

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE STORY/CONVERSATION TOPIC #3

Date: _____

Pretend you are President of the United States. What are some of the first changes you would make? Why?

1.

2.

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE STORY/CONVERSATION TOPIC #2

Date: _____

An issue is an idea or belief that a candidate or party supports. Think about the things that are important to you in this election. What do you want the important issues to be? Why?

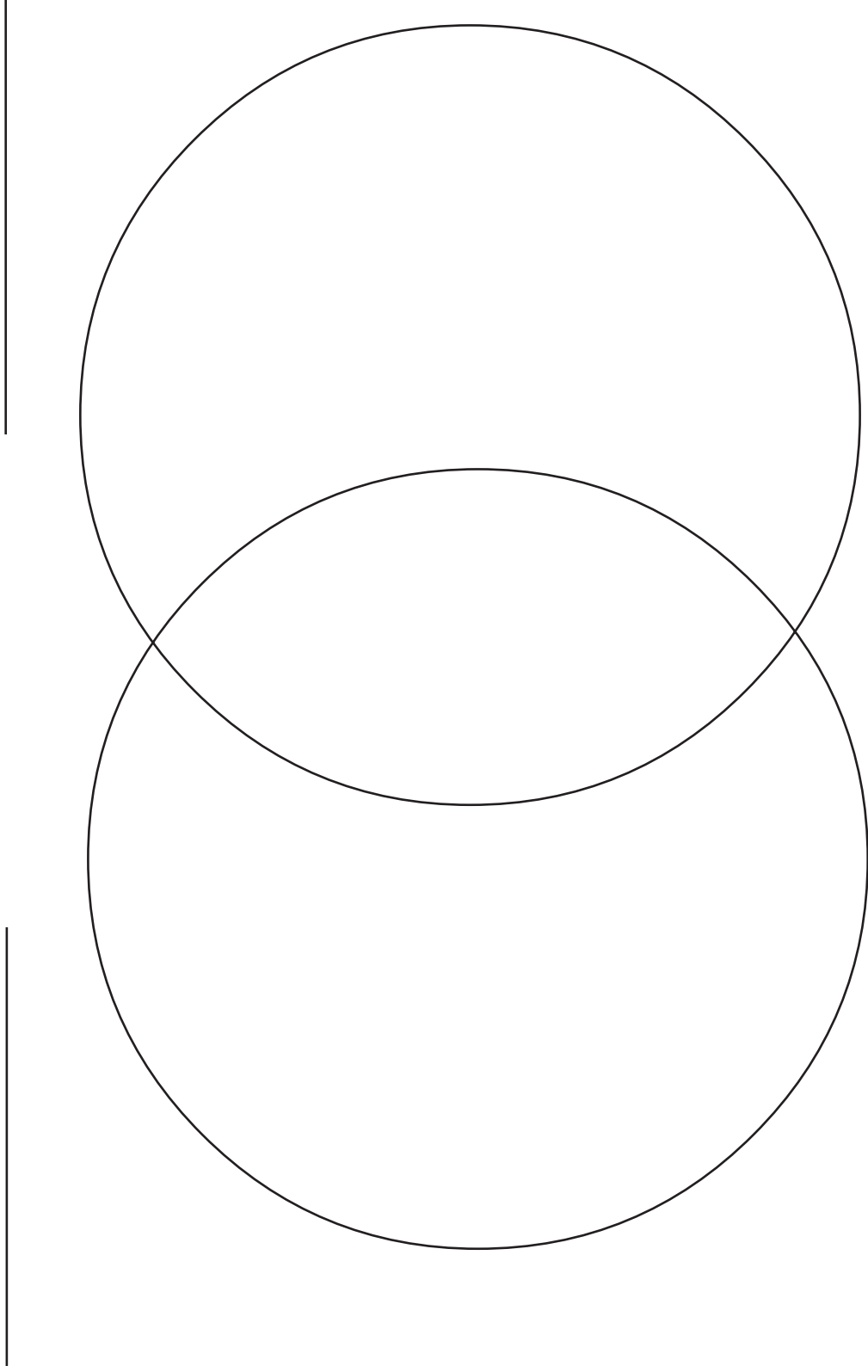
1.

2.

Which candidate supports these issues?

ELECTION VENN DIAGRAM

Use the Venn Diagram to compare candidates or issues in this election.



COMPARE THE CANDIDATES

Use the chart below to compare the two candidates. Write how they are alike and how they are different. Include their views about issues as well as their background.

Candidate #1: _____

Candidate #2: _____

HOW ARE THEY ALIKE?	HOW ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

What do I know?	What do I want to know?	What have I learned?

