

TOWNSEND HARRIS HIGH SCHOOL
in collaboration with
THE TAFT INSTITUTE FOR GOVERNMENT
&
THE OFFICE OF COLLEGE PREPARATORY PROGRAMS,
QUEENS COLLEGE
presents

THE TOWNSEND HARRIS HIGH SCHOOL
ELECTION SIMULATION GAME

TEACHER'S
MANUAL

THE OFFICIAL RULES OF PLAY
for
CAMPAIGN 2013
NEW YORK CITY'S
ELECTIONS FOR MAYOR

WHOLE SCHOOL VERSION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our project began as the outcome of a series of conversations in 1996 on what students know about the election process, political campaigns and the responsibilities of the media in an election. The Game was created out of the collaborative effort of Dr. Michael Krasner, Queens College Department of Political Science and Co-Director of the Taft Institute for Government; Dr. Marvin Leiner, Queens College Preparatory Programs; Lynne Greenfield, Townsend Harris High School Assistant Principal Supervision - Humanities Department and Nancy Leib, Myron Moskowitz and Anthony Scarnati, Townsend Harris High School Humanities Department. More recently, Susan Getting, Townsend Harris's Assistant Principal for the Humanities and Social Studies and her successor, Rafal Olechowski, have provided stellar leadership for the simulation.

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THE ELECTION SIMULATION GAME

AN INTRODUCTION

WHAT PLAYERS LEARN

Since 1996, the election simulation game has been giving students the chance to 'play politics.' Its value as a teaching tool has been clearly demonstrated for high school students and it has also been successfully adapted for use with middle school students, and even first and second graders. While the version of the simulation game presented here uses sophisticated technologies, including computer graphics and video editing equipment, you can play effectively with the most basic technology or none at all. The freedom to compete within a rigorous structure excites students and leaves them wanting to play more. What students learn about politics from playing the simulation game is considerable. What they learn about themselves is staggering.

Players of the simulation game get first-hand introductions to the world of American electoral politics. They develop deeper understanding of the components of an election, the influence and importance of money and the roles of special interest groups and national political parties. Their skills in research, writing, and public speaking are honed as they begin to master the techniques of persuasion. Students learn the value of money and the importance of rational budgeting. Players learn the importance of teamwork and leadership. Confronted with realistic, ethical dilemmas, they learn to plot effective strategies. In short, players learn life lessons along with academic ones.

THE WHOLE SCHOOL BENEFITS

The benefits of playing the simulation game accrue on a number of different levels. In the Townsend Harris High School Model, the simulation game is played with seniors in the campaign, interest group, and media roles. The remainder of the student body becomes the electorate. The younger students have a unique opportunity to experience what it means to be a voter.

Directly exposed to campaigns and to the media's coverage of them, they learn, first-hand, what it takes to be an educated voter. They learn to discriminate as consumers of media and political messages. They learn lessons of great significance usually not acquired from traditional classroom approaches.

As high school teachers and administrators, we are fully, some would say painfully, aware of the growing disaffection of high school seniors. The simulation game makes learning exciting and fun. The players are often the first to arrive to class and the last to leave. Sometimes they have to be practically "kicked out" of the classroom at the end of the period. Imagine that! Seniors who can't get enough of civics class! It's amazing and absolutely true. Playing the simulation game during the fall term sets a spirited tone for the rest of the year and provides students with some of their most cherished high school memories.

The spirit engendered throughout the duration of the simulation game permeates the entire school community. The lively campaigns, colorful posters, boisterous rallies, interesting television and radio programs all help to create a wonderful sense of spirit. As teachers, we are amazed that learning can be so enjoyable and that students can be so enthusiastic about a school project.

So much for the seniors. What about the poor freshmen who "fresh" from the security of middle school are entering the frightening world of high school? Freshmen traditionally feel lost or ignored or become the targets of pranks by 'wise-guy' seniors. The simulation game alters the traditional freshman/senior relationship by making the freshman the largest and most valuable voting body in the school. Seniors are obligated to 'court' freshman to win their very desirable votes.

SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTIONS

There are a number of direct and indirect connections as well as parallels to be made between the simulation game and the broader social studies curriculum. It should be kept in mind that the school's entire student body will, at a minimum, observe an election campaign up close. This experience can and should be used in a number of different ways.

All underclassmen are given entree into the simulation game more directly as holders of SIMBUCK accounts; most receive 50 SIMBUCKS, but six (two from

each class chosen at random) receive 1000 SIMBUCKS and act the parts of 'fatcats'. These accounts are akin to money that can be donated to special interest groups or political parties. More attention, of course, is paid to those who are 'fatcats' and the reactions of the 'have nots' demonstrates an important and obvious lesson: politicians pay greater attention to individuals and special interest groups who donate to their campaigns. The powerful effect of money in politics is witnessed first-hand.

High school juniors typically study United States History and Government and the electoral system. Providing students with a clear understanding of American politics, the primary system and the popular vote versus the Electoral College is challenging. First amendment issues surface frequently as the simulation game progresses. Players who feel unjustly attacked by the press and/or opposition routinely make accusations of libel and slander. Time is allocated to discuss these legal concepts and ascertain their validity in specific instances. Ethical issues requiring discussion and/or action in both politics and the media arise during the course of the simulation game. Students are introduced to a number of real-world special interest groups and become familiar with the missions and activities of these groups. Lessons related to the role of special interest groups and lobbies can be incorporated easily into the regular curriculum. Students are also introduced to the many and diverse career possibilities of the media and political arena. Finally, opportunities exist for students studying research methods in social science to conduct opinion polls, focus groups and exit polls as part of the simulation game.

