Election Research Assignment (2018)

Introduction: Election Day is just days away. Here in the state of Washington, there are a number of state-wide initiatives on the ballot. Nationwide, control of the House of Representatives and the Senate are at stake. Over the next few days, we will be taking some time to explore these ballot measures and key races.

Your Task: For this research assignment, you will be working with 2 or 3 classmates. You will be assigned a Washington State Initiative or House/Senate race to research.

If you have a ballot issue (an initiative), you must look up the following information:

- What does the initiative do? You should be able to explain this so that the average person can understand the issue. (The online voter guide from the Washington Sec. of State’s webpage is very helpful.)
- What are the arguments for it? What are the arguments against it?
- Does each side have a webpage so that a voter could learn more?
- Who is supporting each side? (Look at the Public Disclosure Commission website for info about who has donated to each side.)
- Find at least two newspaper articles that discuss your ballot issue. What do the articles discuss?
- Can you find a television ad from each side? If so, who is paying for the ads? Be sure to share the ads with the class.

If you have a House or Senate race to research, you must look up the following information:

- Who are the major party candidates running for office? Give a brief bio for each.
- What are the issues that they have emphasized in their campaign?
- Does each candidate have a webpage? If so, what information is available for voters?
- Who is supporting each candidate? Look at endorsements as well as financial information. (The Federal Elections Commission webpage is very helpful for this.)
- Find at least two newspaper articles that discuss your House or Senate race. What do the articles discuss?
- Can you find a television ad for each candidate? Be sure to share them with the class.
- Are there any outside groups running attack ads against one candidate or the other? Who is paying for these ads?

You will need to organize your information and present your findings to the class. I’m going to leave it to you to decide how you want to share the information. Just be sure that you are organized and that you clearly articulate the information that you have found.

Keep in mind that your classmates and I are counting on you to educate us about how we should vote on November 6th!

Presentations will start on Thursday. You have a short turnaround time, so get busy!

(Topics are on the Back)
Washington State Initiatives:

Initiative 1631--Carbon Fee/Tax

Initiative 1634--Ban local government from taxing soda and other grocery-related items

Initiative 1639--More stringent requirements for the ownership of firearms

Initiative 940--Changes some of the language regarding the use of force by law enforcement

Advisory Vote No. 19: Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6269--Taxes on crude oil or petroleum products received by pipeline

Washington Senate Race:

Maria Cantwell (Dem.) vs. Susan Hutchison (Rep.)

Washington's 5th Congressional District (House of Reps)

Cathy McMorris Rodgers (Rep.) vs. Lisa Brown (Dem.)

Washington's 8th Congressional District (House of Reps)

Dino Rossi (Rep.) vs. Kim Schrier (Dem.)

Montana Senate Race:

John Tester (Dem.) vs. Matt Rosendale (Rep.)

Texas Senate Race:

Ted Cruz (Rep.) vs. Beto O'Rourke (Dem.)