

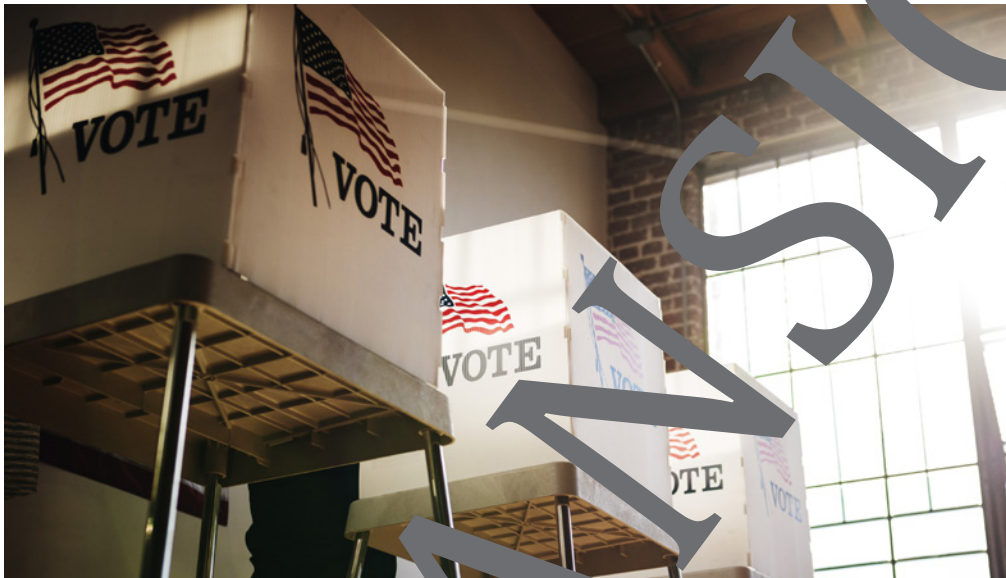
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Unterrichtsmagazin

Current topics in short: Voting in the U.S. – Understanding the presidential election process (ab Klasse 8)

Nach einer Idee von Paul Jenkinson, Weitransdorf

Illustration von Julia Lenzmann, Stuttgart



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Primaries, caucuses, general election – Das Wahlsystem der USA ist kompliziert und für Lernende häufig schwer verständlich. Die US-Präsidenten- und Kongresswahlen im Jahr 2020 werden einen ausschlaggebenden Einfluss auf die Vereinigten Staaten und die Welt haben. Wie funktionieren die Wahlen in den USA? Welche Voraussetzungen müssen die Präsidentschaftskandidaten erfüllen? Und was ist eigentlich das *electoral college*? In dieser Kurzeinheit lernen die Schülerinnen und Schüler anhand eines DIN A1-Posters und eines Textes die Schritte auf dem Weg in das Weiße Haus kennen, um das amerikanische Wahlsystem besser zu verstehen.

KOMPETENZPROFIL

Klassenstufe: ab Klasse 8

Dauer: 2–3 Unterrichtsstunden

Kompetenzen:

1. Lesekompetenz: eine Grafik und einen Sachtext verstehen;
2. Sprechkompetenz: Informationen aus einer Grafik/einem Text mit eigenen Worten wiedergeben;
3. Analysekompetenz: Informationen auswerten und Schlüsse daraus ziehen;
4. Schreibkompetenz: die eigene Meinung begründet in einem ausformulierten Text darlegen

Thematische Bereiche: USA, Wahlen, Wahlsystem, Politik

Medien: Poster, Text

M 1 The road to presidency in the United States

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

REQUIREMENTS FOR A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE



STEP 1: PRIMARIES AND CAUCUSES

In **PRIMARY** elections, people choose who will represent their party in the general election.

A **CAUCUS** is a meeting held to decide which candidate a political group will support in the election. The members of a party discuss and decide on the best candidate.

Political parties choose their **PRESIDENTIAL NOMINEES** through primary elections and party caucuses (meetings). Would-be candidates cross the country to party members.

There are different political beliefs. People with the same ideas form a **POLITICAL PARTY**. The two main parties in the U.S. are the Democrats (blue) and the Republicans (red).

STEP 2: NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The **PARTY CONVENTIONS** formally nominate the winner of the primaries and caucuses.

If the winning candidate has not already named his or her **VICE-PRESIDENTIAL** running mate, the choice is announced at the convention.

The presidential candidate campaigns throughout the country. That way, he/she can gain the support of the general population.

The **CAMPAIGN** for the presidency traditionally begins in early September. Most campaigns rely on national radio, television appearances, press coverage and the social media.

