

Focused Inquiry

In this focused inquiry, students will consider the most powerful voice that every citizen has in our democracy: voting. Students will learn who gets to vote, how people register to vote, and the outcomes: who actually winds up voting. Students will finally study some of the ways that people are encouraged to vote. Using all of this learning, students will create a piece that encourages people to vote.

Standards

- SSS1.4.1 Identify the concepts used in documents and sources.
- SSS1.5.2 Construct arguments using claims and evidence from multiple sources.
- C2.5.2 Explain how a democracy relies on people’s responsible participation, and draw implications for how individuals should participate.

Learning Goals

1. Students will know and understand voter eligibility and registration in Washington state.
2. Students will analyze data on past presidential election voter turnout to make connections between the number of registered voters and actual voter turnout.
3. Students will study various ways that people are encouraged to vote and create their own product that encourages people to vote.

Compelling question:

What can we do to encourage people to vote in elections?

Staging the question:

Distribute the [Launch Handout \(page 11\)](#)

Students will view a poster created by artist Melissa Chang. Share with students that the primary responsibility of a citizen is to vote! People are encouraged to vote in many ways. Ask students: *What do you notice? What does the artist draw? Who is her intended audience? Is this poster designed to encourage people to vote? Does it succeed?* Have a class discussion and introduce the compelling question.

Supporting question 1:

Who gets to vote?

Formative Performance Task

Complete [Appendix A \(page 12 and 13\)](#)

Notes to teacher:

- Students will read the requirements for voter eligibility (abbreviated from the Secretary of State’s website) and complete the “You Try” portion of Appendix A to test whether the descriptions would allow people to register to vote. (**Answers:** 1. Y, 2. N, 3. Y, 4. Not yet!, 5. Y)
- Print or digitally post copies of the voter registration form using the link. Ask: *what information on this form are people required to provide? Is it easy to register to vote?* Turn and talk, and then add your thinking to the bottom of Appendix A.

Featured sources:

- Source A: Voter Eligibility (edited), <https://www.sos.wa.gov/elections/voter-eligibility.aspx>, Office of the Secretary of State, Public Domain.
- Source B: Washington State Voter Registration form, https://www.sos.wa.gov/assets/elections/civics/vrf_2023_english_osp.pdf, Office of the Secretary of State, Public Domain.

