



Questions for Classroom Discussion

The Voting Age

- **What group of people currently votes in political elections?**

- ⇒ Consider that every citizen over the age of 18 is allowed to vote according to the Constitution, and voting can not be restricted by race, religion, gender, or any other reason
- ⇒ Consider that different groups—such as women and African Americans—have not always had the right to vote, and the Constitution has since been amended to protect their right
- ⇒ Consider that informed citizens might cast a better vote... however, being “informed” is not a requirement to vote

- **What are reasons why the minimum voting age should be lowered?**

- ⇒ Consider that the laws and decisions made by those who are voted into office will have a huge impact on young people today, even though young people currently have no say in the matter
- ⇒ Consider that typical arguments, such as young people are uninformed or easily persuaded, can be seen as unfair since adults are still able to vote when they are uninformed or easily persuaded (and many adults fit that description)
- ⇒ Consider that the age of 18 is simply a number (the minimum voting age used to be 21), and that people don't suddenly change or become better citizens when they turn 18

- **What are reasons why it would be a bad idea to lower the minimum voting age?**

- ⇒ Consider that the legal adult age in the United States is 18, and this is when several legal privileges begin (such as being able to enter into a contract, or serve on jury duty)... so it makes sense that this is the voting age
- ⇒ Consider that children need to gain experience and learn basic skills to appreciate the fundamentals of American democracy, and then they will be ready to vote
- ⇒ Consider that children are easily persuaded and do not always make sound decisions... while some adults also fit this description, the goal should be to limit people who vote this way, not increase it
- ⇒ Consider that there are scientific studies that a child's brain is changing throughout teenage years, and emotional development is not complete until adulthood