

**Students talk for a few minutes about each topic, then lead a discussion in your group:**

1. Who is the head of state in your country? What is his title? (president, prime minister, etc.)
2. How many terms may the head of state serve?
3. What political parties do you have in your country? What are the main differences between them?
4. Are you interested in politics? Would you ever run for office? Do you vote every time you have a chance?
5. Do you follow American politics? What seems different or strange about American politics?
6. If you were head of state of your country, what is the first thing you would change?

**Students, take turns reading each paragraph in the article below.**

The head of the US government is the president. He is elected for four year terms. The president may only serve two consecutive terms. President Obama is the current president. He is serving his 2nd term. He may not serve again. On November 8, 2016 we will elect a new president.

We have a party system in the US. We have two main political parties, Democrat and Republican. President Obama is a Democrat. Sometimes Democrats are called liberals, and Republicans are called conservatives. The symbol for the Republican party is an elephant, and the symbol for Democrats is a donkey. States that usually vote Republican are called red states. States that usually vote Democratic are called blue states.

During the year before the November 2016 presidential election, states will hold primaries. Primaries are elections to help decide who the candidate will be for each party. The Democratic Party and the Republican party will each hold a primary. In the primary election people will choose among all the candidates that are running for president for that party. Each state will have a primary election.

After all the primaries, each party will have a convention to officially nominate a presidential candidate based on which candidate won the most primary delegates. The presidential candidate will then choose a vice presidential candidate to run with him.

There are some other small parties besides the Democrat and Republican. They will have their own conventions and nominate candidates. However, it is very hard for a candidate from a small party to get elected. In some elections, a third party candidate has changed the outcome of an election by taking away voters from one of the major parties.

The presidential election will be held in November and the new president will take office in January of 2017. Only US citizens may vote in a presidential election.

After the election on November 8th, the current president is called a "lame duck". That is because he doesn't have much power. Everyone knows that he will be out of power in two months.

**Questions:**

**1**–What is the term of office for the US president?

**2**–How many terms may he serve?

3-What are the two main political parties in the US?

4-What is the purpose of a primary election?

5-Who chooses the vice presidential candidate?

6-When will the president be elected?

7-When will the new president take office?

8-What is a lame duck?

**Vocabulary: Tell what the underlined word or phrase means in the sentence.**

1.What time do the polls close?

2.I would never think of running for office.

3.He ran a dirty campaign.

4.Lori was a delegate to the Democratic convention.

5.Turn on the television if you want to see the election returns.

6.The Democrats and Republicans will have a platform which states their beliefs.

7.Who is the front runner in the state of New York?

8.The Democrats have a clear majority in the state of New York.

9.Have they counted all the ballots yet?

10.The absentee ballots aren't in yet.

11.Our exit poll shows the Republican candidate is winning in that precinct.

12.His constituency would never approve of an extra-marital affair.

13.Only 80% of the eligible voters have registered.

14.Voter turnout may be low for this election.

15.He is liberal with his money when it comes to supporting cancer research.

16.Jill is conservative in her dress. She never wears skirts above her knees.

17.I think John would be a good candidate for the director's job.

18.He wants to take two consecutive weeks of vacation.

19.I nominate Joe to wash the dishes tonight.