

Dear students of class 12/ENG1,

unfortunately, we are back in that unpleasant situation where you have to stay at home while I prepare tasks for you. I hope you all are well, please take care!

In our last lesson together, we started working on campaign speeches for a fictitious mini presidential election in class.

Your first task for Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, is going to be to finish these speeches **on your own**. You should have some notes from the last lesson that you can use now to complete the whole speech.

Below you find the worksheet from last week including the task and also a little help on how to write a speech.

**You will have to send in your speeches until Friday, November 13<sup>th</sup>, via mail to [bergmann@gymba.de](mailto:bergmann@gymba.de)! Your work is going to be graded!**

Stay healthy!

P. Bergmann

# How can you become the president of the USA?

## A guide through the US election system

Arbeitsblatt

Englisch  
Klasse 9–12

|       |         |        |
|-------|---------|--------|
| Name: | Klasse: | Datum: |
|-------|---------|--------|

### Pre-reading task

Match up the words on the left with the correct definition on the right.

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 1. election       | a) system of voting in secret by marking a paper and putting it in a box            |
| 2. vote           | b) a limited period of time, e.g. the duration of holding an office                 |
| 3. ballot         | c) survey to find out what people think / who they would vote for                   |
| 4. term           | d) the choice that someone makes in an election                                     |
| 5. campaign       | e) person who steps in when the president is unable to do his or her job            |
| 6. inauguration   | f) the act of choosing a president or government by popular vote                    |
| 7. vice president | g) planned political activities and advertising to make people vote for a candidate |
| 8. opinion poll   | h) the formal ceremony of putting the new president into office                     |

- If you want to become US president, you must have lived in the US for all of your life.
- You have to be a Christian to become president.
- All US presidents have been male and white.
- The election day is always a Tuesday.
- All US presidents so far have either been Republicans or Democrats.
- There is no limit to how long you can be the US president.
- The Democrats are often called the Grand Old Party.
- Parties decide who they nominate in caucuses and primaries.
- Joe Biden is going to be vice president, when Trump gets re-elected.
- You can win the majority of votes but still lose the election.

### M1 How is the US president elected?

On 3 November 2020 the election for the next US president will take place. Here is how it works:

To become president (or vice president) in the USA, you have to be a natural-born US citizen<sup>1</sup>, at least 35 years old and you must have been resident<sup>2</sup> in the USA for at least 14 years before the election. You do not have to be male or Christian, but interestingly, the US voters seem to favour these characteristics. All US presidents so far have been men, and only one US president, Barack Obama, has not been white.

The presidential election takes place every four years on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November. The reason for this strange choice of a November Tuesday as the election day dates back to 1845. Most people then were farmers and had to travel far to their ballot station<sup>3</sup>. On Sunday they would attend the church service<sup>4</sup>, Monday was needed for travel, so they voted on Tuesday to be back for market day on Wednesday. And November was a month that was not needed for planting and harvesting<sup>5</sup>. In some states like New York or Hawaii, election day is a public holiday, but in most states it is not.

In the USA, you cannot be president for more than two terms, which each last four years. The two main parties competing in the election are the Republican party, also called the Grand Old Party



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### While-reading tasks

Read M1 and decide whether the following statements are true or false. Correct the false statements.

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(GOP), and the Democrats. Every president so far has been a member of one of these parties, although sometimes smaller parties also nominate a candidate. To become a candidate for the election, members of a party have to campaign to be nominated first. Meetings of the party members in which they discuss who would be the potentially most successful presidential candidate for their party are called caucuses. At the end of a caucus, participants vote publicly for the candidate they support. In many states, the most successful candidate for a party is determined in state elections called primaries. In closed primaries, only the party members can vote, whereas any registered voter can vote in open primaries. This process is usually finished in the late summer of the election year.

This year, Joe Biden has been nominated as the candidate for the Democratic Party, beating 29 other Democratic candidates, and current<sup>6</sup> president Donald Trump will campaign to be re-elected for the Republicans, together with his vice president Mike Pence. In some states the Republicans have cancelled their primaries completely to express support for the current president.

As a next step, the nominee<sup>7</sup> chooses a vice presidential candidate. Joe Biden has chosen Kamala Harris, a US Senator from California. Both presidential candidates are campaigning throughout the country to win the votes of the public, and they also have public debates with the candidate from the other party.

Unlike in other countries, there is no time limit to the campaigning. This makes the campaigns long and expensive, and the candidates must raise funds<sup>8</sup> from their supporters or use their own money to finance them.

On election day, 3 November 2020, all US citizens over 18 can cast their votes<sup>9</sup>. But these votes do not directly determine the winning candidate, but rather they vote for people called electors. The 538 electors determined by the people's vote form the so-called 'Electoral College' and elect the president on 15 December. The number of electors each state has depends on the size of its population, and whoever gets the most votes in a state gets all the electors. The biggest and therefore most important states are California (55 electors), Texas (38), New York (29) and Florida (29). The minimum number of electors for a small state is three.

This voting system can lead to a situation where a presidential candidate who got the most votes from the public might not actually win the election, because they did not win the states with the most electors. This happened in 2016 when Donald Trump won the election against Hillary Clinton, although she had a higher number of votes from the public. So the strategy for the candidates is to campaign widely to win enough states to get the 270 electoral votes needed to win the election.

