Election Topic Deep Dive

Objective:

Students will examine one controversial topic for better contemporary and historical understanding of the issue.

Students will:

- develop research skills
- enhance analytical skills
- improve critical thinking skills
- develop objective reporting skills

Resources/Materials:

- 2020election.procon.org
- ProCon.org topic site such as deathpenalty.procon.org, abortion.procon.org, or gun-control.procon.org
- internet connection

Preparation:

- Teachers should make a list of appropriate research topics that have both 2020 election coverage **and** a topic site on ProCon.org. For example, ProCon.org does not have additional information on China tariffs, but does have a site about felon voting. All topics may be found on the ProCon.org homepage. Please note that topics have varying amounts of coverage.
- Teachers should decide whether to assign candidates or have students choose. Students may be required to choose a candidate who is ideologically opposed to the students' personal opinion.
- This assignment may be completed individually or in very small groups. Students may cover all of the candidates in small groups, or a single candidate individually or in small groups.
- This assignment may be given as a long-term project with sections due at different dates.

Activity:

1. Students should select or be assigned one topic that appears on 2020election.procon.org **and** has a topic site on ProCon.org.
2. Students should report and analyze a candidate's position on the issue objectively.
3. Students should dive into the issue site to learn the history of the issue (via the background or historical timeline resources).
4. Students should learn about factors surrounding and influencing the main issue. For example, religious opinions on the death penalty, or state laws restricting abortion.
5. Students should briefly look into candidate's biography on 2020election.procon.org to determine if any personal or professional information might influence the candidate's position. For example, a candidate's religion or that they were a criminal prosecutor.
6. Have students objectively analyze the candidate's position on the issue in light of all of the new information they have learned.

Evaluation:

1. Research skills
2. Understanding and analysis of information gathered
3. Writing proficiency
4. Ability to objectively report political information