

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 may be vocabulary unfamiliar to the students.

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Notes:

STEP ONE

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.

STEP TWO

Discuss: 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.

STEP THREE

The Article: Read the article, and work with a partner to understand it. Lastly, summarize in your own words.

STEP FOUR

Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

a.	Did you like this article?
b.	Is it a good thing that McCain chose a woman to be his Vice President? Why/not?
c.	Why do you think that McCain may have chosen Sarah Palin? Please explain.
d.	Is it a good thing that Barak Obama is the first black candidate with a real chance to become the US President?
e.	Who do you think will win the US election in November? Please explain.
f.	What do you think of age discrimination? Please support your opinion with examples, if possible.

STEP FIVE

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.