation	X
V. E.	Civic Participation	*

X = a standard that is address in this curriculum

* = a standard that could be addressed in this curriculum

On the Campaign Trail addresses the following Curriculum Standards for Social Studies, developed by the National Council for the Social Studies, 1994, for high school.

Standard Concept

VI.	Power, Authority and Governance	
	Mechanisms Used to Balance Competing Needs and Wants	*
	Applying Political Science Theories to Issues and Problems	*
X.	Civic Ideals and Practices	
	Evaluating Selected Public Issues	*
	Forms of Civic Participation	X
	Public Policy Analysis and Political Actors	*

Impact of Public Opinion on Public Policy and Decision-Making*

Relationship of Policy and Behavior to Democratic Ideals *

X = a standard that is address in this curriculum

* = a standard that could be addressed in this curriculum

On the Campaign Trail addresses the following 21st Century Learning Skills, developed by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills.

Standard Concept

2	Learning and Innovation Skills	
2A	Creativity and Innovation	
	Think Creatively	X
	Work Creatively with Others	X
	Implement Innovations	X
2B	Critical Thinking and Problem Solving	
	Reason Effectively	X
	Use Systems Thinking	*
	Make Judgments and Decisions	X
	Solve Problems	X
2C	Communication and Collaboration	
	Communicate Clearly	X
	Collaborate with Others	X
3	Information, Media, and Technology Skills	
3A	Information Literacy	
	Access and Evaluate Information	X
	Use and Manage Information	X
3B	Media Literacy	
	Analyze Media	*

3C	ITC Literacy	
	Apply technology	X
4	Life and Career Skills	
4A	Flexibility and Adaptability	
	Adapt to Change	X
	Be Flexible	X
4B	Initiative and Self-Direction	
	Manage Goals and Time	X
	Work Independently	X
	Be Self-Directed Learners	X
4C	Social and Cross-Cultural Skills	
	Interact Effectively with Others	X
	Work Effectively in Diverse Teams	X
4D	Productivity and Accountability	
	Manage Projects	X
	Produce Results	X
4E	Leadership and Responsibility	
	Guide and Lead Others	X
	Be Responsibility to Others	X

X = a standard that is address in this curriculum

* = a standard that could be addressed in this curriculum

Resources

Resources are distributed to the students at different points in the problem. (See The Sequence of the Unit for one example.)

*All handouts may be found in **Student Materials**.*

Assessment guidelines for evaluating student performance on unit products can be found in the **Teacher Materials**:

- A scoring guide for the table students complete to explain their spin on campaign issues
- A checklist for the description of the campaign message
- A scoring guide for the final presentation of media pieces
- An answer key for the table students complete to explain their spin on campaign issues

Lesson Materials

Because Project Based Learning is grounded in constructivist learning, several “teachable moments” will arise when students readily need to know a particular concept. During these moments, teachers can use several techniques to teach these concepts. For this purpose, lesson materials are included so traditional lectures can be used to provide information on more difficult subject matter. Alternatively, a Socratic method could be used in which the teacher uses questioning strategies to guide students toward knowledge and understanding.

This unit on campaigning includes information on the following areas for potential mini-lectures:

- Campaign Management
 - Staffing and structuring the campaign
 - Researching district issues, voters, and opposition candidates
 - Developing a campaign plan
 - Developing the message, image, and presentation of the campaign
 - Voter contact
 - Using paid and free media
 - Fundraising and budgeting

- Campaigning in the United States
- Campaign Finance Reform
- Who Votes?
- Campaign Slogans and Themes
- Using Direct Mail
- Characteristics of a Profile Mailer
- Characteristics of an Issue Piece/Magazine
- Characteristics of a Hit Piece
- An example of the completed table for “The Stand the Candidate Should Take on the Issues” (this is the teacher key in the Teacher Materials)

*Lesson materials may be found in the **Teacher Materials**.*

Resources Include:

- Entry document from Governor Brown
- Memo from Dario Martinez regarding J.T. Watts for County Board of Supervisors
- Memo from Dario Martinez regarding Angelina Gonzales for State Assembly
- Blank table for recording issues and the candidate’s stand on the issues
- Memo from Dario Martinez and an attached note from the governor
- Description of a press release
- Sample of a press release
- Websites

The Sequence of the Unit

Because Project Based Learning is grounded in students’ constructing knowledge from real-world applications, the sequence of learning will differ in each class. As a result, it is virtually impossible to describe the exact unfolding of this project, even though it has been tested on several occasions. What follows is an example of the sequence of the project during one class. We have used this particular sequence in our Procedures section. The phrases **bolded** below are cross-referenced in the margin for easier detection.

Pre-project planning

0. Prepare for a successful project implementation

Launching the Project

1. Discuss the **memo from Governor Brown** with the whole class

Framing the Inquiry

2. Develop the **initial “Know” list with the whole class**
3. Develop the **initial Driving Question** with the whole class
4. Develop the **initial “Need to Know” list with the whole class**

Problem-solving and learning activities

5. Undertake **mini-lecture on campaign staffing** with the whole class
6. **Divide students into two groups**
7. Half the class (Gonzales campaign) writes **initial Project Log entry**
8. Half the class (Watts campaign) discusses the **memo from Dario Martinez**
9. **Revise “Know/Need to Know” lists with the Watts campaign**
10. Watts campaign writes **initial Project Log entry**
11. Gonzales campaign discusses the **memo from Dario Martinez**
12. **Revise “Know/Need to Know” lists with the Gonzales campaign**
13. Have students **prepare table** explaining the spin they would give the campaign issues
14. Optional: Undertake a **mini-lecture on who votes**
15. Have students **prepare a statement** describing the message of the campaign
16. Have students write **second Project Log entry**
17. With the whole class, undertake **mini-lecture on why campaigns use direct mail**
18. **Show examples and discuss** the profile mailers and issue pieces

19. Have students prepare and present a **storyboard display of a profile mailer**
20. Have students **begin preparation of an issue piece**
21. Discuss the **memos** from Dario Martinez and Governor Brown
22. **Revise “Know/Need to Know”** lists
23. **Show examples and discuss** the characteristics of a hit piece
24. Optional: Undertake a **mini-lecture on press releases**
25. **Finalize the Driving Question** with the whole class
26. Have students make **final Project Log entry**
27. Have students **prepare final series of media pieces**
28. Students **present media pieces**
29. Use **scoring guide** to assess student products
30. **Wrap-up and debrief** with the whole class
31. Manage student reflection on the 21st century skills practiced and the process of learning in PBL
32. Multiple-Choice Test to assess individual students’ knowledge of key political concepts
33. Make notes or adjustments to the unit to improve student learning for the next time the unit is taught
34. Extensions to the unit

Step-by-Step Teaching Guide

Each of the above instructional activities is discussed in more depth below, with tips for successful classroom implementation.

Pre-project planning

0. Prepare for successful project implementation.

There are a number of issues that must be considered before embarking on a project with students. These include:

- How much time will be devoted to the project?
- What content resources need to be prepared in advance (textbooks, articles, websites, etc.)?
- Do all students have the skills they need to tackle the project—including basic literacy skills as well as the ability to work in teams, make presentations, and conduct research? If not, is it necessary to pre-teach some of these skills, make sure students who need it have adequate support, or deal with these challenges in other ways?
- How will student groups be formed? (*See comments in Chapter Two.*)
- How will groups report on their progress and be held accountable? Do report forms or other tools need to be developed?
- Is it necessary to arrange access to the library/media center or computer lab?
- Do parents or administrators need to be informed about the process of Project Based Learning and be assured that time spent on the project is focused on standards-specific learning goals?

In addition to considering the above issues, be sure student handouts and clarifying lesson/mini-lecture materials are ready—or at least underway. Finally, **decide if the culminating product will be done as a small group, in pairs, or individually.** This will affect how you present the task to students, use time, and assess their learning.

Launching the Project

Meet with the whole class and inform them that in this activity they will be working in teams, role-playing campaign media consultants for a fictional State Assembly or County Board of Supervisors political race. Each team must design a series of marketing pieces that address specific campaign issues for a candidate. In the process, they will find that their candidate is less than perfect and they will have to strategize how best to present the candidate to the public.



Prepare for successful project implementation



Individual

or



Pairs

or



Small group

Memo from
Governor Brown



Whole class

Entry Point:

1. Discuss the memo from Governor Brown

Give students a copy of the memo from Governor Brown. This memo informs students that they are campaign consultants with expertise in campaign literature. They are asked to help with the campaign of a friend of the governor. The campaign manager, Dario Martinez, will contact them to explain the candidate, the district, and campaign issues and to give them a directive. The memo warns students that the candidate is “less than perfect.”

*See the Entry Document in the **Student Materials**.*

Framing the Inquiry

Initial
“know” list



Whole class

2. Develop the initial “Know” list with the whole class

The first step in answering the question is to assess what students know about the problem posed in the Entry Document. This can be done as a class by creating a “What We Know” list on chart paper, an overhead transparency, or by using a computer projector. It is for students to assess what they know about the problem. The “know” inventory will differ for each class because students struggle with identifying the knowledge they have and defining the body of knowledge they do not have. Students should be coached to identify all of the information provided in the memo from Governor Brown. Ask students to carefully review the Entry Document and offer items for the list, making sure to record only what is actually stated in the text and not what might be inferred.

Examples of statements that might appear on the initial “know” list follow. Remember that every class will produce a different list, and every idea should be put on the board. Sometimes seemingly strange ideas that come from a “What We Know” discussion result in the most creative approaches to the problem’s solution.

What do we know?

- Candidate is important to the governor
- Candidate isn’t perfect
- Candidate has “good heart” and “a commitment to the community”
- We have worked for the governor in the past
- The governor is important to us
- If we do well, the governor wants us to work on other campaigns in the future

- The governor expects us to work around shortcomings of the candidate
- We will receive a review of major issues and demographics for the district
- We are working as a media team for LD Consulting, Inc.
- Dario Martinez is the campaign manager
- Our future work for the governor depends upon how well we do on this campaign

3. Develop the initial Driving Question with the whole class

After discussing the Entry Document with the students, have them draft a tentative Driving Question. Students should be prompted to start this process by filling specific information into the general Driving Question form:

How can we, as _____, do _____ so that _____?

The initial Driving Question may be far from the Driving Question that will emerge as students think about and work with the project. This is expected. The Driving Question will evolve as students gain more insight and knowledge about the problem and its underlying issues. Remember, the problem is intentionally ill-defined so that the students must grapple with issues and concepts. It is this continual struggle that builds knowledge. The initial statement may look something like:

How can we, as the media team for LD Consulting, Inc., put together media pieces for the campaign of the governor's friend so that the candidate wins the election and we are assured future employment?

4. Develop the initial "Need to Know" list with the whole class

The next step in this process is to coach students to identify information they need to know in order to provide a solution to the Driving Question. Again, making sure that students pay close attention to all parts of the Entry Document, create a class list of "What We Need to Know." If students are missing a key piece of information about the problem, the content, or their task, ask questions to elicit items for the list.

Without a doubt, students will suggest things they need to know that, in reality, they do not need to know. Now is not the time to filter these questions out. Rather, allow students to see their irrelevance once additional information is discovered.



Initial Driving Question



Whole class



Initial "Need to Know" list



Whole class

The knowledge inventory will differ for each class because students struggle with identifying the knowledge they have and defining the body of knowledge they do not have. An example of the type of items that might appear on the initial “Need to Know” list follows. Remember that every class will produce a different list and every idea should be put on the board. Sometimes seemingly strange ideas that come from a “Need to Know” discussion result in the most creative approaches to the problem’s solution.

What do we need to know?

- What office is the candidate running for?
- What are the candidate’s flaws?
- How big is the district?
- Is money a factor?
- How much can we spend?
- What are the major issues?
- What kind of commitment does the candidate have to the community?
- What are the demographics of the district?
- What does “demographics” mean?
- What are media pieces, and what type of media pieces will we need?
- Can we slander anybody?
- Who are the opponents?
- Does our candidate have political experience?
- How much more time do we have in this campaign?
- What is the name of the candidate and his/her personal information?
- What is the candidate’s relationship to the governor?

Potential Hurdle

It’s important to point out to students that although the primary motivating factor for working on this campaign is to keep the governor as a client, real-world campaign consultants respond to other motivations as well.



Potential Hurdle: Campaign consultants, if they are good, are well paid, and some of them act as “soldiers of fortune.” It’s important to point out to students that although the primary motivating factor for working on this campaign is to keep the governor as a client, real-world campaign consultants respond to other motivations as well. Some consultants are motivated by power and money and will work for high-profile candidates that pay well. However, this is not the case for all campaign consultants. Most consultants get into the campaign business for idealistic political reasons—they believe government can solve social and economic problems, and they want to participate in making that happen. That is why consultants tend to work

exclusively for either Democrats or Republicans or for causes that follow a particular set of beliefs. Campaign consulting is a fascinating occupation, in part because it is made up of cunning strategists who are fundamentally true believers motivated by principles, beliefs, fame, ambition, power, and money.

Problem-Solving and Learning Activities

5. Undertake mini-lecture on campaign staffing with the whole class

Project Based Learning is most effective when there is a continuous dialogue between the teacher (as a coach) and students. When students are left to discover knowledge or provide solutions on their own, without teacher coaching, lectures, or use of Project Logs, students may flounder and stray off-track. To prevent this, teachers must actively direct students toward the curriculum goals by posing probing questions in class discussions, providing lectures, circulating and listening to discussions in group work, and evaluating the Project Log with meaningful, useful comments. Teachers may take advantage of teachable moments by giving mini-lectures using the lesson materials provided with this unit.

The lesson materials provided in the Teacher Materials are meant for teachers to supplement their knowledge of the subject. It is not mandatory to use the lecture material. Much of this material can be used as needed or if questions arise that require a mini-lecture. The first mini-lecture in the Teacher Materials is on campaign staffing and management and marketing strategies. Although this unit has students playing the part of a “media team” with specific expertise, they should be familiar with all aspects of the campaign process. The lesson materials about media strategies can help students to interpret the campaign issues in a way that puts their candidate in a favorable light. The lesson materials can be used as a mini-lecture along with a PowerPoint presentation. A sample PowerPoint presentation is available at www.bie.org.

*Lesson materials for mini-lectures may be found in the **Teacher Materials**.*

6. Divide students into two groups

Begin by dividing the class in half. Further divide one-half of the class into teams of three to four students to work on the Watts campaign. Divide the other half of the class into teams of three to four to work on the Gonzales campaign. The Gonzales campaign teams work on the Project Log, while the teacher meets with the Watts campaign teams.

The first resources students receive are two memos from the campaign manager, Dario Martinez. One memo describes J.T. Watts, who is running against Mike Johnston for the County Board of Supervisors. The second



Mini-lecture on
campaign staffing



Whole class



Two groups

memo describes Angelina Gonzales, who is running against Aldo Billings for State Assembly. These memos should be discussed separately with the student teams.

*All handouts may be found in the **Student Materials**.*

The Project Log

Throughout the project, each student will keep a Project Log that will help the student and teacher follow the construction of the student's knowledge. To ensure that students stay focused on the underlying political issues and understand the content, the log should be checked periodically by the teacher. The log can also serve as an important assessment of how a student or group uses problem-solving skills, develops new questions or "Need to Know" items, and how well a group works together and manages time and tasks.

The Project Log can be introduced after the class is familiar with the role they are playing in the project. Students can keep track of the project right from the start by recording in their logs the Driving Question and "Know/Need to Know" list, and then noting any later changes in these.

