
Should Everybody Vote?

Segment Length: 3:59 minutes; 5:36 minutes

Videos:

“You. Must. Vote.”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bOp0lpXtqN4>

“Everyone Must Vote?”

See website: https://stosselintheclassroom.org/both_sides/

Guide:

The questions below will help students achieve a better understanding of the arguments made on either side of a contentious topic. Because these questions often touch upon statements made briefly in the videos, we recommend reading the questions before watching each video.

Students are encouraged to take notes during the videos, and it may be helpful for students to break into groups, each taking responsibility for only a few questions, before coming together for discussion.

Analysis Questions:

1. John Stossel and Bryan Caplan note that an individual is just one of millions of voters – their ballot is unlikely to decide the election. Why might Hank Green defend voting even if your vote won't by itself make a difference in the election outcome?
2. Appropriate self-selection occurs in voting, says John Stossel. What does he mean by this? Why would this self-selection occur? That is, why don't we expect equal voter turnout regardless of political knowledge?
3. Hank Green calls voting a responsibility, not a privilege. Would John Stossel agree? How might Bryan Caplan differentiate the responsibilities that Americans have on the basis of their different levels of knowledge?
4. John Stossel remarks that, unlike in the automobile market, voters aren't likely to recognize the harm of their mistake. Why?
5. Based on Hank Green's reasoning, why might it still be valuable to vote for a candidate who loses?
6. Special interest groups have a greater understanding of national affairs, John Stossel argues. What does this have to do with whether or not one should vote?
7. Bryan Caplan describes the irrationality of voters as going beyond ignorance about basic questions. What is the real problem he describes?

8. Many would-be voters are stupid, says John Stossel. But doesn't everyone deserve a voice in a democracy? How might Stossel respond?
9. Bryan Caplan states that democracies often choose bad policies. What does Hank Green have to say about this?
10. Why should more people decide to have no opinion about some issues, according to Bryan Caplan?