BEYOND SOCIAL STUDIES: OTHER CONNECTIONS

The school's Student Leadership class can be directly involved in the simulation game in the role of Election Commission. This provides student leaders with real opportunities to lead. They are called upon to make decisions, implement programs and activities, administer elections, conduct voter registration drives and adjudicate disputes. The hands-on experiences are invaluable and there is a real carry-over from the simulation game to the real world of student government.

Media, Print and Broadcast Journalism classes also play direct roles in the simulation game. Students with technical expertise in broadcasting are enlisted in much the same way that campaigns hire advertising agencies to produce commercials for television and radio. Reporters for the school's newspaper learn

how to cover political news as they cover their classmates' participation in these school-wide events. Math and statistics classes are used to create a variety of statistical charts and graphs to track the action. Innovative teachers, in any number of subject areas, can use the activities of the simulation game to bring their subjects to life.

BEYOND THE SCHOOL: CONNECTIONS TO THE COMMUNITY

The simulation game players, in every sense, become experts in the issues and candidates shaping the real elections. This expertise is a valuable resource to be tapped. Visits to senior centers, middle schools, and PTA meetings are excellent outlets for the student players. The students' knowledge of and enthusiasm for politics, in general, and the current election, in particular, is shared with outside groups. Connections between students and senior citizens, older and younger students and parents are wonderful outcomes of participation in the simulation game. Community service in the form of participation in an active political campaign gives students the opportunity to experience the real world of electioneering while campaigning in their own school election.

Depending upon the election being simulated, another connection that can be made links students from different schools all over the United States in conversations about politics. Internet and teleconferencing technology make such connections easy. Imagine students engaged in Internet chats with students playing their same roles in school all over the country.

Let the **GAME** Begin!

What follows is intended as a **TEACHER'S MANUAL** to the simulation game. Its purpose is to help explain how the simulation game is played as well as to describe the nearly 300 possible roles and responsibilities, the daily activities, special events and assessment tools that are part of the program. Please keep in mind that we are presenting the most elaborate version of the game, based on a whole school, resource rich environment.

You can play the simulation game in a great variety of settings. You can play in one classroom, with two campaigns, three interest groups and one newspaper and it will work just fine. Whatever the choice you make, use this manual to suit your situation.

We present a three-part approach.

1. Prepare your students (**PLAN**).
2. Keep them focused on their tasks (**MONITOR**).
3. Hold them accountable (**ASSESS**)

and then stand back and **BE AMAZED!**

The Townsend Harris High School ELECTION SIMULATION GAME

OFFICIAL RULES OF PLAY

for

CAMPAIGN 2013:

THE NEW YORK CITY ELECTIONS FOR MAYOR

The purpose of The Election Simulation Game is to create a total political campaign experience that is enjoyable and parallels the real world of politics. Our experience in this area has shown that through widespread participation in The GAME, all players, including those participating as the electorate experience, first hand, American electoral politics.

...and the fundamental rule of the election simulation game is KEEP IT REAL! The simulation game works as a teaching tool ONLY if all players play their roles seriously and participating teachers insist that all players mirror, as closely as possible, actual campaign roles. In fact, we tell our students that it's like other games—it only works, and it's only fun if you take it seriously.

The simulation game is most effective when played at the same time as an actual election campaign. The Campaign 2013 version of the game could be played from September to November 2013 - during the NEW YORK CITY campaign.

The Ethos of the Simulation Game and the Role of Teachers

As noted earlier, the simulation game works by creating a structure of rules, assignments, responsibilities, and accountability within which the players exercise their creative (and competitive) abilities. Students must be given the opportunity to succeed or fail on their own.

Teachers should provide feedback, assessing the quality, timeliness, and effectiveness of the students' efforts, whether it is a campaign rally, a debate performance, an interest group's advertisements, or the media's stories. Teachers may also point out the failure of a campaign, an interest group, or a media institution to respond adequately to a certain issue or event.

Teachers should avoid advocating a particular strategy or direction for a campaign, an interest group, or media outlet. The students must play the roles; if the teacher plays the role, then the point of the simulation—for the students to have the experience of politics first hand—is lost.

It would be entirely appropriate for a teacher to say that a campaign was losing steam; it would be entirely inappropriate for a teacher to say that the campaign should run a negative commercial about the opposition's stand on homelessness. It would be entirely appropriate for a teacher to say that an interest group wasn't doing enough; it would be out of bounds to say specifically what they should be doing. A teacher should tell a media group if their reporting has missed an important issue, but should not tell them what language to use or which people to interview.

SPECIAL NOTE: THE TWO PHASES OF 2013

Because the primary elections will take place on September 10th and the likely runoff election on October 1st, we have organized the all-school simulation in two phases. In the first phase, which includes the kickoff rally, all the mayoral candidates for both parties (probably four) will be included and will compete. When the real world selection has taken place, which will likely be after the runoff election, the simulation will follow those results. The losing candidates will drop out, and they and their staff will be reassigned to the remaining three campaigns, which will compete in the second phase that ends with the simulation election on November 4th. Because campaign treasuries for both phases will depend in part on the candidates; those figures will be posted on the Taft Institute web site (taftinstitute.org) as soon as they are chosen.

RULE 1: VOTING

VOTING STRENGTH

RATIONALE: Each of the five boroughs of New York City has a different voting strength. In the simulation we seek to closely mirror the real election by giving a different "weight" to the votes of each grade. To encourage greater interest in the game and enthusiastic participation in the lower grades, freshmen and sophomores receive more voting power than do upper grade students. This pattern also helps to integrate the freshmen because, as noted earlier, the seniors have to court them for their votes.

