



Kids Voting 2008 - Teacher Resource Kit

This Kit has been designed to support you as you deliver Kids Voting for the Parliamentary Elections in 2008. It is divided into three main sections and includes:

1. basic requirements for Kids Voting
2. covering the fundamentals of Parliamentary democracy in New Zealand
3. helping kids explore ways to make choices about who to vote for

How much you cover will, of course, depend on how much time you have available. The basics of Kids Voting takes two sessions: firstly the voting and, a week later, the counting. We would encourage you to cover both of the other topics in whatever time available as they provide the basic background needed in order for people to feel confident casting their vote.

A word on timing

Parliamentary Elections can be held at any time with usually four to six weeks notice. This year the last possible date is 15th November. (For more information on the election sequence see Appendix 1). You can do much of the material covered in items 2 and 3 above at any time prior to the election and then follow the campaign through current issues. The actual Kids Vote will commence after the election date is announced.

Initial preparation with your colleagues

You may wish to do some initial preparation with fellow teachers about how to manage Kids Voting in your school. You might like to:

- ⇒ Speak to colleagues whose classes will be taking part in the election and involve them in the planning of your school's election.
- ⇒ Think about roles. To run the election you will need to have an Election Coordinator, an Electoral Roll Coordinator, Electoral communication team, Polling Clerks. For the count you will need Electoral Officers. Students can fill many of these roles. Details are provided below.
- ⇒ Hold a preliminary planning meeting with all relevant teachers, and students who are keen to be involved to discuss budget, time scale etc.
- ⇒ Agree on the amount of time your school wishes to devote to preparation for the election. For instance: How many periods will be spent covering the relevant topics? Will voting take place during classes or at break or lunchtime? Will you allow advance voting? Use this guide according to the time you have available.

Impartiality

You need to think about ensuring that the delivery of KidsVoting is, and is seen to be, politically neutral and impartial. It is important that no-one thinks that the kids are being encouraged to vote a particular way.

Some things that you need to consider are:

- ⇒ Tell parents what is happening ahead of time and assure them it will be neutral
- ⇒ Be sure that if you are collecting material about parties or candidates that you cover a range of parties: e.g. all parties, or all parties in parliament or the two biggest parties

It is not a good idea to ask kids to campaign for a particular party or candidate. Such activity might be seen as part of the actual election campaign and therefore subject to the Electoral Finance Act. If you want the kids to have the experience of campaigning then it would be better to have a different election on an issue that is real within the classroom or the school.

Part 1: Basic Requirements for Kids Voting

Key learning outcome: Students will understand the Parliamentary voting processes and have experienced voting for themselves.

Part 1 sets out what you need to do to carry out Kids Voting and includes:

1. Timing
2. Resources provided
3. Evaluation
4. Involving Students
5. The key roles
6. Setting up your Polling Stations
7. Creating an Electoral Roll
8. Setting up your ballot box
9. Voting information for students
10. The Election Day vote
11. Counting the results
12. Announcing the results

1 Timing

Carrying out Kids Voting with your class will take a minimum of 2 lessons: one to vote and one to count the votes. Voting **must** occur prior to the Wednesday before Election Day. Counting will occur in the week after Election Day. You can supplement these core activities with additional learning.

2 Resources provided

The following resources are provided to you by the Kids Voting team

First set of resources (delivered in Ballot Box from May onwards)

- ⇒ Ballot Box: PLEASE NOTE that the box which your resources came in is your Ballot Box. You will have been sent one box per participating class. You need to keep the box for Kids Voting Election Day.
- ⇒ An A4 Kids Voting Sticker in English or Te Reo that needs to be stuck to the side of the ballot box to secure it
- ⇒ 'I voted' stickers in both English and Te Reo for students that have voted
- ⇒ This Teacher Resource Kit

- ⇒ A pre-paid self-addressed envelope to return the student evaluation forms, teacher evaluation forms, and school results
- ⇒ We have also provided a set of materials from the Electoral Enrolment Centre and the Electoral Commission that should be of use:
 - ⇒ Make it count bookmark
 - ⇒ orange Balloon
 - ⇒ Taking Part
 - ⇒ Get ready to vote, it's as easy as 123 booklet
 - ⇒ Enrolling to vote application
 - ⇒ Black NZ Compendium (Statistics)
 - ⇒ Orange Electoral Compendium (general)
 - ⇒ Two ticks? Too easy!
 - ⇒ Everything you need to know about enrolling to vote
 - ⇒ Enrolling to vote before you're 18
 - ⇒ Enrolling to vote as a New Zealand Maori
 - ⇒ Postcards, "hey Gorgeous", "Hey Lazy", "Hey Weirdo" and "Hey Do-Gooder"
 - ⇒ Smiley faces in various languages
 - ⇒ Sheet on information about the unpublished electoral roll.
 - ⇒ Moved house? Re-enrol to vote
 - ⇒ Make it count. Enrol to vote
 - ⇒ Turned 18? Enrol to vote
 - ⇒ Hands up for a little help in the classroom!

