

## LESSON PLAN – CAN YOU RUN FOR PRESIDENT FROM PRISON

**Subject:** Civics and Government

**Grade Level:** 5th

### Standards:

**SS 5.2.6** Describe the primary and general election process for local, state, and national offices, including those used to select congressional and presidential office holders.

**ELA 5.2.4** Draw inferences, conclusions, or generalizations about text and support them with textual evidence and prior knowledge

### Materials Needed:

Students will need access to:

- Kahoot polling devices
- Word cards with magnets on the back so they will affix to a white board surface.
- Biographical outlines for Debs and LaRouche that include their backgrounds (including reasons for incarceration) and key platform ideas. Provide a copy for each student. Brief bio sketches are attached to this plan.
- A chart listing the constitutional requirements for a person to be a U.S. President.
- Paper suitable for a mural if any students choose this assignment.

### Learning Objectives:

- SWBAT identify constitutionally based qualifications for national office holders and the procedures for becoming a candidate by doing a class presentation: “How does a person qualify and how are they chosen to run for president?”
- SWBAT write an essay or make a class presentation titled: “Why I would or would not vote for Eugene V. Debs or Lyndon LaRouche for president.” Cite at least two sources in addition to the biographies provided to students.
- Alternative product: Choose up to three partners to plan and draw a mural illustrating the qualifications and usual steps for a person to become a presidential candidate.

### Introduction/Anticipatory Set:

Ask students: Which of these would prevent a person from running for US President? Show word cards with the following printed on individual cards: age 20, age 35, age 80, a picture of a 50 year old woman, a college diploma with an X on it, birth certificate saying born in France, and a prison cell (shown through the bars).

After presenting all of the cards, have students use Kahoot to vote on the individual items they believe would **exclude** a person from running for president. Record the scores next to each card.

### Body of Lesson:

**I Do:** Project the list of constitutional requirements onto the whiteboard screen for a person to be a U.S. President. Introduce these requirements by asking students what they learned about government in earlier grades as noted in the Declaration of Independence, United States Constitution, and the Bill of Rights (these are often taught in grade 2).

Ask students who works in government, what do they do? Are they all elected? Who is in charge?

**We Do:** Students should begin to see the difference between elected people and those who are hired to work in government.

Would you like to add any requirements?

Ask students what kind of person they would prefer to be president. Characteristics, behaviors, beliefs, education, plans, etc.

Do you think someone who is in prison should be able to run for president? Has anyone ever done this?

Distribute the biographical sketches of Eugene V. Debs and Lyndon LaRouche. Read the descriptions of these two men. Do either of these two men meet the constitutional requirements? Projecting photographs from an online source would add to this discussion.

**You Do:** Select one of the assignment choices.

### Summary/Closure

### Assessment

Rubric for any of the assignment choices:

Introduction-opinions clearly stated.

Ideas organized in a purposeful way.

Used words and phrases to link opinions and reasons to make their case.

Concluding paragraph restates opinion in creative, but clear sentences.

Cited at least 2 sources.

Points for each item above: (4 points well done, 3 points several, 2 points some, 1 point, none.

For the sources item, the scores would be either 1 if they are there or 0 if none are cited.

### Extension Activities

This lesson could be expanded to include online videos and other resources. With expansion, it could become a lesson for several days.

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### **Eugene V. Debs**

Born: November 5, 1855, in Terre Haute, IN

Died: October 20, 1926, in Elmhurst, IL

Career:       Left home and began working on the railroads at age 14  
                  Labor organizer  
                  April 1894, Leader of Chicago Pullman Palace Car Company strike  
                  Spent six months in jail for his role in the Pullman strike  
                  1897 founded the Socialist Party  
                  1900-1920 candidate for U.S. President five times  
                  1918, sentenced to 10 years in prison for sedition

Source: online [Britannica](#), 10/12/21

### **Lyndon LaRouche**

Born: September 8, 1922

Died: February 12, 2019

Career:       Attended Northeastern University; left in 1942 because he thought the teachers “lacked competence...”; returned after WWII, but did not graduate  
                  WWII was a conscientious objector (He was a Quaker at that time.) He worked with the ambulance crews.  
                  1949 joined Socialist Workers Party  
                  Beginning in 1996 he ran for U.S. President eight times  
                  October 1986 a federal grand jury indicted him on charges of credit card fraud and obstruction of justice.  
                  December 1988 convicted of conspiracy to commit mail fraud. Served five years in prison.

Source: online [Wikipedia](#), 10/12/21