

the center for
deliberative democracy

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Deliberative Democracy in the Classroom Toolkit Instructions

This toolkit is intended for high-school students, and will complement classes in History or Government. This toolkit is designed for 4 class sessions of about an hour per session. All components can be a shortened or lengthened to fit existing curriculum.

This Toolkit should be used accompanied with:

1. Citizenship in 21st Century America – Complete Briefing Materials – Teachers’ Copy
2. Citizenship in 21st Century America – Briefing Materials with Worksheets – Student Copy
 - a. Topic 1: Citizenship and Participation
 - b. Topic 2: Exercising Choice
 - c. Topic 3: Serving One’s Country
 - d. Topic 4: Becoming Informed
3. Pre-deliberation Baseline Survey for Citizenship in 21st Century America
4. Post-deliberation Survey for Citizenship in 21st Century America
5. One-page moderator guide for student moderators
6. Data Entry Instructions

Overview

The public is generally ill informed – for quite understandable reasons – about most issues of public interest. Yet, individuals are still expected to provide an “opinion” when asked for one in public opinion polls. These polls supposedly provide us with a glimpse of what the public thinks right here and now. However, we may want to reconsider the extent to which the results of these polls accurately reflect the public’s true opinions and beliefs given the lack of awareness about the issues. Deliberative Polling seeks to obtain public opinion that is not only representative, but also considered and well thought-out.

The *Deliberative Democracy in the Classroom Toolkit* is inspired by an innovative public consultation method known as Deliberative Polling®. The process in the classroom will begin and end with students’ opinions about a critical issue on the national, statewide or local civic agenda. The Center for Deliberative Democracy, in partnership with PBS *By the People*, has prepared a set of materials for the classroom titled **Citizenship in 21st Century America**. These materials are based on an actual Deliberative Poll that was held online with a national sample of the US population. These classroom materials include vetted balanced briefing materials and pre- and post-deliberation surveys. In addition, this toolkit has built in classroom time for students to research facts and perspectives on the issues, learn to locate, consider, and verify alternative and independent sources, engage in critical thinking by weighing competing arguments, and critically assess their premises and sources of information. Active classroom or school-wide discussion in moderated settings in small groups and large groups brings civic debate to life. At the conclusion of the Deliberative Democracy activity, the participating students answer the same “opinion poll” they did at the start and are able to track how their own and peers’ thinking evolved with further knowledge, research, critical thinking and civic engagement.

Purpose

The Deliberative Democracy in the Classroom Toolkit combines civic education with exercises in critical thinking, collaboration, and research that buttress language arts’ reading, understanding and reasoning

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skills. This Toolkit is being shaped by educators and others involved in civic engagement to meet classroom imperatives through vetted briefing discussion materials as well as vetted Internet destinations, online search and information and sources verification opportunities, and activities synced to the Common Core standards.

Objectives

1. To introduce students to the concept of “Deliberative Polling”
2. To help students build research skills necessary for becoming well informed on specific topics as well as citizens more generally.
3. To undergo “civic engagement” through discussion with peers in order to become more knowledgeable about competing perspectives on a specific topic of discussion.
4. To track how thinking evolves with further knowledge, research, critical thinking, and civic engagement.

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Session 1 – Introduction to Deliberative Polling

Purpose: The goal of this session is to get students comfortable with the idea of “Deliberative Polling” and how it is different from the typical polling process.

Learning Objectives:

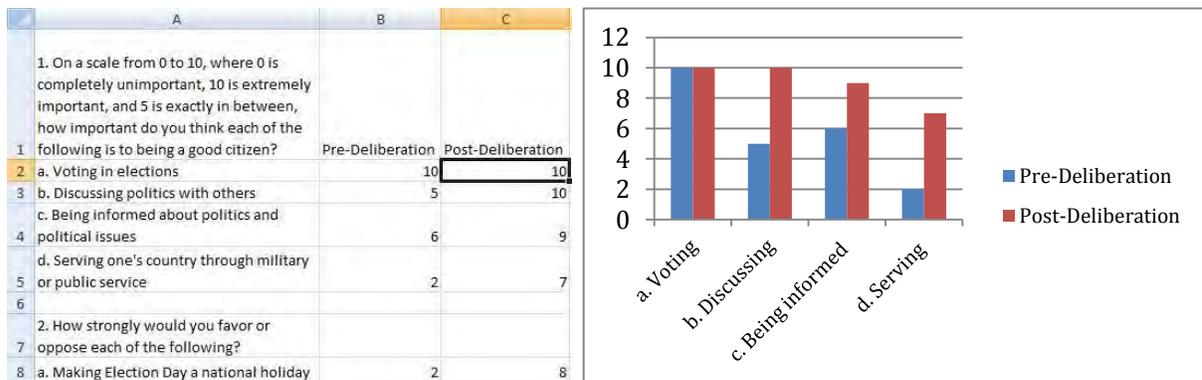
1. Learning how to use Excel for data input and analysis
2. Become familiar with the concept of public opinion
3. Begin discovering the importance of citizen voice in public affairs.