Initial Project Log entry (Gonzales campaign)



Small group

7. Half the class (Gonzales campaign) writes initial Project Log entry

Introduce the Project Log to the students working on the Gonzales campaign, while the Watts teams read the memo from Dario Martinez and revise the initial "Know/Need to Know" list. Ask the Gonzales teams to start their Project Log by brainstorming what they believe to be the most important characteristics of an ideal candidate. The entry document warns them that their candidate is "less than perfect." Have students list the qualities of a perfect candidate. Students should be prepared to defend the characteristics they have identified. Students can then list what tasks they think a candidate must perform when running for office. Finally, students, working in groups, can discuss how the qualities of a perfect candidate relate to the work of campaigning. Students should keep their Project Log lists for their perfect candidate, as they will be using these lists to prepare the profile mailer for Gonzales.

Potential Questions

What qualities would you want in a "perfect" candidate? What do you think are the most important tasks a candidate must perform when running for office? How do the qualities of a perfect candidate relate to the work of campaigning?



Potential Questions to Ask: The Entry Document warns that your candidate is "less than perfect." What qualities would you want in a "perfect" candidate? What do you think are the most important tasks a candidate must perform when running for office? How do the qualities of a perfect candidate relate to the work of campaigning?

8. Half the class (Watts campaign) discusses the memo from Dario Martinez

Take the half of the class working on the Watts campaign through the memo about Mike Johnston, his opponent, district issues, and constituents.

9. Revise “Know/Need to Know” list with the Watts campaign

The new information from the Martinez memo gives cause to revisit the “Know/Need to Know” list. Remember, you want to eliminate as much of the original “Need to Know” list as possible. Examples of what might be added to the “Know/Need to Know” list include:

What else do we know?

- Our candidate is J.T. Watts
- He is running against Mike Johnston
- Johnston and Watts are running for the County Board of Supervisors
- Watts is a businessman in his early forties
- He likes sports
- He thinks the bureaucracy is inefficient and unresponsive
- He is a fiscal and social conservative
- He has not served in an elected office before
- He wants more jobs and activities for young people in the community
- Major issues are commercial development, highway construction, and increased crime
- Young families are moving into the community

What else do we need to know?

- What is a fiscal and social conservative?
- How much money do we have to spend on his campaign?
- What is a profile mailer?
- What is an issue piece?



Memo from
Dario Martinez
(Watts campaign)



Small group



Revise “Know/
Need to Know” list
(Watts campaign)



Small group

Initial Project
Log entry (Watts
campaign)



Small group

Memo from
Dario Martinez
(Gonzales campaign)



Small group

Revise "Know/
Need to Know" list
(Gonzales campaign)



Small group

Prepare
a table



Small group

10. Watts campaign writes initial Project Log entry

Now give the Project Log to the students on the Watts campaign teams, while you work with the Gonzales campaign teams on the memo from Dario Martinez and the initial "Know/Need to Know" lists.

11. Gonzales campaign discusses the memo from Dario Martinez

Take the Gonzales campaign teams through the memo from Dario Martinez about the Gonzales and Billings campaign for State Assembly.

12. Revise "Know/Need to Know" list with the Gonzales campaign

Follow the same procedure used with the Watts campaign, and revise the list of "Know/Need to Know" items. Eliminate as much of the original "Need to Know" list as possible.

13. Have students prepare a table explaining the spin they would give the campaign issues

Martinez has directed the media team to explain the stand the candidate should take on the major campaign issues, given the demographics of the area. Students can gather the information they need from the candidate biographies, the review of major campaign issues, and the district demographic data. This exercise is intended to help students synthesize information from disparate sources. It also demonstrates how campaign staffs often are forced to use incomplete information to draw conclusions about the best course for a campaign. Remind students that data are never complete, and as campaign experts they are expected to suggest the most reasonable answers, given the information they have.

Have students fill in the table explaining the community's likely stance on issues, the candidate's stance, and the spin the media team would give the major campaign issues. They can begin by listing the major issues, the community's points of view about the issues, and the community groups who would likely support these different points of view. As an example, Gonzales is running in a predominantly aging district with deteriorating schools. If the candidate supports increased taxes to improve education, who is likely to vote for her, and who is likely to vote against her? Judging from what the students know about the candidate and the opponent, they can make educated guesses about which side of the issue their candidate would likely support. Gonzales would likely support improving the schools. Can she afford this stance if it means advocating higher taxes? Students have to weigh their candidate's likely point of view against that of the majority of voters and decide if the candidate can afford to promote that point of view.

If you wish, you can give students more specific information about the district's demographics or issues. Feel free to add details, change demographics, or create new issues or problems for the district. The conditions of the district can be as specific as you care to make them so long as there are conflicts among constituent groups and there are unresolved problems and issues requiring the candidates to take a stand. A blank table is included with the student handouts in the Student Materials.

Teachers can have students fill out the first four columns of the table (Major Issues, Community Groups in Favor, Community Groups Opposed, and Candidate's Likely Stance Based on Biography). The process can be stopped here for a mini-lecture on who votes. Students can then fill in the last column (Stand You Think the Candidate Should Take to Win the Election).

14. Optional: Undertake a mini-lecture on who votes

A mini-lecture on who votes is included in the Teacher Materials. Remind students that campaign staff makes decisions about who to target with its message based upon who is most likely to vote. As an example, young people have a poor voting record, and as a result, candidates usually do not "market" themselves to young voters.

*Lesson materials for mini-lectures may be found in the **Teacher Materials**.*

Potential Hurdle: The underlying message here is that candidates can choose to take the point of view of the most voters, counter the point of view of the most voters and thus lose support, or spin the issue in such a way that their stand seems to fit the point of view of most voters. It's also possible to spin it so the candidate seems to support both sides (e.g., improved schools at no cost to taxpayers). Candidates often depend upon this type of rhetorical vagueness to skirt around issues that polarize a community. In addition to avoiding candor or direct responses, candidates will likely avoid extreme positions as well. As Barry Goldwater's aggressive stance toward local command of nuclear weapons in Vietnam proved in the 1964 presidential race, politicians who go to extremes often lose to those who take less extreme stances and employ vague rhetoric about the stances they do take. After Lyndon Johnson won the 1964 election and began bombing the Ho Chi Minh Trail, pundits claimed, "We voted for Johnson and got Goldwater." The willingness of students to use these types of campaigning ploys and make the kinds of compromises demanded of candidates will run the gamut. Some students will embrace the opportunity to spin issues, use rhetoric, and ignore the values of the candidate. Others will want their candidate to stick by his or her values, even at the expense of votes.

Remind students that campaigning is a series of moral judgments and so is leadership. In the political arena, compromise is inevitable and it is the



Optional: Mini-lecture on who votes



Whole class



Potential Hurdle

The underlying message here is that candidates can choose to take the point of view of the most voters, counter the point of view of the most voters and thus lose support, or spin the issue in such a way that their stand seems to fit the point of view of most voters. The willingness of students to use these types of campaigning ploys and make the kinds of compromises demanded of candidates will run the gamut. Some students will embrace the opportunity to spin issues, use rhetoric, and ignore the values of the candidate. Others will want their candidate to stick by his or her values, even at the expense of votes.

essence of a democratic system. In a free market of ideas, people are bound to disagree. The democratic process provides a framework whereby people with conflicting needs and wants can come to some compromise. Such compromise can result in a reasonable amalgam of ideas that the electorate can live with. Campaigning is the beginning of an elected official's experience with political compromise.

One example of a completed version of the table is included as a teacher key in the Teacher Materials. This example can be used to prompt students during the exercise, but it should not be used by students to copy down the information. There are many other ways this table could be completed, and the teacher key simply serves as an example for teachers.

*A Teacher Key is provided in the **Teacher Materials**.*

Prepare a
statement



Small group

15. Have students prepare a statement describing the message of the campaign

The second thing Martinez has asked the media team to do is prepare a statement describing the message of the campaign. This can be done as homework and presented by the media teams to the class. Alternatively, some answers can be presented in class with the remaining answers submitted to the teacher. The statement should answer the following questions:

1. ***What issues will the candidate focus on in the campaign?***

Students can use the information they prepared for the table to answer this question.

2. ***What slogan will the candidate use?***

Slogans are one-line quips that can be easily remembered and are directly associated with a candidate. (For examples of slogans, see the Teacher Materials.)

3. ***What recurring theme will the candidate use in his/her campaign***

Themes differ from slogans in that they are associated with issues, or the general focus of the campaign, rather than directly relating to the candidate. (For examples of recurring themes, see the Teacher Materials.)

4. *What recurring theme will the candidate use against his/her opponent?*

These themes are generally negative and short and are often aimed directly at the opposing candidate. (For examples of recurring themes used about an opponent, see the Teacher Materials.)

5. *Why have you chosen this strategy?*

Students should work in their groups to devise a defense of their strategy.

16. Have students write second Project Log entry

Perhaps the most important use of the Project Log in this unit is as a check for the students' feelings about the campaign process. Students should be asked to note any difficulty they have in preparing a campaign theme and message for someone they do not necessarily support, or for someone willing to make compromises about important community issues. It is important that teachers check logs at this stage to address problems. Students should note how they think the campaign process can be improved, and they should consider why campaigning is such a crucial element of a democracy.

Potential Questions to Ask: As a free market society, we accept and often rely on advertising to tell us about the products we buy. We use advertisements to inform and educate us about certain products. In politics, consumers, in the form of voters, select candidates in a similar manner—that is, advertisements inform and educate us about the candidates. However, using advertising in politics can “turn people off” to politics and make them cynical about candidates. Why do you think advertising candidates turns people off to politics? Do you think it is wrong for politicians to advertise themselves when running for office, and if so, why? If campaigning is a necessary element of democracy, how do you think it can be improved?

17. With the whole class, undertake mini-lecture on why campaigns use direct mail

Martinez's final request is for a storyboard display of a profile mailer and an issue piece. You can begin this part of the unit by undertaking a mini-lecture with the whole class on why campaigns use direct mail. A mini-lecture on direct mail is included in the Teacher Materials.



Second Project Log entry



Small group



Potential Questions

Why do you think advertising candidates turns people off to politics? Do you think it is wrong for politicians to advertise themselves when running for office, and if so, why? If campaigning is a necessary element of democracy, how do you think it can be improved?



Mini-lecture on why campaigns use direct mail



Whole class

Show examples
and discuss



Whole class

Storyboard display
of a profile mailer



Whole class

Begin preparation
of an issue piece



Small group

Discuss
the memos



Small group

18. Show examples and discuss the profile mailers and issue pieces

It is also helpful to review the characteristics of a profile mailer and issue piece and to show students examples. The Teacher Materials include a mini-lecture on the characteristics of profile mailers and issue pieces. Examples can be found at www.bie.org.

19. Have students prepare and present a storyboard display of a profile mailer

Once students have reviewed the examples, they can begin designing their profile mailer. Have students begin this process by reading their initial Project Log entry, in which they listed the qualities of a perfect candidate. Have students identify qualities from this list that are characteristic of their candidate. These are the qualities they should highlight in the profile mailer.

The profile mailer should be done on a storyboard, with each section of the board depicting one fold or panel of the flyer. Profile mailers can be displayed in the classroom, and students can present their storyboard to the class for comment. Scoring guides for assessing the profile mailers are available at <http://www.bie.org/tools/freebies/cat/rubrics>.

20. Have students begin preparation of an issue piece

After presenting and assessing their profile mailers, students begin work on the issue piece. It is their work on the issue piece that is interrupted by the project twist. Wait until after the students have invested time and creative energy in the issue piece—when they have a vested interest in its completion—to introduce the memo from Martinez with the governor's attached note.

21. Discuss the memos from Dario Martinez and Governor Brown

While students are involved in creating their issue pieces, they receive a memo from Martinez with an attached note from the governor. This is the twist to the project. Students discover that their candidate has been involved in a situation that may affect his or her ability to retain voter support. The media teams are now asked to make a decision about how to use the remaining scarce time and financial resources to shore up the campaign against an attack ad from the opponent. The media teams must decide whether to continue with the flyer they have been working on, or to create a flyer that is a hit piece against the opponent. Another possibility is to write a press release and/or newspaper advertisement putting a positive spin on the situation.

Explain to students that they cannot use the issue piece to defend their candidate against the hit piece, and they cannot incorporate hit piece wording aimed at their opponent in their issue piece. Experience with this unit tells us that the Watts campaign is more likely to use hit pieces than the Gonzales campaign because of the seriousness of the hit. However, make it clear to students that the choice of pieces is theirs, provided they recognize the advantages and disadvantages of each option.

Potential Hurdle: The students were told in the entry document that their ability to do an effective job on this campaign would affect the governor's decision to hire them for another campaign. However, in the governor's most recent communication he is, in a thinly veiled way, taking part of the responsibility for this last-minute campaign disaster. This exonerates the media team enough so they can make calculated decisions about what to do next. They do not need to simply react by sending out a hit piece about the opponent. Make sure the students recognize that they have choices.

However, remind students that to voters an unanswered hit is a concession. Good intentions may lead students to stick to the high road at all costs, but they need to recognize the efficacy of negative campaigning and the toll it takes on the target—their candidate. They must weigh their ideals about positive campaigning against the odds of sacrificing their candidate's victory.

22. Revise “Know/Need to Know” lists

This is the time to take inventory of what students will need to know in order to proceed with the final presentation for the campaign. Students will likely include in their need to know lists questions about hit pieces and negative campaigning in general. Students may also need information about how to write a press release.

23. Show examples and discuss the characteristics of a hit piece

Review with students the characteristics of a hit piece. A mini-lecture on hit pieces is included in the Teacher Materials. Remind students that they cannot compromise this dilemma by adding elements of the hit piece into their issue magazine. Hit pieces and issue magazines present the campaign issues in completely different ways. Issue magazines promote a positive view of the candidate's work on several issues and give detailed personal information about the candidate, while hit pieces condemn the opponent's personal behavior or stance on an issue.



Potential Hurdle

The students were told in the entry document that their ability to do an effective job on this campaign would affect the governor's decision to hire them for another campaign. They do not need to simply react by sending out a hit piece about the opponent. Make sure the students recognize that they have choices.



Revise “Know/Need to Know” lists



Show examples and discuss



Whole class

Optional:
Mini-lecture on
press releases



Whole class

24. Optional: Undertake a mini-lecture on press releases

Project Based Learning involves making tough decisions, and avoiding this decision making compromises the lesson about campaigning. Because of the dramatic changes that can take place during a campaign, it is common for staff to be asked to abandon a project and move in an entirely new direction. This is what students are facing at this juncture in the unit.

Show students the examples of hit pieces from the BIE website. Be sure to ask students what they find effective and ineffective about these direct mail pieces. Ask them to point out what they think appeals to the voters and what will likely turn voters off. The Teacher Materials include references to websites with information on negative campaign advertising and its impact on voters.

The Teacher Materials includes a mini-lecture and an example of a press release. (Students who have participated in the BIE Economics unit, *Matildaville*, will already be familiar with the press release. Composing a press release is one of the requirements for that unit.)

*Lesson materials for mini-lectures may be found in the **Teacher Materials**.*

Potential Hurdle

Be careful not to overemphasize the value of the press release at this juncture. Press releases are free and they help frame your candidate's side of the argument. However, they are not going to take much of the sting out of the attack, and they will not serve as stories in and of themselves.



