



Film Discussion Guide



YARD GIRL
PRODUCTIONS
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Table of Contents

This discussion guide has been designed to prompt reflection and facilitate conversations about the themes explored within *The Young Vote* and how they relate to the lives of your learners. The guide provides facilitation recommendations on the different ways you can utilize the resource to support your students' learning and development as civically engaged young people. The guide also includes an overview of the film and cast, and key information and discussion questions for each of the six (6) themes. The final section of the discussion guide is dedicated to helping your students apply their insights from the film to their own lives and provides prompts to help them identify what they will do to create change, including registering to vote through [The Young Vote](#) website, if they're eligible.

- Facilitation Recommendations P. 3
- Film Overview P. 4
- The Cast P. 5-6
- Discussion Theme #1: Community and Me P. 7-8
- Discussion Theme #2: Democracy and Civic Engagement P. 9-10
- Discussion Theme #3: Voting and Democracy P. 11-12
- Discussion Theme #4: Voter Suppression P. 13-14
- Discussion Theme #5: Trust and the Political System P. 15-16
- Discussion Theme #6: Hope and Determination P. 17-18
- Application: What will I do? P. 19



Facilitation Recommendations

***The Young Vote* inspires conversation and action.**

Dear educators,

This discussion guide has been designed to help young people process the film and its relevance to their everyday lives, both now, and in the future. The guide can be facilitated with middle, high school, and university students. It is designed to support young people, regardless of their age and voting eligibility, to have dialogue about themes that are critical to our democracy, to deepen their understanding of civic engagement and to identify ways they can actively be involved in their community. Some of the discussion questions are for those who are eligible to vote, these questions are marked with '(V)'.

As the resource requires young people to practice communication skills and explore differing perspectives, it is recommended that you have clear community agreements in place that prioritize effective dialogue over debate and the creation of a brave space, grounded in safety, dignity and accountability.

Ideally, learners will discuss each of the six themes over multiple lessons, and then apply their insights by taking specific action within their community. We know time is tight and that this approach isn't always possible so each theme can also be explored independently to give you the flexibility to facilitate conversations, according to the goals and needs of your context. Regardless of which themes you cover, we recommend starting with the first theme 'Community and Me' and wrapping up with the 'Application', as this helps connect the film to the everyday lives of your students, particularly those who aren't eligible to vote.

As you know your students best, please use the discussion questions as a starting-off point and adapt them as needed to suit your students and their learning. The 'Application' can be as big or small as you'd like, and can also be used as an assessment item, depending on your context.

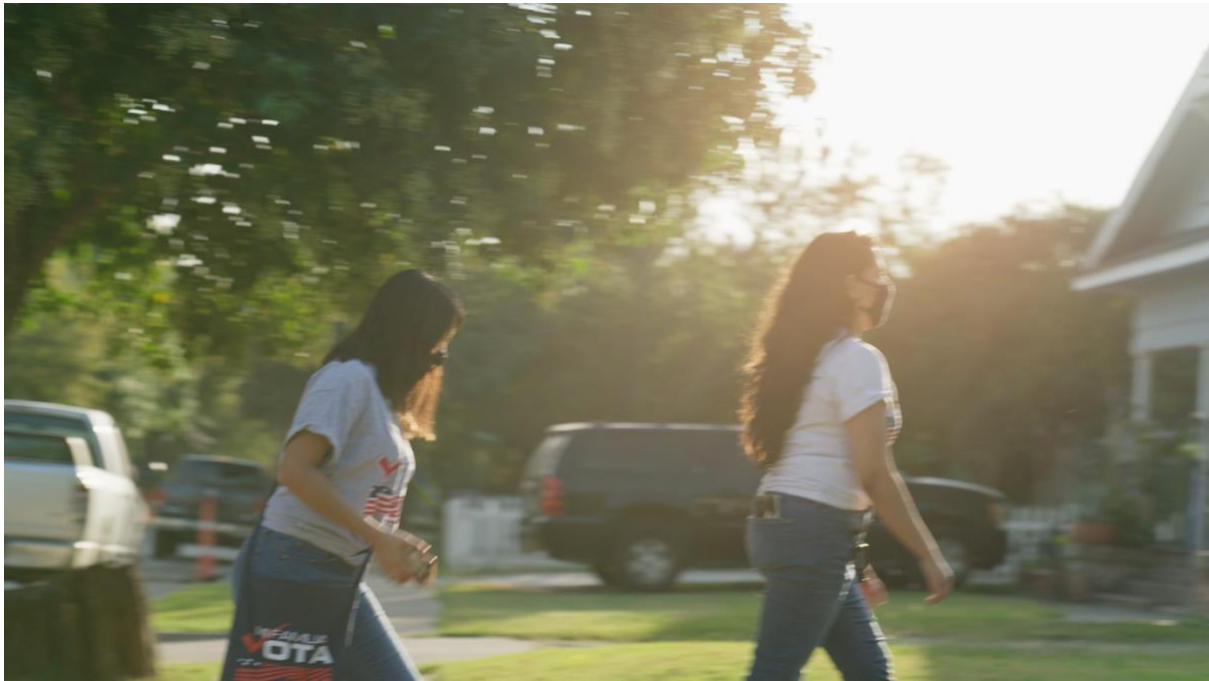
Thank you for all that you do for our young people and our wider society!