Activities:

1. Warm-up (15 minutes):
 - a) Hand out the pre-deliberation survey on *Citizens in 21st Century America* from the CDD website.
 - b) If done on paper, assign “student numbers” to each student, so the survey remains anonymous. Keep the numbers until the entire activity is done, to compare changes at the individual level.

Something to consider: Surveys, exercise in Data Entry.

If the surveys are completed on paper, you may arrange for students enter their own survey data into Microsoft Excel. This way, students can see their opinions from their surveys graphically in Excel. Please refer to the Data Entry Instructions worksheet for more detailed steps.



Alternatively, you can have your students complete the survey online, prior to coming to class, as their homework. This way, there is no need for data entry and the online survey tool will create helpful graphical results. Please contact the Center at cdd@dp.stanford.edu for a personalized link.

2. Discussion and Lecture (35 minutes)

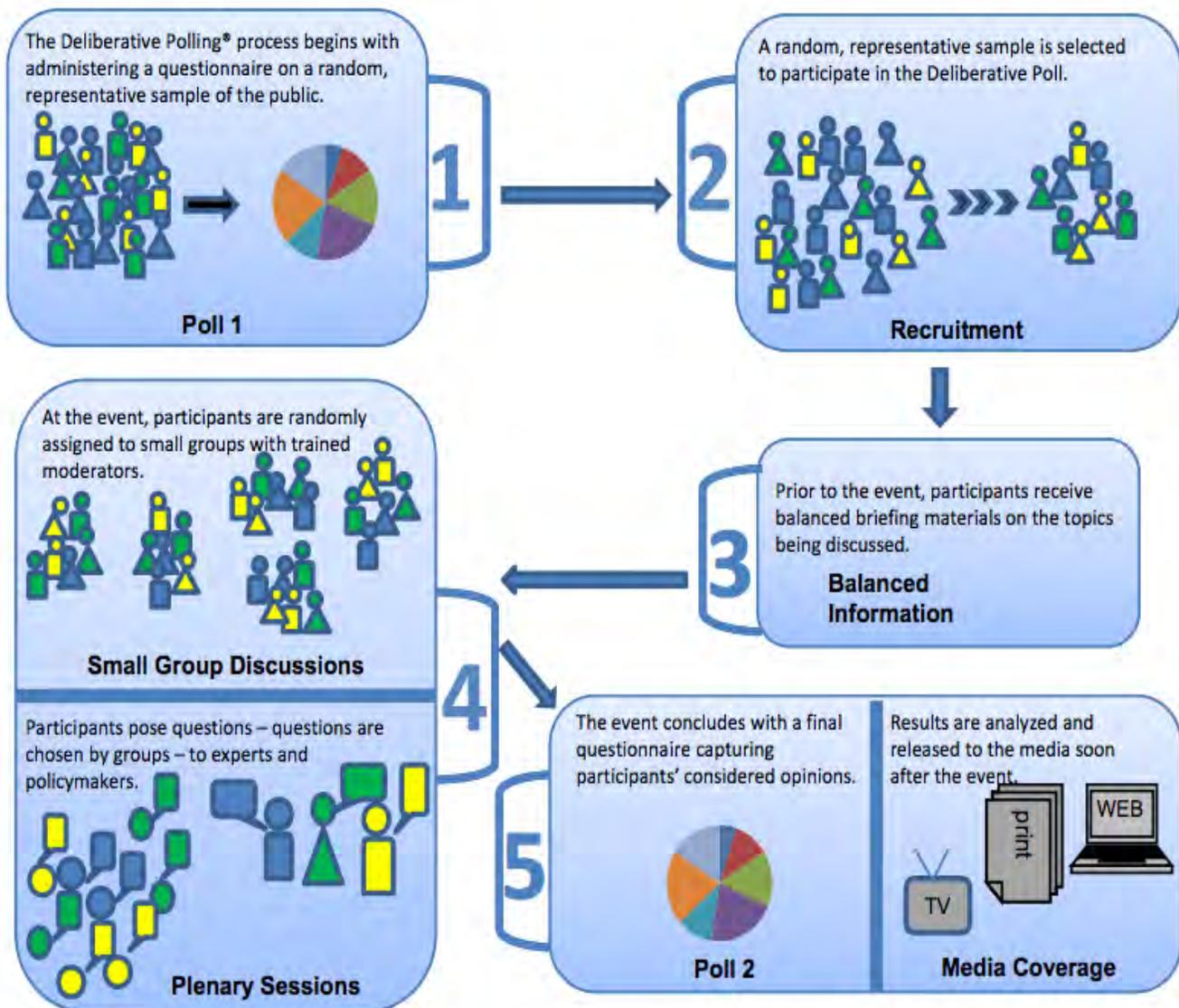
- a) Prompt discussion with questions about public opinion. Some questions are provided below:

<i>What are surveys?</i>	<i>What is polling?</i>
<i>Do you think that the decisions you voiced in the survey were reflective of your opinions?</i>	<i>How did you feel responding to survey questions that you did not know very much about?</i>

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- b) Then, you can provide a definition of polling and explain how polling is done in the community.
- Conventional polling is conducted everyday and on almost any topic.
 - Polling firms will usually conduct surveys through telephone and random digit dialing.
 - Surveys are usually conducted for people over 18, so high school students may not have participated in telephone surveys.
 - Survey companies are beginning to conduct surveys over mobile phones—some firms even use text messages
 - Internet polling, like CNN instant polls, is becoming more common.
 - Some polls do not use random selection, so they focus on getting the opinion of a certain group of people.
- c) Begin a discussion of deliberative polling and contrast it with the initial discussion of polling.

Here is a brief description of deliberative polling:



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Here are some places that deliberative polling has been conducted:



National Projects. CDD and MacNeil/Lehrer Productions have conducted DPs on issues facing the citizens of the US such as foreign policy, health care, education, and citizenship in the 21st century.



State and Local Projects. Energy Choices - Vermont, Nebraska, Texas (8 projects) and Nova Scotia have used DP to give guidance on how their state/province should meet its future electricity needs.



European Union. CDD and its European collaborators conducted the first European-wide DP with more than 360 randomly selected citizens from all 27 member states and discussions were conducted in 23 languages.



China. Zeguo Township in Zhejiang Province has conducted three DPs - allowing residents to impact the budgetary decisions of their local government.

And, here are some of the effects of deliberative polling:

- After the Bulgarian project (May 2007), Prime Minister Stanishev publicly embraced the results and pledged to implement the policy recommendations toward the Roma and even followed up by commissioning another national Deliberative Poll on budget priorities.
- The Northern Ireland DP (February 2007) on school collaboration also seems like it has led to policy consequences for shared schooling.
- The Zeguo Township DP (2005) influenced the budget of the town, with the town putting into effect the top projects citizens voted on in the poll.

Finally, here is a chart that compares the deliberative polling process and the classroom toolkit process:

Toolkit	Both	Deliberative Polling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortened to fit into time constraints of average high school class • Adjusted to complement a high school curriculum • Students take on the role of many parts of the deliberative polling process, such as researching pros and cons to form “briefing materials.” • Students act as moderators in small group discussions • Students become experts in the panel sessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on Deliberative Polling • Help strengthens civic education and citizenship • Provides place for discussion about important issues • Allows citizens to think about and reflect upon their opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often a multi-day activity • Scientifically selected people to be demographically representative through phone surveys, versus having a classroom’s students • Briefing materials are created beforehand by experts • Moderators are provided for small group discussions • Experts answer questions during the panel sessions

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3. Finishing up (10 minutes):

- a) As a class, brainstorm other topics that call for a deliberative poll in your community/campus. (Consider issues big and small. For example, how should school funds be appropriated on campus? Or should healthcare be required for all citizens?).

(Optional) Explain how the next 3 class sessions will be conducted, providing students with a general idea about what they will be expected to do as part of this 4 session deliberative polling activity. Allow time for any questions that the students may have for questions about today's lesson, the deliberative polling activity, or deliberative polling in general.