Potential Hurdle: Be careful not to overemphasize the value of the press release at this juncture. A press release can be used before, during, and after the impact of the opponent's hit piece. Press releases are free and they help frame your candidate's side of the argument. However, they are not going to take much of the sting out of the attack. Press releases allow the campaign to inform reporters as to the candidate's whereabouts; they can provide quick, universal responses to hits; and they can offer reporters ideas about stories to pursue. They will not serve as stories in and of themselves. No news agency is going to tell the story exactly as it is contained in the press release. Also, there is no guarantee that the press release will even be used or noticed by the press. And worst of all, the press release can lead reporters to negative stories that the candidate doesn't want told.

Finalize the Driving
Question



Whole class

25. Finalize the Driving Question with the whole class

Once the class has reviewed the examples of hit pieces and the example of a press release, they should be told that they will not receive any additional information on the need to know list. The Driving Question should be revisited for the final time.

Final Project
Log entry



Small group

26. Have students make final Project Log entry

The final Project Log can be used after students in their media teams have had an opportunity to discuss their options.

Potential Questions to Ask: What are the various scenarios you can use to help save your candidate's campaign? What are the pros and cons of each?

At this point, direct the media teams to design and prepare their final presentation of campaign materials.

27. Have students prepare final series of media pieces

Students, in their groups, are asked to prepare a presentation of their media pieces for Martinez. They are required to have visuals (e.g., storyboard of hit pieces and issue pieces, examples of a press release). Remember that part of the skill-building in this unit is to prepare a convincing presentation. Visuals should be turned in to the teacher before the presentation so that errors can be shown to students and corrected. Teachers should stress that all members of the group must be prepared to make the presentation or to answer questions. One way to ensure this is to randomly select, at the time of the presentations, the member of the group who will make the presentation. Students can also be asked to attach a sheet to the final media pieces, explaining the reasons for their choices and who the pieces target.

Teachers may want to collect and save samples of student campaign mailers, newspaper ads, and press releases to show subsequent classes as examples.

Presentations, Assessment, and Debrief

28. Students present media pieces

29. Use scoring guide to assess student products

A scoring guide is provided at <http://www.bie.org/tools/freebies/cat/rubrics> for assessing the presentations. It can also be used to guide students in meeting the expectations of the assignment.

When assessing students, remember that Project Based Learning is most effective when the students are placed in real-life situations. As a consequence, if students begin to alter the authenticity of the situation, the learning environment can easily be reduced to fun and games. This negates much of the validity of the technique and knowledge gained from the unit. To prevent this digression, stress that their work must be accurate and reflect knowledge gathered from available resources. In other words, students cannot make up data and scenarios. They cannot give bogus answers to real situations.

Also, coach students to see that "I don't know" is a legitimate answer to a question. This makes the classroom authentic. When presented with a problem outside the classroom, information is generally available, but time



Potential Questions

What are the various scenarios you can use to help save your candidate's campaign? What are the pros and cons of each?



Prepare final series of media pieces



Small group



Present media pieces



Scoring guide

Wrap-up
and debrief



Whole class

to seek out information is limited. This is one of the lessons that Project Based Learning teaches. To enable students to gain this insight, they must learn when to say that they do not have the data to give an appropriate, accurate answer. In other words, there are a limited number of answers because of limited information. Again, students cannot make up answers. They must use the available information.

30. Wrap-up and debrief with the whole class

It is critical that the wrap-up and debriefing section of the unit not be ignored. This is the part of the unit in which students, as a class, are given feedback on both process and content. It is imperative that incorrect knowledge or statements be corrected at this point in the project. How the debriefing is conducted is less important than the fact that it is conducted.

Process Debriefing

It is important that students have a chance to discuss how they undertook the problem-solving process. This could be done with a series of questions. For example:

- How do you think you did?
- Is there anything you think you left out?
- Is it difficult when there is not one right answer to the problem?
- How does it feel to go through the project without specific direction?

These questions could be used to help guide the students toward a discussion about how the process helped them learn about campaigning.

Content Debriefing

As mentioned in the Purpose and Rationale section, there can be a disparity between who makes a good candidate and who makes a good officeholder. Recognizing this disparity is an important lesson in this unit. Through this project students see how effective marketing strategies can often mask—or expose—a candidate’s character flaws. It is up to the voters to determine if these flaws will affect the candidate’s ability to be an effective officeholder. This is why it is crucial for voters to observe campaigns with a critical eye. It is important to discuss these ideas with students at the end of the process. Some questions to bring up include:

- Should we curb negative campaigning, and if so, how? If not, why not?
- Do our frequent (almost constant) elections create voter burnout, and if so, how can we avoid this?

- What is the potential impact of campaign finance reform on campaigning? What impact did *Citizen's United* have on campaign finance reform? How can campaign finance reform be achieved?
- How did your candidate's stance on the issues during the election compare to his or her stance based on their biography? How did you feel about this shift in position?
- How has participating in this experience made you a better judge of candidates?
- How did you feel about having to consider abandoning the issue magazine before it was completed?

31. Manage student reflection on the 21st-century skills practiced and the process of learning in PBL

Students should have a chance to discuss the process of learning in PBL, and to reflect on the 21st-century skills of critical thinking, collaboration, and presentation that they used in the project. This part of the debrief could be done with a series of questions, for example:

- Do you find it to be difficult when there are several possible "right answers" to the Driving Question? Why?
- How does it feel to go through some parts of the project without specific directions, to make some of your own decisions?
- How much do you think you learned in terms of skills like working as a team and making a presentation?

Finally, ask students for feedback on how the project was structured, with questions such as:

- Did you need more resources to help you solve the problem—more lecture time, more readings, more time on the computer?
- Did you need more help learning how to work together in your group?
- Did you have enough time for each step of the unit?
- Are there any suggestions you would make for improving how the unit is taught?

32. Multiple-Choice Test to assess individual students' knowledge of key political concepts

*The multiple-choice test for this unit may be found in the **Teacher Materials**, in "Assessment Tools."*

33. Make notes or adjustments to the unit to improve student learning for the next time the unit is taught

Teaching tips

Do's and Don'ts

In reading through this project, changes will inevitably come to mind. In this section, we highlight changes that have worked and changes that have not worked. Please do not try the ideas that have failed, even though the temptation may be great!

Ideas to Try

Teachers can add other candidates and offices to the choices presented here. In considering other candidates keep in mind the need for a “twist” or some revelation that makes the candidates less than perfect and opens them up to hit pieces. Although it presents classroom management challenges, teachers can divide students among the four candidates profiled in this unit (J.T. Watts, Mike Johnston, Aldo Billings, Angelina Gonzales) and run four separate campaigns instead of two. This would provide an opportunity to end the unit with a candidate debate. Also, running candidates against one another creates in-class competition that may give some students more buy-in.

Students may want more detail about the candidates’ districts. Feel free to change the demographics, add elements to the issues and community problems, or create districts that mirror the students’ community. The specifics of the communities can be as rich and varied as you wish, provided you maintain conflicts among constituent groups and create community problems (e.g., traffic congestion or declining test scores).

This unit works well with cross-curriculum English or Philosophy courses. If time permits you may want to ask students to prepare other campaign materials, including bumper stickers, billboards, street or “lawn” signs, radio ads, or give-away items.

Ideas Not to Try

Campaigns should be kept local or for statewide legislative offices rather than national or gubernatorial races. At the national or gubernatorial level, campaign funding, staff size, and the number of consultants drastically limits the ability of a group like the “media team” to make meaningful decisions. In addition, gubernatorial and congressional races vary in terms of funding, and therefore, in types of media attention. A campaign for a senator in Montana, with a population of about 975,000, is considerably different in cost and in the size of its media market than a campaign for a senator in New York, with a population of about 19 million, or California, with a population of more than 33 million. Students should not be given the impression that they can generalize about gubernatorial or congressional campaigns based upon

campaigns conducted in their state or district. In addition, at these higher levels of campaigning, there is a heavier reliance on television advertisement. Generally, at the local level (except in major cities) there are radio, but not television, advertisements. Asking students to prepare a television commercial for a candidate is probably not a realistic assignment. Television commercials are labor and funding-intensive and require sophisticated knowledge of the technology and the medium.

Add the following websites for timely information about and examples of television campaign commercials:

The Living Room Candidate
<http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/>

The Museum of Broadcast Communications "Political Processes and Television"
<http://www.museum.tv/eotvsection.php?entrycode=politicalpro>

Christian Science Monitor "The history of political TV ads"
<http://www.csmonitor.com/2004/0707/p25s01-stin.html>

The 30-second Candidate
<http://www.pbs.org/30secondcandidate/text/index.html>

34. Extensions to the unit

- Research your government representative's (federal, state, or local) position on any issue that interests you. Look for issues that might affect you directly: school issues, city or county issues, state or national issues. Determine if the position held by the government official is in line with yours. Then find ways you can lend support in either the next election or the next time he or she is evaluated on their job performance. Create a plan on what you will do to support keeping this official in office. Examples might be to volunteer for their election campaign, offer to write letters of support, or conduct a fundraising project.
- Conduct an election campaign in your school featuring candidates for federal, state, or local office. Have students form campaign committees with a campaign manager, publicity manager, speechwriters, and researchers. Identify candidates who oppose each other in any of the three government levels—federal, state, or local. Have each committee research the candidates' qualifications for office and their position on the important issues. Each committee should develop briefing papers that summarize the candidate, his or her qualifications, where they stand on the issues, and what initiatives they propose to address these issues. Student committees can then create media pieces—speeches, 30-second radio, television, or web-based spots, newspaper

advertisement, website development—to promote or challenge the candidate. Students can present their media pieces to the class or the entire school, and mock-elections can be held.

- In the few months prior to an election, track individual polls from different news websites or national polling organizations such as Gallup, Rasmussen, or Pew. Investigate the polls to make sure they represent a cross-section of society, ask unbiased questions, and are conducted by a neutral organization. Develop a cover sheet that identifies the polling organization(s), summarizes the questions asked in the polls, and identifies the time period in which the surveys were conducted. Set up a recording chart with the name of the polling organization at the top, one column for the dates (by the week), another for candidates and/or issues. Over the weeks, update the candidates' or issues' polling numbers on the chart. Develop an analysis report addressing the following questions:
 - What trends occur between one polling period and the next? Have the candidates or issues been gaining or losing support?
 - Identify any news stories that might have influenced the polling trends. Summarize the content of the stories and explain their possible influence on the trends.
 - What adjustments, if any, did the candidates or advocates for or against the issues make in response to any news stories or changes in polling trends?
 - What changes, if any, were evident in polling trends after the adjustments?
- Have students review the Supreme Court's decision on *Citizens United v. FEC*. Have students conduct a case study. In their case study, they should summarize the central issue of the case, address what parts of the Constitution were involved, identify the parties involved, and summarize the ruling of the lower court. Then have them summarize the arguments for the appellant, the respondent, and the ruling of the Supreme Court. Have students answer the following questions: What are the implications of this ruling? How does it set a precedent for other rulings? What do proponents and critics of the ruling say? Have students express their opinion on the decision and its impact on campaign finance reform.

Campaign Management

An electoral campaign is an organized effort to persuade voters to vote for a certain candidate.

The size and complexity of the campaign depends upon the office (governor, mayor, City Council, Congress), the size of the district or state, and the existence of a credible opponent. The more important the office, the larger the district, and the more credible the opponent, the more money will likely be spent on the campaign. The more money spent on the campaign, the more likely job descriptions and job tasks will be specific and campaign workers will be employees rather than volunteers. In general, campaigns need: 1) money, 2) media attention, and 3) a cadre of support. The campaign strategy is the way candidates manipulate these three elements in order to win votes. Campaigns deal with image, information, and candidate/public contact. They require attention to, and expertise in, the following tasks:

1. Staffing and structuring the campaign
2. Researching district issues, voters, and opposition candidates
3. Developing a campaign plan
4. Developing the message, image, and presentation of the campaign
5. Voter contact
6. Using paid and free media
7. Fundraising and budgeting

1. Staffing and structuring the campaign

In small campaigns volunteers do much of the work. In major campaigns, paid experts, whose skills may be highly specific, do this work. Generally, a campaign staff will include:

- **Campaign Manager**—Directs and administers the campaign; manages the message and direction of the campaign. The campaign manager and his/her staff help write speeches, schedule appearances, plan strategy, and recruit supporters.
- **Fundraiser**—Responsible for raising money to operate the campaign and for monitoring and auditing the sources of funding.
- **Treasurer**—Can be the same person as the fundraiser; oversees the use and auditing of campaign funds. In California, every campaign is required by law to disclose the name of the treasurer on campaign material.

- **Campaign Counsel**—Provides expertise on campaign law, especially finance and fundraising.
- **Media Consultant**—Plans advertisements, buttons, stickers, direct mail, and give-aways, and helps spin the issues. Media consultants and the press secretary plan and implement the “message,” keeping in mind that these two staffers may often be at cross-purposes.
- **Research and Policy Advisor**—Researches the issues of the district and advises the candidate on policy; is involved in deciding the spin on issues and events surrounding the campaign.
- **Pollster**—Generally a hired firm that provides opinion research and gives candidates feedback on how they are viewed, what their chances are for winning the election, what voters want, and where their support is strong or weak.
- **Press Secretary**—Works with the media to get favorable information about the candidate into the daily news, attracts attention for the candidate, and deflects negative press. The press secretary and media consultants plan and implement the “message.”
- **Field Director**—Field campaigning (often described as “grassroots”) is the heart of campaigning and comes under the aegis of the field director, who oversees contact with neighborhood organizations, unions, and clubs and the coordination of volunteers. Also canvasses local organizations for endorsements, gathers signatures, sets up phone trees, and provides office support for the headquarters.

2. Researching district issues, voters, and opposition candidates

Campaigns must begin with thorough research about:

- Voter demographics and voter history
- Critical issues and voters’ opinions on these issues
- The opponent or opponents in the campaign
- The candidate and, to some degree, the candidate’s staff and associates
- Financial sources for campaigning
- Potential media resources, both paid and free
- Organizations and individuals that may provide support or endorsements
- Potential donated resources, like office space or plane travel
- Legal requirements

Some of this research is done using public opinion polls. Polls are a collection of individual attitudes and beliefs on issues gathered by polling experts, who try to measure opinion by asking a small sample portion of a group for their opinion and then extrapolate the results to the whole group. In a campaign, polls are used at various points:

- **Benchmark polls** are used at the beginning of a campaign to determine such basic information as how well the candidate is known, what issues people associate with the candidate, what people think of the opponent, and what issues people are concerned about. A benchmark poll can help the campaign staff design its campaign strategy.
- **Tracking polls** follow changes in attitudes toward candidates or issues by conducting daily sets of interviews. These interviews generally sample a small number of people and do not provide reliable generalizations. However, averaged over time, tracking polls can show trends or changes in attitudes. Tracking polls are used by well-funded, major campaigns like governor's races or Senate races. The campaign staff uses tracking polls to guide and revise its strategies.
- **Exit polls** are conducted in person at voting stations. They are short questionnaires given to a sample of voters after they have voted. Exit polls help the media predict the winner in a race, and they provide the reasons behind voter choices.
- **Push polls** are really unscrupulous, negative campaigning tactics masquerading as polls. Pollsters will ask leading questions based upon inaccurate information as a means of spreading doubt about an opponent. As an example, a push poll conducted by the Aldo Billings staff might ask prospective supporters of Angelina Gonzales, "Would you likely support or not support Angelina Gonzales if you knew she planned to provide free public transportation for all government workers once she is elected?" Even though Gonzales has no such plans and no power to implement such a program, such an unsubstantiated suggestion will raise doubts in the minds of her supporters.