The Electoral College votes are then officially counted by Congress in early January. The inauguration<sup>10</sup> of the next president will take place on 20 January 2021.

<sup>1</sup>Bürger(in), <sup>2</sup>Einwohner(in), <sup>3</sup>Wahlstation, <sup>4</sup>Gottesdienst, <sup>5</sup>Ernten, <sup>6</sup>aktuell, <sup>7</sup>Kandidat(in), <sup>8</sup>Geld sammeln, <sup>9</sup>Stimmen abgeben, <sup>10</sup>Amteinführung



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## Further Activities

1. What makes a good president? In a small group, write down ten important characteristics a good president should have, in your opinion. Present them in class and give arguments for your choices.
2. If you were president, what would you do? Write down a list of your political goals and invent a campaign slogan.
3. Nominate three or four candidates from your class and form party groups. Each party writes a campaign speech for their candidate. Give the speeches in class – if you like, hold a mini election for your class president.

## How to write a speech

### Getting started: the nature of speeches

In contrast to written texts – where the author does not face his readership and their reaction – a speech usually brings the speaker and his audience into immediate contact. To choose the appropriate subject matter, tone and wording of a speech, the speaker must consider the following questions:

- What is the role of the speaker?
- What is the topic of the speech?
- On what occasion is the speech given?
- With what intention is the speech made?
- Who is being addressed? Who is the audience?
- What kind of language (register) would be adequate?

### The structure of speeches

A speech contains three parts: the introduction, the body and the conclusion.

| The three parts: Ideas and advice   | Useful phrases  |
|---|---|
| <b>Introduction:</b> In the introduction you establish contact with your audience; you want to grab their attention. You can create a positive atmosphere by making a funny or interesting remark. Then you refer to the topic of your speech, your audience and the occasion.  |   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Greet the audience politely. Thank them for the invitation. State your topic and its importance.</li><li>2. Catch your listeners' attention with, e.g.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• a provocative statement or question</li><li>• a surprising fact or trend</li><li>• a new discovery</li><li>• an eye-opening experience</li><li>• an anecdote, joke or quotation</li></ul></li><li>3. State your aim. (Outline the structure of your speech.)</li></ol> | <p><i>Ladies and gentlemen, ...</i><br/><i>It is an honour for me to be here today ... / to speak to you about ...</i><br/><i>I feel greatly honoured by your invitation.</i><br/><i>As some of you might know, since my early childhood I have taken a special interest in ...</i><br/><i>You might all remember XY who said many years ago, "..."</i><br/><i>We are here today ...</i><br/><i>Today, I would like to tell you a little about...</i><br/><i>In this time of great (uncertainty...), it is especially important / significant / salient to ...</i><br/><i>Hence, ... / Thus I would like to introduce you to ... , before I explain to you how ... . I will then conclude by highlighting / drawing to your attention the facts about ... / emphasising how ...</i></p> |

**Main part:** Depending on the topic and purpose of your speech, you can keep your listeners' attention by ...

1. developing your ideas step by step, either in
  - chronological or topical order,
  - from the least to the most important idea
  - alternating arguments for or against an idea;
  - according to cause and effect,
  - problem and solution,
  - or advantage or disadvantage
2. backing up your ideas with background info.
3. giving examples to support your statements.
4. dividing your speech into clear units (paragraphs).
5. linking the parts of your speech.
6. repeating and emphasise important points.

*In my opinion / view, ...*  
*To my mind, ...*  
*I am of the opinion that ...*  
*I hold the view that ...*  
*My own view of the matter / the problem is that ...*  
*First of all, people should be aware of the fact that ...*  
*First, ... / Second ... / Third ...*  
*In addition, one mustn't forget that ...*  
*Furthermore, ... / Moreover, ... / Besides, ...*  
*In contrast to ..., it mustn't be overlooked that ...*  
*Above all, ...*  
*With regard to ..., ...*  
*However, ... / ..., however, ... / ..., though, ...*  
*For example, ...*  
*I am sure / convinced that ...*  
*It seems to me that ...*  
*Personally, I firmly believe that ...*  
*On the one hand ..., on the other ...*  
*Surely, everybody will be happy about ...*  
*Obviously, nobody expects ...*  
*Clearly, it is necessary that ...*  
*Undoubtedly, the risk of ... should not be underestimated.*  
*Surprisingly, not many people know that ...*  
*Interestingly, experts have predicted that ...*  
*Strangely / Oddly enough, it has been claimed that ...*  
*Luckily, nobody expects that ...*

*(For other suitable useful phrases, please refer to your "How to write a comment " word lists.)*

**Conclusion:** In the conclusion you repeat the main points and refer to the audience again.

1. Come to a convincing end, e.g. with one of the following ...
  - a short summary
  - a quotation
  - a call for action
  - a look into the future
  - a rhetorical question
  - a promise
  - an appeal
  -
2. Finish your speech clearly.

*Let me conclude with the words of ... who once said that...*  
*I am hoping for ... Thank you for listening / for your attention.*  
*All my evidence points to one direction: ....*  
*Looking at all the facts and figures, I have to draw the conclusion that ...*  
*All in all, we could say that ...*  
*To sum up, there is no doubt that ...*  
*In conclusion, ... / To conclude, ...*  
*What it all boils down to is the following: ...*  
*Let us all work together to ...*