

Unit Five: Politics, Voting, and Government

I.

Text 1:

Election Day is when citizens vote for their leaders. In many countries, adults 18 and older can vote in national or local elections. To vote, people usually register in advance, show an ID, and then mark their ballot in secret. Voting is a key part of democracy. Democracy means that the people choose their leaders and can change them peacefully. If very few people vote, some leaders may stay in power even though they do not represent the majority. That is why many governments and activists encourage people to vote every election. In recent years, there have been debates about voting rights. Some groups say it should be easier to vote, with online voting, automatic registration, or voting on a holiday. Other groups worry about fraud and want stricter rules. Finding the right balance between security and access is a central political challenge.

Answer in full sentences.

1. What happens on Election Day according to the text?
2. Who is usually allowed to vote in most countries?
3. Name two steps a person must take before voting.
4. What is the main idea of the second paragraph?
5. Why is it a problem if very few people vote?
6. What is the meaning of the word *democracy* in this context?
7. Give two examples of ideas that people support to make voting easier.
8. What concern do some people have about voting rules?
9. In your own words, explain the “political challenge” mentioned at the end.
10. Would you prefer voting in person or online? Give one reason connected to the text.

Text 2:

“The right to vote is precious. Fifty years ago, the Voting Rights Act broke down laws that stopped African Americans from registering and voting. Thousands of ordinary people, including maids and sharecroppers, risked their safety so future generations could vote. Today, there are still problems. Some laws and practices make it harder for certain groups to vote. This is why we must protect voting rights and encourage every citizen to ‘seize the power’ of the ballot.”

Answer in full sentences.

1. What did the Voting Rights Act do according to the text?
2. Who are two types of people mentioned as fighting for voting rights?
3. What does Obama mean when he says the right to vote is “precious”?
4. What is one way some people make it harder for others to vote today?
5. What does Obama want citizens to do with the “power” of the ballot?
6. Do you think all citizens should have the same access to voting? Use one idea from Obama’s speech in your answer.

II.**Match each word on the left with the best definition on the right**

Word / Phrase	Definition
A. democracy	1. A system where people choose their leaders by voting. Students of history
B. election	2. The process of choosing leaders by voting.
C. citizen	3. A person who belongs to a country and has rights and duties.
D. ballot	4. The paper or electronic form used to vote.
E. government	5. The group of people who rule a country.
F. legislation	6. Laws made by a parliament or congress.
G. voting rights	7. The legal right of people to vote in elections.
H. campaign	8. Activities candidates do to persuade voters.

Underline the past-tense verbs in the following sentences. Then write the base verb beside each.

- Many people fought for the right to vote.
- The Voting Rights Act broke down unfair laws.
- Activists marched for equality.
- They protected their communities.
- The government encouraged more people to vote.

Read the verbs below aloud and write the sound of the final “-ed” as /ɪd/, /t/, or /d/.

helped →

worked →

needed →

watched →

played →

liked →

protected →

voted →

used →

missed →

Compare/contrast paragraph

A compare and contrast paragraph highlights the similarities and differences between two subjects. The structure of such a paragraph is often based on one of two primary organizational approaches, with obvious transition sentences to direct the reader. The paragraph is arranged using one of the following techniques, depending if you wish to group by subject or by particular criteria.

- **Block Method:** You present all the relevant information for the first subject, followed by all the relevant information for the second subject. This is effective when you want to provide a complete, holistic picture of each subject before showing how they relate.
- **Point-by-Point Method:** You shift between subjects within the same paragraph, comparing and contrasting them based on specific points or traits. This method is often preferred for shorter paragraphs as it allows for a more direct, side-by-side comparison of individual features.

.... A strong compare and contrast paragraph should include these core elements:

- Topic sentence: Clearly introduces the two subjects and establishes the focus of the comparison (whether you are focusing on similarities, differences, or both).
- Supporting details: Provide specific examples, facts, or observations for each subject. Using signal words like "similarly," "in contrast," "however," and "on the other hand" is essential to help the reader track the shifts between subjects.
- Concluding sentence: Summarizes the main points and offers a final thought or insight regarding the relationship between the two subjects.

Example Paragraph:

The following example uses the point-by-point method to compare two common fruits:

"While both apples and oranges are popular fruits that provide essential vitamins and nutrients to the diet, they offer distinct sensory experiences. Apples generally possess a firm, crisp texture and a flavor profile that ranges from sweet to tart. In contrast, oranges are significantly juicier and have a tangy, citrus-forward taste that requires peeling a thick rind, unlike the thin, edible skin of an apple. Ultimately, although both satisfy a craving for something sweet, their unique textures and preparation methods make them suitable for very different snacking preferences."
