

In what ways can people participate in our government?		
	Day 1	60 minutes
Learning Objective	Students will be able to identify ways in which people can participate in government and why it is important for them to do so.	
Introduction	Pose the following question to students: “Why do all people matter in our government?” You can clarify the questions by adding the questions: “Why should we participate? Why should we be informed?”	25 minutes
	Students write their response on a post it, binder, paper, warm-up sheet, etc., then pair share with a peer.	
	Conduct a whole-class debrief answering the essential question. Keep in mind that students may share that they feel <i>not all</i> people matter. If that is brought up feel free to talk about why they feel that way and how we can change that.	
	Tell students we will be looking at ways people can participate in our democracy and why that is a crucial function of a democratic society. We will also be creating a public service announcement encouraging others to participate.	
	Put students into small groups and provide them each with a piece of chart paper and a different colored marker for each group member.	
	Instruct students to brainstorm ways people participate in government. Responses could include: voting, protests, petitions, completing the census, being informed of current events, marching, writing letters to elected officials and/or the media. If students are missing key answer, direct them to add to their list.	
	Ask students to think about all the ways young people can participate and draw stars next to the list items on their chart that <i>they</i> can participate in. For example, they may star “being informed of current events”, but not “voting.”	
	Have each group share their examples. Groups can add to their own lists, those shared by others that they hadn’t included.	
	Ask students “What trends do we notice on the posters?”	
	Reiterate the essential question “Why do all people matter in our government” and point out how all people do matter and do have a voice.	
Evaluation of Sources	Project the following question: “Why is voting a crucial part of our democracy?”	30 minutes
	Ask students to share their responses and write them on the board. Tell students we want to understand who voted and see why it’s so important.	

	Complete “Voting Trends in America” activity (Documents A and B). Do not complete Part 3 on Page 8 of Student version	
	Have students share answers and discuss what happens when people don’t participate.	
Closing	Exit ticket: Why is voting important? What happens when you don’t vote?	5 minutes
	Students should write answers on a piece of paper and turn in on their way out the door using their resources from the day.	