You can order more copies of this material by sending an email to info@elections.govt.nz

Second set of resources (delivered after election date is announced)

- ⇒ Voting documents (these will be similar to adult voting documents and will include the actual political parties and candidates for the electorate(s) selected by each class)
- ⇒ A results sheet
- ⇒ A teacher evaluation sheet

3 Evaluation

In order for us to evaluate Kids Voting 2008, we would like each student to complete a pre- and post-election evaluation form. Once these are completed, please keep them safe, as we would like the same students to complete the second part of the evaluation in order to compare the results. The pre- and post-election forms will be emailed to you and be available at www.kidsvoting.org.nz. These results should also be useful for your own assessment of the impact of the activities.

4 Involving Students

In the lead up to Kids Voting 2008, you may wish to appoint students to various roles to help run and manage the project. Encouraging students to be actively involved in this way will ensure that they are more engaged in the process.

You can find more details of the roles in running an election and possible activities in the resource **Elect!** which is on www.elections.org.nz

If you have a school newsletter students might like to cover the event as journalists.

If you do take photos or write an article or create a video we would appreciate it if you could send a copy to us to put on the Kids Voting website.

5 The key roles

The following roles can be taken by students or teachers:

- ⇒ Election Coordinator - to oversee the event and ensure the entire election runs smoothly.
- ⇒ Electoral Roll Coordinator - to produce the electoral roll in time for the election (see below on how to create an electoral roll).
- ⇒ Electoral communication team - to help advertise the election through distributing leaflets and creating posters saying 'VOTE HERE TODAY'.
- ⇒ Polling Clerks - to ensure the polling station is run effectively and correct procedure is followed. They will also oversee any provisions for advance voting for those students who know they will not be at school on that day.
- ⇒ Electoral Officers - to help count the votes in the week after Election Day.

6 Setting up your Polling Stations

A key aim of Kids Voting is that it demystifies the election process for young people. Replicating the polling place layout and process as closely as possible is important as it assists with demystifying the process.

- ⇒ Students will need to know exactly where and when they need to go to vote on Election Day. You must carry out the vote sometime before the end of the Tuesday prior to Election Day. It is illegal to distribute replica copies of the ballot papers on the three days before an election (i.e. Wednesday, Thursday, or Friday before Election Day on the Saturday).
- ⇒ You might want to make provisions for advance voting for those students who know they will not be at school on that day (details of how advance voting works in the adult election are on www.elections.org.nz).
- ⇒ As this is a secret ballot, schools should ensure that pupils have access to private voting areas - you can create these through putting up partitions in the polling stations to create separate booths.

- ⇒ Many schools are used as polling stations for the adult elections. It would be useful to find out if your school will be used as a polling station. Students may be able to view some of the preparation or talk to the Electoral Registrars running the station.

7 Creating an Electoral Roll

Your electoral roll coordinator will need to produce an electoral roll for your class. Using the template attached (Appendix 2), enter each student's first and surname and allocate them a number on the left hand side of the roll.

8 Setting up your ballot box

The box in which we sent your resources is your class ballot box. Once you have emptied all the contents you can secure the box by sticking the A4 size 'Kids Voting' sticker along the side in order seal it. This seal should not be broken or tampered with until the election is over and the votes are ready to count.



9 Voting Information for students

You will need to explain various aspects of voting to your students prior to Election Day:

- ⇒ The electoral system that exists in Parliamentary Elections: MMP (see www.elections.org.nz for more information on MMP)
- ⇒ The importance of a secret ballot and why their vote is important by outlining the following:
- **Your vote is your choice:** It is illegal for anyone to try to put pressure on you or to influence your vote, especially by threats or bribes. Although you are required by law to enrol to vote when you turn 18, you do not have to vote - it's your choice.
 - **Your vote counts:** It is an opportunity to have your say. Vote! Then your opinion is counted in the result.
 - **Your vote is secret:** No-one should know who or what you have voted for. If you are blind or physically unable to make your vote then a trusted person can help you.

