
Voting and Elections

A representative democracy is a type of government where the people elect representatives to make decisions for them. The Constitution describes how we elect our leaders and representatives. It also defines their responsibilities.

At the national level, citizens elect the President of the United States. They also elect representatives to serve in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. State and local governments are modeled after the federal government.

Citizens who want to serve in government go through a campaign process. We call people running for office candidates. Each candidate shares what they believe about different issues. Citizens review each candidate carefully. They choose the one who best represents their viewpoints or who they think will do a good job. On election day, citizens vote. The candidate with the most votes wins!

In order for a representative government to work, citizens need to take an active role in making changes in local and national governments. Part of taking an active role means voting for elected officials and on important issues. Voting gives you a voice in government. To vote, citizens must be 18 years old or older. They also need to register, or sign up, to vote. Citizens vote for community, state, and national leaders.

