



Tips for Teachers

A Guide for Using *New Youth Connections* in Schools and After-School Programs

May/June 2008

IN THIS ISSUE

All About the Election

We have several articles on the election, including a detailed description of how to register to vote. **We've included a copy of a voter registration form in this Tips** (see the last page). You can make copies for your students and can guide them through completing it. You may also download extra copies at www.elections.state.ny.us/NYSBOE/download/voting/voteform.pdf. Note that putting a Social Security number or driver's license number on the form makes it easier to vote on Election Day but it is not required. The forms should be mailed to the addresses listed on page 24 of the issue.

Have Your Students Enter the Contest: Great End-of-Year Activity
2 Writing Contests—Cash Prizes
Students can win \$150, \$75, and \$50.

Reminder: Your students can enter the contest by going to our website and clicking on the "enter contest" button. Our web address is youthcomm.org.

Writing Contest #189: Pick the President

Deadline: June 30, 2008

Contest question: If you could pick anybody to be the president, who would it be? Why? (This can be any real person, living or dead—including people you know.)

Lesson #1: Practicing the 5-paragraph essay

If you are teaching the 5-paragraph

essay, this is a good practice opportunity.

Goals: Writing the 5-paragraph essay. Critical Reading: Identify the arguments in an opinion piece.

Pre-class activities for the leader: Read "Oprah for President" on page 10 by Shameeka Dowling. Note Oprah's personal qualities/skills and experiences that the writer mentions in her story. You can highlight them as they appear or make lists. Becoming familiar with them will help you lead the discussion described below.

1. Introduction: Tell the group they are going to write a five-paragraph composition that they can submit to *New Youth Connections* magazine and have a chance to win a cash prize. As part of this exercise they are going to read a story by a teenager who thinks Oprah should be president.

2. Brainstorming: Ask them what personal qualities or skills a presidential candidate should have. Write their suggestions on the board until you have 5-7 items. Then ask what experiences a candidate should have on his or her resume. When you have few of those ask them why those qualities and experiences would make the person a good president. Write down 3-5 responses on the board.

3. Read Story: Tell the students that they are now going to read a story by a teenager who thinks that Oprah Winfrey should be president. The group is going to see if the qualities they picked for their lists match the ones the writer discussed in her article.

Hand out the magazine and direct them to page 10.



Paulina Korkus

As they read the story (either silently or out loud) ask them to circle the sentences that mention *personal qualities and experiences* that make Oprah a strong presidential candidate. Also ask them to circle the sentences in which Shameeka argues that Oprah could use these skills and experiences to be an effective president.

Tips for Teachers is written for the bulk subscribers to *New Youth Connections* to help them use the magazine more effectively with teens in their classes and programs.

For more information, contact:
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youthcomm.org

Tips for Teachers is also available on our website at:
www.youthcomm.org

4. More Brainstorming: Based on what they read in the story—or any other ideas that occur to them—ask for volunteers to add to the lists you put on the board. Write down their suggestions.

5. Write Essay: Tell students that their assignment is to write five paragraphs about who they think would make a good president. They should look at the lists on the board and think about people who they think fit many of the criteria, and then pick one of those people to write about. Depending on the writing skills of your class, you may want to remind them that no one is likely to fit every criterion, which is OK.

Writing Tips

If necessary, remind students that a paragraph is a group of sentences on a theme. The first sentences usually states the theme. So, for example, if a paragraph begins, “It’s very important for the president to have leadership experience,” then the next few sentences should explain why the person they prefer has relevant experience.

Tell them there is a structure they can use (they should be taking notes as you lay out the structure):

> **First paragraph: Introduce the candidate.** Include some biographical information. Put in one sentence about why she/he is a better candidate than Obama, Clinton, or McCain. Tell them to look at the first three paragraphs of the story for an example of how they might

introduce their choice.

> **Second paragraph: Write about the personal qualities or skills of their candidate.** They should consult their list. They should include at least two instances of how their candidate’s behavior shows that the nominee has those skills. For example, if someone nominates her sister because she is smart, what does the sister do that proves she is smart?

> **Third paragraph: Write about the experiences of the candidate.** This could include jobs, education, military experience, family roles, community work, etc.

> **Fourth paragraph: If their candidate is elected how will she or he use the skills and experiences to be a good president?** Tell them to look at the first paragraph of the last column of the story. There, Shameeka argues that Oprah’s international charity efforts will help her negotiate with foreign leaders.