Sincerely,

The Young Vote team

Film Overview

Democracy is being threatened...
And young people are taking it personally.



The Young Vote follows a diverse group of students and activists during the 2020 election to understand young people's perceptions of voting and civic engagement. The film takes you street-level alongside young passionate activists from California, Florida, Kentucky, and Texas as they challenge barriers to civic participation so their voices and the voices of their peers will be heard. It's a story about unleashing civic power, shaping the future of America, and preserving the promise of democracy.

“Although it doesn’t pack the punch I wish it would, I’m still going to be voting because it is important. Without the vote, I have no power. The little power I do have is in my vote. It’s the most direct way I can do something with the political system.”

- Ariana

The Cast



SOPHIA

Sophia is a native of Oregon currently living in Los Angeles. She wrote her college thesis on why millennials don't vote in higher numbers. She is particularly interested in tackling the issues facing women and the most marginalized groups in our society and worked as an organizer for the 2020 election nationally and in Georgia.



ARIANA

Ariana is an African-American student activist from Louisville, Kentucky who attends Northern Kentucky University. She has been involved in issues important to her and her community since she was in high school and wants to help end police brutality in her home state. She is not sure if voting is as powerful as activism.



LIZ

Liz is a DACA immigrant who came to the U.S. when she was seven years old with her parents from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico. She grew up in North Texas and although she is not able to vote herself, she works as an organizer in Dallas with a leading civic engagement organization in the Latinx community that is focused on engaging first time Latino voters in the political system.



ELENA & DARIEL

Dariel and Elena are high school juniors who live in Orlando and Cooper City, Florida respectively. They meet through the group Civics Unplugged because neither of them are interested in joining a political party and want to work to ensure Florida allows Independents and Non Party Affiliates citizens to vote in the primaries.

Discussion Theme #1: Community and Me

Community can have many different meanings but at its core it is about people and our connections to each other. Our communities can be local, national, and international and can be based on our shared location, interests, heritage, and other identifiers. We might be part of several communities at any given time, for example, the school community, a specific sporting community, the town we live in, a religious community and the country we call home.

A central theme explored in *The Young Vote* is whether our communities, particularly our national community, reflect the type of society we want to live in and what our role is in helping build the community we desire.

“The past two elections in this country have made a huge part of society say ‘OMG, I don’t live in the country I thought I lived in’.”

- Thanasi Dilos (Founder of Civics Unplugged)

Throughout the film, we see each of the cast member’s share their views on the type of society they want to live in, the challenges currently stopping it from being a reality and the solutions they’re implementing to help create change.

- For Sophia, it’s about ensuring young people can trust the government and political system, so they engage in campaigns to mobilize their peers to vote and to hold the government accountable for their promises to voters.
- For Elena and Dariel, who aren’t of voting age, it’s about being in a society where people’s right to vote isn’t confined by the two-party system, so they focus their action on campaigning for Open Primaries, where all voters can vote, regardless of political party.
- For Ariana, it’s about having a community where everyone, particularly Black people, are safe and there is justice in our society, so they use activism to create awareness and they vote to use their voice and hold leaders accountable.
- For Liz, they have a sense of duty to help others understand why it’s crucial people participate in their democracy, and while as a DACA immigrant, they’re ineligible to vote, they are committed to helping their Latino community engage in the voting process.

#1 Community and Me

Discussion Prompts:

- What does community mean to you? Who does/doesn't it include? Why?
- What kind of society do you want to live in? What do you care about? Why do those things matter to you?
- What/who has shaped your perspective on what matters?

For example, in the film, Sophia talks about the influence of her mom taking her to a protest when she was a child and how this shaped her view that using your right to vote matters. Whereas Ariana talks to their personal experiences as a Black female in America and the influence of the civics program at her school on shaping their perspective that communities need to value everyone and that Black Lives Matter.

- Does our current society reflect the type of world you want to live in? If not, what are some of the challenges currently stopping your ideal society from becoming a reality?