

the ARTICLE (for instructors)

McCain Picks Veep

The suspense around McCain's Veep pick had been building all week, even as people watched the Democratic National Convention. Who would the Republican candidate, a person many have called "a maverick," choose to be his running mate? No one could have guessed the almost completely unknown governor of Alaska, Sarah Palin.

Stalwart Republicans have already begun to spin the news. They call her a Washington outsider in an effort to place distance between McCain and the failed policies of the unpopular President Bush. She isn't beholden to the status quo of politics in the capital. She's young, too. In other words, she will bring fresh ideas to the national scene. On the other hand, the Democratic pundits have painted her as someone woefully unqualified to be just one step away from the Presidency. What if McCain died in office? This is a very real concern for some Americans, given the accompanying stresses of the job and his age. After all, he just turned 72.

Of course, Democrats will focus on the negatives and Republicans on the positives. Impartial historians and scholars, however, have disparagingly called Palin the most unqualified Vice Presidential choice of modern times. She completely lacks experience in national security and foreign affairs. After all, she has only been governor of Alaska, a state with few people, for two years. Before that, she was mayor of a town with slightly more than 5,000 people.

It's all a big gamble. Palin could invigorate McCain's campaign, drawing women supporters and independents who have yet to decide on a candidate. Or people could scoff at his choice and turn away in droves. But it also sends a very clear message: McCain isn't worried about his age, and has no intention of passing away during his Presidency. Palin's lack of experience and her youth simply don't matter.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in **red typeface** are the recommended vocabulary for this lesson.

WARM-UPS

Select one or all of the following warm-up activities.

1. **Define:** What does "president" mean? Can you use it in a sentence? Can you give examples?

2. **Brainstorm:** Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with "president" for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together.

3. **Speculate:** Write in the missing word for today's article title: "McCain () ()." Why did you choose these words for the blanks?

4. **Do you agree or disagree? Why?**

| | |
|----|--|
| a. | I'm very interested in the US election. |
| b. | The US election this year will be the biggest news of the year worldwide. |
| c. | The US President is one of the most influential and important people in the world. |
| d. | John McCain is too old to become President. |
| e. | Barak Obama is too young and inexperienced to become President. |

5. **Rank It!:** What age is ideal for a politician in national government? Rank the choices in order, from best to worst.

Remember to support your answers!

| | |
|----|---------------|
| a. | 35 or younger |
| b. | 36 - 45 |
| c. | 46 - 55 |
| d. | 56 - 65 |
| e. | 66 or older |

VOCABULARY

Select one of the following vocabulary acquisition activities.

1. Vocabulary match: Individually or in pairs/groups, match the words in column A (from the article) with the best choice in column B.

| | | | |
|----|-------------------|----|-----------|
| a. | suspense | q. | obligated |
| b. | stalwart | r. | energize |
| c. | beholden | s. | tension |
| d. | pundit | t. | belittle |
| e. | woeful | u. | neutral |
| f. | impartial | v. | crowd |
| g. | disparage | w. | loyal |
| h. | invigorate | x. | laugh at |
| i. | scoff | y. | expert |
| j. | drove | z. | awful |

2. Fill in the Blanks: Fill in the blank with the correct word.

| | woefully | suspense | disparagingly | impartial | stalwarts |
|----|---|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| | beholden | scoff | pundits | droves | invigorate |
| a. | The () around McCain's Veep pick had been building all week. | | | | |
| b. | () Republicans have already begun to spin the news. | | | | |
| c. | Sarah Palin isn't () to the status quo of politics in the capital. | | | | |
| d. | The Democratic () have painted her differently. | | | | |
| e. | They think that she is () unqualified to be just one step away from the Presidency. | | | | |
| f. | () historians and scholars don't have positive views. | | | | |
| g. | They have () called Palin the most unqualified Vice Presidential choice of modern times. | | | | |
| h. | Palin could () McCain's campaign, drawing women supporters. | | | | |
| i. | People could () at his choice. | | | | |
| j. | They could turn away in (). | | | | |

