

# Ballot Box

### Supplies:

- 1 shoebox
- Red, white, and blue paper
- Scissors
- Tape or glue stick
- Markers



### Steps:

	<p>Step 1: Remove the top of the shoe box and cut a six-inch by one-inch rectangle in the center of the lid using scissors. Set the lid aside.</p>
	<p>Step 2: Decorate the outside of the box completely with decorative paper. Trim the edges of the paper with scissors when needed.</p>
	<p>Step 3: Using the markers, write the word "Vote!" in large letters on the top of the box. For an optional challenge, find out how many Electoral College members your state has (number of representatives, senators, and electors) and write the state name and Electoral College numbers on the top of the box.</p>
	<p>Step 4: Using the markers, decorate the top of the box. Be creative!</p>





Step 5: Use the ballot box to hold an election with family or friends! (See the Extension Activity below.)

**What is the Electoral College, and how do you become a student there?** The Electoral College is not a school but is a group of people who elect the President and the Vice President of the United States every four years. When Americans vote for President and Vice President, we are actually voting for someone called an elector to represent us in what is called the Electoral College. This elector usually casts his or her vote for the candidate who wins in their state.

#### **Fun Facts:**

- The United States is a Representative Democracy or a Republic, which means that we, the people, elect our representatives for our cities, our state, and our country. As Americans, we have the right and responsibility to vote for our leaders. It's a special privilege that millions of people around the world continue to fight for today.
- Our Founding Fathers wanted American citizens to be involved in choosing the President and Vice President, so they established a voting system. During a presidential election, every state holds its own election for President and Vice President. The candidates that win the popular vote (the person who earned the most votes from the people in that state) in each state usually win all of the electors from that state.
- The amount of electors that each state gets depends on how many people live in that state. The number of electors from each state can change every few years if a lot of people move out of one state and into another state. In total, there are 538 members of the Electoral College. The presidential and vice presidential candidates who win a majority of the votes from these state electors win the election.

#### **Extension Activity: Favorite Snack Election**

Use your ballot box to hold a family or classroom favorite snack election. You will need a slip of paper and pencil for each voter.

Instructions:

1. Write five different snack options on the board.
2. Give each child a slip of paper and a pen or pencil.
3. Ask them to write or draw their favorite snack on the slip.
4. Have them place their slips in the ballot box.
5. Count the votes together and announce the winning snack.
6. Discuss the results and enjoy the winning snack together.