Session 2 – Building News and Digital Literacy Research

Purpose-To research arguments related to citizenship and become informed before small group discussions.

Learning Objectives:

1. Help students build research skills through the web and/or through texts.
2. Help students become proficient at reading documents for arguments and supporting evidence.
3. Aid students in assessing the validity of sources.
4. Allow students to analyze both sides of controversial issues.

Activities:

1. Assigning groups. For this Toolkit, there are four possible topics: Citizenship and Participation, Exercising Choice, Serving One’s Country, and Becoming Informed. Please assign your students to groups following one of the following ways:

A. If you assign your entire class to one topic...	B. If you split your class into four groups...	C. If you split your class into two groups...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All students in your class can research and discuss the same topic. • Students can compare and contrast their research results • You can focus each class session on a different topic. • If you use all four topics, you will need four class sessions to cover all four topics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group can discuss one topic • All four topics can be completed in one sessions • Students can learn about topics from each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group discusses one topic of the four for two topics total covered • There is still variety in the students’ research topics, but more than one topic can be covered • You can have another session for the other two topics. • If you use all four topics, you will need two class sessions to cover all the topics.

2. Issue and read discussion materials (20 minutes)

- a) The materials are titled **Citizenship in 21st Century America** and are downloadable from the CDD website.

3. Fill-in the Pro/Con arguments worksheets (40 minutes)

- a) This task can be a homework assignment or a classroom group assignment, individually or in groups. Afterward, students can combine their charts into a final class chart.
- b) The worksheets are available for download on the CDD website.
- c) These Pro/Con argument worksheets will be the basis for small group discussion, next class.

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The following section was prepared by Professor Geanne Rosenberg, Director of the Harnisch Collaborative Future of Journalism Projects at Baruch College of the City University of New York and Faculty Associate at Harvard University's Berkman Center for Internet & Society.

Here are suggested ways to building News and Digital Literacy:

It is important to find credible information online while building the Pro/Con Argument worksheets. Here are some exercises to aid in finding reliable research:

1. Lesson in Search Parameters and Key Words:

- What are the best keywords for finding information about citizenship?
- What are the worst?
- What is the difference in the results?
- What Google search parameters and advanced techniques can help improve the results? Let students play around with Google Advanced Search, available at: http://www.google.ca/advanced_search
- Individuals or groups can report their findings in terms of best and worst methods to the class.

2. Lesson in Researching Complex Issues Online, Finding Credible Sources and Verification Strategies Part I:

- Who can find the most important and accurate facts about the citizenship?
- What were the steps?
- How can you verify the information and prove it is accurate? Factors include whether it is a .edu, .gov, .com or .net site, looking up the authors' credentials, and double-checking the facts presented on the site.
- One possibility here is to break the students up into workgroups on different aspects of citizenship – perhaps in the four topics suggested above.



3. Lesson in Researching Complex Issues Online, Finding Credible Sources and Verification Strategies Part II.



Egyptians celebrating in Tahrir Square after the fall of Mubarak

- How do we build citizenship?
- What are examples from other countries? What should the expectations be?
- Ask the students to discover for themselves what data is accurate or misleading. How can they tell? How can they verify or debunk?
- Questions for Class Discussion: Do they consider the accuracy of the information they share in their social networking activities? Do they think about the accuracy of the information shared by others?

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Wrapping Up

At the end of this class session, your students will have completed their worksheets for the next class session's group discussion. In preparation for next class session, the small group discussions, you will need to:

- a) Split the class into groups of 8-10 people.
 - i) There are two additional roles that should be assigned:

The Moderator: Moderators facilitate group discussion so it is balanced in both the number of people talking and the type of arguments presented.

- There is one moderator per small group
- Please hand them the *One Page Guide for Moderators of Small Group Discussions*, available on the CDD website. Moderators should ensure that the guidelines are followed in discussion.
- Some general guidelines for discussion are: Everyone's voice counts, Respect and listen to each other's opinions, Not everyone needs to agree or disagree. Moderators should not express their own opinions or biases, and ensure that participants are talking to each other, and not them.

The Expert: Experts answer questions during the panel sessions with more in-depth information.