On the Campaign Trail limits research on issues and voter demographics to expedite the unit. However, in actual campaigns, a good deal of initial staffing and funding goes into research to prepare the campaign plan and its central theme and message. As this unit demonstrates, research about one's own candidate is a critical part of campaigning. A candidate's opponent will learn his or her weaknesses and attack them, so it is imperative that the campaign staff is prepared. Campaign staff need to know in advance the pitfalls they may face and the potential negative campaigning they may encounter later in the campaign. Information early-on gives staffers an opportunity to consider (and practice) the spin they will put on the negative features of their candidate.

3. Developing a campaign plan

A campaign plan provides the structure for deploying limited time and financial resources. This is the campaign's plan of attack that will be followed by the candidate and staff. It spells out the goals and overall strategy of the campaign, and includes staffing, time lines, scheduling, fundraising, budget, and media strategies. Some campaigns prepare a written campaign plan that is made available in edited form to the public. The plan answers the general questions:

- What are our goals in this campaign?
- What is our strategy for reaching our goals?
- What will it cost to reach our goals?
- How will we budget campaign funds?
- What is our time line for reaching our goals?
- How will we schedule our candidate's time in order to reach our goals?

The planning process allows candidates to reflect upon the ways in which money will be raised and spent, and on the means the candidate is willing to use in order to get elected. Will the candidate accept funds from locally unpopular interest groups or political action committees (PACs)? Will the candidate participate in debates? Will the candidate divulge personal information? These are all questions the candidate answers in the planning process.

4. Developing the message, image, and presentation of the campaign

In order to get elected, candidates need to send the right message to the right audience, using the most time-and-money-efficient medium possible. The candidate needs a clear and concise message that is repeated often. This message should resonate with the voters and strike a chord that voters are passionate about. The message needs to be consistent and easy to articulate.

Candidates also need an image. Voters are likely to support a candidate who creates an emotional link with the public, even if they don't agree with all of the candidate's political beliefs and goals. John Kennedy made Americans feel as if they all had sophisticated backgrounds, Boston accents, Ivy League educations, and vision. The public enjoyed, by association, that image of America.

The most rudimentary stage of creating an image requires the candidate and staff to develop campaign literature that repeats the candidate's

name and the office he/she is running for. Name/face recognition with the office is paramount to getting elected. Direct mail, radio and television advertisements, lawn signs, newspaper advertisements, and canvassing are all strategies used to promote name/face recognition.

In developing the message and presentation of the campaign, candidates and their staff must reflect on the proportion of negative to positive campaigning. Candidates and their staff must decide how much of their resources they will devote to:

- Convincing voters of the good their candidate can do (positive campaigning)
- Convincing voters of the harm their opponent(s) can do (negative campaigning)

5. Researching district issues, voters, and opposition candidates

Campaigns must begin with thorough research about:

- Voter demographics and voter history
- Critical issues and voters' opinions on issues
- The opponent or opponents in the campaign
- The candidate and, to some degree, the candidate's staff and associates
- Financial sources for campaigning
- Potential media resources, both paid and free
- Organizations and individuals that may provide support or endorsements
- Potential donated resources, like office space or plane travel
- Legal requirements

Some of this research is done using public opinion polls. Polls are a collection of individual attitudes and beliefs on issues gathered by polling experts, who try to measure opinion by asking a small portion of a group for their opinion and then extrapolate the results to the whole group. In a campaign, polls are used at various points:

- **Benchmark polls** are used at the beginning of a campaign to determine such basic information as how well the candidate is known, what issues people associate with the candidate, what people think of the opponent, and what issues people are concerned about. A benchmark poll can help the campaign staff design its campaign strategy.

- **Tracking polls** follow changes in attitudes toward candidates or issues by conducting daily sets of interviews. These interviews generally sample a small number of people and do not provide reliable generalizations. However, averaged over time, tracking polls can show trends or changes in attitudes. Tracking polls are used by well-funded, major campaigns like governor's races or Senate races. The campaign staff uses tracking polls to guide and revise its strategies.
- **Exit polls** are conducted in person at voting stations. They are short questionnaires given to a sample of voters after they have voted. Exit polls help the media predict the winner in a race, and they provide the reasons behind voter choices.
- **Push polls** are really unscrupulous, negative campaigning tactics masquerading as polls. Pollsters will ask leading questions based upon inaccurate information as a means of spreading doubt about an opponent. As an example, a push poll conducted by the Aldo Billings staff might ask prospective supporters of Angelina Gonzales, "Would you likely support or not support Angelina Gonzales if you knew she planned to provide free public transportation for all government workers once she is elected?" Even though Gonzales has no such plans and no power to implement such a program, such an unsubstantiated suggestion will raise doubts in the minds of her supporters.

On the Campaign Trail limits research on issues and voter demographics to expedite the unit. However, in actual campaigns, a good deal of initial staffing and funding goes into research to prepare the campaign plan and its central theme and message. As this unit demonstrates, research about one's own candidate is a critical part of campaigning. A candidate's opponent will learn his or her weaknesses and attack them, so it is imperative that the campaign staff is prepared. Campaign staff need to know in advance the pitfalls they may face and the potential negative campaigning they may encounter later in the campaign. Information early-on gives staffers an opportunity to consider (and practice) the spin they will put on the negative features of their candidate.

6. Developing a campaign plan

A campaign plan provides the structure for deploying limited time and financial resources. This is the campaign's plan of attack that will be followed by the candidate and staff. It spells out the goals and overall strategy of the campaign, and includes staffing, time lines, scheduling, fundraising, budget, and media strategies. Some campaigns prepare a written campaign plan that is made available in edited form to the public. The plan answers the general questions:

- What are our goals in this campaign?
- What is our strategy for reaching our goals?

- What will it cost to reach our goals?
- How will we budget campaign funds?
- What is our time line for reaching our goals?
- How will we schedule our candidate's time in order to reach our goals?

The planning process allows candidates to reflect upon the ways in which money will be raised and spent, and on the means the candidate is willing to use to get elected. Will the candidate accept funds from locally unpopular interest groups or political action committees (PACs)? Will the candidate participate in debates? Will the candidate divulge personal information? These are all questions the candidate answers in the planning process.

7. Developing the message, image, and presentation of the campaign

In order to get elected, candidates need to send the right message to the right audience, using the most time-and-money-efficient medium possible. The candidate needs a clear and concise message that is repeated often. This message should resonate with the voters and strike a chord that voters are passionate about. The message needs to be consistent and easy to articulate.

Candidates also need an image. Voters are likely to support a candidate who creates an emotional link with the public, even if they don't agree with all of the candidate's political beliefs and goals. John Kennedy made Americans feel as if they all had sophisticated backgrounds, Boston accents, Ivy League educations, and vision. The public enjoyed, by association, that image of America.

The most rudimentary stage of creating an image requires the candidate and staff to develop campaign literature that repeats the candidate's name and the office he/she is running for. Name/face recognition with the office is paramount to getting elected. Direct mail, radio and television advertisements, lawn signs, newspaper advertisements, and canvassing are all strategies used to promote name/face recognition.

In developing the message and presentation of the campaign, candidates and their staff must reflect on the proportion of negative to positive campaigning. Candidates and their staff must decide how much of their resources they will devote to:

- Convincing voters of the good their candidate can do (positive campaigning)
- Convincing voters of the harm their opponent(s) can do (negative campaigning)

Presentation also requires attention to subtle visual messages. Details such as whether to wear a suit or casual clothes to certain gatherings, to use expensive bond paper for direct mail pieces, or to use demonstrative body language during a debate can have a major effect on the candidate's image. These factors are dependent upon the demographics of the community and should be considered when planning direct mail, advertisements, and candidate/voter contact.

8. Voter contact

One major task of campaign staff is to ascertain who the voters are: their demographics, their major concerns, and their opinions about the issues. Campaign literature and candidate appearances are then designed and delivered to specific voters according to this information. This process is called targeting, and it helps candidates put their resources where they are likely to have the most impact. Triage is used in targeting. That is, resources are not used on those who would vote for the candidate no matter what, nor are they used on voters who under no circumstances would be persuaded to support the candidate. Rather, resources are directed toward voters who are undecided and could be persuaded to vote for the candidate.

Targeting information to specific demographic or geographical groups is a technologically sophisticated process. Candidates select an issue (abortion, homelessness, healthcare) and send a mailer about the issue to those who are concerned about it and will likely agree with the candidate's stance. To some degree, candidates guess about agreement, but they can be more scientific about it by buying mail lists (including ones that contain voters who have supported similar candidates or causes), using precinct lists and past election returns, or using phone and/or door-to-door canvassing of the area prior to sending the mailer.

The candidate has six major ways to contact potential supporters:

Face-to-face—Candidates speak to groups of workers, union members, church members, social groups, parents, and college students, and go door-to-door or meet and greet people in a shopping mall or office complex.

Telephone—Generally campaigns purchase phone banks and use paid professionals or volunteers to make persuasive appeals for the candidate, or to encourage the candidate's core supporters to vote.

Free media—Candidates attempt to get press releases or appearances printed or aired.

Paid media—Radio, television, newspaper ads, and billboards are used in target areas.

Direct mail—Targeted to specific groups of voters, direct mail includes introductory pieces and endorsements (profile mailers), negative campaign pieces (hit pieces), issue pieces, and “slate cards” like those sent out by unions or party organizations.

Internet—Campaigns are coming to rely upon websites to promote their candidate and make personal contact with voters. Most candidates have a website, and they use it to promote their stances on issues, publicize their accomplishments, and answer voters’ questions.

9. Using paid and free media

In many ways, campaigns are organized around paid and free media attention. Events and activities for the candidate are scheduled with an eye to attracting media attention. Media coverage is expensive, so candidates try to attract as much free media as they can. It is the job of the campaign manager, the press secretary, and the media staff to maximize free exposure for the candidate. The campaign staff will supply the media with the candidate’s daily schedule, advance copies of speeches, and access to prepared statements (press releases).

Free media include:

- Radio and television news spots
- Newspaper coverage
- Press releases
- E-mail
- Campaign websites
- Open-source websites
- Social media sites

Candidates depend upon this coverage for their major speeches, debates, and rallies. These events are designed to attract as much free attention as possible and are often called “media events.” Many of them are “pseudo” in nature and designed solely to attract television, radio, and press coverage. Often they are staged. A candidate with a strong environmental message may meet the press at a local dumpsite or a badly polluted river. Candidates concerned about the physical deterioration of local schools will tour a school site and invite the press. The intent is to draw attention to the candidate and either to the problem that needs addressing or the accomplishments of the candidate. Other events, like debates, are planned but not staged. They can, to some degree, be scripted, but candidates are expected to answer impromptu questions from the press.

The media, for their part, know that conflict and scandal will attract the greatest number of readers and viewers. This encourages negative campaigning because negative campaigning results in more free media coverage for candidates.

Larger statewide or national campaigns also take advantage of radio call-in shows, television “magazine” programs, televised town meetings, late-night entertainment programs, and interview shows to get free exposure. For any race more local than gubernatorial, newspapers are the most crucial form of free media.

Candidates cannot rely on free media to get the message out exactly the way they want it told to voters. They must depend upon paid advertising to “script” the story and present themselves in the most positive light.

Paid media include:

- Radio and television advertisements
- Direct mail
- Give-away items like pencils or pot holders
- Billboard advertisements
- Websites
- Video news releases

Television advertising is expensive. A 30-second spot can cost more than \$5,000 in large media markets (big cities), and production costs can be as high as \$35,000 for that 30-second spot. Some local cable channels run paid advertisements, which help smaller, local campaigns. Major channels have media markets that are much larger than a local election district, so advertisements on these channels reach audiences that will not vote in the district election. Cable channels have smaller media markets and will reach just those affected by the campaign. Furthermore, cable channels charge less for advertising than the larger network stations. Candidates still must weigh the cost of advertising production and exposure on cable channels against the cost of radio, direct mail, and newspaper advertising, which can often reach a broader audience for less money.

Another form of paid media access is the video news release (VNR). The VNR is an interview in the form of a news report, paid for by the campaign and aired at the candidate’s expense on local television. The candidate allows local reporters to participate in the interview by posing questions. VNRs are generally used in campaigns that are trying to reach a broad market.

More recently, political campaigns have begun to incorporate the Internet into their campaign operations. E-mail, campaign-run websites, open-source websites (YouTube, Flickr), and social media websites like Twitter and Facebook have become valuable tools for campaigns. The advantage of using these tools is that they are inexpensive, can be easily accessed by computer or handheld devices, and content can be produced by the campaign itself. Political campaigns use the Internet for meetings, planning, and operations. In addition to e-mails, campaign staff carry out virtual meetings, set up schedules, plan and coordinate events, and communicate constantly. Campaigns also produce and distribute more and more of their promotion through the Internet. E-mail and campaign websites provide more control over the message than open-source websites and social media, but these more open forms of Internet media can spread the word geometrically, known as “going viral.” Open-source websites and social media also provide opportunities for hit pieces, sometimes anonymously. One major negative aspect of Internet media is the problem of having a campaign’s system hacked, or broken into, by the opposition or pranksters who can steal valuable and confidential information or send out embarrassing messages.

From 1964 to 1996, campaign costs rose from about \$200 million to over \$4 billion a year for all elections. The total cost for all Senate and House of Representatives races in 2000 was a little over \$1.27 billion. Perhaps the most dramatic example of campaign spending was the 2009 New Jersey gubernatorial race, where Governor Jon Corzine and challenger Chris Christy spent more than \$35 million combined. Senate races now cost about \$5 million, and a House of Representatives race can run from \$1 million to \$3 million. Local and state-level races are generally not this expensive. A race for the State Assembly generally costs between \$25,000 and \$500,000. Occasionally, these races can cost as much as \$1 million.

What do candidates do with the money? Most dollars spent in campaigning go to staffing and media attention. In presidential and congressional races, about 70% to 80% of the money goes to television advertisements alone. In general, campaign funds are used in the following manner:

- **Travel costs for statewide or national appearances.** Candidates jet from appearance to appearance, using personalized buses or rented planes. Candidates and staff members stay in hotels and eat meals while “on the campaign trail.”
- **Direct mail.** Mailings are used to introduce the candidate, solicit funds, explain the candidate’s stance on issues, or criticize an opponent.
- **Advertising.** Television, newspaper, and radio ads contribute to the multimillion-dollar advertising budgets of most national candidates. Local candidates generally rely on newspaper and radio ads, with some local television spots.

- **Fundraising parties.** It takes money to make money, and most candidates raise money by throwing gala parties, meet-the-candidate nights, neighborhood barbeques, or big-city gatherings in hotel ballrooms. A small gathering that costs about \$2,500 will net as much as \$25,000 in contributions, while a top-of-the-line party costing \$60,000 can easily raise \$1 million.
- **Office supplies and technology equipment.** Computers, networks, websites, office furniture, phone banks, and campaign software are costly items but contribute to the efficiency of the campaign.
- **Polls.** Polls are an invaluable tool for “need sensing” the voters and profiling the public’s mood. These tools help candidates to prioritize public concerns and determine their stand on the issues. Polls are also used to track how the candidate is doing, so campaigns can tailor the message to either positive or negative trends. Polls are expensive, however. A poll of about 500 people can cost \$15,000.
- **Staff salaries.** Top-flight campaign staffers are expensive. These political campaign professionals, especially if they have a winning record in past campaigns, can cost as much as \$20,000 per month.
- **Consultants.** Campaigns use outside specialists, like LD Consulting, Inc.—the fictitious group in this unit—to provide expertise that would be too costly to employ on staff. These consultants can range from spin experts to web designers, and can charge as much as \$250,000 a campaign.