- **Your vote is important:** No-one else sees things quite as you do, and what you think is important. Consider the issues and vote for the candidate that represents your ideas.

⇒ How to complete the voting document, fold the paper and post it in the ballot box.

10 The Election Day Vote

The process in the polling station:

1. Voters wait in the queue to see the polling clerk
2. When each voter reaches the polling clerk they give their name and class.
3. The polling clerk will draw a red line through their name on the roll to indicate that they have been given a ballot paper.
4. The voter takes their ballot paper to a vacant polling booth where they can vote in private.
5. Once they have marked their ballot paper, each voter puts their document in the ballot box
6. The voter is given an 'I Voted' or 'I Poti Au' sticker.

Support students to encourage their friends and classmates to turn up to vote and make their vote count!

You might also like to encourage your students to ask their parents if they can go to the polling place with them and to watch the election coverage on television on Saturday night.

11 Counting the results

Votes need to be counted in the week after the adult elections have closed.

Encourage class participation in the count so students can see and understand the process.

You will need to appoint electoral officers to help count the votes.

The process for the count:

1. Open the sealed ballot box.
2. Count the number of voting documents: this should correspond to the number of voting documents issued on Election Day (you can check this against your electoral roll).
3. Write down the number of voting documents.
4. Voting papers have to be counted twice: once for electorate votes and once for party votes (instructions below). Complete one count for electorate votes, then repeat the count for party votes.

To count electorate votes

1. Sort the voting documents into piles for each of the various candidates.
2. If you are unable to discern whom they intended to vote for then it is an invalid vote and needs to go in a separate pile. If someone has voted for two or more candidates then this is also an invalid vote.
3. The votes for each candidate should be counted and recorded, plus the total number of invalid votes. The totals should equal the total votes cast. Another electoral officer should then recount the same pile to ensure the result is correct.
4. The candidate with the most votes wins the electorate vote and becomes the electorate MP.

To count party votes

1. Put all ballot papers back into one pile, including the ones with an invalid electorate vote.
2. Sort the voting documents into piles for each of the various parties.
3. If you are unable to discern which party they intended to vote for then it is an invalid vote and needs to go in a separate pile. If someone has voted for two or more parties then this is also an invalid vote.
4. The votes for each party should be counted and recorded, plus the total number of invalid votes. The totals should equal the total votes cast. Another electoral officer should then recount the same pile to ensure the result is correct.
5. Use the MMP calculator at www.elections.org.nz to calculate the make up of Parliament based on the votes from your class or school.

It may also be interesting to sort papers into those who cast "straight votes" i.e. who voted for a party and its candidate, and those who cast "split votes" i.e. for a candidate from a different party. Between a quarter and a third of adults split their votes in New Zealand's Parliamentary Elections.

12 Announcing the results

- ⇒ Announce the Kids Voting result in class and compare it to the actual election result. You can view the preliminary results at www.elections.org.nz
- ⇒ Get your class to complete the post-election evaluation form downloadable from www.kidsvoting.org.nz
- ⇒ Complete the Kids Voting result sheet (we require only one per school) and teacher evaluation forms. These forms will be sent to you with your voting papers once the election date has been announced.
- ⇒ Put the pre and post evaluation forms, the school result sheet and teacher evaluation form in the self-addressed pre-paid envelope and post. (You don't need to send us your voting documents).

- ⇒ If you have any photographs or publicity from your election, please email it to info@kidsvoting.org.nz or post it to us in your prepaid envelope with your other materials so we can promote it through our website.
- ⇒ We will send you a National Summary of results as soon as we can.
- ⇒ Discuss what worked and what didn't and how we can improve upon it in time for next year's Kids Voting.

Part 2: Democracy in New Zealand

Key learning outcome: Students understand the basic elements of Parliamentary democracy in New Zealand.

Part 2 provides you with suggested topics, information sources, and teaching ideas.