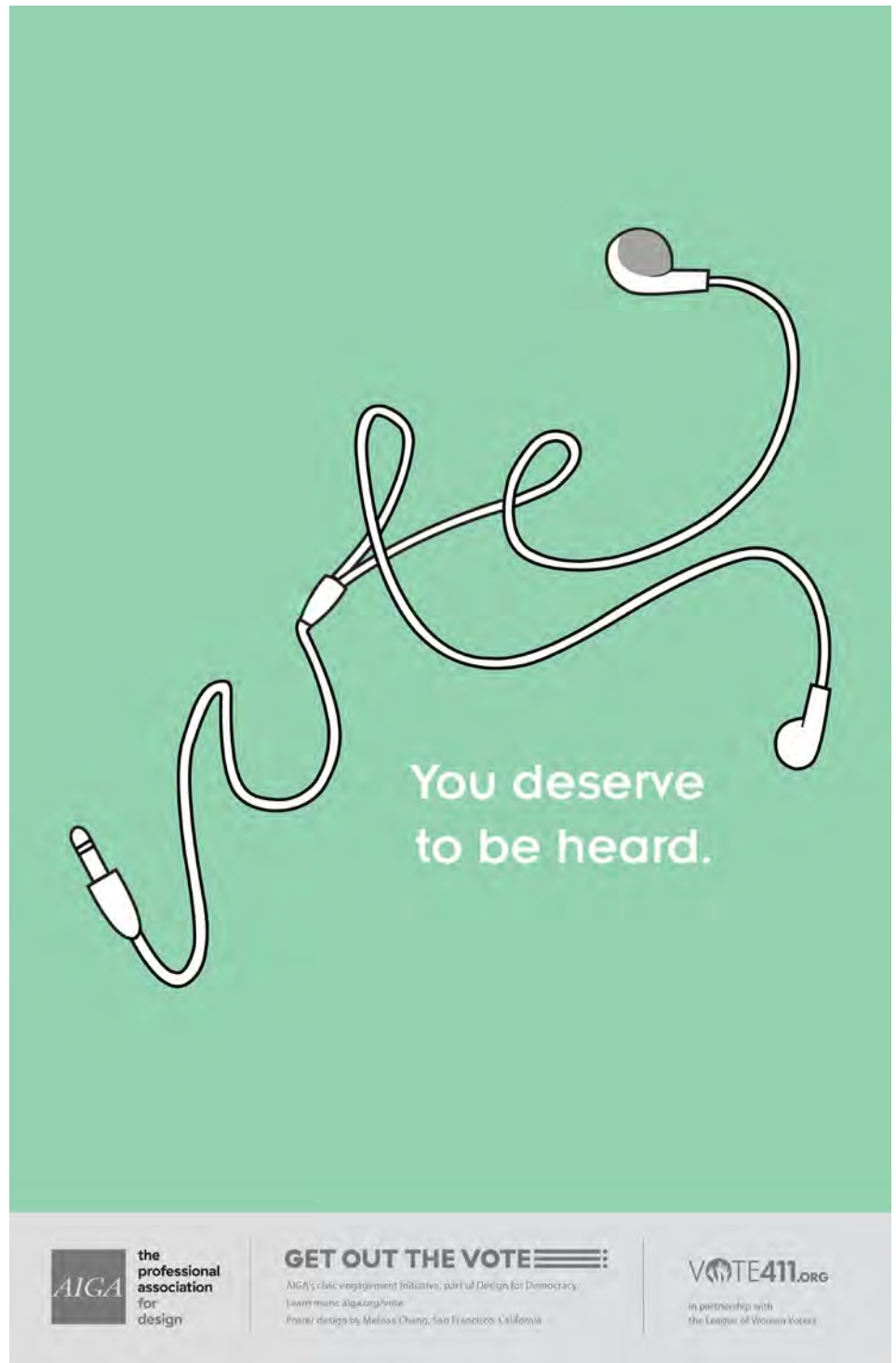
Poster — Melissa Chang

Look at this poster. It was created in 2016 before a presidential election.

Think: What do you notice? What does the artist draw? Who is her intended audience? Is this poster designed to encourage people to vote? Does it succeed?

Pair: Discuss your answers with a partner.

Share: Share your new thinking with the class.



Get Out the Vote Poster copyright Melissa Chang. All rights reserved. Used with permission. Any use of this graphic without prior approval is strictly prohibited. https://www.sos.wa.gov/assets/elections/civics/MelissaChang_GOTV_web.png. This work is available under a [Creative Commons Attribution License](#).

Who gets to vote?

Voter Eligibility

Washington state encourages every eligible person to register to vote and participate in all elections.

Source A

To vote, you must be:	This means:
A citizen of the United States;	I was born here or became a citizen by going through a process called “naturalization.”
A legal resident of Washington state at least 30 days before election day;	I have a permanent address in the state.
At least 18 years old by election day; and	I can sign up when I’m 16 or 17, but can’t vote until I’m 18. However, if I turn 18 by the November General Election, I can vote in a Primary Election.
Not in total confinement for a felony conviction in Washington or currently incarcerated for a federal or out-of-state felony conviction.	I can register and vote if I am not in total confinement in prison for a felony.

You try:

1. I’m 17 but will be 18 by election day. Can I sign up to vote? ___ Yes ___ No
2. I live in Idaho but I work in Washington. Can I register to vote in Washington? ___ Yes ___ No
3. I was born in Mexico but became a U.S. Citizen last year. Can I register? ___ Yes ___ No
4. I was born in Canada and have applied for citizenship. Can I register? ___ Yes ___ Not yet!
5. I was born in Omak, Washington, but I lived in Japan for five years. I moved back to Washington three months ago. Can I register? ___ Yes ___ No

Voter Registration Form (printout on next page):

What information are people required to write in the form?
Do you think it is easy to register? Why or why not?

Instructions

Use this form to register to vote or update your current registration.

Print all information clearly using black or blue pen. Your signature will be used to verify your ballot. Mail this completed form to your county elections office (address on back).

Deadline

This registration will be in effect for the next election if received by the elections office no later than eight days before election day.

Voting

You will receive your ballot in the mail. Contact your county elections office for accessible voting options.

Future Voters

If you are at least 16 years old, use this form to sign up. You'll be automatically registered to vote when you qualify.

Public Information

Your registration name, address, gender, and date of birth will be public information when you become eligible to vote.

Notice

You must be a United States citizen in order to register to vote. You may register to vote if you are at least sixteen years old. You may vote if you will be at least eighteen years old by the next general election, or are at least eighteen years old for special elections.

Knowingly providing false information about yourself or your qualifications for voter registration is a class C felony punishable by imprisonment for up to five years, a fine of up to \$10,000, or both.

Public Benefits Offices

If you received this form from a public benefits office, where you received the form will remain confidential.

Registering or declining to register will not affect the assistance provided to you by that agency.

If you believe someone interfered with your right to register, or your right to privacy in deciding whether to register, you may file a complaint with the Washington State Elections Division.

Contact Information

If you would like help with this form, contact the Washington State Elections Division.

web www.votewa.gov
call 1 (800) 448-4881
email elections@sos.wa.gov
mail PO Box 40229
 Olympia, WA 98504-0229

For official use:

Washington State Voter Registration Form

Register online at www.votewa.gov.

1 Personal Information

last	first	middle	suffix
date of birth (mm/dd/yyyy)			gender
residential address in Washington state			apt #
city			ZIP
mailing address, if different			
city			state and ZIP
phone number (optional)		email address (optional)	

2 Qualifications

If you answer *no*, do not complete this form.

yes no

I am a citizen of the United States of America.

yes no

I am at least sixteen years old and will not vote in a special or general election until I turn eighteen.

3 Military / Overseas Status

yes no

I am currently serving in the military.

Includes National Guard and Reserves, and spouses or dependents away from home due to service.

yes no

I live outside the United States.

4 Identification — Washington Driver License, Permit, or ID

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If you do not have a Washington driver license, permit, or ID, you may use the last four digits of your Social Security number to register.

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5 Change of Name or Address

This information will be used to update your registration, if applicable.

previous last name	first	middle
previous residential address	city	state and ZIP

6 Declaration

I declare that the facts on this voter registration form are true. I am a citizen of the United States, I will have lived at this address in Washington for at least thirty days immediately before the next election at which I vote, and I am at least sixteen years old. I am not disqualified from voting due to a court order, and I am not currently serving a sentence of total confinement under the jurisdiction of the department of corrections for a Washington felony conviction, and I am not currently incarcerated for a federal or out-of-state felony conviction.

sign
here

date
here