Fundraising is a labor-intensive proposition for most political office seekers. This is especially true for candidates who do not have a proven track record in politics. The candidates in this unit are all neophytes—none of them are incumbents—so the time spent fundraising would be about the same for each candidate. In a real campaign, the candidates would spend, on average, more time raising money than would incumbents with a good track record in their district. Some candidates and officeholders spread fundraising over months and years and, therefore, spend little time in any given day on fundraising. For the most part, candidates spend the months before an election getting their message and record out to voters. They will hold several fundraising events spaced out over a year rather than use valuable pre-election time solely to raise money. In this case, fundraising is more concentrated into events, and there will be aggressive fundraising activity around these specific events. Even if candidates do not need to spend a lot of time raising money, they need to be good at it. They need to have good connections with PACs, “checkbook” party members, lobbyists, business leaders, and party officials. We asked several congressional candidates to give us examples of an “average day” to illustrate the amount of time spent fundraising. An average day for a candidate may include phone calls to potential donors, meetings and meals with

particular donor groups, and staff strategy sessions to plan fundraising efforts. Here is a composite example:

Congressional Candidate

- 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.—Drive time to district’s major newspaper offices
- 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.—Newspaper editorial board meeting
- 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.—Drive time to constituent meeting
- 11:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.—Meeting with constituents
- 12:30 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.—Drive time to lunch meeting
- 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.—Business network lunch (fundraising activity)
- 2:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.—Drive time to campaign headquarters
- 2:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.—Debate prep
- 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.—Drive time to local community college
- 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.—Debate at community college
- 8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.—Dinner with staff (includes fundraising strategizing)
- 9:30 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.—Drive time home

Campaigns in the United States

The United States is a nation of constant campaigns and elections. Every year there is a major statewide election held somewhere, plus a major national election every two years and primaries for party nomination that precede the general elections. As an example, in California we have elections for:

- President every four years
- Governor every four years
- Senate every two or four years (two senators with staggered six-year terms)
- Congress every two years
- State Senate every four years
- State Assembly every two years
- Special Districts usually every four years
- County and City offices vary, but generally every two or four years

In the United States, we also have more elected officials than most democracies. There are about 500,000 elected positions, or jobs, filled by people who must run for office. Even if only two people run in a campaign, that means about one million people run for office regularly.

Another characteristic of American campaigning is variety. There are campaigns for:

- State ballot initiatives
- Propositions
- Bond issues (raising money for specific projects)
- Recall elections (to depose a seated politician)
- Local ballot initiatives
- Nomination or party primaries (candidates run within their party)
- General elections (candidates from different parties run against each other)

Voter turnout records illustrate the ballot fatigue experienced in this country. Voter turnout has declined since the 1960s, when 63 percent of eligible voters voted in the Kennedy-Nixon race. In the 2000 presidential race, only 59 percent of eligible voters voted. The historic election of 2008 brought the numbers up to over 64 percent.

Americans are bored by the never-ending campaigns, but they do not necessarily support the alternative of fewer campaigns and longer terms in office. Americans want control of their politicians, and they want their leaders to be accountable to the voter. Because politicians come up for election so often, they devote more time to meeting the public, and while in office they consider the needs and wants of the voters. Americans like politicians to serve as agents of the people and to be responsive to their needs. Unfortunately, constant campaigning also means that politicians are always running for office, need to raise money, and can't take unpopular stands that may be in the best interest of the nation.

For more information on campaign management, see:

- The National Women's Political Caucus:
<http://www.nwpc.org>
- The California affiliate of NWPC holds training programs throughout California to provide women with the skills needed to run winning campaigns. "These day-long workshops focus on the essentials of fundraising, media, and campaign management, as well as message development and get-out-the-vote strategies." NWPC also publishes *Campaigning to Win: The NWPC Guide to Running a Winning Campaign*.
- *Campaigns & Elections: The Magazine for People in Politics* published by Congressional Quarterly Press. The magazine reviews campaign strategies, evaluates the effectiveness of mailers and television advertising, and offers critiques of specific campaigns. Articles also cover costs associated with using different campaign tools. Information can be found at:
<http://www.cq.com/> and <http://www.campaignsandelections.com/>

For more information about polls, see:

- "Good" Polls/"Bad" Polls—
How Can You Tell?: Ten Tips for Consumers of Survey Research:
<http://www.ipspr.sc.edu/publication/Link.htm>
- The Gallup Organization:
<http://www.gallup.com>
- CBS News Polls:
<http://www.cbsnews.com/sections/opinion/polls/main500160.shtml>
- NY Times News Polls:
<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/subjects/n/newyorktimes-poll-watch/index.html>
- The Pew Research Center:
<http://www.people-press.org>
- Rasmussen Reports:
<http://www.rasmussenreports.com>
- National Council on Public Polls:
<http://www.ncpp.org/?q=home>

● Campaign Finance Reform ●

American politics has been rife with influence peddling from those seeking government favors since the early 19th century. After President Andrew Jackson threatened to revoke the charter of the Second National Bank, bank officials went so far as to finance efforts to block Jackson's reelection. Government employees were hired through a "spoils system" of patronage and were expected to kick in part of their salaries to the campaign efforts of those government officials who got them their jobs. Political operatives used corporate donations to control state elections and thus influence the selection of U.S. Senators who were elected by state legislatures at the time.

For more information on campaign finance reform, see:

- Public Citizen is committed to bringing about comprehensive campaign finance reform. The organization reports policy-related news and maintains updates on its website about campaign reform.
<http://www.citizen.org/congress/campaign>.
- New Rules tracks innovative public policy in a variety of sectors (finance, governance, retail, taxes). Its governance section describes clean election laws and reviews campaign reform in Arizona, Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont. <http://newrules.org>
- The Alliance for Democracy is a "progressive populist movement" advocating public funding of all federal elections. It has initiated a "Clean Elections Campaign" to support public funding of campaigns.
<http://www.thealliancefordemocracy.org>
- The Public Campaign advocates clean money campaign reform. Its website includes a review of campaign financing, its problems, and suggested legislative solutions, and explains how clean money campaign reform works. <http://www.publiccampaign.org>
- MovetoAmend.org is a group dedicated to rejecting the Supreme Court ruling in *Citizen's United* and moving to amend the Constitution.
<http://movetoamend.org/>

Two informational videos on campaigning and campaign reform are:

- "Votes for Sale?" from PBS NOW program October 20, 2006. A special investigation into the fight to keep American elections free and fair across the country. Program spotlights the so-called clean elections movement trying to revolutionize how campaigns are conducted.
<http://www.pbs.org/now/shows/242/index.html>
- "After Citizens United" from Bill Moyers Journal documents the effects of the 2010 Supreme Court ruling in *Citizen's United v. FEC*.
<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/02052010/profile2.html>

Who Votes?

Although every citizen in the United States aged 18 or older is eligible to vote (except those imprisoned), most Americans do not vote. Voter turnout is dependent upon age, employment, education, income, and race.

- **Age:** The typical voter is older than 35. Only 31.2% of eligible voters under age 21 actually vote. The percent of voters rises steadily with age. In the 2008 presidential election, voting by age looked like this:

18–29 51.1%

30–44 61.8%

45–59 68.5 %

60+ 70.8%

- **Employment, Education, Income:** The likelihood of voting increases as one moves up the socioeconomic ladder. About 70% of voters with family incomes over \$40,000 vote regularly. Voting steadily declines as income declines. Among the poorest Americans, fewer than 50% vote regularly. Education has a similar effect on voting. Seventy-three percent of those who have completed college vote, while 60% with at least one year of college report voting regularly, and 49% of those who attended high school but not college vote regularly. Of those with an eighth grade education or less, only 28% vote. About 55% of employed citizens vote, while only 37% of unemployed citizens vote. About 54% of the people not in the labor force (including retired citizens) vote regularly.
- **Race:** When blacks and whites with similar family incomes are compared, their reported voting turnout rates are roughly comparable. Hispanics, however, tend to have lower turnout rates even with similar family incomes. About 56% of whites report voting regularly, 51% of blacks, and 27% of Hispanics. This disparity is almost completely explained by the differences in income and education between whites and other racial and ethnic groups.

Campaign Slogans and Themes

What are slogans?

Slogans are one-line quips that can be easily remembered and are directly associated with a candidate or in some way describe a candidate. Examples of famous slogans from past campaigns include:

- “Tippecanoe and Tyler Too”—Used in the 1840 presidential campaign by General William Henry Harrison, recalling his military victory over the Shawnee at Tippecanoe Creek in 1811.

- “He Kept Us Out of War”—The slogan of Woodrow Wilson, who during his first term as president kept the United States out of World War I.
- “I Like Ike”—For Dwight Eisenhower’s 1952 campaign, in which he capitalized on his popularity as a World War II military hero.
- “Compassionate Conservative”—Used by George W. Bush in the 2000 campaign.
- “The Real Deal”—Used by John Kerry during the 2004 campaign.
- “Change We Can Believe In”—Used by Barack Obama in the 2008 campaign.

What are recurring themes candidates use about their campaign?

Themes differ from slogans in that they are associated with issues, or the general focus of the campaign, rather than directly relating to the candidate. Examples of recurring themes from past campaigns include:

- “A New Deal”—Perhaps one of the most famous themes. In the 1932 campaign during the darkest days of the Depression, the Democrats under the leadership of Franklin Roosevelt used it to bring hope to the American people.
- “Morning in America”—Used by Republican Ronald Reagan in the 1980 campaign to strike an optimistic note amidst the malaise of the energy crisis, Iranian hostage standoff, and the Cold War.
- “Steady Leadership in Times of Change”—The 2004 theme for the Republican presidential race.
- “Making America Energy Independent”—One of the themes used by the Democrats in the 2004 campaign.
- “Country First”—Used by John McCain in the 2008 U.S. presidential race.
- “Drill, baby, drill!”—Used by John McCain’s Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin in 2008 to show her support for domestic oil production.
- “Yes We Can!” (¡Sí Se Puede! in Spanish)—Barack Obama’s 2008 theme for the U.S. presidential election.

What are recurring themes candidates use about their opponents?

These themes are generally negative and short and are often aimed directly at the opposing candidate. Negative themes that catch on can be toxic to a campaign. That is, if the candidate does not respond to the charge, it gives credence to the theme; if the candidate does respond, he or she appears defensive. Either way, these themes become labels that are nearly impossible to shake.

- “The Aristocrat in the Palace”—Used by General William Henry Harrison in his 1840 campaign against President Martin Van Buren. Harrison portrayed himself as an ordinary farmer (he was actually from a wealthy plantation family) and cast President Van Buren as a somber elitist divorced from the people.
- “Henry Wallace and His Communists”—An often-repeated theme used by Harry Truman in the 1948 campaign against Henry Wallace of the Progressive Party.
- “Egg-Head”—Used by the Dwight Eisenhower campaigns in 1952 and 1956 to describe the bookish, somewhat aloof Adlai Stevenson.
- “Flip Flop”—An often-repeated theme used by the Republicans in 2004 to describe Senator John Kerry’s voting record.

● Direct Mail ●

Why Use Direct Mail?

Direct mail is an important way to communicate with voters for several reasons:

1. Direct mail has advantages over television and radio.
 - It is cheaper than television or radio.
 - It is not tied to a media market. Television and radio audiences may not include the district’s entire constituency, or may include more than the district’s constituency so candidates pay for advertisements heard by people who cannot vote for them.
2. Direct mail can send a particular message to a specific group, and can target specific districts, precincts, or demographics.
3. It leaves a lasting visual impression.
4. It can be rougher in tone and message than a television or radio advertisement.

5. It can get more in-depth on issues, especially in an issue piece.

What Kind Of Information Is Needed to Plan a Strategy For Direct Mail?

1. Demographic Information
 - Number of registered voters and their party by precinct
 - Ethnic groups, religious groups, age of voters, economic status, education level, type of employment, and professions
 - Family status—configuration of families, school-aged children, gay enclaves, singles groups, retirement communities
2. Issues and opinions
 - Issues of primary concern in the district—environment, war, transportation, taxes, etc.
 - Variety of opinions and how strong opinions are
 - Number of voters for and against issues

How Do Campaigns Gather This Information?

1. Make direct calls to constituents (polls)
2. Buy a copy of the Federal Elections Report
3. Buy lists from political list brokers
4. Request registered voter information from the County Clerk

Characteristics of a Profile Mailer

Profile mailers are slick and casual, and reflect the image and tone of the campaign. Full-size, color copies of profile mailers are available at www.bie.org. In reviewing these pieces with students, stress that:

1. Profile mailers reinforce name/face recognition. The candidate's name and face should be repeated often, or should be central to the piece.
2. Color, paper weight, style of print, and placement of information on the page are critical to capturing the attention of the viewer. (In the examples shown on the BIE website, ask students which ones they find appealing and why. As an example, what makes one photo effective and another one not effective?)

3. Marketing experts assume that fewer than half of the people who pick up a mailer will actually open it, so it is important to make the first page engaging. Fewer than 10% of the people who open the mailer will actually read it, so words should be kept to a minimum and speak directly to the voters being targeted.
4. Profile mailers should include:
 - The name and face of the candidate
 - A slogan or catch phrase
 - Photos of the candidate with his/her family or other people's families
 - Photos of the candidate in action—playing soccer or baseball with children or his/her family, visiting a construction site, talking with business leaders
 - Photos of the candidate with various ethnic groups
5. As long as they aren't cluttered, profile mailers can also include:
 - Positive images of the candidate with representatives from target voter groups (elderly, young families, children)
 - Testimonials from representatives of target voter groups
 - Endorsements
 - A brief review of the candidate's accomplishments or qualifications

Writing Pieces

Characteristics of an Issue Piece or Issue Magazine

The issue piece breaks all the rules about glib, straightforward language and plentiful white space. It is a narrative review of the candidate's stand on issues deemed important to the race or the district. It is an in-depth look at the candidate's philosophy, generally organized by topic of interest as identified by the polls. In reviewing the issue pieces provided at www.bie.org, stress that:

1. No campaign media expert actually expects voters to read a 40- to 60-page issue piece. In fact, they are not likely to read a four- to five-page issue piece. They may read headlines and callout phrases or sidebars, so these need to be catchy and raise central points that make the candidate look good.
2. Issue pieces are expected to show how busy, committed, involved, competent, and informed the candidate is. This impression can be given by actual content and by the sheer volume of content.

3. The issue piece is serious in tone.
4. An issue piece must include information that is carefully weighted to appeal to the target audience. It would not be wise to send an issue piece advocating increased taxes to pay for schools to an elderly population that is worried about taxes and beyond the immediate benefit of public schools.
5. Information can be presented in a magazine format rather than a flyer.
6. Issue pieces often follow a question-and-answer format.

Characteristics of a Hit Piece

A hit piece is the quintessential form of negative campaigning. In reviewing the three hit pieces provided, observe the following:

1. In the hit piece, the candidate uses slanted language, innuendoes, and if possible, factual information to erode the opponent's image and thus voter support.
2. Hit pieces use stark or sharp colors, catchy phrases, and minimal verbiage. In reviewing the three hit piece examples on the BIE website, ask students to consider the wording, the nature of the accusations, color schemes, and photos in determining the impression given of the opponent.
3. If photos are used of the candidate, these will generally be muted, in soft colors or soft tones—in contrast to the unattractive, sharp-toned photos of the opponent.
4. Generally, hit pieces want to divorce the candidate sending out the hit piece from the bad news being given about the opponent. The name of the candidate may only appear in small print. This practice of playing down the role of the sender is especially true in places where negative campaigning has been known to cause a backlash.
5. Federal law requires that all campaign literature print the source of the piece. It is illegal for a candidate to send out an anonymous hit piece.
6. It is also illegal to send out hit pieces after a certain deadline prior to the election. (In California all literature must be mailed no later than 48 hours before the polls close.) Candidates want to send out hit pieces as close to this deadline as possible, so the opponent cannot react effectively. An unanswered hit piece is seen as a concession.