CANDIDATE KWL

Candidate: _____

<i>What do I know about the candidate?</i>	<i>What do I want to know about the candidate?</i>	<i>What have I learned about the candidate?</i>

Campaigns & Elections Definitions

Absentee Voting: A method of voting which enables registered voters to vote in a given election without physically going to the polls.

Campaign: A schedule of planned actions and events leading to the election of the candidate.

Campaign Finance Reform: Any effort to change federal campaign finance laws and practices. The most recent campaign finance reform debate centers around a proposal from Sen. McCain (R-AZ) and Sen. Feingold (D-WI) that will restrict the amount of soft money allowed to be used by candidates in federal elections.

Candidate: An individual running for office in an election.

Caucus: Meetings where party members gather together to nominate a candidate. Caucuses usually involve a series of meetings held over weeks or months, attended by a select group of party members. Both the Democratic and Republican Parties have their own rules governing caucuses and operation of the caucuses changes from state to state.

Citizen: A member of a state or other political community. Only United States citizens are allowed to vote in political elections.

Debate: A discussion between candidates held to address issues and campaign platforms.

Delegate: An individual that is appointed or elected to represent others.

Democracy: A government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

Early Money: Campaign money given before or during primaries. These funds help a campaign establish momentum.

Election Day: Federal elections are held on the first Tuesday, after the first Monday in November on even-numbered years. Presidential elections are held every four years. It is on this date that the American public votes for its choice of president.

Electoral College: The group of individuals who formally elect the United States president and vice-president.

Election Cycle: The period before an election during which candidates raise money and seek voters' support.

Federal: A form of government in which power is divided between one central power and several regional powers.

Federal Election Commission (F.E.C.): A commission that oversees federal campaigns. Founded in 1974.

G.O.P.: Refers to the Republican party, previously known as the Grand Old Party.

Grassroots: A grassroots campaign is one that involves the citizens (common people) as a main political group.

Incumbent: An individual currently holding a position of office.

Independent: A voter who does not claim to be a member of a political party. (This voter will exercise a free choice in voting with either party on different candidates and issues.)

Issues: Ideas and points of debate around which candidates may develop policy. Issues are sometimes divided into those that concern domestic affairs within the United States, and those related to foreign policy.

Landslide: The occurrence of a shocking electoral victory in which one candidate's votes far surpass those of other candidates.

Lobbyist: A person who attempts to influence a candidate's platform toward a specific issue. They are often accused of using soft money to gain the candidate's support for their issue.

Matching Funds: Primary presidential candidates are eligible to receive dollar-for-dollar funds from the federal government that match the amount they have raised through their own efforts. They can receive matching funds only if they agree to limit their spending to \$46 million (FEC estimate for 2004) during the primaries.

Media: Press coverage of political events that communicate political issues and occurrences to the public. This coverage can be intentionally or unintentionally biased in favor of a particular candidate.

Midterm Election: A Congressional election held half-way between presidential elections. Approximately 1/3 of Senate seats and the entire body of the House of Representatives are up for election. Some consider the results a reflection of the electorate's views on the incumbent president's performance.

National Conventions: National party conventions are huge media events where thousands of delegates convene to officially nominate their party's candidate. The convention provides a platform to declare their party's nominee and vice presidential running mate. Each party's platform is also discussed and announced at conventions.

Nominee: A person proposed by others for election to office.

Non-partisan: A person who does not identify with any particular political party.

Partisan: A person who is strongly devoted to a political party.

Party: A group united by similar political values, joined to influence the federal election.

Platform: A statement of issues announced at party conventions.

Political Action Committee (PAC): A group of people joined by a shared interest. A PAC can donate up to \$5,000 per candidate per election.

Poll: The place where votes are cast. The term 'poll' is also used to describe a survey researching public opinion.

Pollster: A person or company whose duty is to research public opinion.

Precinct: The precinct, which divides portions into sort of neighborhoods, is the smallest political unit in politics. A precinct can have between 200 and 1,000 voters.

Primary: A stage in the election process in which voters cast their ballots for their preferred candidate or delegate who represents that candidate. The outcome of a primary indicates to party leaders, the media, and the public the chance each candidate has to be elected. Primaries are the main way to nominate a candidate.

Rhetoric: The ability to effectively use language, through the practice of exaggeration or display, to influence others.

Running Mate: A presidential candidate will choose another individual to run for vice president. This person is the president's running mate.

Soft Money: Funds raised by political parties directed towards party building and not directly towards supporting federal candidates.

Spin: The presentation of information that is biased or slanted to favor a candidate. Advisors to a candidate may engage in "spin" in their communications to the media.

Straw Poll: A non-official, non-scientific study of voter preferences in an election.