



## GROW A VOTER CURRICULUM



MEDIA LITERACY

PORTLAND  
Your ballot must be received by 8:00 PM<sup>2</sup>  
on Election Day to be counted.

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## MEDIA LITERACY

"JAMES BALDWIN SAID THAT, '**PEOPLE ARE TRAPPED IN HISTORY AND HISTORY IS TRAPPED IN PEOPLE.**' WE CAN'T ESCAPE WHERE WE COME FROM, BUT IT'S OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO RESHAPE WHAT THAT STORY LOOKS LIKE."

- STACEY ABRAMS, *ALL IN: THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY*

# LESSON ONE



## ALL IN FOR CIVIC AND MEDIA LITERACY: USING THE FULL FILM



### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

- ★ How does the documentary *ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy* tell the story of American democracy, voting rights, and voter suppression past and present?
- ★ How do media literacy skills inform civic literacy?

### OVERVIEW

***ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy*** tells the story of the 2018 gubernatorial race in Georgia and the insidious voter suppression tactics used throughout the campaign leading up to election day. The film offers students a historical overview of voter suppression tracing its roots to our nation's founding, and insight into how individuals, communities, and social movements fought to guarantee and expand the right to vote.

In this lesson, students will practice critical media literacy skills to "read" and analyze the documentary film ***ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy***. By strengthening and practicing these skills, students can become more discerning consumers of all media, increase their civic literacy, and become more responsible and engaged citizens.



## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- ★ Watch the full documentary, *ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy*
- ★ Analyze the documentary using critical media literacy questions
- ★ Demonstrate skills to 'read' film with a critical media literacy lens



## Materials

- ★ Film Trailer
- ★ Handout: [NAMLE Key Questions to Ask When Analyzing Media Messages](#)
- ★ Information for students to access and watch the full film
- ★ Access to or copies of the Letter from filmmakers



## Length

This lesson includes a suggested flipped classroom model, where students will do a short introductory exercise as a class, watch the full film as homework, and come together for the class activities.

### Suggested pacing:

- ★ Fifteen minutes class pre-work
- ★ Film viewing at home
- ★ One 55-minutes class period

## HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

**MEDIA LITERACY** empowers people to be critical thinkers and makers, effective communicators and active citizens and strengthens their ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act using all forms of communication.

**CIVIC LITERACY** provides the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in civic life knowing how to stay informed, understand governmental processes, and how to exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship at the local, state, national, and global level.

# CLASS PRE-VIEWING WORK

## PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY (15 MINS)

### 1. Watch the trailer for ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy (2:55 minutes)

After watching the trailer, discuss the following questions:

- ★ What ideas and stories do you think this film will explore?
- ★ Who do you think the producers will interview?
- ★ Who do you think is the intended audience for this film?
- ★ What do you hope to learn from this film?
- ★ What does the title, "All In: The Fight for Democracy," tell you about the film?

### 2. Media Literacy Groups: Jigsaw

- ★ Organize students into small groups of three and assign each group a number. This will be their jigsaw group.
- ★ Distribute the [NAMLE Key Questions to Ask When Analyzing Media Messages](#). (NAMLE is an acronym for National Association of Media Literacy Education.) Read over the top of the handout "Using this Grid" and answer questions. Assign each student to an expert group:
  - ★ #1: Authors & Audiences
  - ★ #2 Messages & Meanings
  - ★ #3 Representation & Reality
- ★ Have students read over the questions in their assigned group. Clarify that only relevant questions need to be answered and encourage them to generate new questions and observations to share with the entire class as they watch the documentary.

### 3. Explain Homework

- ★ Watch [ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy](#) on Amazon Prime
- ★ After watching the full film at home, students should come to class prepared with typed answers to the questions for their assigned section. If your class uses shared online docs, create folders for each group and have students upload their documents before class begins.

# NEXT DAY ACTIVITIES

## 1. DISTRIBUTE AND READ ALOUD THE LETTER FROM THE FILMMAKERS

**Quick Write:** Have students take a few moments to write down their responses to the letter.

**Discuss:**

- ★ Did the letter match your expectations with regard to the filmmakers' point of view?
- ★ Was there anything in the letter that surprised you, or changed your thoughts about the film, or any of the answers to the questions in your section?

## 2. EXPERT GROUPS

- ★ Have students get into their expert groups -- Authors & Audiences, Messages & Meanings, or Representations & Reality.
- ★ In groups have students share their observations and answers before working to reach a general consensus as an Expert Group.
- ★ If in-person, return to original jigsaw group of three members. If online, have students go into breakout rooms with the initial three group members.