For further information about negative campaigning and examples of media use, see:

- <http://www.completecampaigns.com/article.asp?articleid=8>
- http://www.pbs.org/30secondcandidate/tricks_of_the_trade
- <http://www.thisnation.com/question/031.html>

Table: The Stand the Candidate Should Take on the Issues

Answer Key

The following is an example of a completed version of the table that students are expected to fill out. Remember, this is only one example. The table can be completed in many different ways. This example can be used to prompt students during this exercise, but it should not be given to students to copy. This example is based upon the Angelina Gonzales campaign.

<i>List Major Issues</i>	<i>List Community Groups in Favor</i>	<i>List Community Groups Opposed</i>	<i>Describe Candidate's Likely Stance Based on Biography</i>	<i>Describe Stand You Think Candidate Should Take to Win the Election</i>
Raising taxes	None—most people in the district want lower taxes	The elderly, the working class, the middle class	She supports access to quality public education and raising taxes to support it.	She can support better public services, like schools, but not by raising taxes.
Increase funding for education	Young families	The elderly	She supports access to quality public education, although she attended private schools. She served on the school board and has young children, so education is probably a priority.	The elderly control local political decisions and they see no gain in supporting higher taxes for public education. Angelina must talk about improving test scores and school performance and not about spending tax money to repair deteriorating school buildings.
Social services	The elderly want police protection and affordable health care, while young families want better schools, recreational facilities, and help for those who lose their jobs.	Most people would rather have services cut than taxes raised, but they disagree on which services to cut.	She is running for office to enact her vision of government involvement in social reform and believes the government should protect the elderly, the poor, children, and those unable to care for themselves.	To stay loyal to her vision but not alienate most of the voters, she must focus on improving social services for everyone through greater efficiency rather than tax increases.

Campaign reform	Everyone	None	Angelina served on the statewide Governor's Committee to Investigate Campaign Finance Reform. She is likely to be knowledgeable on the subject, but it is not clear if she supports campaign reform.	Since the community is sick of negative campaigning and the obscene amount of money that funds local campaigns, she should frequently state that her campaign is focusing on issues—not slander or innuendo about her opponent—and that she expects the same from her opponent.
Jobs	The elderly want a readily available, inexpensive, semi-skilled workforce. Young families move here to find work in tourist and recreational facilities, technology firms, and elderly-related services.	None	She supports the public services needed to improve the community's quality of life. She also wants to protect the natural environment and the community's small town flavor.	In promoting jobs in service industries for the elderly, she can explain to elderly voters the importance of quality education as a means of providing semi-skilled and skilled workers for elderly-related services.

Scoring Guide for the Table

The Stand the Candidate Should Take on the Issues

Lists Major Issues

10%

Student provides a thorough review and synthesis of the issues presented by Dario Martinez. Each issue is clearly and accurately summarized.

Lists Community Groups in Favor

15%

Student demonstrates an understanding of the groups likely to be in favor of each of the issues. Student may also suggest other groups that may be favorably impacted.

Lists Community Groups Opposed

15%

Student demonstrates an understanding of the groups likely to be against each of the issues. Student may also suggest other groups that may be unfavorably impacted.

Describes Candidate's Likely Stance Based on Biography

25%

Student demonstrates a thorough reading and understanding of the candidate's biography and can extrapolate what stand the candidate would likely take on each of the issues. (This item is weighted more than the previous three because it is the basis for the connection between the candidate's point of view and the voters.)

Describes Stand Candidate Should Take to Win the Election

35%

Student understands that a candidate's stand will trade support of one group for another and that, to win, candidates need the greater number of voting supporters. Has the student weighed the candidate's likely point of view against that of the majority of voters? Has the student considered whether a candidate can afford to promote a personal point of view over the view of the majority of voters?

Checklist

Statement Describing the Campaign Message

- ___ States the issue/s the candidate will focus on
 - gleans from the demographic material and community profile the issues the candidate needs to focus on to get elected
- ___ Creates a slogan the candidate will use
 - slogan is clever and easy to remember
 - focuses on the positives about the candidate
 - will resonate with the voters in the district
- ___ Creates a recurring theme the candidate will use about himself/herself
 - theme is simple and easy to understand
 - theme is on target given the concerns of the constituency
 - convinces the voters of the good the candidate can do
- ___ Creates a recurring theme the candidate will use about his/her opponent
 - theme is simple and easy to understand
 - theme is on target given the concerns of the constituency
 - convinces the voters of the harm the opponent can do if elected
 - theme makes the opponent vulnerable to negative voter response
- ___ Explains why this strategy will work
 - defends strategy based on expected response of the voters

Scoring Guide For Final Media Pieces and Presentation

*Profile Mailer, Issue Magazine, Hit Piece,
Press Release/Newspaper Ad*

Scoring guide lists criteria for evaluation *in order of importance*. This may be used as a checklist, or points may be assigned to each item. The profile mailer is *mandatory* as the first product of the package; students *choose* which of the others to include.

Profile Mailer

- reinforces name/face recognition _____
- style captures the attention of the voter _____
- voter is enticed to open the flyer with clever artwork or wording _____
- pictures are appropriate _____
- wording is kept to a minimum _____
- campaign catch phrase or slogan is prominent _____
- includes representative photographs of target voters _____
- includes testimonials, endorsements, and a brief review of the candidates accomplishments and qualifications (but not in a cluttered manner) _____

and

Issue Magazine

- is lengthy and thoroughly covers the candidate's stand on the issues _____
- includes headlines, call out phrases and sidebars that are catchy _____
- and make the candidate look good _____
- makes the candidate look well informed on the issues, busy, _____
- committed, involved, and competent _____
- is serious in tone _____
- content is designed to appeal to the target audience _____
- is properly formatted as an issue magazine _____

or

Hit Piece

- uses slanted language, innuendoes, factually negative information that erodes the opponent's image _____
- hit piece is not anonymous and sent out within the legal time frame _____
- uses stark, bold colors, catchy phrases, and minimal verbiage _____
- pictures of the candidate are positive and muted; pictures of the opponent are stark and unattractive _____
- plays down the role of the candidate; divorces him/her from negative message of the hit piece _____

or

Press Release or Newspaper Ad

- is self-serving and makes the candidate look good _____
- tells the story from your candidate's perspective and is on message _____
- is fresh, out of the ordinary, provocative, and/or presents new information _____
- the fresh, out of the ordinary, provocative, and/or new information is presented at the beginning _____
- includes quotes from the candidate that the press will like and use _____
- spin is consistent and evident throughout _____
- spin is convincing _____
- includes a response to the opponent's hit piece _____
- follows appropriate format _____

and

Presentation of Final Media Pieces

- explains the rationale for choices made about which media pieces to create; includes consideration of the impact on voters and the campaign's resources, time frame _____
- justifies choice about how to respond to opponent's hit piece _____

Test for *On the Campaign Trail*

Answer Key

1. What are constituent profiles?
 - A The names, addresses, and phone numbers of people living in a Congressional district
 - B A list of the problems facing people in a voting district
 - C Descriptions of the economic, ethnic, and party preference of voters living in an election district
 - ☒ D A description of a candidate's background
2. What is a candidate profile?
 - A A line drawing of a candidate's image used on campaign materials
 - ☒ B A description of a candidate's personal, professional, and political background
 - C A piece of campaign literature that helps raise campaign funds
 - D Campaign material that outlines the candidate's position on the issues
3. What is the purpose of an issue piece?
 - A To explain how informed and committed the candidate is to the issue
 - B To present the overall theme of the campaign
 - C To present the opponent's views on the issues in a negative light
 - ☒ D To provide voters with a brief review of the candidate's position on the issues
4. The basic purpose of a campaign press release is to
 - ☒ A inform the media about a candidate.
 - B attack an opposition candidate.
 - C raise money for the campaign.
 - D set up the campaign's management.
5. The biggest cost in running a political campaign comes from
 - A travel costs.
 - B fundraising events.
 - ☒ C media advertisement.
 - D staff salaries.
6. One of the issues that motivated candidate J.T. Watts to run for County Board of Supervisors was his frustration with local government. According to the campaign manager's memo, what event contributed to this frustration?
 - A Running against Mike Johnston
 - B Building the skateboard park
 - ☒ C Helping build the business park
 - D Increased crime rate

7. One of the issues in the Watts-Johnston campaign was commercial development and building shopping outlets. Which of the following was a concern raised by Mike Johnston and people who opposed the shopping outlets?
- A Declining property values
 - ☒ B Destroying local businesses and increasing traffic congestion
 - C Less services for senior citizens
 - D Increased businesses taxes
8. Which of the following issue positions would indicate that Angelina Gonzales is a liberal?
- A Believes state government can be an effective tool in bringing about economic growth
 - B Believes social programs have made the poor dependent on government handouts
 - ☒ C Supports campaign finance reform
 - D Committed to have government provide a safety net for the less fortunate
9. Why are people like Governor Brown and Angelina Gonzales concerned about campaign finance reform?
- A Political campaigns cost the tax-payer too much money.
 - B The lack of reform contributes to low voter turnout.
 - C The education system has not prepared students to be informed citizens.
 - ☒ D Campaigns spend too much money focusing on personalities and not on the issues.
10. In the State Assembly district race between Angelina Gonzales and Aldo Billings, which of the beliefs below does Aldo share with many of the people living in the district?
- A He supports quality education and raising the needed funds through taxes to pay for it.
 - ☒ B He feels that government is bloated with costly social programs that burden middle-class taxpayers.
 - C He is young like many of the people living in the community and shares their desire for more business development.
 - D He supports the idea of increasing government programs to assist the elderly.
11. Why would the revelation about J.T. Watts's marijuana use in college be potentially damaging to his campaign?
- ☒ A Watts is running as a responsible social and fiscal conservative and the incident makes him look irresponsible.
 - B He is running against a former police officer who was involved in the case that arrested Watts.
 - C Watts is running to reduce the high crime rate in the county as a convicted felon.
 - D It puts into question whether he should work with youth athletic programs.

12. During the campaign, it was revealed that Angelina Gonzales's husband was using campaign funds to shore up his business. How does this particular revelation make her look less than capable when compared to her opponent, Aldo Billings?
- A Its shows she is not as supportive of the middle class as Billings.
 - B It looks like Gonzales has misspent government tax money during her campaign.
 - ☒ C It implies that Billings would be better qualified to make government more economically and fiscally responsible than Gonzales.
 - D It calls into question her support for higher taxes.
13. As a political campaign is forming, what factors determine how large and complex a campaign will be?
- A The amount of money raised before the campaign begins
 - B The importance of the office, the size of the district and the credibility of the opponent
 - C The more volunteers who join the campaign
 - ☒ D The importance and complexity of the issues in the race
14. Below is a quote from the memo Governor Brown wrote to Campaign Manager Dario Martinez about the pending hit piece from the Johnston campaign. Review the quote and determine the statements that help and hurt candidate Watts by underlining the statement and drawing an arrow either to the "help" column or the "hurt" column.

Help	Quote	Hurt
	<u>Watts got caught growing large quantities of marijuana in the attic of his rented house while in law school. He did not serve jail time because there were some court technicalities about a search warrant.</u> Police apparently entered the house without a search warrant when Watts was arrested. Although <u>he went ahead and finished law school, he lost his right to practice law in the state.</u> Johnston, as the former president of the police union and a long-time City Council member, has access to details of the case, complete <u>with photographs taken of the marijuana plants in the attic and photos of Watts on the day he was arrested...</u>	

15. Which of the following is *not* an advantage of using direct mail in a campaign?
- A It's cheaper than radio and television.
 - ☒ B It's tied to a media market.
 - C It can send a particular message to a specific group.
 - D It can be more direct in its statements and go more in-depth.

16. What is the difference between a campaign slogan and a campaign theme?
- ☒ (A) A slogan is directly related to the candidate and a theme is more associated with the issues.
 - B A campaign theme is only about the opponent and a slogan is about the candidate.
 - C A slogan is usually about the issues and a campaign theme is about the candidate's personality and character.
 - D A campaign theme is about the candidate's reason for running for office and a campaign slogan is taken from one of the speeches.
17. The media responds best to new information sent in a press release. With this in mind, which of the following statements would work best in a press release on J.T. Watts?
- A J.T. Watts, who is running for County Board of Supervisors, announced today he has received the support of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.
 - B J.T. Watts attended the third anniversary party of the opening of the skateboard park last Tuesday with several hundred in attendance.
 - ☒ (C) J.T. Watts supports the building of "big box" retail outlets on the city limits.
 - D J.T. Watts attended law school and began a private investigation business specializing in technology tools for surveillance.
18. Which of the following situations would *not* make a good media event for a candidate?
- A Former teacher, Othea Simpson, who is running for state school superintendent, toured an inner city school pledging to bridge the "digital divide" between schools in rich and poor districts.
 - B One-time mining business owner, Clyde Johnson, will hold a press conference at the sludge ponds of a local paper mill and call for more strict controls over industrial pollution.
 - C Cheryl Rodriguez, local school board candidate, has announced a campaign rally at the Flying Ram sports bar.
 - ☒ (D) Incumbent Labor Secretary Shirley Wong is visiting the lumber mill on Forest Road to talk about job creation and international markets.
19. Many people complain about negative ads and the huge amounts of money spent on degrading candidates, instead of focusing on the issues. Which of the following is one reason why "hit pieces" remain in political campaigns?
- A Supporters of political candidates demand that campaign ads explain why opposing candidates should not be elected.
 - ☒ (B) Surveys and studies have found that negative campaigning works and benefits the candidate who employs it.
 - C Many individuals and organizations who contribute to political campaigns encourage negative ads in political campaigns.
 - D The general public is attracted to conflict and scandal and has little interest in the issues.

20. Which of the following is the best example of target marketing in a political campaign?
- Ⓐ Campaign materials are sent to voters who are undecided and could be persuaded to vote for the candidate.
 - B The campaign spends most of its advertising money on mass media outlets to get wide coverage of their message.
 - C The campaign sends pamphlets and flyers to people who support the candidate's position on the issues.
 - D The campaign organization sent campaign materials to members of the opposing political party.

Entry Document: Memo From Governor Brown



FROM THE DESK OF GOVERNOR BROWN

FROM: Governor Brown
TO: Media Team, LD Consulting, Inc.
RE: Upcoming Campaign

As you know, a long-time friend of mine is running for office in your area. I have recommended that my friend's campaign manager, Dario Martinez, talk to you about putting together media pieces for the campaign. I explained to Martinez that I was very much impressed with the work you did for me in the last election. Part of my commitment to working with you in the future includes my desire to have you help out on the campaigns of candidates important to me. This candidate is very important to me.

Martinez will be sending you a brief profile of my friend, a review of the major issues, and the demographics of the district. He'll want to know what you have in mind for the campaign's message and look.

You'll discover soon enough that my friend is a less-than-perfect candidate. However, I expect that given your track record you will find this to be a healthy challenge and not a stumbling block. This candidate has a good heart and is genuinely committed to the community. I hope the campaign will be an exciting opportunity for you.

Go to it. As always, I expect only the best from you.

First Memo from Dario Martinez

Watts Campaign

J.T. Watts for County Board of Supervisors

C A M P A I G N H E A D Q U A R T E R S

From: Dario Martinez, Campaign Manager
To: Media Team, LD Consulting, Inc.