Voting strength is allocated as follows:

- Freshman votes are equal to **1.5** votes.
- Sophomore votes are equal to **1.0** votes.
- Junior votes are equal to **.75** votes.
- Senior votes are equal to **.50** votes

THUS, SENIORS ARE ENCOURAGED TO "COURT THE VOTES" OF THE MORE POWERFUL NINTH AND TENTH GRADES.

ELECTION DAY

RATIONALE: to simulate the role of the voter and to assess the impact of the simulation on the voting public, the actual voting will not take place during class time. Students need to make an effort to vote by going on their own time to a specific polling place.

ELECTION DAY: The school-wide election will be held on Monday, November 4, 2013. The actual voting will not take place during class time. The *polls* will be open in the school lobby from 7:00 AM - 8:00 AM and during all lunch periods. The *polls* will not be open after dismissal.

- The polls are located in an area of the school building that is accessible to students, but not a place where they usually congregate. The school lobby,

for example, is usually an ideal spot while the school cafeteria is inappropriate. Again, it is essential that students be required to make an effort to vote.

- While the polls are open no person shall do any electioneering within the polling place, or within a one hundred foot radius measured from the entrances designated by the inspectors of election, to such polling place or within such distance in any place in a public manner; and no political banner, button, poster or placard shall be allowed in or upon the polling place or within such one hundred foot radius.

It is incumbent upon the Senior Class to get out the vote

VOTER REGISTRATION

RATIONALE: As in the real world, in order to vote on Election Day, voters must be registered to vote. The Election Commission has the task of devising and implementing a method for registering all students who wish to vote. The Election Commission must also develop a means for insuring that only registered voters cast ballots on Election Day.

RULE 2: CAMPAIGN FINANCE

SIMBUCKS

RATIONALE: Issues related to campaign finance, including raising, spending, and monitoring of funds, are not usually included in simulations. The simulation game emphasizes the raising and spending of money as key strategic activities and decisions. *SIMBUCKS are The Game's currency.*

- Each group in the game, except for media outlets and the Election Commission, begins with a treasury that roughly reflects the relative amount of money that each controls in the real world.

- Underclassmen also receive SIMBUCKS accounts; most receive 50 SIMBUCKS, but six (two from each class chosen at random) receive 1000 SIMBUCKS and act the parts of "fatcats." These underclassmen will be selected and notified of their accounts by the Election Commission. Underclassmen may donate their SIMBUCKS to political parties or special interest groups. Underclassmen may also use SIMBUCKS to form Political Action Committees (PACs). PAC's may run campaigns advancing their political agenda in the same manner as special interest groups, political parties and candidates. PACs must follow the same rules as the interest groups and candidates and are regulated by the Election Commission.

INTEREST GROUP TREASURIES: PHASES ONE AND TWO

Each group must decide which candidate to back and how to back him or her, and each group must decide how much to spend in the primary and how much to spend in the general election campaign.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| • Real Estate Developers Association | 1,800 SIMBUCKS |
| • Bankers/Insurance Alliance | 2,200 SIMBUCKS |
| • Homeowners Association | 450 SIMBUCKS* |
| • Alliance for Quality Education | 300 SIMBUCKS* |
| • NYC Tenants Association | 300 SIMBUCKS* |
| • United Taxpayers Association | 300 SIMBUCKS* |
| • Coalition for the Homeless | 300 SIMBUCKS* |
| • United Federation of Teachers | 1,500 SIMBUCKS |
| • Local 1199 S.E.I.U. | 1,200 SIMBUCKS |
| • NYC is not for Sale 2013 | 300 SIMBUCKS* |

* In addition to SIMBUCKS this group will receive an allowance to broadcast a single 30 second PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT on either television or radio.

RULE 3: CAMPAIGN COSTS

RATIONALE: Each campaign, committee and interest group will have to carefully plan how to best use its resources to reach the maximum number of voters and/or exercise the most impact on the election.

ADVERTISING

TELEVISION:

- 1 minute citywide 500 SIMBUCKS
- 1 minute Freshmen only 250 SIMBUCKS
- 1 minute Sophomore only 200 SIMBUCKS
- 1 minute Junior only 125 SIMBUCKS

All other uses are billed proportionately.

RADIO:

- 1 minute citywide 150 SIMBUCKS
- 1 minute Freshmen only 75 SIMBUCKS
- 1 minute Sophomore only 60 SIMBUCKS
- 1 minute Junior only 25 SIMBUCKS

All other uses are billed proportionately.

PRINT: 1 full page 200 SIMBUCKS

POSTERS: 1 sheet oak tag 50 SIMBUCKS per week

All other sizes are billed proportionately.

PERSONAL APPEARANCES: Candidates and interest group representatives are encouraged to speak directly to voters in classrooms. These appearances are billed as either **speeches** or **town meetings**. A Speech is not followed by a Q and A Session. A Town Meeting is a speech followed by a Q and A session.

Speeches and town meetings will be charged in 5-minute intervals.

	COSTS PER 5-MINUTES	
CLASS	SPEECH	TOWN MEETING
• Freshmen	50 SIMBUCKS	75 SIMBUCKS
• Sophomore	40 SIMBUCKS	60 SIMBUCKS
• Junior	20 SIMBUCKS	30 SIMBUCKS

All other campaign techniques are free of charge.

