

LESSON PLAN 1: CLOSE READING

NATIONAL PAGES 6-9

Lexile level: 1340L

Lower Lexile level (available online): 1090L

What's at Stake

In November's presidential election, will Americans look beyond the circus and vote on the issues?



Before Reading

1 List Vocabulary: Share with students some of the challenging general and domain-specific vocabulary for this article (see right). Encourage them to use context to infer meanings as they read. After reading, distribute or project the **Get a Clue** vocabulary exercise to assess how well students were able to infer meanings.

2 Engage: Have students watch the candidates' campaign ads on upfrontmagazine.com. Challenge them to look for persuasive devices and to use the ads to identify some key election issues.

mogul (p. 6)
pundits (p. 6)
status quo (p. 6)
contempt (p. 8)
sway (p. 9)

Additional Resources

upfrontmagazine.com

Print or project:

- **Get a Clue** (infer word meanings; also appears on p. T12)
- **Article Quiz** (also appears on p. T8)
- **Analyze the Cartoon** (also appears on p. T20)
- **Up Close: What's at Stake?** (close reading; online only)

Video:

Campaign ads for Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump

Analyze the Article

3 Read: Have students read the article, marking the text to note key ideas or questions.

4 Discuss: Distribute or project the close-reading activity **Up Close: What's at Stake** for students to work on in small groups. (Note: The questions on the PDF also appear on the facing page of this Teacher's Guide, with possible responses.) Follow up with a class discussion. If you're short on time, have each group tackle one or two of the questions. Collect students' work or have each group report its findings to the class.

- ▶ **Evaluate the author's claim in the section "The Crook & the Bully" that the candidates have waged a "war of warnings." What does the author mean, and how does she support this claim?**

Evaluate claims, cite text evidence

(The author means that each candidate has been warning voters that his or her opponent is not fit to be president. She cites examples: Trump has warned voters that Clinton is "crooked" because she used a private email server for government business, that she is weak on dealing with ISIS and China, and that she is not economically savvy. Clinton has warned voters that Trump is a bully with a weak grasp of foreign policy and that his ideas, like banning foreign Muslims, go against American ideals.)

- ▶ **Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton have very different backgrounds and stands on the issues. Based on this article, what are some things they have in common?**

Compare & contrast

(The author points out that both candidates have high levels of name recognition and that both have unusually high unfavorable ratings in polls. She writes, "Voters know Trump and Clinton, but many just don't like them.")

- ▶ **Summarize the central ideas of the section "Economic Unease."**

Central ideas, text structure

(The section "Economic Unease" focuses on key issues that will play a role in Election 2016. Concerns about the economy have led to Trump's calls to "make America great again" and prompted Clinton's calls for increasing the minimum wage. Voters are also thinking about terrorism, guns, and the fact that the next president will likely appoint the successor to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia.)

- ▶ **In the section "Sanders or Bust?" why do you think Professor Anthony Corrado describes the presidential election as a "fundraising arms race"?**

Make inferences, cite text evidence

(An arms race is an escalating competition between nations to develop and accumulate weapons. One famous example is the nuclear arms race between the U.S. and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. In this article, Corrado's quote compares the frantic fundraising efforts of the main candidates in Election 2016 to that kind of urgent competition. Corrado predicts that the total cost of this year's race could come close to \$3 billion.)

- ▶ **Based on the article, why are political experts paying close attention to the youth vote in Election 2016?**

Cause & effect, cite text evidence

(The article notes that Barack Obama's support among young voters helped him win each of the last two presidential elections. It also notes that in the Election 2016 primary season, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders received more youth votes than Clinton and Trump combined. The author writes, "It's unclear whether Sanders's young supporters will vote for any other candidate or sit the election out. . . ." The youth vote could help determine the outcome of the election.)

- ▶ **Read the sidebar titled "Where They Stand." What does it add to your understanding of the topic?**

Integrate multiple sources

(This sidebar contrasts Clinton's and Trump's stands on six important issues in Election 2016. It may help some students evaluate which candidate's positions better match their own views.)

Extend & Assess

5 Writing Prompt

After reading the article, what do you think is at stake in Election 2016? Write an essay describing what you think are the key election issues and why. Use evidence from the article to support your response.

6 Classroom Debate

Will 2016 turnout among 18- to 24-year-old voters surpass 2012 levels?

7 Video

If you have not watched the Trump and Clinton campaign ads video, play it now and discuss.

8 Quiz & Skills Pages

Use the quiz (p. T8) to assess comprehension. You may also use the **Get a Clue** skills page (p. T12) to challenge students to infer word meanings from the article and the **Analyze the Cartoon** exercise (p. T20) to hone visual literacy skills.