3. Define: Define each word, correctly pronounce it, explain the meaning and/or usage, and offer an example sentence to the class.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------------|----|-----------------|----|------------------|----|-------------------|----|--------------|
| a. | suspense | c. | beholden | e. | woeful | g. | disparage | i. | scoff |
| b. | stalwart | d. | pundit | f. | impartial | h. | invigorate | j. | drove |

WORD RECOGNITION

1. **Word Search:** Find the target words (in bold). Time yourself, and see how many words you can find in three minutes. In five minutes. In ten minutes.

| woefully | suspense | disparagingly | impartial | stalwarts |
|---|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| beholden | scoff | pundits | droves | invigorate |
| V E P W A S D M S G V D B Y I G F T D O L E T B R H E A J E T T W A O E R V P U H E D E E Z V V H R A F V O O K I S V G E Q E Q W O L U L R S C E L M J B Z L S J G D L P D V V A K C N A S W S E I A L D W I I U X T R Z F N Q R V W Y N R T S S U P G V P A H V N L Z D R U S E X L A G G N D S I M N A S I O S O I M P A R T A I L P P J N G N I G A R A P S I D M E X C G S T I D N U P Q F R I N Q L S C O F F X B H N A N Y S Y R M P D W W S J Y W N B S E | | | | |

2. **Target Word Pool:** Find the target words (in bold) with their exact match. Time yourself, and see how many words you can find in three minutes. In five minutes. In ten minutes.

| woefully | suspense | disparagingly | impartial | stalwarts |
|--|-----------------|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| beholden | scoff | pundits | droves | invigorate |
| sentence driving station suspenseful stalled wistful immaterial beholden pandas vigorous pundit drools puns stalagmite disparaging woefully behooved desperate drives beheld droves sustenance impartially partially distance wistfully suspend invigorate pundits suspense stalwart drove damagingly woeful stalwarts inviolate disparagingly woebegone beneath behold imparts punish impartial vigorously | | | | |

pre- or post-COMPREHENSION

1. Word Association: Brainstorm words associated with today's topic for two minutes. Present to the class.

2. Brainstorm Questions: Brainstorm questions that you would like to ask about today's topic. Answer the questions without looking at the article.

3. True or False?: Guess (before the article) or answer (after the article) whether the sentence is true or false. If false, correct the sentence.

| | | |
|----|--|-------|
| a. | No one knew McCain would pick Sarah Palin as his running mate. | T / F |
| b. | Democrats think she will bring new ideas to Washington. | T / F |
| c. | Democrats think she doesn't have the experience to become President. | T / F |
| d. | Neutral historians think she is one of the least qualified running mates ever. | T / F |
| e. | According to the article, McCain likely feels young enough to become the US President. | T / F |

4. Questions: Answer the questions to check comprehension.

| | |
|----|---|
| a. | According to the article, what have the Republicans begun to do? |
| b. | What do Republicans say about Sarah Palin? |
| c. | What do Democrats say about Sarah Palin? |
| d. | What do historians say about her? |
| e. | According to the article, what message does McCain send with his Veep pick? |

5. Vocabulary: In pairs/groups, remember how the words were used in today's article.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------|----|----------|----|-----------|----|---------------|----|--------|
| a. | suspense | c. | beholden | e. | woefully | g. | disparagingly | i. | scoff |
| b. | stalwarts | d. | pundits | f. | impartial | h. | invigorate | j. | droves |

