



## THE US ELECTION

The 57th United States presidential election takes place on 6th November 2012. – What do you know about the forthcoming election and past presidents? Read on for some background information and classroom activities which we hope will get your vote.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On 6th November 2012, the people of the USA will vote for the next president. There are three candidates, but most people have only heard of two of them: the current president, Barack Obama who is a Democrat; and his main rival, Mitt Romney, a Republican. The third candidate is Gary Johnson, a Libertarian.

The election takes place every four years and this will be the 57<sup>th</sup> quadrennial election. The president may serve only two terms, so if Obama wins, this will be his second, and final, term as president.

To date, there have been 44 presidents, four of whom were assassinated while in office.

The last ten US Presidents:

1 John Fitzgerald Kennedy	1961-1963
2 Lyndon Baines Johnson	1963-1969
3 Richard Milhous Nixon	1969-1974
4 Gerald Rudolph Ford	1974-1977
5 James Earl Carter, Jr.	1977-1981
6 Ronald Wilson Reagan	1981-1989
7 George H W Bush	1989-1993
8 William Jefferson Clinton	1993-2001
9 George Walker Bush	2001-2009
10 Barack Hussein Obama	2009-

If you would like to know more about the American election, click here:

<http://www.history.com/topics/presidential-elections>

And if you would like to find out more about the candidates, then click here:

[www.mittromney.com](http://www.mittromney.com) (Mitt Romney)

[www.barackobama.com](http://www.barackobama.com) (Barack Obama)

[www.garyjohnson2012.com](http://www.garyjohnson2012.com) (Gary Johnson)

## Did you know? \_\_\_\_\_ **Network Now**

And if you would like to incorporate *The US election* in your lesson, we have

- provided you with a suggestion for introducing the topic in class.
- suggested two activities which you can do in your lesson from A1 upwards.

You'll find all this in the following **Teacher's notes** and on the **Worksheet**.

### TEACHER'S NOTES

#### INTRODUCE THE TOPIC

Write on the board: **Tuesday 6th November 2012**

Ask students what they are going to do on this date. Elicit a few responses, then ask what they think Americans are going to do on this date. (They are going to have an election.) You might need to help with vocabulary, e.g. *vote, elect, election*.

Ask your students who is running for the presidency. They will certainly know Barack Obama, and probably Mitt Romney, but you may need to help them with Gary Johnson (see 'Background information' above).

#### ACTIVITY 1 (15+ mins, depending on number of students)

Tell students that on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2012, Obama asked people to contact him on a popular Internet site. He wrote: 'Hi, I'm Barack Obama, President of the United States. Ask me anything. I'll be taking your questions for half an hour starting at about 4:30 ET\*.' (\*Eastern Time)

Ask students to suggest some of the subjects he was asked about.

(Key: He answered questions about work / life balance, unemployment, the recipe for White House beer, money in politics, difficult decisions, 7th November (the day after the election), small businesses, his favourite basketball player, the space programme and Internet freedom.)

Ask your students what question *they* would like to ask Barack Obama. Encourage them to write a question on a slip of paper – you may well have to help with some vocabulary. When everyone has written a question, collect the slip of paper from each student and give it to a different student. Ask each student to read out the question on his / her slip of paper. Encourage as much discussion as possible.

# Did you know? \_\_\_\_\_ Network Now

## ACTIVITY 2 (10+ mins)

Ask students to look at the **Worksheet** and complete the matching exercise *Which president?*. Check the answers together in class. Depending on the age of your students, they may have some memories of these presidents. (Remember when President Kennedy died – we were in the classroom ...) Encourage these reminiscences – and don't worry if they aren't historically accurate.

(Key: 1g), 2f), 3j), 4d), 5a), 6b), 7i), 8h), 9e), 10c))

## FURTHER ACTIVITY (10+ mins)

Ask your students to put the presidents in order – from the current one (Barack Obama) to the one who served the longest time ago.

(Key: See 'Background information' above.)

## WORKSHEET

### WHICH PRESIDENT?

Read the sentences below and choose the correct president.  
Write the right letter on the line.

- a) Barack Obama
- b) Bill Clinton
- c) George H W Bush
- d) George W Bush
- e) Gerald Ford
- f) Jimmy Carter
- g) John F Kennedy
- h) Lyndon B Johnson
- i) Richard Nixon
- j) Ronald Reagan

- \_\_\_ 1 He was shot in Dallas in 1963.
- \_\_\_ 2 He was married to Rosalyn and his father was a peanut farmer.
- \_\_\_ 3 He used to be a Hollywood actor.
- \_\_\_ 4 His father was the US President eight years earlier.
- \_\_\_ 5 He was the first black president of the USA.
- \_\_\_ 6 Today, he is married to the US Secretary of State.
- \_\_\_ 7 People called him 'Tricky Dicky' and he was involved in the Watergate scandal.
- \_\_\_ 8 His middle name was 'Baines'.
- \_\_\_ 9 He was president for only 895 days (about 2 years 5 months).
- \_\_\_ 10 His son was also President of the USA.