RULE 4: MEDIA

RATIONALE: Media outlets, whether broadcast or print, must sell airtime or ad-space in order to generate the money necessary to broadcast or to publish. If certain minimum costs are not covered, the media outlet will have to close. Each media outlet, therefore, may also be required to sell airtime or ad-space in order to be able to pay its broadcast/publishing fees. The Game's media outlets are governed by the following schedule of costs:

	LENGTH	COST
• Television	5 minutes	750 SIMBUCKS
• Radio	5 minutes	225 SIMBUCKS
• Print	6 pages	400 SIMBUCKS

*Public service announcements count as paid advertising. The media class teacher may relax this rule for the first two broadcasts.

RULE 5: RECORD KEEPING

All groups that spend and/or receive SIMBUCKS are required to keep accurate financial records. The Election Commission will randomly audit records. Failure to comply with the rules will result in fines and/or injunctions that the Election Commission deems appropriate.

RULE 6: FINES

The Election Commission can fine any group if it is responsible for littering, vandalism, excessive noise or disruption of the academic environment.

RULE 7: RUNNING THE CAMPAIGN

Each candidate, national party committee and, special interest group is required to actively engage the electorate.

Each must not only get its message out, but must creatively use all the techniques of a campaign to energize the electorate.

Campaigns, whether candidate or interest group, must use available resources to utilize campaign techniques such as:

- press conferences
- poster campaigns
- TV advertisements
- radio advertisements
- print ad campaigns
- 'stump' speeches
- town meetings
- personal appearances
- rallies
- volunteers
- 'local' campaign offices
- web site development
- slogans

Each campaign must define its message and convince the electorate to buy it!!!

Campaigns are not limited to this list. The only limits (in addition to good taste and political reality) are those of imagination and creativity.

Campaigns must also respond to real world events such as reports of economic conditions, scandals, the dropping out of candidates, etc.

GETTING STARTED

You and your students are about to be immersed in the world of electoral politics. Begin by discussing what politics means to them.

DAY 1

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY #1: Politics from the Students' Perspective.

AIM: What is politics?

MOTIVATION: Post the word *POLITICS* on the board.

- Brainstorm a list of words and images in response to the word *politics*.
- Write the students' responses on the board.

DEVELOPMENT: Analyze the list as you lead the class through a discussion of the following:

- Why or why not is this list an accurate description of American politics?
- What do you see as a strength of the American political system? Explain.
- What do you see as a weakness in the system? Explain.
- What do you feel needs to be done to improve American politics?

APPLICATION: In a well-developed paragraph, respond to following: If you were given the opportunity to run for political office, would you "Play the political game?" or "Take the political high road"?

DAYS 2-4

Your students are going to be participating in an election campaign. They will be playing roles in a campaign organization, media outlet or special interest group. In preparation, students need to develop some insight into how these groups and their operatives work in a real world setting. An effective method of accomplishing this task is to provide students with an opportunity to view the 90-minute political documentary *The War Room* - an insider look at the 1992 Clinton Campaign. The film can help your students develop a sense of what will be expected of them over the next several weeks.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY #2: Electoral Politics

AIM: To view the film *The War Room*

PROCEDURE: As students view the film, they take notes to help them answer the following:

- How might the media affect the ultimate success or failure of a political campaign?
- Which is more important to winning an election: campaign strategy or the candidate's ideas?
- How can special interests affect the ultimate success or failure of a political campaign?
- Which campaign strategy is more effective: demonstrating why voters *should* vote for your candidate or demonstrating why voters *should NOT* vote for the other candidate(s)?
- Do campaigns discuss the issues most important to the American people and the world? Why or why not?
- Why do certain issues seem to get left out? Whose interests are served by this pattern? Whose interests are left out?

APPLICATION: Discuss student answers.

DAYS 5-6

The students are now ready to be introduced to the Election Simulation Game. They will be receiving a great deal of information and will require class time to start their reading and discussion of the material. The remainder of the readings should be assigned for homework over the next few days.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY #3: Playing the Election Simulation Game

AIM: How will we simulate the 2013 New York City elections?

PROCEDURE:

- Assign a specific role to each student.
- Distribute the following materials:
 1. ELECTION SIMULATION ROLES:
 2. THE RULES OF THE GAME, and refer students to the
 3. CAMPAIGN 2013 SOURCEBOOK ON THE TAFTINSTITUTE.ORG WEB SITE.
- Allow students some time to read the ROLES and RULES.
- Discuss the readings with the class.
- Peruse the Campaign Source Book with the class.
- Assign specific readings about Party Platforms for homework.
- Reorganize the class into the appropriate groups.
- Discuss with each group its particular responsibilities.
- Start each group on its preparations for the Game's first major event: THE KICKOFF RALLY.

The Townsend Harris High School ELECTION SIMULATION ROLES

CAMPAIGN ORGANIZATIONS—THREE CLASSES

- Candidate and Spouse
- Campaign Manager
 - Campaign Staff:
 - 1 Director of Communications
 - 1 Press Secretary
 - 1 Appointments Secretary
 - 1 Policy Director
 - Policy analysts/speechwriters specialized by subjects such as
Fiscal and economic policy, social policy, or education
 - 1 Media coordinator
 - 1 or more staffers to develop and produce tv, radio and
newspaper ads
 - 1 Finance Manager
 - 1 Accountant
 - 1 Pollster
 - 1 staffer
 - 1 Field Operations Director
 - 1 staffer

TOTAL ROLES: 16 more or less (ROLES CAN BE COMBINED AS REQUIRED)

Campaign roles and activities are described in detail in the section on teaching a campaign class, pages 39-48,

MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS—THREE CLASSES

PRINT: The New York Times or the Daily News

TELEVISION: *Face the Voters*
The Weekly Review

RADIO: *On the Line With...*

EACH MEDIA GROUP WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

PRINT

- Special Feature Writers
- Reporters
- Editor-in-Chief
- Layout Editor
- Finance and Sales Manager and Staff

BROADCAST

- Writer/Technicians
- Host
- Field Reporters (The Weekly Review only)
- Producer /Director
- Finance and Sales Manager and Staff
- Media roles and activities are described in detail in the section on teaching a campaign class, pages 56-68,

INTEREST GROUPS—TWO CLASSES

CLASS #1:

- NYC Tenants Association
- United Federation of Teachers
- NYC is Not for Sale 2013
- Coalition for the Homeless
- 1199 S.E.I.U

CLASS #2:

- Real Estate Developers Association
- Homeowners Association
- United Taxpayers Association
- Bankers/Insurers Alliance
- Alliance for Quality Education (Public Schools)

Note: There are six liberal groups and four conservative groups to reflect the general NYC pattern of larger numbers in liberal groups, but more money in conservative groups.

EACH SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP WILL INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING ROLES:

- Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Fundraiser
- Field Director (for mass membership groups)
- Policy Analyst
- Media consultant
- Interest group roles and activities are described in detail in the section on teaching a campaign class, pages 49-55,

THE ELECTION COMMISSION—ONE CLASS

- The ELECTION COMMISSION (EC) is responsible for auditing the finances of all campaigns and interest groups.
- The EC adjudicates, as it sees fit, all alleged violations.
- The EC is called on to respond as an independent, non-partisan group to respond to allegations.
- The EC is responsible for running the election in a manner as nearly akin as possible to real election procedures.
- The EC at Townsend Harris High School is comprised of the Student Leadership class.

Election Commission roles and activities are described in detail in the section on teaching a campaign class, pages 69-70,

DAYS 7-9

These are the last days, for quite a while, of traditional classes. The objective for these days is to familiarize the students with the positions of each candidate. Every student must be well versed in the platforms of each of the major and minor parties. Day 9 should include a quiz/test on the RULES OF THE GAME and selected readings from the SOURCE BOOK.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY #4: Party Platforms

AIM: Where do the candidates *stand* on the issues?

<u>CANDIDATES:</u>	Republican	Democrat	Green
<u>ISSUES</u>			
TAXES/ THE ECONOMY/ INEQUALITY			
ENVIRONMENT/ STORM PROTECTION			
EDUCATION			
HOMELESSNESS/ HOUSING			
STOP AND FRISK/ PUBLIC SAFETY			

PROCEDURE:

- Create 5 ISSUE GROUPS
- Assign each ISSUE GROUP one of the issues from the chart.
- Each ISSUE GROUP is to use the SOURCE BOOK and other materials such as web sites to complete one row of the chart and become 'an expert' on that particular issue.
- The ISSUE GROUPS reorganize into CANDIDATE GROUPS.
- Each CANDIDATE GROUP WILL contain at least 5 members - one member from each ISSUE GROUP.
- Each member of the CANDIDATE GROUP teaches the other members of the group about the candidate's position on their particular issue.

APPLICATION:

Each student writes an essay entitled: "The Candidate with a Platform on which I Can Stand".

DAY 10

The students are ready to play the *Game*. The classroom is being transformed into a *war room* if it is a campaign or interest class or into a *newsroom* if it is a media class. The students are primed to play politics.

AIM: Let's get organized!

PROCEDURE:

- Review with each group its particular responsibilities.
- Start each group on its preparations for the *Game's* first major event: **THE KICKOFF RALLY.**

GENERAL ASSIGNMENT FOR GRADES 9-11

HOW FAIR IS THE MEDIA'S COVERAGE OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN?

Real-world media and Simulation media are both important components of the simulation process. As students become immersed in creating and consuming their mock media, they become more observant (and more critical) about the real-world coverage of the campaign.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY #6: A Media Evaluation Project (This exercise is aimed mainly at the students playing the role of voters and should be done several times during the simulation)

DEFINITIONS:

- **CLIPPING FILE** — A collection of articles cut from newspapers and magazines on a subject of interest.
- **FAIR REPORTING** - Relating the news in a balanced, unbiased manner. This is the ideal for the news reporter.
- **BIAS** - Partiality; prejudice in favor of one point of view. A news story can reflect bias through editorializing, slanting or both.
- **EDITORIALIZING** - A reporter's expression of his/her own opinion in a news story. Reporters are supposed to avoid this practice.
- **SLANTING** - Deliberate or unintentional distortion of the news in such a way as to favor a point of view, a party or a candidate. Intentional slanting aims to influence the reader's (or listener's) opinion through such subtle means as unbalanced quotations and sources, selection of flattering or unflattering photographs, and placement of story. Reporters, editors, photographers, headline writers and layout personnel can all contribute toward slanting a story toward a favored candidate.
- **BALANCE** - The fair presentation of the most important sides of a story. It is achieved by including quotations that represent all the relevant points of view.
- **ISSUE** - A controversial subject that gives rise to discussion and debate.

ISSUE COVERAGE - News stories that focus on the substance of the controversial subjects of a campaign.

HORSE RACE COVERAGE - News stories that focus on which candidate is winning and which is losing and why.