We are looking forward to your presentation of media pieces for J.T.'s campaign. Below are the important facts about the campaign, including a profile of J.T. and his opponent, and a review of the campaign issues and district demographics.

J.T. Watts, Supervisor Candidate

Although J.T. graduated from law school with honors, he has never practiced law. After college he began a private investigation business specializing in technology tools for surveillance. He has been operating this business locally for 10 years. He has seven employees. J.T. is not married and has no children. He supports his elderly mother and aunt. J.T. is a political novice, but he has been involved with public service projects. He has served on several nonprofit boards and is active in youth athletic programs (he played basketball in college). As a member of the Park and Recreation Board, J.T. was successful in bringing a skateboard park and outdoor basketball courts to the community. Most recently J.T. led a campaign to build a business park in town. He and a group of business partners actively, and successfully, pursued funding for the project. They shepherded the project through the planning phase and ultimately succeeded in getting the business park built. It was this often-frustrating interaction with local government that inspired J.T. to run for public office. He found the bureaucratic process inefficient and unresponsive to citizens. J.T. recognizes that he is a fiscal and social conservative running in a county that does not support the social conservative agenda. Although he has no experience as an elected official, he feels he brings a businessman's common sense to politics. He is committed to making government more responsive to the needs of citizens. He wants to improve government institutions so that they can help the community prosper in a reasonable and prudent manner. J.T. feels that sound planning and commercial development will bring much-needed jobs to the community, which in turn will help young families and students. He wants more jobs, training programs, and constructive activities for young people. He believes people will not need welfare and public handouts if they have the opportunity to work at well-paying jobs. J.T. is articulate, upbeat, and highly energetic. His youthful good looks belie the fact that he is in his mid-thirties.

Mike Johnston, Supervisor Opponent

Mike Johnston is a 71-year-old retired police officer who served as president of the local police union for more than 20 years. Johnston served on the City Council in the biggest city in the county before running for county supervisor. No one in the county knows local law and local politics better than Johnston. It's long been believed that to get anything done, one had to get the approval of Johnston. This is where Watts and Johnston first locked horns. Johnston objected to converting open space into a business park. Watts's overwhelming success in raising funds for the project, and the sheer numbers he had supporting the business park, embarrassed Johnston into accepting the project. Johnston has carried a fierce grudge against Watts ever since. He sees Watts as the "new breed" of arrogant business leaders who try to use end-runs to get around the county's old guard political elite. Johnston is well connected among the state's "checkbook Democrats." He is interested in running for the Board of Supervisors as a means of protecting the county from wholesale development and protecting the interests of long-term county residents. Johnston is especially concerned about the elderly residents of the county, who raised their children in the community and want to remain there in their retirement but are fearful of the effects of wholesale commercial development.

Major Campaign Issues***Commercial Development***

Several "big box" retail outlets want to move into the county. The building of a series of big box stores and shopping outlets is supported by pro-growth forces who see new tax revenues coming into the area as a result of these businesses. Increased tax revenue will help fund much-needed community projects. Supporters also see these stores as providing jobs for working and middle class residents of the area. The anti-growth forces see the stores as bringing in more people and creating traffic congestion. They think the increased tax dollars would be spent on fighting increased crime, road building and maintenance, and other "unnecessary" public services. Opponents also worry that big box stores will destroy some of the locally-owned businesses competing with them.

Local Highway Construction

The state has offered to fund the widening of the highway that runs through the district, provided local residents fund a portion of the project through a tax. Thus far, county voters have refused the freeway plans. Supporters of the highway construction plan see this as solving some nightmarish traffic problems in the area. They are concerned about declining property values as a result of the difficult commute to the major metropolitan area. Opponents see this as more taxes. They also think that increased access to the area would lead to more commercial and residential development and eventually more traffic problems.

Increased Crime Rate

Local residents are concerned about the increase in gang-related crimes in the area. Some local youth agencies and parent groups want to curb gang activity and youth crime by providing more activities for young people. They want intervention programs; after-school, evening, and weekend supervised activities; and inexpensive family activity centers and recreational facilities. Others in the community see this as a crime-control issue. They want increased police protection, more officers on the streets and in the schools, and stiffer sentences for convicted criminals.

District Demographics

This is predominantly a commuter community for people who work in the major metropolitan area about a half-hour's drive out of the county. Housing is still affordable because of the difficult commute, and a lot of young families are moving here. The ethnic makeup of the community is a close replica of the state as a whole, with a growing number of middle and working class Asians, African Americans, and Hispanics. Many of the citizens of the county have lived here all their lives, and they resent the influx of people from the nearby metropolitan area. Housing developments are replacing open fields, orchards are becoming strip malls, and schools are overcrowded. It is becoming difficult to find teachers and people to fill skilled government jobs, as salaries for public employees are lower here than in the nearby metropolitan area.

Now that you have read about the candidate and the district, we would like you to start work on the campaign by completing the following tasks:

- Please complete the attached table, which will tell us the stand you think the candidate should take on the issues.
- Once you have completed the table, please write a statement describing your campaign message. Your statement should answer the following questions:
 1. What issues will the candidate focus on in the campaign?
 2. What slogan will the candidate use?
 3. What recurring theme will the candidate use about himself?
 4. What recurring theme will the candidate use about his opponent?
 5. Why have you chosen this strategy?
- We would like you to design the “look” for a series of direct mail pieces, including an introductory or profile mailer and an issue piece. Please prepare the initial profile mailer and the issue piece as a storyboard display.

First Memo from Dario Martinez

Gonzales Campaign

ANGELINA GONZALES FOR STATE ASSEMBLY **C A M P A I G N H E A D Q U A R T E R S**



From: Dario Martinez, Campaign Manager
To: Media Team, LD Consulting, Inc.

We are looking forward to your presentation of media pieces for Angelina's campaign. Here are the important facts of the campaign, something about Angelina and her opponent, and the campaign issues and district demographics.

Angelina Gonzales, Assembly Candidate

Angelina is a progressive liberal with strong views about the role of government in providing a safety net for those less fortunate. She believes in government protection of the elderly, poor, children, and those unable to care for themselves. Although Angelina attended private schools all the way through law school, she supports access to quality public education and raising taxes to support schools. She thinks making the state's schools the best in the nation should be a high priority. She prides herself in being a champion of the working poor. She wants to protect the beautiful natural environment of this district, keep the small town flavor, and make it a welcome place for tourists. As a successful criminal defense attorney, Angelina is a champion of prison reform and fair treatment of the poor and minority groups who are disproportionately imprisoned. She advocates protecting the rights of the accused, rehabilitation programs for convicted criminals, and prison alternative programs for non-violent offenders. Angelina has served on the local school board, the City Council, and the statewide Governor's Committee to Investigate. Angelina is 35 years old, married to a local businessman, and has two young sons. She is running for office in order to help enact her vision of government involvement in social reform. Because of her background as a defense attorney, Angelina is accustomed to speaking and presenting complicated information in an understandable and convincing manner. She is smart, charming, attractive, and well-spoken. Most of all she believes that government, managed by ethical politicians, can be an effective champion of the people.

Aldo Billings, Assembly Opponent

Aldo Billings is a 35-year-old African American political conservative and one of the state's most promising young businessmen. He is proud of his "up-by-the-bootstraps" success story.

He is, as Richard Nixon would say, a “cloth coat” Republican. Billings is the son of a single mother—a schoolteacher who insisted that her son attend public schools, including state college. After receiving a BA in business, Billings went to work for an international shipping company. He eventually started his own business and has made a fortune in the leasing of shipping containers for international transport. His company employs a fair share of the local white-collar workers. Not known for his generosity, Billings is a stern man, economically conservative, practical, and politically ambitious. Billings is well connected nationally in the Republican Party and sees this Assembly race as a first step toward running for national office. Billings is committed to bringing sound economic and fiscal thinking to government. He thinks the state government can be an effective tool in serving economic growth, protecting citizens, and offering education opportunities for its citizens—provided government follows a careful and realistic plan. Billings feels that government, as it is now, is bloated with costly programs that burden middle class taxpayers. These programs have made the poor dependent upon government handouts instead of teaching them to do for themselves. Billings is also an outspoken critic of “pork barrel politics” and thinks it is time for working people to speak out against unbridled public spending and subsidies given to special interests. He wants to be the people’s representative in this fight.

Major Campaign Issues

Campaign Reform: People in this community are sick of negative campaigning and the “obscene” amount of money that goes into the funding of local and state campaigns. They want their local elections to focus on issues and not personalities. They resent outsiders trying to influence their elections.

Taxes: State taxes are an issue for both the elderly and working classes in this area. There is general agreement that the state tax system negatively affects the middle class. Most people want lower taxes. Debate at the state level about increasing services by increasing taxes is extremely unpopular in this community. These people don’t want increased taxes. They would rather have government services cut than taxes raised, but they disagree on the services they want cut.

Education and Social Services: Standardized test scores in area schools are mid-range to low compared to the rest of the state. School buildings are deteriorating, and the school-age population is rising. However, the elderly control local political decisions, and they see no immediate personal gain from supporting higher taxes for public education. The aging population wants the kinds of public services that benefit them: police protection; increased jail time for convicted criminals; affordable health care and prescription drugs; more assisted-living facilities; and a readily available, inexpensive, semiskilled workforce. Young families want better schools and recreational facilities and a safety net for those who lose their jobs.

District Demographics

This community is highly suspicious of the liberal agenda and is one of the few areas of conservative voting in the state. The elderly—specifically aging members of the Eisenhower Generation and the oldest, most affluent Baby Boomers—dominate politics. Housing is still moderately priced and golf courses and other recreational facilities are plentiful. Education is not a high priority and several school bonds have been defeated in recent years. There is no heavy industry in the area. However, young families come here because they can find work in tourist and recreational facilities, the state hospital, homes and assisted-living facilities for the elderly, and in a growing small technologies industry. A large software company is considering moving its headquarters here.

Now that you have read about the candidate and the district, we would like you to start work on the campaign by completing the following tasks:

- Please complete the attached table, which will tell us the stand you think the candidate should take on the issues.
- Once you have completed the table, please write a statement describing your campaign message. What issues will the candidate focus on in the campaign?
 1. What slogan will the candidate use?
 2. What recurring theme will the candidate use about herself?
 3. What recurring theme will the candidate use about her opponent?
 4. Why have you chosen this strategy?
- We would like you to design the “look” for a series of direct mail pieces, including an introductory or profile mailer and an issue piece. Please prepare the initial profile mailer and the issue piece as a storyboard display.

Table: The Stand the Candidate Should Take on the Issues

<i>List Major Issues</i>	<i>List Community Groups in Favor</i>	<i>List Community Groups Opposed</i>	<i>Describe Candidate's Likely Stance Based on Biography</i>	<i>Describe Stand You Think Candidate Should Take to Win the Election</i>

<i>List Major Issues</i>	<i>List Community Groups in Favor</i>	<i>List Community Groups Opposed</i>	<i>Describe Candidate's Likely Stance Based on Biography</i>	<i>Describe Stand You Think Candidate Should Take to Win the Election</i>

Second Memo from Dario Martinez

Watts Campaign

J.T. Watts for County Board of Supervisors

C A M P A I G N H E A D Q U A R T E R S

From: Dario Martinez, Campaign Manager
To: Media Team, LD Consulting, Inc.
Re: Governor's Attached Note

As you can see by the attached note, we have a real problem. According to our pollster, we can expect about a 5% decline in voter support once Johnston's hit piece is mailed and Watts's secret becomes public knowledge. This 5% loss in voter support could will cost us the election.

The good news is we got this leaked to us. This gives us a chance to plan a counterattack before we get slammed by Johnston's hit piece.

What do you folks think we should do? Clearly, we don't have the time or the money to print both the issue piece you are working on and a mailer defending against these revelations about Watts. Our finance advisor says we could do one flyer and a full-page newspaper ad. That's all we have money for. Of course, we could scrap the issue piece and do a hit piece about Johnston's questionable relationship with his child. He's less likely to try and create a media event out of our misfortune if he knows we can fight back. Remember, in the public's eye, not responding to Johnston's hit piece is a concession to it.

We can always send out a press release in addition to the mailer and the newspaper ad. The press release is essentially free. The problem with the press release is that we don't know if the press will use it, or if they will print exactly what we say. The important thing is that all of this has to be done in the next few days, before Johnston's hit piece is mailed.

I need a presentation from you in the next day or so about your suggested mailer—whether it's the issue piece, a hit piece, or a counter to Johnston's hit piece. I also need an accompanying newspaper advertisement and/or press releases as you see fit. Whatever package you present, it must address the anticipated negative publicity and let our constituents know that we are trying to keep this campaign focused on issues. Unfortunately, I can tell you from past experience, the public will pay less attention to issues when faced with an interesting scandal.



FROM THE DESK OF GOVERNOR BROWN

FROM: Governor Brown
TO: Media Team, LD Consulting, Inc.
RE: Pending Hit Piece

It seems J.T. is facing a serious problem in his campaign. I have gotten word, via a printer who worked closely with my previous campaign manager, that the Johnston campaign is preparing a hit piece that will be mailed in the next few days. Their plan is to make sure the hit piece arrives in voters' mailboxes early next week, giving your people little time before the election to prepare an adequate response.

I wanted to give you a heads-up on this so you can prepare your spin. Watts got caught growing large quantities of marijuana in the attic of his rented house while in law school. He did not serve jail time because there were some court technicalities about a search warrant. Police apparently entered the house without a search warrant when Watts was arrested. Although he went ahead and finished law school, he lost his right to practice law in the state. Johnston, as the former president of the police union and a long-time City Council member, has access to details of the case, complete with photographs taken of the marijuana plants in the attic and photos of Watts on the day he was arrested—all taken from police files, I presume.

I knew about this but, you know, it happened more than 10 years ago and in a local election like this, I didn't think his opponent would make an issue of it. Sorry to keep you in the dark about this unfortunate situation.

I can give you one glimmer of good news: Johnston had a child out of wedlock at age 16. Several years ago, the child came forth claiming Johnston was a deadbeat dad. There are people in your area who know this, but it's never been made "public knowledge." See what you can make of that.

Second Memo from Dario Martinez

Gonzales Campaign

ANGELINA GONZALES FOR STATE ASSEMBLY **C A M P A I G N H E A D Q U A R T E R S**



From: Dario Martinez, Campaign Manager
To: Media Team, LD Consulting, Inc.
Re: Governor's Attached Note

As you can see by the attached note, we have a real problem. According to our pollster, we can expect about a 5% decline in voter support once Billings' hit piece is mailed and Angelina's misfortune becomes public knowledge. This 5% loss in voter support could well cost us the election.

The good news is we got this leaked to us. This gives us a chance to plan a counterattack before we get slammed by Billings's hit piece.

What do you folks think we should do? Clearly, we don't have the time or the money to print both the issue piece you are working on and a mailer defending against these revelations about Angelina. Our finance advisor says we could do one mailer and a full-page newspaper ad. That's all we have money for. Of course, we could scrap the issue piece and do a hit piece about Billings's Libertarian past. He's less likely to try and create a media event out of our misfortune if he knows we can fight back. Remember, in the public's eye, not responding to Billings's hit piece is a concession to it.

We can always send out a press release in addition to the mailer and the newspaper ad. The press release is essentially free. The problem with the press release is that we don't know if the press will use it or if they will print exactly what we say. The important thing is that all of this has to be done in the next few days before Billings's hit piece is mailed.

I need a presentation from you in the next day or so about your suggested mailer—whether it's the issue piece, a hit piece, or a counter to Billings's hit piece. I also need an accompanying newspaper advertisement and/or press releases as you see fit. Whatever package you present, it must address the anticipated negative publicity and let our constituents know that we are trying to keep this campaign focused on issues. Unfortunately, I can tell you from past experience, the public will pay less attention to issues when faced with an interesting scandal.



