

## HAGMAN, LUCY

### LESSON OBJECTIVE(S):

- Use a primary document to describe the voting practices in a local election in Jacksonian America.
- Recognize that the U. S. Constitution changes over time toward a more perfect Union.
- Compare an election scene in Jacksonian America to a present-day election.
- Analyze and interpret a cultural event through its representation in artwork.

### MATERIALS:

1. George Caleb Bingham, *The County Election*, 1852 (7B)
2. Computer with White Board capability (optional)
3. Internet access (optional)

### PROCEDURES:

1. Access prior knowledge through discussion of recent Student Government election.
2. Ask students questions about the voters in early America. Who were they, and were there any stipulations on voting? *The first voters were white, land holding males. In the election of 1828, all male citizens could vote.*
3. Present *The County Election*, 1852. Ask students what they see.
  - a. The phrase on the banner is, “the will of the people is the Supreme law”. *This is an election in the middle of a town.*
  - b. Continue to draw from students who they see, what is happening, and what clues support their statements: *There is a crowd of men with a few children playing. The man in red seems to be voting. Some men seem to be talking. One man is sick while an African American is serving something. The picture is crowded with men.*
  - c. Is anyone missing from the picture? *Women*
  - d. Question students about the clothes and the different types of hats the individuals are wearing. What do they see? *The men are wearing many styles of old clothing and different hats.*
  - e. Help students draw conclusions from their observations: At an election in Jacksonian America only male citizens could vote, hence the absence of women. The African American is a servant or slave. The men pictured are from different occupations as apparent from their hats and dress.
  - f. Ask the students how close to this is the “will of the people” as appears on the banner?

- g. Tell the students that the artist, George Caleb Bingham (1811-1879) was himself a politician and ran in this pictured election.
  - h. Ask the students to find the artist. What clues are present? *Fellow is drawing in the lower center and someone is watching him. He is in the center.*
  - i. Explain to the students that the artist recognized the irregularities in the election and actually lost this election to E. D. Sappington, who appears as the candidate in the top hat greeting prospective voters.
  - j. The artist's work expressed his belief in the values of democracy.
  - k. Although there are voting irregularities, (students could identify several here), the process of democracy is happening. *Voting irregularities: voice vote, no secret ballot, no voter registration, campaigning at polls, could be buying votes*
4. Fast forward 100 years to 1962. Is the scene any different? Yes. How?
  5. Fast forward another 50 years to 2000. How has the scene changed? *Younger people are voting.*
  6. More people are voting and there are few irregularities because the U. S. Constitution is a document that can and is formed to that more perfect union that our Founding Fathers sought.
  7. Discuss the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendments (1870): Voting Rights
  8. Discuss the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1920): Women's Suffrage
  9. Discuss the 23<sup>rd</sup> Amendment (1951): Presidential voting for the citizens of the District of Columbia
  10. Discuss the 24<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1964): a ban on poll taxes
  11. Discuss the 26<sup>th</sup> Amendment (1971): establishes voting age of 18
  12. Extend the lesson by:
    - a. Students may research voting machines at the following:
      - i. <http://www.divms.uiowa.edu/~jones/voting/pictures/>
      - ii. <http://americanhistory.si.edu/vote/>
    - b. Students assume the role of an individual present in the artwork. Write a personal narrative of the event.
    - c. Art connection: Students explore the individual drawings and fun facts about the painting at the following:
      - i. <http://www.slam.org/bingham/hunt.html>

**Assessment:**

- Students complete the t-chart below:

VOTING RIGHTS 1852	VOTING RIGHTS 2012