

You may have read that this Tuesday is Super Tuesday. What does that mean?

**Background:**

We will elect a new president this November. Two **candidates** will run for president, one from the Democratic Party and one from the Republican party. Sometimes there are “third party” candidates, but they usually do not get many votes.

The Democratic and Republican party are having **primaries** now. Primaries are elections in each state to decide who the candidate for their party will be. The Republican candidate needs 1,237 **delegates** out of the 2,340 possible. Democrats need 2,383 out of a possible 4,136. Currently, Donald Trump is winning for the Republicans with 82 delegates. Ted Cruz is in second with 17 and Marco Rubio is in third place with 16. In the Democratic party, Hilary Clinton has 544 to 85 for Bernie Sanders.

If no candidate wins the **nomination** outright, then the winner will be decided at the **convention**. This is called a brokered convention. Many people think the Republican convention will be a brokered convention.

**So what is Super Tuesday:**

Only a few states have had their primary elections. States are free to choose when they hold their primaries. Sometimes there are as many as 30 states voting on Super Tuesday. This Tuesday, 13 states will have their primary election. Texas is among them. Texas is an **open primary** state. That means anyone can vote in the Republican or Democratic primary. You don't have to be a “party member” to vote for that party. In closed primary states, you must **register** as a Democrat or Republican to vote in that primary. In the general election in November you can vote for either candidate, regardless of his party. This is true in both open and closed primary states.

Super Tuesday is important because in one day a candidate can earn a large number of delegates. On the Republican side, about 600 delegates will be awarded, and on the Democratic side about 800. Texas is the biggest delegate prize with 155 Republican delegates and 252 Democratic delegates at stake.

Ted Cruz is from Texas and is expected to win here, but Donald Trump is running strong in the **polls**. On the Democratic side, Hilary Clinton is expected to win.

**Discuss:**

Talk about elections in your country: Do you have political parties? How many parties are there? Who decides who the party nominee will be? Do you always vote? Only 58% of Americans voted in the 2012 presidential election. What is the percentage of people who vote in your country? How old do you have to be to vote? Is there any group that is not allowed to vote? Is your country having elections this year? Do you keep up with politics in your home country while living in the U.S.? What kind of issues do candidates debate about in your country: foreign policy, immigration, economics, education, health care, other?

**Idioms:** Match the underlined idiom with the meaning in the chart below.

1. Donald Trump is going to win this election. I feel it in my bones.
2. Six people got laid off today at work. I think that's a harbinger of things to come.
3. We bent over backwards to make Tran fit in, but she never really felt like a part of our group.
4. The president of the company came to our office yesterday. Our manager really rolled out the red carpet for him.
5. The boss took Jim to task for not being more respectful to the president when he came in.
6. I've been in the doldrums since my grandpa died. We were so close. I really miss him.
7. After her divorce, Sally felt footloose and fancy free. I think she is really enjoying being single.
8. I've worked really hard to make the house look nice. If I spent another couple of weeks and a few thousand dollars, I could really improve things. But at this point, I think I'll leave well enough alone.
9. The presidency requires someone who understands world affairs and economics. I don't think this candidate fits the bill.
10. I'll never forget the expression on her face when I walked in on John's arm. Boy, if looks could kill!
11. When Jerry jumped out from behind the couch, I nearly jumped out of my skin.
12. I was at a loss for words when May told me Jeff was leaving her. I wanted to be sympathetic because she was pretty broken up about it. But I really feel it is the best thing that can happen for May.

have the qualities or experience necessary	give someone treatment befitting royalty	a sign of things that will happen in the future	describing an unpleasant look or reaction to something a person did
startled or frightened	scold or reprimand someone	leave things as they are	sluggish, lacking energy
something you are sure is true, even though you have no way to know it will happen	unattached, able to do what you like with no responsibilities	unable to think of anything to say	work very hard to accomplish something. go out of your way to make something happen.