FROM THE DESK OF GOVERNOR BROWN

FROM: Governor Brown
TO: Media Team, LD Consulting, Inc.
RE: Pending Hit Piece

It seems Angelina is facing a serious problem in her campaign. I have gotten word, via a printer who worked closely with my previous campaign manager, that the Billings campaign is preparing a hit piece that will be mailed in the next few days. Their plan is to make sure the hit piece arrives in voter's mailboxes early next week, giving your people little time before the election to prepare an adequate response.

I wanted to give you a heads-up on this so you can prepare your spin. Angelina's husband has been having some financial difficulties and has taken funds from her campaign to shore up his business. In addition, as her campaign's treasurer, and apparently without her knowledge, he took campaign contributions to meet personal expenses. I knew for some time the family business was in financial trouble, but I did not think it would impact the Assembly campaign.

I can give you two pieces of good news: my staff unlocked some interesting information about Mr. Billings. It seems his mother applied for and received food stamps when he was young. She was a single-mother, finishing college to become a schoolteacher, and for 18 months received food stamps. In speeches made during this campaign, Mr. Billings has said programs like food stamps only make the poor dependent on government handouts and should be cut from the budget.

The second piece of news involves his shipping company, which received significant government subsidies in the form of grants and tax-breaks when it first started. His tax returns from the first years of his business indicate significant grants were given his company, paid for by taxpayers, to purchase the land for storing his shipping containers. E-mails and memos indicate Mr. Billings had contracted a well-known Washington D.C. lobbyist who convinced several members of Congress to place special "ear-marks" in the federal budget providing tax breaks for Mr. Billings's company. Interesting, from a man who claims in his campaign speeches to be a lifelong Republican and critic of "pork barrel politics and unbridled spending and subsidies given to special interests." There are people in your area who know this, but it's never been made "public knowledge." See what you can make of that.

Press Release

What is a Press Release, and How Do Politicians Use a Press Release?

A press release is an announcement given to the media (newspaper, radio, and television reporters) by government or business leaders, candidates, or elected officials. The press release contains information about an event, issue, or story that its writers hope will be covered in the news reports.

There are two kinds of press releases used in campaigning. The first is usually called a “press advisory,” and it is used to get the media to attend an event. The press advisory provides the “who, what, where, when, and why” of the event. The first paragraph implies the “why” and suggests that the reporter will learn more when he or she attends. It is a “pre-release” used to pique interest or keep the media in tow. Some information will be held back until the event to make sure the press attends. The beginning paragraph may be the only part of the press release reporters will read, so it should entice them to attend the event. In subsequent paragraphs, in descending order of importance, should be the supportive facts and supplemental information.

The second type of press release is the more standard and inclusive story. This release should be written like a self-serving newspaper story, and it must have a quote from the candidate. The best possible scenario is having a reporter quote your release rather than actually probing the candidate for comment. While smaller media organizations may actually run the whole release close to verbatim, major media outlets will rarely use your canned quote. But, it does frame the heart of the story from your candidate’s perspective, and it may help keep your candidate on message.

The media, especially television and radio, seek news that is fresh and out of the ordinary. In the first instance, if a public leader makes a statement that is similar or the same as statements he or she has made in the past, the information is not likely to be reported because it is not new. The statement may provide important information to the public, but it will not attract attention in the same way that a radical departure from past statements would make people take notice. Second, the media report stories that are out of the ordinary, exciting, provocative, or unusual rather than important. As an example, if the mayor gives a speech about a new traffic plan for the downtown area and falls off the stage while giving his speech, the media will give much more air time to the mayor falling off the stage than to the new traffic plan, even though the traffic plan may have serious consequences for the businesses and citizens of the city.

Given the tendency of the press to report what is fresh and what is out of the ordinary, the press release must appeal to these preferences or it will be ignored. Place the elements of “what is new” and “what is out of the ordinary” at the very beginning of the press release.

The press release is also an opportunity for the writer to put a particular spin or interpretation on the event being reported. A candidate uses the press release to convince the press, and ultimately the public, to believe and support his or her position. The spin should be consistent and evident throughout the press release.

Press releases allow the campaign to inform reporters about the candidate's whereabouts, provide quick, universal responses to hits, and offer reporters ideas about stories to pursue. They will not serve as stories in and of themselves. No news agency is going to tell the story exactly as it is contained in the press release.

Here are some other rules for writing a press release:

- At the top of the release, include the name and phone number of a contact person.
- Start the release with the city and release date. It is very important to include the date so that reporters know how old your story is. Reporters read dozens of faxed and mailed press releases every day, and sometimes they go through them quickly. The date will make it clear that yours is a new, "hot," immediate issue.
- Keep the heading (title) short. (Reporters won't use it, but it should grab their attention.)
- Keep it simple. Do not use acronyms and long, difficult words.
- Keep the press release to one page, and end with three pound signs (###).

A press release can be used before, during, and after the publication of an opponent's hit piece, but it will not replace a direct mail piece responding to the opponent's charges. The press release can provide free news coverage and can help frame your candidate's side of the argument. However, the press release is not going to take much of the sting out of the attack. There is also no guarantee the press release will even be used or noticed by the press. And worst of all, the press release can lead reporters to negative stories your candidate doesn't want told.

Once the media team and the press secretary are satisfied with a press release, it is "blast-faxed" to media organizations. Because the release is faxed, it is best to keep it to one page, single-spaced.

Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: P.J. Wang, 415/555-1234

GOVERNOR TAPS GONZALES FOR CAMPAIGN FINANCE REFORM TEAM

Tireless Advocate for Fair Elections to Help Revamp Campaign Laws

SACRAMENTO (December 13, 2011)— Gov. Brown today announced the selection of Angelina Gonzales to serve on the prestigious statewide Governor’s Committee to Investigate Campaign Finance Reform.

Gonzales, a public interest attorney and candidate for the State Assembly, is a well-respected and published advocate for campaign finance reform. She has served on a non-partisan task force reviewing state law and has contributed to a comprehensive report on the effects of campaign costs on voter turnout.

“Angelina Gonzales is one of the state’s most committed champions of campaign finance reform,” Gov. Brown said. “She won’t stop until we manage to get a handle on out-of-control campaign spending. I look forward to the day she brings her passion and expertise to the state legislature.”

The governor has directed the Committee to Investigate Campaign Finance Reform to canvas the state, garner feedback from citizens, investigate potential solutions, and suggest ways the state can reform its current campaign finance laws.

At a press conference with the governor today, Gonzales left no doubt that she’s up to the task.

“I’m deeply concerned about the role of money in politics,” Gonzales said. “That’s what inspired me to get involved in the first place, and that’s why I’m running for office. There’s simply too much money in politics today, and I intend to do something about it.”

Gonzales thanked Gov. Brown for the opportunity and credited him for taking a critical first step in addressing the public’s demand for reform.

Angelina Gonzales, an attorney and public policy advocate, is a candidate for the State Assembly. She has served as a member and past president of the City Council and as a member of the Unified School District Board of Trustees.

###

Name: _____

Date: _____

Test for *On the Campaign Trail*

Please circle the letter of your answer.

1. What are constituent profiles?
 - A The names, addresses, and phone numbers of people living in a Congressional district
 - B A list of the problems facing people in a voting district
 - C Descriptions of the economic, ethnic, and party preference of voters living in an election district
 - D A description of a candidate's background

2. What is a candidate profile?
 - A A line drawing of a candidate's image used on campaign materials
 - B A description of a candidate's personal, professional, and political background
 - C A piece of campaign literature that helps raise campaign funds
 - D Campaign material that outlines the candidate's position on the issues

3. What is the purpose of an issue piece?
 - A To explain how informed and committed the candidate is to the issue
 - B To present the overall theme of the campaign
 - C To present the opponent's views on the issues in a negative light
 - D To provide voters with a brief review of the candidate's position on the issues

4. The basic purpose of a campaign press release is to
 - A inform the media about a candidate.
 - B attack an opposition candidate.
 - C raise money for the campaign.
 - D set up the campaign's management.

5. The biggest cost in running a political campaign comes from
 - A travel costs.
 - B fundraising events.
 - C media advertisement.
 - D staff salaries.

6. One of the issues that motivated candidate J.T. Watts to run for County Board of Supervisors was his frustration with local government. According to the campaign manager's memo, what event contributed to this frustration?
 - A Running against Mike Johnston
 - B Building the skateboard park
 - C Helping build the business park
 - D Increased crime rate

7. One of the issues in the Watts-Johnston campaign was commercial development and building shopping outlets. Which of the following was a concern raised by Mike Johnston and people who opposed the shopping outlets?
 - A Declining property values
 - B Destroying local businesses and increasing traffic congestion
 - C Less services for senior citizens
 - D Increased businesses taxes

8. Which of the following issue positions would indicate that Angelina Gonzales is a liberal?
 - A Believes state government can be an effective tool in bringing about economic growth
 - B Believes social programs have made the poor dependent on government handouts
 - C Supports campaign finance reform
 - D Committed to have government provide a safety net for the less fortunate

9. Why are people like Governor Brown and Angelina Gonzales concerned about campaign finance reform?
 - A Political campaigns cost the tax-payer too much money.
 - B The lack of reform contributes to low voter turnout.
 - C The education system has not prepared students to be informed citizens.
 - D Campaigns spend too much money focusing on personalities and not on the issues.

10. In the State Assembly district race between Angelina Gonzales and Aldo Billings, which of the beliefs below does Aldo share with many of the people living in the district?
 - A He supports quality education and raising the needed funds through taxes to pay for it.
 - B He feels that government is bloated with costly social programs that burden middle-class taxpayers.
 - C He is young like many of the people living in the community and shares their desire for more business development.
 - D He supports the idea of increasing government programs to assist the elderly.

11. Why would the revelation about J.T. Watts's marijuana use in college be potentially damaging to his campaign?
 - A Watts is running as a responsible social and fiscal conservative and the incident makes him look irresponsible.

- B He is running against a former police officer who was involved in the case that arrested Watts.
- C Watts is running to reduce the high crime rate in the county as a convicted felon.
- D It puts into question whether he should work with youth athletic programs.
12. During the campaign, it was revealed that Angelina Gonzales's husband's was using campaign funds to shore up his business. How does this particular revelation make her look less than capable when compared to her opponent, Aldo Billings?
- A Its shows she is not as supportive of the middle class as Billings.
- B It looks like Gonzales has misspent government tax money during her campaign.
- C It implies that Billings would be better qualified to make government more economically and fiscally responsible than Gonzales.
- D It calls into question her support for higher taxes.
13. As a political campaign is forming, what factors determine how large and complex a campaign will be?
- A The amount of money raised before the campaign begins
- B The importance of the office, the size of the district and the credibility of the opponent
- C The more volunteers who join the campaign
- D The importance and complexity of the issues in the race
14. Below is a quote from the memo Governor Brown wrote to Campaign Manager Dario Martinez about the pending hit piece from the Johnston campaign. Review the quote and determine the statements that help and hurt candidate Watts by underlining the statement and drawing an arrow either to the "help" column or the "hurt" column.

<i>Help</i>	<i>Quote</i>	<i>Hurt</i>
	Watts got caught growing large quantities of marijuana in the attic of his rented house while in law school. He did not serve jail time because there were some court technicalities about a search warrant. Police apparently entered the house without a search warrant when Watts was arrested. Although he went ahead and finished law school, he lost his right to practice law in the state. Johnston, as the former president of the police union and a long-time City Council member, has access to details of the case, complete with photographs taken of the marijuana plants in the attic and photos of Watts on the day he was arrested...	

15. Which of the following is *not* an advantage of using direct mail in a campaign?
- A It's cheaper than radio and television.
 - B It's tied to a media market.
 - C It can send a particular message to a specific group.
 - D It can be more direct in its statements and go more in-depth.
16. What is the difference between a campaign slogan and a campaign theme?
- A A slogan is directly related to the candidate and a theme is more associated with the issues.
 - B A campaign theme is only about the opponent and a slogan is about the candidate.
 - C A slogan is usually about the issues and a campaign theme is about the candidate's personality and character.
 - D A campaign theme is about the candidate's reason for running for office and a campaign slogan is taken from one of the speeches.
17. The media responds best to new information sent in a press release. With this in mind, which of the following statements would work best in a press release on J.T. Watts?
- A J.T. Watts, who is running for County Board of Supervisors, announced today he has received the support of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.
 - B J.T. Watts attended the third anniversary party of the opening of the skateboard park last Tuesday with several hundred in attendance.
 - C J.T. Watts supports the building of "big box" retail outlets on the city limits.
 - D J.T. Watts attended law school and began a private investigation business specializing in technology tools for surveillance.
18. Which of the following situations would *not* make a good media event for a candidate?
- A Former teacher, Othea Simpson, who is running for state school superintendent, toured an inner city school pledging to bridge the "digital divide" between schools in rich and poor districts.
 - B One-time mining business owner, Clyde Johnson, will hold a press conference at the sludge ponds of a local paper mill and call for more strict controls over industrial pollution.
 - C Cheryl Rodriquez, local school board candidate, has announced a campaign rally at the Flying Ram sports bar.
 - D Incumbent Labor Secretary Shirley Wong is visiting the lumber mill on Forest Road to talk about job creation and international markets.

19. Many people complain about negative ads and the huge amounts of money spent on degrading candidates, instead of focusing on the issues. Which of the following is one reason why “hit pieces” remain in political campaigns?
- A Supporters of political candidates demand that campaign ads explain why opposing candidates should not be elected.
 - B Surveys and studies have found that negative campaigning works and benefits the candidate who employs it.
 - C Many individuals and organizations who contribute to political campaigns encourage negative ads in political campaigns.
 - D The general public is attracted to conflict and scandal and has little interest in the issues.
20. Which of the following is the best example of target marketing in a political campaign?
- A Campaign materials are sent to voters who are undecided and could be persuaded to vote for the candidate.
 - B The campaign spends most of its advertising money on mass media outlets to get wide coverage of their message.
 - C The campaign sends pamphlets and flyers to people who support the candidate’s position on the issues.
 - D The campaign organization sent campaign materials to members of the opposing political party.

Teacher Feedback Form

At Interact, we constantly strive to make our units the best they can be. We always appreciate feedback from you—our customer—to facilitate this process. With your input, we can continue to provide high-quality, interactive, and meaningful instructional materials to enhance your curriculum and engage your students. Please take a few moments to complete this feedback form and drop it in the mail. Address it to:

Interact • Attn: Editorial
10200 Jefferson Blvd. • P.O. Box 802
Culver City, CA 90232-0802

or fax it to us at **(800) 944-5432**

or e-mail it to us at **access@teachinteract.com**

***We enjoy receiving photos or videos of our units in action!
Please use the release form on the following page.***

Your name: _____

Address: _____

E-mail: _____

Interact unit: _____

Comments: _____

Release Form for Photographic Images

To Teachers:

To help illustrate to others the experiential activities involved and to promote the use of simulations, we like to get photographs and videos of classes participating in the simulation. Please send photos of students actively engaged so we can publish them in our promotional material. Be aware that we can only use images of students for whom a release form has been submitted.

To Parents:

I give permission for photographs or videos of my child to appear in catalogs of educational materials published by Interact.

Name of student: _____ (print)

Age of student: _____ (print)

Parent or guardian: _____ (print)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Address:

Phone: _____

Interact

10200 Jefferson Blvd.
Culver City, CA 90232-0802
310-839-2436