- There should be three to five experts per topic. These students do not participate in small-group discussions, but can listen.
- The experts should be students who are familiar with their arguments and sources of information.
- You can pick different experts for different topics, so students who are experts may participate in other topics' discussions on different days of class.
- Alternatively, you could have real experts come in for the panel discussions.

Alternatively, you could have actual experts come in—for example, the Government teacher, local officials, and others who work with government and citizenship

- b) Ask all students think of some questions that they want to ask the panelists in class tomorrow.

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Session 3 – Deliberative Democracy

Purpose: To undergo “deliberative democracy” through discussion with peers. This will be executed in two parts: first, small groups for discussions and second, a large “panel” discussion.

Learning Objectives:

1. Consider multiple points of view on a specific topic
2. Learn how to formulate educated opinions with supporting evidence

Here are three suggestions for arranging your class in accordance with suggestions made in session two:

A. If you assigned your entire class to one topic...	B. If you split your class into four groups...	C. If you split your class into two groups...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold the discussions for one topic at a time.• You will need four class sessions if you want to cover all four topics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hold discussions for all four topics in one session.• If you want the entire class to observe all four discussions, the discussions for each topic will only be about 15 minutes.• Alternatively, you could split the class into four groups and have them hold their own discussions for the whole class period, and then have them share later.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have two class sessions, where the 1st class session cover two topics and the 2nd class session cover the remaining two topics.• Please adjust the time allotted for the sessions below accordingly.

Activities

1. Small Group Discussions (40 minutes)

- a) Designate the roles of moderator and experts. There is one moderator per group, and two to three experts per topic.
- b) Begin the group discussions!
 - You should have about 8-10 students in each group.
 - Have the moderator begin the discussions as described above. Please hand them the one-paged moderator guide for reference.
- c) About 5 minutes prior to your designated end time, have groups come up with two questions to ask the “experts” during the panel discussion. These questions need to be agreed upon by the entire group. The groups should designate students to ask the questions.

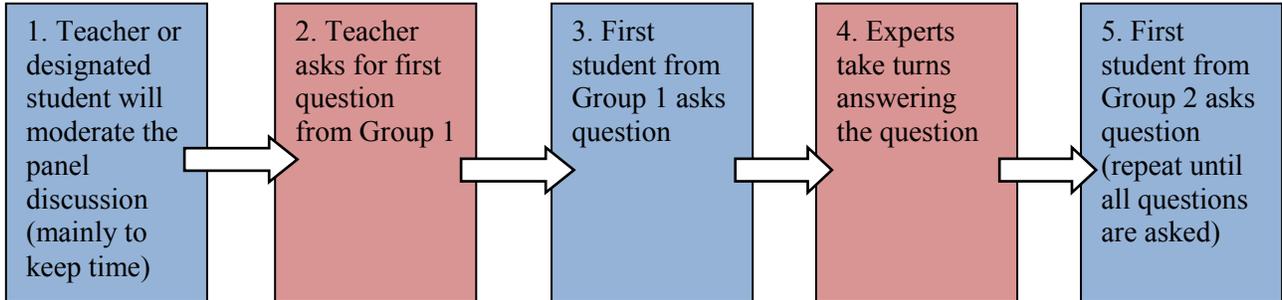
2. Panel Discussion (15 minutes)

- a) Organize the classroom so that the “experts” form a panel at the front of the class. The “experts” will only respond to questions developed from the small group discussions. Panelists should be allowed to have their sources and any other materials they want to reference as they speak and answer questions.
- b) All panelists should have the opportunity to answer each question, but answers should be limited to 2-3 minutes per panelist.

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- c) Teachers should emphasize that no one can “win” the discussion. It is not a debate in which there is a winner and loser. Instead, all students (on the panel and not!) should feel encouraged to listen to and absorb the multiple points of view on that particular topic.

Suggested Format for Panel Discussion



3. Wrapping it up (5 minutes)

- a) Go over the points that students found most convincing on both sides of the argument.
- b) Remind students that in the next and final session they will be asked for their opinions on the topic again and that students should consider all the viewpoints that were voiced in the discussions today when making their decisions.

Session 4 – Wrap up and Final Survey

Purpose: To complete the deliberative poll and measure any changes.