Topics

There are a range of topics and options for teaching about democracy in New Zealand. These include:

- ⇒ What is democracy?
- ⇒ Democracy in New Zealand
- ⇒ MMP and how it works
- ⇒ Parties and candidates
- ⇒ Who can vote and when
- ⇒ How Parliament is elected
- ⇒ What Parliament does

Resources

A lot of great resources have been developed to support teaching about parliamentary democracy in New Zealand, covering the topics above and lots more. A number of resources are available from the Electoral Commission website at www.elections.org.nz including the following:

Resources designed for teaching

- ⇒ **Democracy - everyday concepts** has been written by two political scientists with the intention of giving background to anyone interested in how representative democracy works. Sections and the articles within them are written to stand alone, so they can be read individually or in any order according to preference or need. This resource will be particularly useful to teachers, students, journalists, state servants, politicians, and other activists.
- ⇒ **Elect!** is for use during an election process within a school context or to provide an overview for election processes used at local or national level in New Zealand. Elect! could be used as part of a bigger unit of learning about government systems or participation in society, or as the basis for a complete unit in itself. It can be focused or adapted to suit any electoral or learning situation. Elect! provides a framework, conceptual

foundations, core and related activities, and assessment suggestions for doing this successfully.

- ⇒ **Hands up!** examines issues at the heart of citizenship and involvement in society. It encourages students working at levels 1-4, to become socially and 'politically' active in issues relevant to their own lives, starting in their school and local community. This resource provides information for teachers in a 'ready-to-use' format. The seven activities build sequentially and are linked to the concepts outlined in the conceptual overview. Students will learn more by 'doing' than just reading or being told about political process.

Information about MMP

- ⇒ **Two Ticks, Too Easy** is the leaflet explaining MMP that is sent to every person on the electoral roll. You can download the content or a pdf. The leaflet is available in 21 languages and later this year an audio version will be available in all of the spoken languages. (This leaflet has been included in your pack).
- ⇒ A PowerPoint presentation that explains MMP is available in English and Maori
- ⇒ MMP quiz and advanced quiz
- ⇒ MMP frequently asked questions. Covers topics including when your electorate vote has wider impact, overhang, coalitions and tactical voting, what happens to votes for parties not crossing threshold, list MPs, and the process by which MMP could be changed.
- ⇒ MMP seat allocation calculator allows you to calculate the total number of MPs each political party would receive, using the allocation method that is used in the general election.

Resources that can be used as source material

- ⇒ **Adventures in Democracy** - Free and fair elections have always been central to New Zealand's identity as a progressive, democratic nation. This section, based on the book *Adventures in Democracy: A History of the Vote in New Zealand* traces the evolution of New Zealand's democracy over 150 years. The book and this online resource were commissioned by the Electoral Commission to mark the 150th anniversary of New Zealand's first parliamentary elections held between July and October 1853.
- ⇒ **Taking Part** explains how decisions are made in New Zealand and how New Zealanders can help shape them by having their say, and also offers practical advice. Taking Part is suitable for group use, including with new New Zealanders. Downloads of the print version and an online ordering to request hardcopies are also available.

Resources about Parliament and Political Parties

- ⇒ Parliamentary related teacher resources are available on <http://www.explore.parliament.nz/>
- ⇒ Information sheets about how parliament works, electorates and MPs are on www.parliament.nz
- ⇒ A list of registered parties and their websites is on www.elections.org.nz

Note: As candidate information will not be available until after Nomination Day (see Appendix 1), it will not be possible to study specific candidates before then. However you can research the political parties at any time. If you want to research candidates, you will only have three weeks in which to do so.

Part 3: Making Choices

Key learning outcome: Students have considered the different ways of making choices about who to vote for.

Research indicates that many young people find it hard to choose who to vote for, and how to go about making this choice. The information and options can sometimes seem daunting. It may be useful to spend some time with your students supporting them to look at the possible ways in which they can make their own choices.

Gathering information

In order to gather information for students to analyse you could:

- ⇒ Video the leaders' debates on television
- ⇒ Encourage students to gather political advertising and media clippings
- ⇒ For 'live' information on registered political parties go to www.elections.org.nz

