

# GROUP ACTIVITY: THE POWER GAME

A Mock County Chair Simulation

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## Overview

In this activity, your group will experience what it was like when county party chairs controlled who appeared on the county line ballot. One student plays the County Chair, and the rest play candidates trying to earn a spot on the line. Then you will switch to the new system and compare the experience.

## Setup (5 minutes)

Groups of 5 to 6 students. Each group needs:

- 1 student designated as the County Chair
- 4 to 5 students designated as Candidates
- Each candidate receives a Candidate Card (cut out from the next page)

## Round 1: The Old System (10 minutes)

**Step 1: Each Candidate has 60 seconds to "pitch" the County Chair on why they deserve a spot on the county line.**

Step 2: The County Chair picks 2 candidates for the line. These candidates get prime ballot placement. The rest are sent to "Ballot Siberia" (scattered positions).

Step 3: The class votes using the old-style ballot layout (county line candidates listed prominently, others scattered).

**Step 4: Record the results.**

## Round 2: The New System (10 minutes)

**Step 1: No County Chair this round. All candidates are listed equally in an office-block format.**

Step 2: Each Candidate has 60 seconds to pitch the entire class (not just one person).

Step 3: The class votes using the new office-block ballot (all candidates listed together for each office).

**Step 4: Record the results.**

## Group Discussion (10 minutes)

After both rounds, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Did different candidates win in Round 1 vs. Round 2? Why?
2. How did the County Chair decide who got on the line? Was it based on qualifications?
3. How did it feel to be a candidate who was NOT picked for the line?
4. Which system gave voters better choices? Why?
5. What does this teach you about the importance of ballot design in real elections?

## CANDIDATE CARDS

Cut along the dotted lines. Each candidate gets one card.

<b>CANDIDATE 1</b>	<b>Alex Rivera</b>	A teacher who wants to improve schools. Has 10 years of experience in education. Not connected to any political party leaders.
<b>CANDIDATE 2</b>	<b>Jordan Park</b>	A business owner who wants to lower taxes. Well-known in the community. Friends with several party leaders.
<b>CANDIDATE 3</b>	<b>Sam Chen</b>	A community organizer who fights for affordable housing. Has led protests and voter registration drives. No political connections.
<b>CANDIDATE 4</b>	<b>Morgan Jinx</b>	A lawyer who worked in the county government. Has the support of the current County Chair. Wants to keep things running smoothly.
<b>CANDIDATE 5</b>	<b>Taylor Brooks</b>	A young activist focused on climate and environmental justice. Running for the first time. Has a large social media following but no party support.
<b>CANDIDATE 6</b>	<b>Casey Plath</b>	A retired police officer who wants to address public safety. Endorsed by the local police union. Moderate views. Some party connections.

# RESULTS RECORDING SHEET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Group Members:

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## ROUND 1 RESULTS (Old System):

County Chair chose for the line:

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Winner of the vote:

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Was the winner on the county line? YES / NO

## ROUND 2 RESULTS (New System):

Winner of the vote:

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Was this the same winner as Round 1? YES / NO

## REFLECTION:

What was the biggest difference between the two rounds?

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What did this activity teach you about how ballot design affects elections?

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