Learning Objectives:

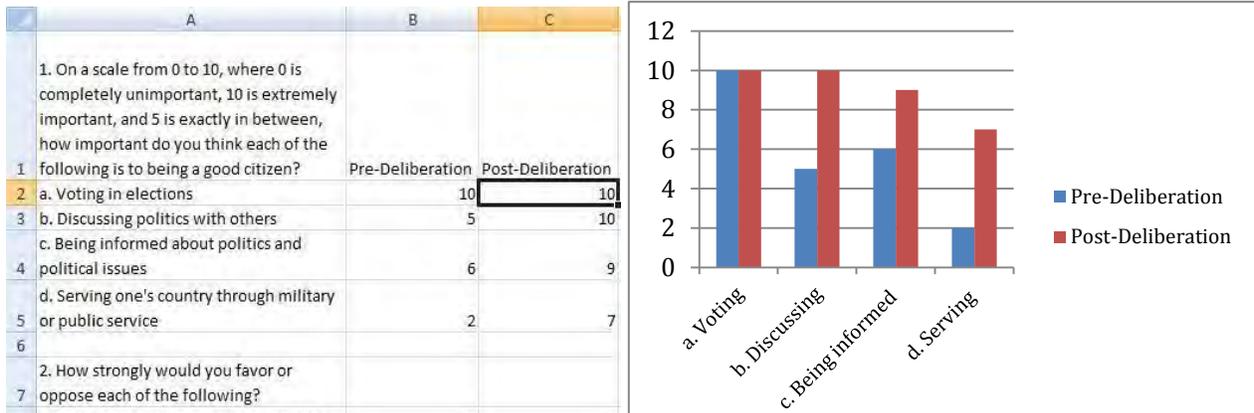
1. Track how thinking evolves with further knowledge, research, critical thinking, and civic engagement.
2. Analyze changes graphically and through Excel.

Activities

1. Administer the post deliberation survey (15 minutes)
 - a) The full survey should be taken in silence and should be anonymous. Please assign the students the same numbers they had when they filled out the first survey. This survey can be completed on paper in class or online. If online, please contact cdd@dp.stanford.edu for a personalized link.
2. Show the results from the first survey graphically (15 minutes)
 - a) As a class, discuss these results.
 - b) Examine the second survey results, and how they differ from the first survey results.
 - If taken online, the results from the second survey should be available immediately through the online software. If taken on paper, results may be input by the students themselves as an exercise in data entry.
 - c) The answers to the knowledge questions are provided below, to measure if there have been any knowledge gains throughout the activity.

Something to consider: Surveys, exercise in Data Entry.

If the surveys are completed on paper, you may arrange for students enter their own survey data into Microsoft Excel. This way, students can see their opinions from their surveys graphically in Excel. Please refer to the Data Entry Instructions worksheet for more detailed steps.



Answers to the Pre- and Post- Survey Knowledge Questions

- | | |
|--|--|
| 19. 5,000,000 | 23. Men between 18 and 25 year old |
| 20. Ensure a majority for one party over another | 24. Gets a majority of Electoral College votes |
| 21. 50% | 25. Every 10 years |
| 22. Australia | 26. Iowa and New Hampshire |

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3. Discussion and wrap up (30 minutes)

- a) Ask students to volunteer to explain why they did or did not change their opinions.
- b) Reflect on the deliberative polling process. Ask students if they feel better about their decision-making after learning about the topic or why being informed is beneficial not only for themselves as individuals, but also for society more generally.
- c) Summarize the key things that were learned throughout the process.
 - o Explain that this does not have to be a one-time experience – being informed about various topics is doable.
 - o Emphasize how students can go about learning more about any topics that interest them in the future by using resources online and at school.
 - o Summarize ideas about what resources were most helpful for them (specific websites, books, people, etc.)



You can find more information on the methodology of Deliberative Polling(r) on the website of the **Center for Deliberative Democracy**: <http://cdd.stanford.edu/>

The contributors to this toolkit include:

- The Center for Deliberative Democracy at Stanford University,
- Ed Madison, Graduate Teaching Fellow at University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication
- Professor Geanne Rosenberg, Director of the Harnisch Collaborative Future of Journalism Projects at Baruch College of the City University of New York and Faculty Associate at Harvard University's Berkman Center for Internet & Society,
- Esther Wojcicki, Vice-Chair of the Creative Commons Board of Directors and Board Chair of Learning Matters
- Daniel Werner, former President of MacNeil/Lehrer Productions (PBS); Executive Producer of MacNeil/Lehrer Productions; Executive Producer of *By the People*

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