6. Fragments: Remember how the fragments were used, and complete the sentence from today's article.

| | |
|----|---|
| a. | Who would the Republican candidate, a person many have called "a maverick"... |
| b. | Stalwart Republicans have... |
| c. | This is a very real concern for some Americans, given... |
| d. | She completely lacks... |
| e. | Palin could invigorate McCain's campaign, drawing... |

post-COMPREHENSION

- 1. Vocabulary:** Circle any additional unknown words/phrases in the article. In pairs/groups, use your dictionaries to understand the meanings. Present to the class.
- 2. Class Questions:** Read through the article once more, and write down any questions that you would like to discuss in pairs/groups or as a class. Discuss.
- 3. Summarize:** Work with a partner to summarize the article in your own words.
- 4. Discuss:** Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

| | |
|----|---|
| a. | Did you like this article? |
| b. | What was your general impression after reading this article? |
| c. | How important is the age of a leader? Should it be a major issue? Please explain. |
| d. | How important is the experience of a leader? Should it be a major issue? Please explain. |
| e. | Is it a good thing that McCain chose a woman to be his Vice President? Why/not? |
| f. | Why do you think that McCain may have chosen Sarah Palin? Please explain. |
| g. | Is it a good thing that Barak Obama is the first black candidate with a real chance to become the US President? |
| h. | Who do you prefer in the US election, John McCain or Barak Obama? Why? |
| i. | Who do you think will win the US election in November? Please explain. |
| j. | What do you think of age discrimination? Please support your opinion with examples, if possible. |

- 5. Presentation:** Select one of the questions from above and prepare a formal presentation with your partner. Choose either to inform or persuade in your presentation. Use the following outline to organize your presentation, making notes on your notebook. Lastly, speak to another pair of students.

| |
|---|
| Introduction: State the key idea of your presentation. |
| Outline: Briefly mention the steps you plan to present. |
| Main Body: Break this into statements with supporting evidence for each one. |
| Conclusion: Summarize the key points once more. |

- 6. Google Search:** Type "Sarah Palin" into Google news and read additional articles on this topic. Discuss or write an essay about your findings.

STUDENT HANDOUT (the article)

McCain Picks Veep

The suspense around McCain's Veep pick had been building all week, even as people watched the Democratic National Convention. Who would the Republican candidate, a person many have called "a maverick," choose to be his running mate? No one could have guessed the almost completely unknown governor of Alaska, Sarah Palin.

The Republican stalwarts have already begun to spin the news. They call her a Washington outsider in an effort to place distance between McCain and the failed policies of the unpopular President Bush. She isn't beholden to the status quo of politics in the capital. She's young, too. In other words, she will bring fresh ideas to the national scene. On the other hand, the Democratic pundits have painted her as someone woefully unqualified to be just one step away from the Presidency. What if McCain died in office? This is a very real concern for some Americans, given the accompanying stresses of the job and his age. After all, he just turned 72.

Of course, Democrats will focus on the negatives and Republicans on the positives. Impartial historians and scholars, however, have disparagingly called Palin the most unqualified Vice Presidential choice of modern times. She completely lacks experience in national security and foreign affairs. After all, she has only been governor of Alaska, a state with few people, for two years. Before that, she was mayor of a town with slightly more than 5,000 people.

It's all a big gamble. Palin could invigorate McCain's campaign, drawing women supporters and independents who have yet to decide on a candidate. Or people could scoff at his choice and turn away in droves. But it also sends a very clear message: McCain isn't worried about his age, and has no intention of passing away during his Presidency. Palin's lack of experience and her youth simply don't matter.

Notes:

STUDENT HANDOUT (fill in the blank)

Fill in the blank with the correct word.

| | | | | |
|------------|------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| woefully | invigorate | slightly | stalwarts | droves |
| completely | suspense | supporters | impartial | disparagingly |
| coff | candidate | beholden | accompanying | pundits |

McCain Picks Veep

The (a. _____) around McCain's Veep pick had been building all week, even as people watched the Democratic National Convention. Who would the Republican (b. _____), a person many have called "a maverick," choose to be his running mate? No one could have guessed the almost (c. _____) unknown governor of Alaska, Sarah Palin.

The Republican (d. _____) have already begun to spin the news. They call her a Washington outsider in an effort to place distance between McCain and the failed policies of the unpopular President Bush. She isn't (e. _____) to the status quo of politics in the capital. She's young, too. In other words, she will bring fresh ideas to the national scene. On the other hand, the Democratic (f. _____) have painted her as someone (g. _____) unqualified to be just one step away from the Presidency. What if McCain died in office? This is a very real concern for some Americans, given the (h. _____) stresses of the job and his age. After all, he just turned 72.