- **NEWS ARTICLE** - A printed story about a recent event or issue.
- **EDITORIAL** - An *unsigned* opinion article that expresses the view of the newspaper, magazine, or news program on a current issue. Near an election, it is common to see editorials endorsing specific candidates.
- **COLUMN** — a *signed* opinion article that expresses the individual opinion of the author, who is an employee of the newspaper. A column often appears with a photograph of the columnist. A column can appear in the same paper with an editorial taking the opposite side on an issue.
 - **OP ED ARTICLE**—a *signed* opinion article by a guest writer who is not an employee of the newspaper, usually selected because of expertise or position.

PROCEDURE:

- Choose a daily metropolitan newspaper to be your newspaper for the duration of this project. Suggested newspapers include Newsday, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Daily News, and the Post.
- Clip one **NEWS ARTICLE** from your paper (or select one from TV or radio and take notes on it).
- Clip additional **NEWS ARTICLES** on the **same story or issue** from another newspaper and, when possible, from a Townsend Harris mock media publication (or select a simulation broadcast and take notes).
- Using the **FAIRNESS AND ACCURACY CHECKLIST**, evaluate each of the articles. Compare your findings in a paragraph.

FAIRNESS AND ACCURACY CHECKLIST

NAME OF NEWSPAPER/T.V. /RADIO BROADCAST _____

HEADLINE/LEAD: _____

DATE: _____ TIME: _____

1. BALANCE: Are the candidates quoted equally? YES ___ NO ___
Are the quotations chosen fairly? YES ___ NO ___
Is each candidate's point of
view given equal weight? YES ___ NO ___
Are the other sources balanced? YES ___ NO ___
2. NEUTRALITY: Is there editorializing? YES ___ NO ___
3. VISUAL IMAGES: Does the choice of photographs favor
one candidate over the other? YES ___ NO ___
4. STORY PLACEMENT: Does it correspond to the
importance of the story? YES ___ NO ___
5. FAIRNESS TEST: Can you tell from this article or
broadcast, which candidate is favored? YES ___ NO ___
6. CITIZEN'S TEST: Does this article give you as a
prospective voter the information
you need to cast an informed vote? YES ___ NO ___

To answer this question systematically, try measuring by column inches or by seconds how much of the story is devoted to fluff, how much to horse-race coverage, and how much to issues or leadership qualities.

MAJOR EVENTS

The *Election Simulation Game* contains a series of major events designed to put the election in the forefront of school-wide activities. Each of these events must be carefully planned and each has a very specific role to play within the election. At Townsend Harris High School, the major events include the kick-off rally, candidate debate, interest group rally and Election Day. Nowhere is the need for **PLANNING. MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT** more critical than in the preparation and execution of these events.

THE KICK - OFF RALLY

PURPOSE AND FORMAT

The kick-off rally is the first public event in the election simulation. It is held 5-7 days after roles have been finalized. It fulfills a number of functions.

- It is the players' first opportunity to get into their roles in front of a senior class audience, their fellow simulators. The limited composition of the audience allows each player to 'try-out' his/her role in front of a largely supportive audience and controls the potential 'damage' of a poor performance.
- It allows the players to put a "face" to the major roles and introduces the different players' points of view.
- It allows for the discovery of technical problems in time to be addressed prior to the candidate debates.
- It begins to build the sense of camaraderie and spirit so essential to the success of the Game.

tone and process

- The kick-off rally takes on the look and feel-good atmosphere of a political convention.
- The audience becomes as much a part of the scene as those on stage.
- Candidates and interest group spokespersons have the opportunity to briefly (not longer than 2 minutes) address the audience. The audience is encouraged to be enthusiastic.
- The supporters of a speaker must energetically display their support for their candidate or spokesperson. Slogans and campaign themes are introduced at this rally.
- The spirited scene is documented by the media and becomes a central feature of the first newspapers and broadcasts.

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION: Who Does What, When and How?

Teachers:

- The teachers undertake the planning for the kick-off rally during the first week of school while planning by the players begins as soon as roles have been finalized.
- The rally date is determined as soon as possible during this week. The space for the rally is selected and secured, a guest list drawn and non-players invited.
- The rally host is determined.
- Teachers review the candidates and other spokespersons' statements prior to the rally.
- A discussion of what makes an effective presentation should be included.
- Teachers are responsible for the development of an assessment instrument to help students process the rally experience.

Rally Host:

The group that hosts the rally has many responsibilities. The selection of the host group is, therefore, critically important. Two basic criteria need to be considered in the selection of a host.

- The host must be non-partisan and have the resources, time and manpower, to carry out the many responsibilities of hosting. Media groups are best suited to host major events.
- The host is responsible for directing the event and decorating the space.
- The host group informs all the players of expectations, time limits, appropriate tone and audience participation.
- The host group provides the master of ceremonies and coordinates activities with the school's technical and stage crews.
- The host group provides a seating plan and ushers to help seat the audience.
- The host group, in short, is responsible for the success of the rally.
- The teacher of the host group keeps the group on task and acts as liaison to the administration, faculty and, staff.