Using information

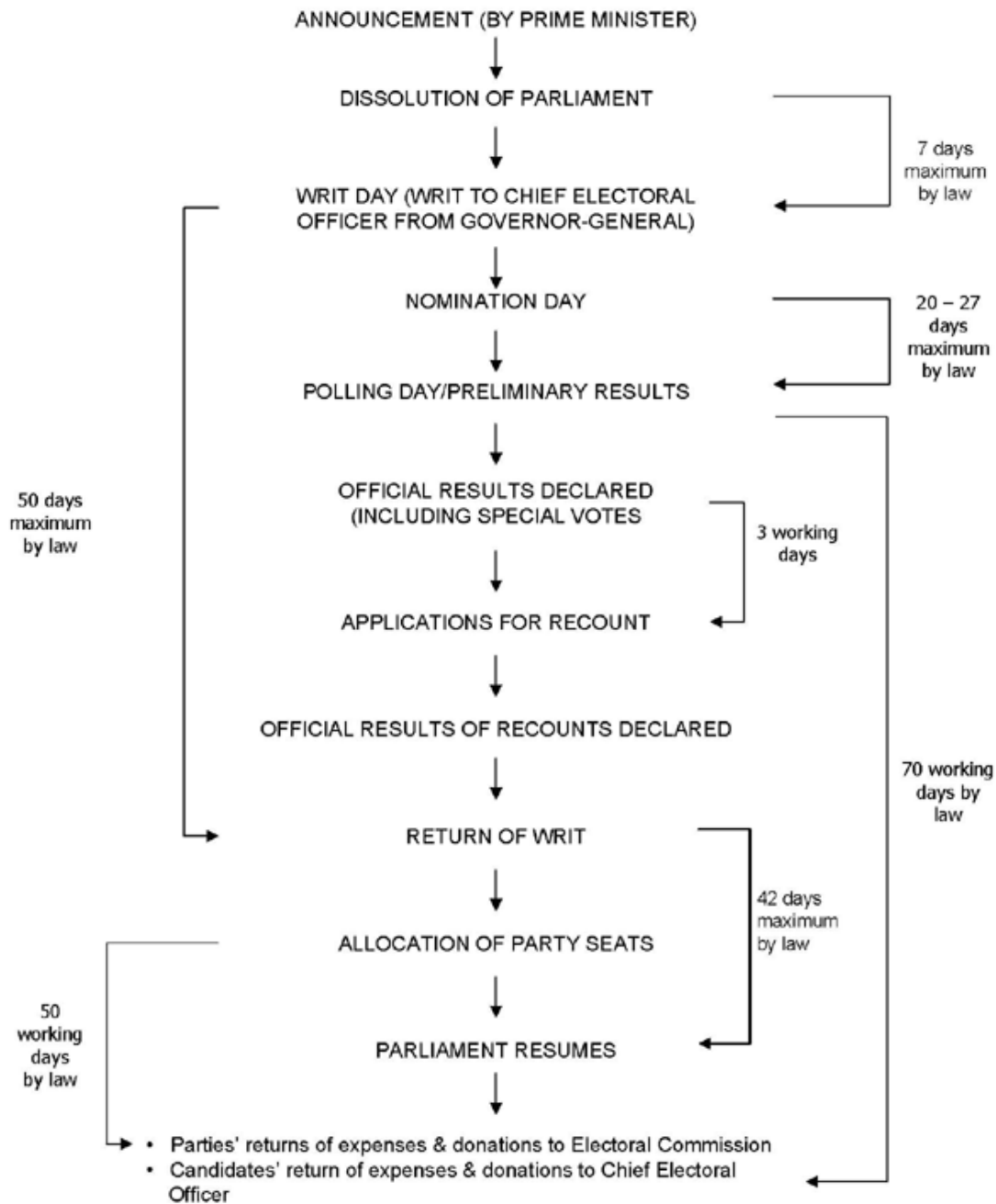
You could use a range of activities with your students to encourage them to think about the following issues:

- ⇒ What information exists to help you make your choice?
- ⇒ How can you get this information?
- ⇒ What can you learn from the available material?
- ⇒ Does it help you decide who to vote for?
- ⇒ How might you choose who to vote for? (their image, policy, behaviour, how they answer questions etc.)
- ⇒ How do you make choices in other areas of life such as which music you like or which sports team to support or which phone/ mp3 player / game to buy?
- ⇒ You could discuss with the kids ideas of a political spectrum and how each party will tend to have a coherent set of policies. This topic is covered in **Democracy - everyday** (available at www.elections.govt.nz).

- ⇒ Ask students to collect clippings from local papers about candidates that are standing in their electorate. In groups of five ask students to share the news items they have collated and discuss the following questions.
 - ⇒ Are the stories positive or negative?
 - ⇒ Identify what is fact and what is opinion in two separate columns
 - ⇒ Is the writer trying to encourage readers to vote for the candidate?
 - ⇒ Would you vote for the candidate(s) featured in the news article?
 - ⇒ What do you think of the language used? Is it easy to understand?
 - ⇒ Ask each group to feedback their findings to the rest of the class including examples from the articles to support their views.

Appendix 1 - Election sequence

ELECTION SEQUENCE



Source: Ministry of Justice Chief Electoral Office

Appendix 2 - Electoral Roll Template

Kids Voting 2008: Parliamentary Elections Electoral Roll		
School:		
Class:		
Registration Number	First Name	Surname
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