

TEACHING TOLERANCE



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MIDDLE & UPPER GRADES ACTIVITY

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EXPANDING VOTING RIGHTS

The Four Generations

The Silent Generation

BORN 1928 to 1945
TURNED 18 IN 1946 to 1963
CURRENT AGE 66-83

- 81% of Americans age 65 and older
- Conservative views on government and society for most of their lives
- Once one of the most Democratic generations, today they are the most Republican
- Silents make up 17% of all registered voters
- More uncomfortable than younger people with many social changes, including racial diversity and homosexuality
- Only group to favor McCain over Obama in 2008
- Highly engaged in 2012 election, as in 2010
- More likely to rate Social Security as top voting issue
- Favor Republicans on most issues, but not Social Security
- 79% are non-Hispanic whites

The Boomer Generation

BORN 1946 to 1964
TURNED 18 IN 1964 to 1982
CURRENT AGE 47-65

- Boomers make up 37% of registered voters, the largest share of any generation
- Now express as much frustration with government as the Silents
- Particularly concerned about their own financial future
- Uncertainty about retirement security has many planning to delay retirement
- Older Boomers are somewhat more Democratic than younger Boomers
- Nearly half say life in U.S. has gotten worse since the 1960s

Generation X

BORN 1965 to 1980
TURNED 18 IN 1983 to 1998
CURRENT AGE 31-46

- Similar to Millennials on social issues
- Grown more critical of government over the last decade
- Backed Obama in 2008, but tilted toward GOP in 2010
- Since '09, sharp drop in financial satisfaction
- Older Xers tend to vote more Republican, younger Xers vote more Democratic
- Gen Xers make up 26% of registered voters

The Millennial Generation

BORN 1981 to 1993
TURNED 18 IN 1999 to 2011
CURRENT AGE 18-30

- Voted for Obama by two-to-one in 2008, the largest margin within any age group since 1972
- Much less politically engaged than in 2008
- The most diverse generation—41% are Hispanic or nonwhite
- 17% of registered voters
- Consistently liberal views on many social and governmental issues
- Experiencing high rates of unemployment, but still upbeat
- Welcome the new face of America