KICK-OFF RALLY CHECKLIST

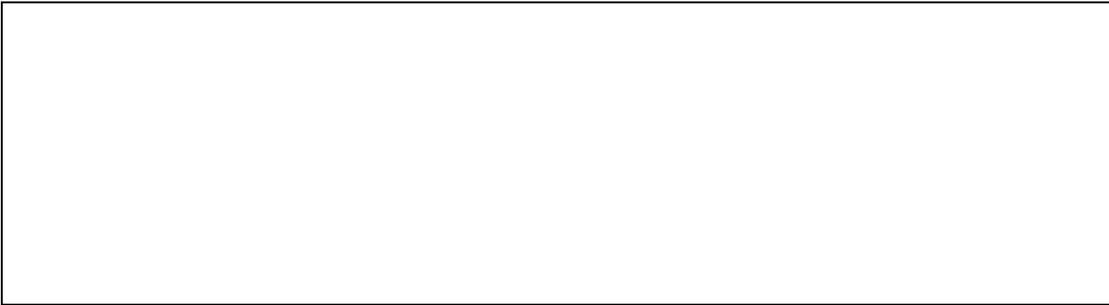
- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> rally date | <input type="checkbox"/> master of ceremonies selected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> space secured | <input type="checkbox"/> script |
| <input type="checkbox"/> decorations | <input type="checkbox"/> inform participants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 'guest' list | <input type="checkbox"/> consult tech & stage crews |
| <input type="checkbox"/> non-senior classes invited | <input type="checkbox"/> seating plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> host group selected | <input type="checkbox"/> ushers selected |

The candidate debate is the single most important event in the *GAME*. Here votes are won and lost. Polls taken before and after the debates in previous games have clearly demonstrated the significance of the debate. A poor performance can spell disaster and a strong performance can provide a springboard to victory. The importance of the debates cannot be overstated.

THE CANDIDATE DEBATE

PURPOSE

- This is the main issue forum and also the main forum for presenting and judging leadership qualities.
- It is a test of the candidates and campaigns' abilities to prepare the candidates.
- It also tests the media's preparation on the issues and ability to cover this event.



tone

The debates are the most formal and serious events of the simulation.

The Townsend Harris High School Model:

- Two debates are staged approximately 2-3 weeks before Election Day.
- Seniors and freshmen attend the first, in the morning, while sophomores and juniors attend the afternoon debate.
- The debate requires each candidate to make opening and closing statements, answer a series of questions posed by a panel of *reporters*, offer rebuttals to opponent's answers and, respond to opponent's rebuttals. All responses are carefully timed. Questions may also be taken from the audience in the style of a town hall meeting.

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

Teachers:

- Preparations for the debates begin shortly after the kick-off rally.
- The teachers decide on the date for the debates as well as on the special scheduling required.
- Debates need to be held in an auditorium and that space needs to be reserved. Plans for seating and attendance are given careful consideration. Additional chairs are usually needed to accommodate the larger afternoon audience.

Debate Host:

- A media group or the Election Commission may host the debates.
- The host is responsible for coordinating the efforts of the campaigns and media who are participating in the debates.
- The host group provides a master of ceremonies.
- The host group and its teacher select representatives from the media to serve as panelists for the debate.
- The host group prepares a list of question topics to guide the panelists as they prepare the debate questions.
- The host group teacher and the media teacher monitor the questions. Each question, like all else in the *Game*, mirrors the type of questions asked of actual candidates in national debates. While the candidates are not given questions in advance, they are given a list of question topics.
- The host group arranges a meeting with the campaign managers, at least one week prior to the debates, to set the ground rules for the debates.
- The host group is responsible for coordinating activities with the technical and stage crews in preparation for the use of the auditorium and for decorating the auditorium and setting up the stage. The auditorium is stripped of all campaign posters and materials during the debates; however, the hall and lobby are utilized for campaigning on debate day.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

- Each audience member scores the debate on a *scorecard* produced by the host group.
- The scorecards provide valuable insight into the efficacy of the debates and the data from statistical analysis by either the media or other group such as a social science research class is shared with all media, campaign and special interest groups. In past Games, the scorecards have been the single most accurate predictors of the outcome of the election.
- Each audience member should come to the debate prepared to ask a question of one or more of the candidates.
- Classroom teachers are encouraged to help students prepare to be an active and well-informed audience.

PACE AND PROCESS

- The master of ceremonies keeps the debate moving by adhering strictly to the response time limits agreed to by the campaigns.
- The master of ceremonies and the speakers utilize a timekeeper seated in the front row to warn speakers, at appropriate intervals, as time is expiring.
- The master of ceremonies maintains an appropriately formal tone for the debate and reminds the audience, as necessary, not to applaud or otherwise react to statements made by the speakers.

CANDIDATE DEBATE CHECKLIST

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| _____ date | _____ panelists selected |
| _____ reserve auditorium | _____ ground rules meeting |
| _____ additional chair | _____ review & finalize questions |
| _____ special schedule | _____ consult tech & stage crews |
| _____ seating plan | _____ remove campaign posters from auditorium and decorate |
| _____ host group selected | _____ prepare scorecards |
| _____ master of ceremonies | _____ script |
| _____ question topics | _____ score card analysis |

THE INTEREST GROUP RALLY

PURPOSE

This rally is held 1-2 weeks before Election Day. Its purpose is to create a forum for interest groups, quite literally, to take center stage. Each special interest group creates an informative skit about its mission, point of view or position on ballot questions. Groups are encouraged to make their skits lively and entertaining.

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

- Preparations for the Interest Group Rally begin approximately one week after preparations for the debate.
- Preparations for both the Interest Group Rally and the Candidate Debate occur simultaneously. It is wise to have these events hosted by different groups.

