

The Election of 1800 Campaign Commercials

"The idea that you can merchandise candidates for high office like breakfast cereal is the ultimate indignity to the democratic process."

-Democratic candidate Adlai Stevenson, 1956

"Television is no gimmick, and nobody will ever be elected to major office again without presenting themselves well on it."

-Television producer and Nixon campaign consultant Roger Ailes, 1968

Campaigns throughout history have relied on political advertisements in order to help the public understand candidates' political views. In earlier campaigns, candidates relied on advertising strategies such as public appearances, newspaper ads and editorials. Their tactics were sometimes no better than the political smear campaigns that exist today.

You will study the major issues from the Election of 1800. Two main candidates in this election were John Adams of the Federalist Party and Thomas Jefferson of the Republican Party. You will be assigned one of the main issues from the campaign and will be assigned to support one of the political parties. You will create a campaign commercial that will explain to the voting public your party's position on the issue you are given. Have fun!

The Issues

The issues that we will work with are ones that Federalists and Republicans split over during the early years of the United States. These issues are as follows:

1. Should the central government be strong or limited? Why? (The American Journey, p. 209-210)
2. Should there be a Bank of the United States? Why or why not? (The American Journey, p. 260-261, 268, Creating America, p.296-297)
3. What type of people should run the government, the elite (upper class) or the common people? Why? (The American Journey, p. 268)
4. Should the Constitution be interpreted strictly or loosely? Why? (The American Journey, p. 268, Creating America, p.297)
5. Should the United States support the French Revolution? Why or why not? (The American Journey, p. 264, Creating America, p.301-302)
6. What should America do about the XYZ Affair? (The American Journey, p.270, Creating America, p.305-306 and the internet)
7. Defend or oppose the Naturalization, Alien, and Sedition Acts and give reasons to support your position. (The American Journey, p. 271-272, Creating America, p.306-307)
8. Should the United States Senate ratify Jay's Treaty? (The American Journey, p.264-265, Creating America, p.302, and the internet)
9. What economic policies would be best for the nation? (Note: read about Alexander Hamilton's economic plans during Washington's administration, specifically paying off Revolutionary War bonds, issuing protective tariffs, and issuing excise taxes, like the one on whiskey: The American Journey, p.259-261, Creating America, p.295-297)
10. Should the United States have a permanent standing army? (do internet research at sites such as <http://www.commondreams.org/views04/0505-08.htm>)

The Assignments

Each pair will be given one of the above issues and be assigned to be either Federalists or Republicans. Each person in the group will choose one of the following roles. Follow the directions to complete your job.

Script Editors

You will work with the video editor to research your position on the issue that you were assigned. You are responsible for writing a script approximately one-minute long explaining the position that your candidate would have taken on the issue. You will then record this script in Windows MovieMaker (under "Narrate Timeline"). Your script should do the following:

- Clearly state the issue you were given
- Clearly state the reasons that support your party's position
- Use emotional words to convince the public to vote for your candidate

Video Editors

You will work with the script editor to research your position on the issue that you were assigned. You are responsible for gathering images that will coordinate with the script. You will then assemble the pictures into a video approximately one-minute long using Microsoft MovieMaker. You must adjust the pictures so that they match the script editor's recorded narration. Your video should do the following:

- Use images that relate to the issue and candidate you were given
- Use timings and transitions to coordinate the visuals with the narration
- Use emotional imagery to convince the public to vote for your candidate

Helpful Resources

<http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/>

This website has examples of campaign commercials from 20th century presidential campaigns. The site also explains issues surrounding campaign advertising.

<http://windows.microsoft.com/en-US/windows-vista/Getting-started-with-Windows-Movie-Maker>

This website has links to teach you how to use Windows MovieMaker.

Correctly Turning in the Project

Follow the correct steps for finalizing the movie: choose #3, Finish Movie, Save to Computer, follow the instructions, name your file with your issue number, position (F or R), period number, and last names (example: 1R per 3 Val Brown)

You must email a .WMV file to Mrs. Young (syoung@mvusd.net). Do not turn in a MovieMaker Project file!

If you don't correctly finalize the movie, your project will not be viewable on other computers. You will not get credit until I have a correctly formatted project emailed to me! Ask for help if you don't understand how to do it correctly! Thank you.