

Electoral College and the Popular Vote Grading Rubric

| Category | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Questions completed with accuracy and correctness. | All questions were completed correctly with text evidence to support answers. | All questions were completed correctly, but no text evidence was provided to support answers. | More than half of the questions were completed correctly, however the coloring portion of the map was completed incorrectly. | More than half of the questions were completed incorrectly. |
| Fractions and percentages of Democrat and Republican parties from the Cartogram | Fractions and percentages were calculated correctly. The correct place value is used. | Fractions or Percentages were calculated correctly. The correct place value is used. | Factions and/or percentages were calculated incorrectly. Correct place value is used. | Calculations are incorrect. |
| Cartogram | Colored with accuracy. Coloring is completed neatly. | Colored with accuracy. Cartogram is not colored neatly. | Cartogram is not colored with accuracy. | Cartogram is not colored. |
| Data accuracy | Data is correct and accurate based on the 2000 election. | Data is correct and accurate, the wrong year was used. | Data is | Data is incorrect. |
| % difference of popular votes vs. electoral for each candidate | Percent difference was calculated correctly. Work is shown. | Percent difference was calculated correctly. No work was shown. | Percent difference was calculated incorrectly. Work is shown. | Percent difference was calculated incorrectly, no work was shown. |

Total Score: _____ / 15

Electoral College and the Popular Vote Project

On November 3, 2020 we will go to the polls and cast a vote for the President and Vice President of the United States. That evening, as the last polls close in Alaska, we will be getting reports about who won the popular vote in the election. But will we really know who won the election?

When The Constitution of the United States was written in 1787, the method of electing the President was widely debated and considered from many points of view. In order for smaller states to have equal representation, it was suggested that the Congress should elect the President. But then concerns were raised that the balance of powers would be compromised if the Congress elected the President. So it was decided that a group of electors should be chosen by each state, in whatever means that the state decided, and in the same quantity as the state had Congressional members. This group became the Electoral College. The Constitution of the United States says that each state will have members of an Electoral College who will cast the deciding votes in Presidential elections.

1. Choose a state and determine how many Senators your state gets in Congress.
2. Using the same state you chose from #1, how many Representatives does your state get in Congress?

Electoral votes are allocated based on the most current Census. This is exactly how the number of Representatives of each state is decided.

3. There are 50 states in the U.S. How many Senators are there in Congress?
4. There are 538 members of the Electoral College. How many Representatives must there be in Congress?
5. To reach a majority of the votes in the Electoral College, what number represents a majority of the Electoral votes?