Teachers:

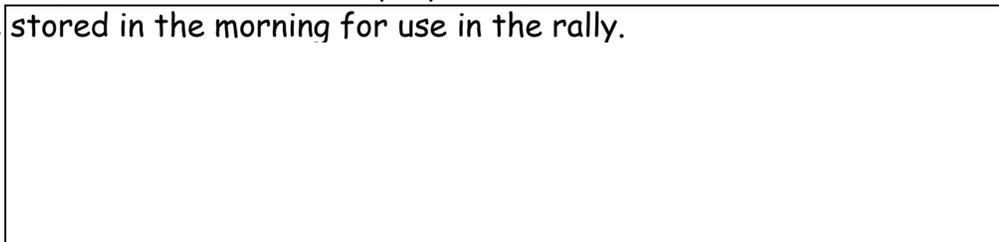
- Teachers set a date and period for the rally and reserve the auditorium.
- It is advisable to have another room such as the music room, to serve as a waiting area or "green room" for the acts.
- Non-senior classes are invited and a seating plan developed. Interest group teachers approve written scripts at least one week in advance of the rally.
- Teachers need to supervise both the audience and participating students.
- Teachers are responsible for developing an instrument to assess the impact of the rally.

Host Group:

- The host group sets the time limits for the skits.
- It coordinates with the technical and stage crews and identifies any special technical requirements such as music, lighting, video. . The host group arranges a rehearsal.

The day of the Interest Group Rally is a particularly hectic one.

The simulation teachers will need to actively supervise all the action. Supervision is needed in the music room, hallway, backstage and, audience. Costumes, props and, other 'stuff' need to be stored in the morning for use in the rally.



INTEREST GROUP RALLY CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> rally date | <input type="checkbox"/> master of ceremonies selected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> space secured | <input type="checkbox"/> script |
| <input type="checkbox"/> decorations | <input type="checkbox"/> inform participants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 'guest' list | <input type="checkbox"/> consult tech & stage crews |
| <input type="checkbox"/> non-senior classes invited | <input type="checkbox"/> seating plan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> host group selected | <input type="checkbox"/> ushers selected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> rehearsal | |

ELECTION DAY

The final major event of the *Game* is Election Day. Voters can cast their votes in the lobby before school or during their lunch period. The polls are open from 7:00 - 8:00 in the morning and during the three lunch periods. Social Science Research students conduct exit polling to assist the news media's coverage of the election.

Preparation for Election Day should begin about three weeks prior to Election Day. The Election Commission takes the lead role in this activity.

- The lobby is reserved and tables and chairs ordered.
- The Election Commission is responsible for setting up the polls, decorating the lobby and conducting the voting.
- Care must be taken to ensure that voters cast a single ballot and that the process is efficient.

- The Commission is responsible for producing the Scantron ballots, ballot boxes and voter (official class) lists.
- The Commission tabulates the votes, declares the winner, and posts the results.
- Election results must be made available to the media by the end of the day.

Electioneering of any type is strictly prohibited in the polling area (second floor) on Election Day. Campaigning is encouraged on this day throughout the rest of the building and in front of the building. The media conducts extensive coverage of the voting in the lobby throughout polling hours. Live Election Day coverage should be broadcast to the student body throughout the day.

ELECTION DAY CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> reserve lobby | <input type="checkbox"/> election crews: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> print ballots | <input type="checkbox"/> morning & lunch bands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> get pencils | <input type="checkbox"/> exit polling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> set-up & decorate lobby | <input type="checkbox"/> vote counting crew |
| <input type="checkbox"/> get official class lists | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> prepare ballot boxes | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> set-up lobby bulletin board
as election tote board | |

TEACHING A CAMPAIGN CLASS

The key to teaching a campaign class is organization. The class takes on the organizational structure of a campaign. Roles are clearly defined and individuals true to their roles and clear as to their responsibilities within the campaign. Some students will seek to do too much, while others will seek to do too little. It is the teacher's role to keep students on task and in role throughout the campaign.

TEACHERS CAN MAXIMIZE THE SUCCESS OF THE GAME THROUGH PLANNING, MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT.

(Please note: the list of roles that follows is geared to the most elaborate version of the game. Some roles are not mentioned in the primary election version, but are included here in the event other elections are simulated)

ROLES AND COMMITTEES

MANAGEMENT TEAM: The management team consists of the candidate, spouse, and campaign manager. This group is ultimately responsible for the day-to-day operation of the campaign. This group either makes or approves each and every decision affecting the campaign. Fund-raising is the particular responsibility of the management team.

THE CANDIDATE:

- The candidate is the most visible member of the campaign.
- The candidate must be affable and knowledgeable. He/She is the public face of the campaign.
- The candidate needs to attend rallies, hold press conferences, speak to classes, appear on television and radio shows, appear at fund raisers, debate his/her opponent, and in short, do all those things the real candidate is doing.

THE SPOUSE:

- The spouses also play very public roles.

- Each will be called upon to accompany the candidate at various campaign functions and represent the candidate when he/she is unable to attend.

THE CAMPAIGN MANAGER:

- The campaign manager is the person most directly responsible for the operation of the campaign.
- The campaign manager must keep the members of the campaign focused. He/She must be able to delegate responsibility. All campaign business goes through the campaign manager.

COMMUNICATIONS STAFF: The communications staff includes press secretaries and appointments secretaries and is headed by the director of communications. These are the campaign *message-makers*. The communications staff prepares all official communiqués. All appearances are scheduled and coordinated by this group.

THE PRESS SECRETARIES:

- The Press Secretaries prepare and deliver press releases to the media.
- They help to keep the campaign in a positive light in the press.
- They attempt to direct press coverage of the campaign and to make the candidate as visible as possible in the press.
- The press secretaries will be directly responsible for arranging each of the candidate's press conferences.

THE APPOINTMENT SECRETARIES:

- The Appointment Secretaries are responsible for maintaining the candidate's schedule.
- They must coordinate with outside groups to arrange appearances.