Of course, Democrats will focus on the negatives and Republicans on the positives. (i. _____) historians and scholars, however, have (j. _____) called Palin the most unqualified Vice Presidential choice of modern times. She completely lacks experience in national security and foreign affairs. After all, she has only been governor of Alaska, a state with few people, for two years. Before that, she was mayor of a town with (k. _____) more than 5,000 people.

It's all a big gamble. Palin could (l. _____) McCain's campaign, drawing women (m. _____) and independents who have yet to decide on a candidate. Or people could (n. _____) at his choice and turn away in (o. _____). But it also sends a very clear message: McCain isn't worried about his age, and has no intention of passing away during his Presidency. Palin's lack of experience and her youth simply don't matter.

STUDENT HANDOUT (extended listening)

Listen and fill in the missing sentences. Compare answers with a partner, and then listen once more.

McCain Picks Veep

The suspense around McCain's Veep pick had been building all week, even as people watched the Democratic National Convention. Who would the Republican candidate, a person many have called "a maverick," choose to be his running mate? a) _____.

The Republican stalwarts have already begun to spin the news. They call her a Washington outsider in an effort to place distance between McCain and the failed policies of the unpopular President Bush. b) _____
_____. She's young, too. In other words, she will bring fresh ideas to the national scene. On the other hand, the Democratic pundits have painted her as someone woefully unqualified to be just one step away from the Presidency. What if McCain died in office? This is a very real concern for some Americans, given the accompanying stresses of the job and his age. After all, he just turned 72.

Of course, Democrats will focus on the negatives and Republicans on the positives. Impartial historians and scholars, however, c) _____. She completely lacks experience in national security and foreign affairs. After all, she has only been governor of Alaska, a state with few people, for two years. Before that, she was mayor of a town with slightly more than 5,000 people.

It's all a big gamble. Palin could invigorate McCain's campaign, drawing women supporters and independents who have yet to decide on a candidate. d) _____. But it also sends a very clear message: e) _____. Palin's lack of experience and her youth simply don't matter.

STUDENT HANDOUT (activities)

ANSWER KEY

Vocabulary

1. Vocabulary Match:

| | | | |
|----|---|----|---|
| a. | s | f. | u |
| b. | w | g. | s |
| c. | q | h. | t |
| d. | y | i. | x |
| e. | z | j. | v |

2. Fill in the Blanks:

| | | | |
|----|----------|----|---------------|
| a. | suspense | f. | Impartial |
| b. | Stalwart | g. | disparagingly |
| c. | beholden | h. | invigorate |
| d. | pundits | i. | scoff |
| e. | woefully | j. | droves |

pre- or post-Comprehension

1. True or False:

| | |
|----|---|
| a. | T |
| b. | F |
| c. | F |
| d. | F |
| e. | T |

2. Fragments:

| | |
|----|--|
| a. | choose to be his running mate? |
| b. | already begun to spin the news. |
| c. | the accompanying stresses of the job and his age. |
| d. | experience in national security and foreign affairs. |
| e. | women supporters and independents who have yet to decide on a candidate. |

Student Handout

1. Fill in the Blanks

| | | | |
|----|--------------|----|---------------|
| a. | suspense | i. | Impartial |
| b. | candidate | j. | disparagingly |
| c. | completely | k. | slightly |
| d. | Stalwart | l. | invigorate |
| e. | beholden | m. | supporters |
| f. | pundits | n. | scoff |
| g. | woefully | o. | droves |
| h. | accompanying | | |

2. Extended Listening

| | |
|----|--|
| a. | No one could have guessed the almost completely unknown governor of Alaska, Sarah Palin |
| b. | She isn't beholden to the status quo of politics in the capital |
| c. | have disparagingly called Palin the most unqualified Vice Presidential choice of modern times |
| d. | Or people could scoff at his choice and turn away in droves |
| e. | McCain isn't worried about his age, and has no intention of passing away during his Presidency |