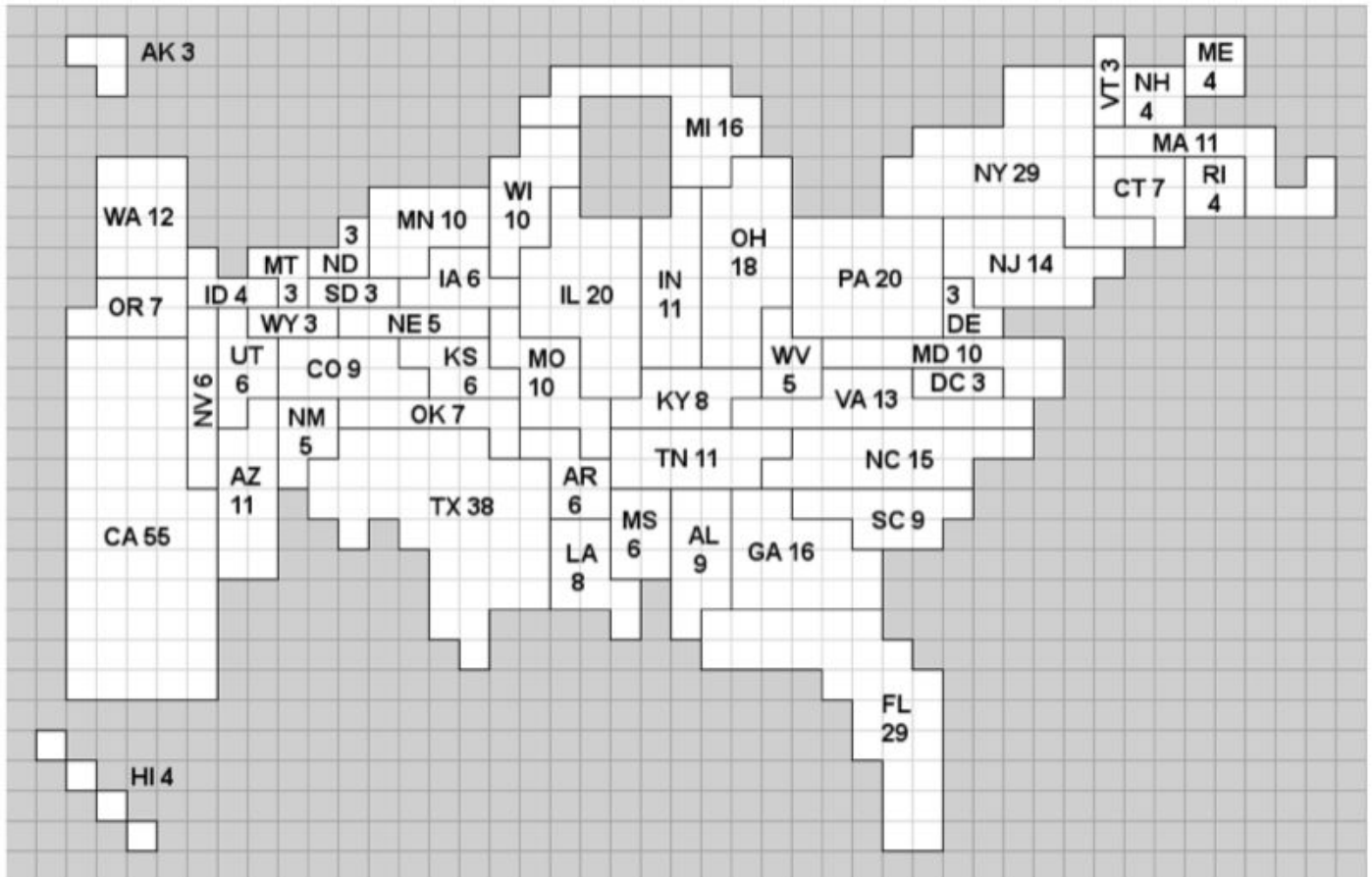
There are Presidential elections every four years. In the year 2016, we used the Electoral College numbers that were determined by the 2010 Census.

We found this really cool chart that is supposed to look like the United States, but ...The states aren't the right size (or shape for that matter).

Each state is represented by unit squares. Each square represents one Electoral College vote. So for instance, since Montana and Wyoming are not very densely populated and have only 1 Representative in

the House and of course 2 Senators, those two states look really small in this cartogram because they each only fill 3 squares.

6. Color the cartogram using the **popular vote** of each state (Democrat and Republican) for the 2000 election. Once colored, determine the fraction and percentage of democrat and republican. Using the cartogram you colored on this page, make at least 5 observations.



For the most part, state electors vote on a "winner-take-all" basis according to the popular vote. But ... In the 2000 Presidential election, Republican George W. Bush ran against Democratic, Al Gore. Al Gore received 50,999,897 votes in the popular election. George W. Bush received 50,456,002 votes.

7. Who won the popular election?
8. Have you ever heard of President Al Gore?
9. Who won in the Electoral College vote?

10. Who actually won the election?

In the 2000 Electoral College, George Bush won 271 electoral votes. Al Gore won 266 electoral votes.
Electoral College votes for 2000 Presidential election

11. Suppose 1 more state had voted for Gore and not for Bush. Could Gore have won the Electoral vote?

12. How many more votes did Gore need to reach the majority of the Electoral votes?

13. I have heard that if neither candidate reaches 270 electoral votes that the election is decided in the House of Representatives. Is it even possible for either candidate to reach 270 votes? Could this have happened in the Bush/Gore election?

Using the cartogram you colored, calculate the percent difference between the popular vote and the electoral college for each candidate. (difference/highest = %/100)

15. Gore vs. Bush Popular Vote :

16. Gore vs. Bush Electoral College:

1A **cartogram** is a map in which some thematic mapping variable is substituted for land area or distance. Source: <http://www.colleyrankings.com/cartogram2010/>

Sources for activity:

<http://www.archives.gov/federal-register/electoral-college/about.html>

<http://www.howstuffworks.com/electoral-college.htm>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electoral_College_\(United_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electoral_College_(United_States)) <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cartogram>

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