

Lesson/Activity Title:

# MY OWN PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE

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**Time:** Approximately 15-20 minutes for the focus and introduction; approximately 10-20 minutes for the modeling and guided practice; approximately 45-60 minutes for the independent practice; and approximately 15-20 minutes for the closure.

## Instructional Goals:

- Students will brainstorm a list of qualifications they think a good presidential candidate should have.
- Students will use the **PebbleGo** online database to learn about the job of president of the United States.
- Students will use the **PebbleGo** online database to identify and take notes on the requirements a U.S. presidential candidate must meet in order to run in an election.
- Students will create a fictional character, decide on their own requirements and qualities of a good presidential candidate, and create a campaign poster for their fictional candidate.

## Integrated Content Standards

- National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) (<https://www.socialstudies.org/standards>)
- Common Core English Language Arts/Literacy Standards ([www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/))
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- NCTE/IRA Standards for English Language Arts National Educational Technology Standards for Students (<https://www.iste.org/standards/for-students>)

## Materials/Resources:

- **PebbleGo** Social Studies online database
- **President of the United States Research** handout
- **My Presidential Candidate** handout
- Pencils
- Art supplies such as markers, colored pencils, or crayons

## Procedures/Lesson Activities:

### Focus



1. Bring the class together and write the word campaign on a white board.
2. Ask the students if they know what that word means. If students are not able to give their own accurate definition of the word, tell them a campaign is how a person who wants to run for an office tries to convince voters they are the best person for the job. The person does this using signs, speeches, advertisements, and social media.
3. Ask the class to think of a time a person might use a campaign to convince voters they are the right person for the job. Prompt students to give you examples such as student body president, mayor, and president. Record their responses.
4. Tell students that it is important that voters learn all they can about a candidate before deciding who to support. Brainstorm a list of criteria that they could use to determine who might be the best person for the job. Ask leading questions that prompt responses like “education,” “experience,” and “values.”

### Teach/Model

5. Explain to the students that they will use the **PebbleGo** Social Studies online database to research and take notes on the job of president of the United States because of the upcoming election. They will also learn about the requirements presidential candidates must meet before entering the race.
6. Demonstrate how to navigate the **PebbleGo** Social Studies online database. Click on the Social Studies section of the database, then on the “U.S Government” subcategory, and finally the “President” article.
7. Click on at least two of the heading tabs such as “Who Can Be President?” or “How We Elect a President” to demonstrate navigating an article.

### Guided Practice

8. Pass out the **President of the United States Research** handout and review the directions. Demonstrate navigating the **PebbleGo** online database and completing some of the handout until students have a clear understanding of the process.
9. Remind students that they always need to give credit to their research source. Click the “cite” button and then model copying the information in the bibliography section of the handout.
10. Distribute the **My Presidential Candidate** handout. Explain to students that they will create their own fictional presidential candidate. They will need to decide on the requirements a candidate should meet before running in the election. Then, they will create a campaign poster explaining why that character would make a good president.
11. Refer the students to the section of the handout that lists the qualities it takes to be a good presidential candidate. Model brainstorming and recording ideas such as *honesty* or *leadership*.



12. Demonstrate brainstorming a fictional candidate who possesses those characteristics. Encourage students to create their own candidate or use a character from their favorite book or TV show. For example, tell students the candidate you came up with is named “Patriotic Patty” and model writing her name in the space provided. Remind students to complete the rest of the handout, including the question about why they think it’s important for a presidential candidate to possess the qualities they brainstormed.
13. Show students the campaign poster section of the handout. Remind them that as they create their own poster, they should use at least one of their brainstormed characteristics to visually convince people to vote for their candidate. For example, to show kindness, they might draw their candidate helping someone in need.

## Independent Practice

14. Allow students time to access the **PebbleGo** Social Studies online database and complete the President of the United States Research handout. Circulate the room and offer assistance as needed.
15. Have students complete the My Presidential Candidate handout and illustrate their campaign poster.

## Closure

16. Ask students to introduce their fictional presidential candidate and share their campaign poster with classmates. You can elect to do this together as an entire class or divide students into small groups.
17. Encourage discussion on the qualities students think a presidential candidate should possess. Ask questions such as:
  - › How did you decide what qualities to give your fictional presidential candidate?
  - › Did each of you come up with the same qualities a good candidate should have?

## Extend/Enrich

Have students create a Venn diagram comparing their own presidential candidate requirements to those of a real U.S. presidential candidate. Then ask students to write a few sentences comparing and contrasting the similarities and differences.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## President of the United States Research Handout

Use the **PebbleGo** online database and the handout below to learn about the president of the United States.

What age does a U.S. presidential candidate need to be?

\_\_\_\_\_

U.S. presidential candidates must also meet what other requirements?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Describe at least three things the president of the United States does during his or her day.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What do you think is the president's most important job? Why?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Bibliography:

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



## My Presidential Candidate

It's your turn to create a presidential candidate! You will decide what requirements the candidate must meet. You will also decide what good qualities the character should have. Then you will draw a campaign poster showing why people should vote for your candidate.

Write three requirements you think someone needs to meet before running in a presidential election.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

List three qualities you think a good presidential candidate should have.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

What is the name of your fictional character who has all of these characteristics?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think it is important for a presidential candidate to have these qualities?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



Use the space below to create a campaign poster for your fictional presidential candidate. A campaign sign should tell people why a voter should choose your candidate for the job. Remember to use some of your ideas above to help you create the poster.