> **Fifth paragraph: Summarize the candidate’s strengths.** Tell them to look at Shameeka’s last paragraph as a good example of how to do this, including the leading transition phrase, “Looking at everything...”

Extra idea and discussion point:

Ask your students, “What important aspect of a presidential candidate’s campaign does Shameeka ignore?” (Do they think it odd that she doesn’t mention what Oprah thinks about the war in Iraq, immigration, or other issues?)

Writing Contest #190: Do Over

Deadline: October 6, 2008

Contest question: What’s something that you’ve done or said that you’d like to take back?

Lesson Idea

Ask students if they know the meaning of the golf term “take a mulligan.” If no one knows what it means, tell them that a mulligan is a “do-over.” If you hit your ball into the water, you can call mulligan, and take the shot over. (Among friends, not in tournaments.) Bill Clinton was famous for the number of mulligans he would take.

But many things in life do not offer a “do over.” Once the words are out of your mouth, or you’ve committed the act, you have to live with the consequences. If you talk thoughtlessly about a friend behind her back, you may lose the friend. If you catch herpes, you have it for life. No “do-overs.”

Tell the students that despite the fact that some acts cannot be undone, people often wish they could.

Tell them to think of something they’ve said or done that they would like to take back. Why? What would be different in their life now? How would it have affected their relationships? When did they learn that they wanted a “do-over”? What would they do differently in the future?

Send the winning essays to NYC. (Note: If the topic is sensitive, we will leave the writer’s name off of the published essay.)

Get More Teaching Resources at the Youth Communication Website (www.youthcomm.org)

- You can order dozens of books and teacher guides on topics your students are interested in.

- You can download over 250 stories from past issues of *New Youth Connections* and *Represent: The Voice of Youth in Foster Care*.

- You can download lesson ideas from past issues of “Tips for Teachers.”



- You can find out about writing workshops for young people in foster care.

- You can browse our book and DVD catalog and order from our e-store.

- You can have your students enter our writing contests.

Attention Health Educators Free Condoms Available

We’ve published a listing of health clinics and community organizations that distribute free condoms during the summer. See page 8. There is a sexual health quiz on page 9 that can help foster communication between teens and parents or other important adults in their lives.

(Cover this column when you copy the quiz at right.)

Practice Lesson for Regents Exam Listening Section

Story: "Getting My First Vote Right," p. 7

What the teacher needs to know to use this lesson: The Regents English exam has a listening section. A proctor reads the students an **Overview** (see below). The proctor then reads a passage to the students, *twice*. The students can and should take notes. The students then answer some multiple choice questions on the hand out to the right.

NOTE: This lesson omits the report writing section of the Regents exam. It only contains the listening part.

1. Read the Overview

During the real test the students have a printed version of the Overview in front of them as the proctor reads the story. Write it on the board.

Read this to your students:

Overview: You will listen to an article written by a teenager who voted for the first time last February. You will then answer some multiple choice questions. You will hear the article twice. You may take notes.

2. Tell your students, "Now I will read the passage aloud to you for the first time."

After reading the story once, say:

"You make take a few minutes to look over your notes. (Pause) Now I will read the story again."

3. Multiple Choice Questions

After reading the article for the second time give them the questions on the right.

Here are the answers to the questions:

1) b 2) c 3) d 4) c 5) a 6) a 7) d

Getting My First Vote Right

Directions: Use your notes to answer the questions about the story read to you.

1) What kind of decision-maker is the author?

- a) thinks a lot about decisions and makes a rational choice
- b) thinks a lot about decisions but can follow her emotions
- c) thinks a lot about decisions but can never make up her mind
- d) thinks a lot about decisions but lets her friends or family decide for her

2) What political issue does the author mention?

- a) the war in Iraq
- b) global warming
- c) health care
- d) equal rights for women

3) When did the author make up her mind about her vote?

- a) when she was in the voting booth
- b) when she registered to vote
- c) right after the New Hampshire primary
- d) the night before voting

4) What other consideration besides the issues does the writer mention as influencing her vote?

- a) gender of the candidates
- b) race of the candidates
- c) the candidates' chances of getting elected president in November
- d) the debates

5) On the day she voted, what did the author have to do to cast her ballot?

- a) state and sign her name
- b) register to vote
- c) have her mother there to give permission
- d) prove she was 18

6) Why did the writer's family think that McCain would beat Obama in November?

- a) Obama is inexperienced
- b) McCain is a Republican
- c) Obama is African-American
- d) too many people dislike Obama

7) Besides being her first time voting, what else made voting in this election exciting to the writer?