STEP 3: GENERAL ELECTION

With their popular vote, people actually vote for so-called electors representing their state.

The **GENERAL ELECTION** usually takes place in November. Each U.S. citizen is allowed to vote for one President and Vice President.

STEP 4: ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Each state gets a certain number of **ELECTORS** depending on their total population.

In 48 states, the candidate who receives the greatest number of popular votes in a state (e. g. 55 in California) receives the entire **ELECTORAL VOTE** of that state. Even if some people voted for electors of the other party, the whole state is assigned to the winner.

Each elector from every state votes for one presidential candidate. The candidate who gets more than half of the votes (270) wins the election.

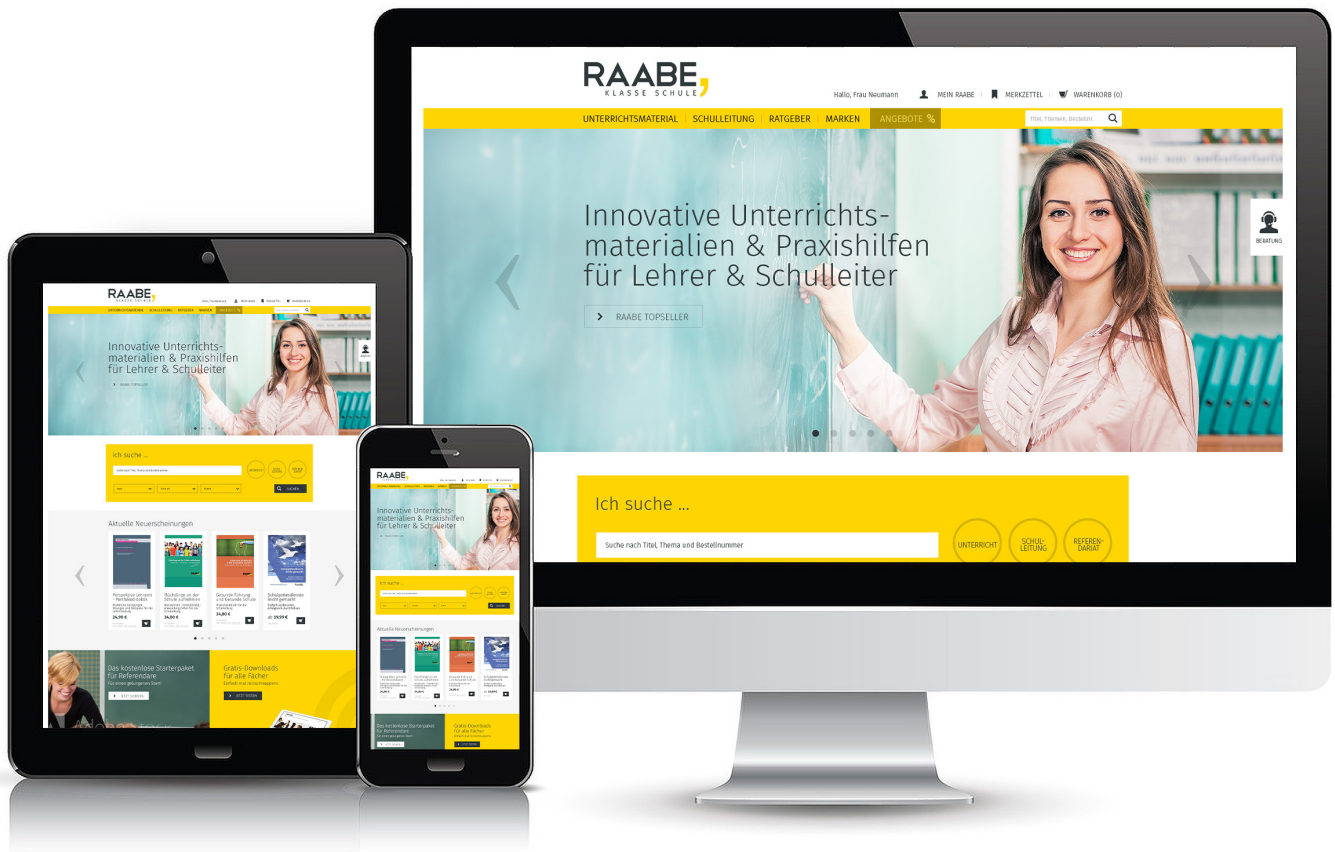
The **INAUGURATION** of the new President and Vice President takes place in January. The term of office lasts four years.

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

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