

## Election Scavenger Hunt

How much information about the election can you find in today's newspaper? Circle what you can find and supply page numbers in the blanks. To the list, add other items that you find in the newspaper.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. A photo of a candidate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. A political symbol
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A political advertisement
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. A quote from a candidate for the U.S. Senate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. An election word or "jargon"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. A poll
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. A reference to a special interest group
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. The names of both major political parties
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. An editorial about an issue or a candidate
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. A local campaign event
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. An opinion expressed by someone in your community about a local candidate or issue
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. A political cartoon
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Other: \_\_\_\_\_



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## Speaking Out About Local Concerns

What do people in your community talk about? Read letters to the editor and stories that deal with issues in your community. Identify and write in the space below the problems that concern them:

Topics	Dates
Jobs/Economy	
Education	
Taxes	
Growth/Development	
Environment (recycling, garbage collection)	
Other	



Choose a problem that concerns you. Read to learn as much as you can about it. Write a letter to the editor expressing your opinion.



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## **People and Places in Your Community**

If a candidate wanted to spend a day walking the streets of your community, where would you take him? Using the newspaper, identify places where people gather, including businesses. List your choices, or cut and tape the places to create a poster that could serve as a map. Mark the beginning and end and number each step along the way.

On his trip around your town and county, who will the candidate meet? With newspaper photos, create a collage that paints a true picture of your community.



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## Identifying Local Political Leaders and Their Parties

North Carolina's counties vary the way they handle local races. In some counties, candidates for county commissioner, local school board and other offices must declare themselves Republicans or Democrats while in other counties they do not. Even in non-partisan races, candidates may indicate their political leanings and party affiliations through what they say and do.

Based on coverage of local elections, list candidates, their office and their political party in partisan races.

Candidates	Office	Political Party

In non-partisan races, identify the candidates and offices. Cut out and attach to this paper or write down statements made by the candidates that indicate their political leanings and party affiliations.

Candidates	Office	Statements



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## **What is a Leader?**

From the newspaper select words and pictures that include the letters in the word "leader" and also describe a leader or the qualities of a leader.

**l**

**e**

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Write a paragraph about a leader or leadership in which you use the words and pictures you choose.



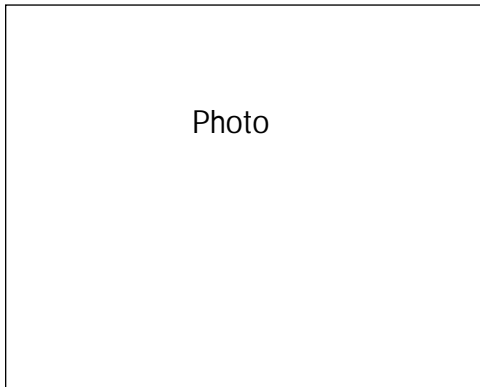
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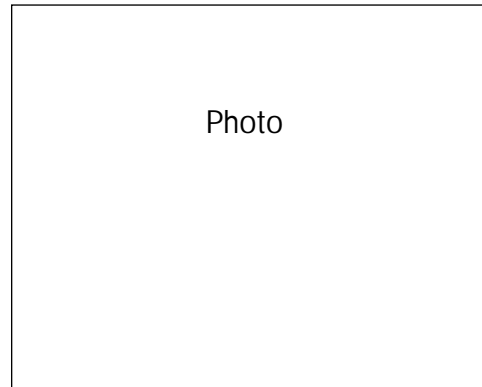
## What Photos Say

Look for photos of candidates in your newspaper. How do they look? Do they look sad, worried, joyful, tired, confident, serious...? Paste two photos of opposing candidates on this paper and make a list of words that apply under each photo.

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_



Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_



Do the photos leave you with a positive impression of the candidates? Why or why not?

Would the candidates' supporters prefer different photographs? If so, how would they change them?



# Assessing Character

Choose five character traits that you think are essential in a leader. Then choose five candidates from the newspaper and list their names on the dotted lines. Evaluate each person on one of the traits, attaching news stories with statements and other information on which you base your assessment. If you cannot find reasons for your chosen trait, make another selection that can be supported with facts from news stories.

Character Trait Evaluated:	1	2	3	4	5
_____	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
_____	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
_____	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
_____	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
_____	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
_____	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓



**Note!** You may want to consider terms adopted and promoted by your school system as part of its character education initiative.



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## Getting the Facts on Local and State Candidates

Gather information from newspapers and other election material to complete profiles on candidates for local and state office. Your teacher will provide additional sheets for each candidate you choose to profile.

Candidate's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Office: \_\_\_\_\_  
Political party: \_\_\_\_\_ Residence: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Religion: \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's name: \_\_\_\_\_ No. of children: \_\_\_\_\_

Educational background:

Professional experience:

Political offices held:

Political viewpoints on issues affecting your region or state:

Political viewpoints on issues affecting your local community:



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## Examining What Candidates Say

In an effort to win support, candidates take positions on issues that concern voters. Identify news stories that include statements made by candidates. Circle any quotes.

Choose two quotes and agree or disagree with the positions. Explain your answers:

Candidate Quoted: \_\_\_\_\_

Quote:

\_\_\_\_\_ agree

\_\_\_\_\_ disagree

Candidate Quoted: \_\_\_\_\_

Quote:

\_\_\_\_\_ agree

\_\_\_\_\_ disagree



**Follow-up:** Do you always agree with the candidates you support? Do voters vote for candidates with whom they agree on all issues? Explain.



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## **Sending Your Message**

Is there an issue that concerns you more than any other? What is it?

To gauge concerns of citizens, candidates, elected officials, their staffs and other influential readers examine the letters to the editor every day. Use letters to effectively communicate views in your own words. Here's how:

- Find out the newspaper's requirements for length (usually published on the editorial page).
- Write as a concerned, informed citizen, not an employee of a company.
- Add something to the debate; don't repeat what others have said.
- Make your own case, rather than simply refuting someone else's.
- Get to the point quickly.
- Support your assertions with facts.
- Outline concisely the action that you believe should be taken.
- Explain how the public will benefit.
- Sign your letter.

What message would you like to send to voters and candidates?  
Write a letter to the editor.

Dear Editor:



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## **The Polling Place**

If you were really voting, you would have to know much of the following information. Look in your newspaper for answers to the questions about precincts and polling places. Use other materials as needed.

1. What is your precinct?
2. Where is your polling place?
3. What time do the polling places open and close?
4. Are candidates and their supporters allowed to be present at the polls to talk to voters or pass out literature? Are limits set?
5. Who supervises the voting in the polling places and how did they get their jobs?
6. Who counts the ballots cast on Election Day? How?
7. When, how and to whom do election officials report the number of votes cast on Election Day? Who certifies the vote?



**Follow-up:** For help in determining your precinct and polling place, check the Web site for your county board of elections or check links through the state Board of Elections at [www.sboe.state.nc.us](http://www.sboe.state.nc.us).