- a) she could vote for a woman
- b) she could vote for an African-American
- c) it was hard choosing a candidate
- d) it was a close race

New York State Voter Registration Form

You Can Use This Form To:

- register to vote in New York State
- change your name and/or address, if there is a change since you last voted
- enroll in a political party or change your enrollment

To Register You Must:

- be a U.S. citizen
- be 18 years old by the end of this year
- not be in jail or on parole for a felony conviction
- not claim the right to vote elsewhere

Need More Registration Forms?

You can get registration forms at most state agency offices and post offices or at any county board of elections or call 1-800-FOR-VOTE.

In Order To Vote:

- you can register in person at your county board of elections
- to vote in an election, you must mail or deliver this form to your county board no later than 25 days before the election in which you want to vote
- be 18 years old by the date of the election in which you want to vote
- your eligibility to vote will be based on the date you file this form
- your county board will notify you of your eligibility

Questions? Call your county board of elections. Find the phone number on the other side of this form.

Hearing impaired people with TDD/TTY may call the New York State Relay #711.

Visit our website - www.elections.state.ny.us

Información en español: si le interesa obtener este formulario en español, llame al 1-800-367-8683

中文資料：如果你有興趣索取本中文資料表格，請電 1 - 800 - 367-8683

한국어: 한국어 양식을 원하시면 1-800-367-8683 으로 전화하십시오.

IDENTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Your identity must be verified prior to election day, so that you will not have to provide identification when you vote. Your identity can be verified through your DMV number (driver's license number or non-driver ID number), or the last four digits of your social security number, as requested in Box 9 of this application.

If your identity is not verified before election day, you will be asked to provide identification when you vote for the first time. Samples of the identification you may provide include a valid photo ID, a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or some other government document that shows your name and address.

If you include a copy of any identification with this application, be sure to tape the sides of this form closed.

TO COMPLETE THIS FORM:

Box 9: If you have a current DMV number, you must provide that number. If you do not have a current DMV number, you must provide the last four digits of your social security number.

Box 10: If you have never voted before, write "None." If you can't remember when you last voted, put a question mark (?). If you voted before under a different name, put down that name. If not, write "Same."

Box 11: Check one box only. In order to vote in a party primary, you must be enrolled in one of New York's 5 constituted parties.

•**Except** the Independence Party, which permits non-enrolled voters to vote in their primary elections.

If you would like an application for an ABSENTEE BALLOT or would like to be an ELECTION DAY WORKER, please check the corresponding box below.

Yes, I need an application for an Absentee Ballot **Please print in blue or black ink** Yes, I would like to be an Election Day Worker

1 Are you a U.S. citizen? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If you answered NO, do not complete this form.		2 I will be 18 years old on or before election day: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> If you answered NO, do not complete this form, unless you will be 18 by the end of the year.		For Board use only!	
3 Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial _____ Suffix _____					
4 Home Address Where You Live (do not give P.O. address) _____ Apt. No. _____ City/Town/Village _____ Zip Code _____ County _____					
5 Address Where You Get Your Mail (if different from home address) _____ P.O. box, star rtc., etc. _____ Post Office _____ Zip Code _____					
6 Date of Birth _____		7 Sex (circle) _____ M F		8 Home Tel. Number (optional) _____	
10 The last year you voted _____		Your Address was (give house number, street, and city) _____		9 ID Number - Check the applicable box and provide your number <input type="checkbox"/> New York DMV number _____ If you do not have a New York DMV number, please provide <input type="checkbox"/> Last four (4) digits of your Social Security number _____ <input type="checkbox"/> I do not have a New York DMV number or a Social Security number.	
In county/state _____		Under the name (if different from your name now) _____			
11 Choose a Party — Check one box only <input type="checkbox"/> DEMOCRATIC PARTY <input type="checkbox"/> REPUBLICAN PARTY <input type="checkbox"/> INDEPENDENCE PARTY <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATIVE PARTY <input type="checkbox"/> WORKING FAMILIES PARTY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (write in) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> I DO NOT WISH TO ENROLL IN A PARTY			12 To vote in a primary election, you must be enrolled in one of these parties. *See above		
AFFIDAVIT: I swear or affirm that • I am a citizen of the United States. • I will have lived in the county, city, or village for at least 30 days before the election. • I meet all requirements to register to vote in New York State. • This is my signature or mark on the line below. • The above information is true. I understand that if it is not true I can be convicted and fined up to \$5,000 and/or jailed for up to four years. █ Signature or mark in ink █ X _____ Date _____					

Please do not write in this space