RERUN 1912

A classroom activity. Students score the four main candidates of 1912 from 0 to 10, count the ballots two ways, and talk about whether the answers differ. You need the ballot (page 2, one per student) and the tally sheet (page 3).

WHAT HAPPENED

"Theodore Roosevelt, denied the Republican nomination, ran anyway — and he and William Howard Taft split the Republican electorate nearly down the middle. More than half the country voted for one of the two Republicans; Woodrow Wilson won the presidency with 42 percent."

Score the Vote, ch. 2



Source: 1912 presidential popular vote.

HOW TO RUN IT

1. Hand out one ballot per student. Introduce the four candidates the way your class is studying the era.
2. Each student scores every candidate from 0 to 10. A 0 means no support; a 10 means strongest support. Equal scores are fine.
3. Collect the ballots. Copy each ballot's four scores onto one line of the tally sheet, or have students read them aloud.
4. Add up each candidate's column: the highest total wins. Then count the old way, one vote per ballot for its highest-scored candidate, and compare.

TALK ABOUT IT

1. Wilson won with 41.8% of the vote. Roosevelt and Taft together won 50.6%. Was Wilson the choice of most voters? How could you tell?
2. Did your class's score winner match its pick-one winner? If not, what made the difference?
3. A voter who loved Roosevelt and could live with Taft had to choose one of them in 1912. What could that voter say on a score ballot that the 1912 ballot would not let them say?
4. Under the score rule, a blank adds nothing to a candidate's total, the same as a 0. Is that fair to a candidate most voters have never heard of?
5. In Florida in 2000, the certified margin was 537 votes and Ralph Nader drew 97,488. How is that election like 1912? Does the spoiler effect favor either party?

Florida 2000: Certified Florida results, 2000 (Florida Dept. of State).

Score the Vote is a project of Super Citizen, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

YOUR BALLOT: 1912

Score every candidate from 0 to 10. You don't have to pick just one: give your favorite a 10, and still say what you think of everyone else.

CLASS BALLOT

RERUN 1912 · SCORE VOTING

Score every candidate from 0 to 10.

Fill in one bubble per candidate. 0 = no support. 10 = strongest support. Ties are fine.

President of the United States, 1912

CANDIDATE	0 NO SUPPORT	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 STRONGEST SUPPORT
Eugene V. Debs Socialist Party	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Theodore Roosevelt Progressive Party	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
William Howard Taft Republican Party	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Woodrow Wilson Democratic Party	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Add up the scores. Highest total wins.

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TALLY SHEET

Copy each ballot's four scores onto one line. Add down each column for the totals. Then circle each line's highest score: that is the ballot's one vote in the old, pick-one count.

#	DEBS	ROOSEVELT	TAFT	WILSON
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				

#	DEBS	ROOSEVELT	TAFT	WILSON
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23				
24				
25				
26				
27				
28				
29				
30				

More than 30 ballots? Print a second sheet and add the two together.

RESULTS

	DEBS	ROOSEVELT	TAFT	WILSON
Total score add both columns				
Pick-one votes count the circled scores				

SCORE WINNER: _____ PICK-ONE WINNER: _____

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