## 3. JIGSAW SHARING

Starting with expert group #1 Authors & Audiences, and moving through each of the three groups, have students share their consensus answers. Allow enough time for each student to share and discuss.

## 4. CLOSING

After all groups finish, review the exercise and invite students to reflect on the process of watching a film with specific media literacy questions in mind.

- ★ In what ways was this different from how you normally watch films?
- ★ Which category or question stood out to you as particularly revealing with regard to the film's message, perspective, or potential bias?
- ★ How would you apply this exercise to other media about elections, politics, or other social issues?
- ★ If you could ask director Liz Garbus or producer Lisa Cortés any question about making ***ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy***, what would you ask?

## 5. DISCUSSION EXTENSIONS

- At 42 minutes in, the film discusses how the footage from Selma was a turning point in the public's perception of racial violence, protest, and the civil rights movement. Carol Anderson shares,

*They cut into their movie of the week to show the footage of Bloody Sunday. The nation was appalled, because one of the ways that Jim Crow worked so smoothly and so effectively, is that you didn't have to see it. But when you see the violence raining down on people who are just fighting for the right to vote it tells you that something is systemically, fundamentally wrong in this democracy.*

- ★ Do you think visually seeing images and footage of injustice, such as Bloody Sunday, has a greater impact on audiences than only hearing about it? Why?
- ★ Are there examples from current events that stand out as demonstrating how injustice caught on tape leads to change?

- The film drives viewers to the [AllInForVoting.com](http://AllInForVoting.com) website. Before going to the website, what do you expect the site to contain given the content of the film?

- ★ Explore the website and assess whether it contains the information you predicted.



# HANDOUT - NAMLE KEY QUESTIONS

NAMLE KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN ANALYZING MEDIA MESSAGES		
<p><b>USING THIS GRID</b> – Media literate people routinely ASK QUESTIONS IN EVERY CATEGORY – the middle column – as they navigate the media world. Occasionally a category will not apply to a particular message, but in general, sophisticated “close reading” requires exploring the full range of issues covered by the ten categories. • The specific questions listed here are suggestions; you should adapt them or add your own to meet your students’ developmental level and learning goals. • Encourage students to recognize that many questions will have more than one answer (which is why the categories are in plural form). • To help students develop the habit of giving evidence-based answers, nearly every question should be followed with a probe for evidence: HOW DO YOU KNOW? WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT? • And remember that the ultimate goal is for students to learn to ask these questions for themselves.</p>		
AUTHORS & AUDIENCES	AUTHORSHIP	Who made this?
	PURPOSES	Why was this made? What does this want me to do? Who is the target audience? Who are they talking to? or Who is this for?
	ECONOMICS	Who paid for this?
	EFFECTS	Who might benefit from this message? Who might be harmed by it? Is this message good for me or people like me? What does the storyteller want me to remember?
	RESPONSES	What actions might I take in response to this message? How might I participate productively? How does this make me feel and how do my emotions influence my interpretation of this?
MESSAGES & MEANINGS	CONTENT	What does this want me to think (or think about)? What would someone learn from this? What does this tell me about [insert topic]? What ideas, values, information, or points of view are overt? Implied? What is left out that might be important to know?
	TECHNIQUES	What techniques are used and why? How do the techniques communicate the message?
	INTERPRETATIONS	How might different people understand this message differently? What is my interpretation and what do I learn about myself from my reaction or interpretation?
REPRESENTATIONS & REALITY	CONTEXT	When was this made? Where or how was it shared with the public?
	CREDIBILITY	Is this fact, opinion, or something else? How credible is this (and how do you know)? What are the sources of the information, ideas, or assertions? Can I trust this source to tell me the truth about this topic?

Adapted by Faith Rogow & Cyndy Scheibe from NAMLE’s Core Principles for Media Literacy Education (April 2007) [www.NAMLE.net/coreprinciples](http://www.NAMLE.net/coreprinciples). Reproduction for educational use is encouraged.

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# LETTER FROM THE FILMMAKERS

LIZ GARBUS (DIRECTOR), LISA CORTÉS (DIRECTOR/PRODUCER)

September, 2020

Though the "right to vote" is at the core of our democracy, the ability to vote is not.

Each year, millions of registered voters are purged from voter lists, hundreds of polling stations are closed, and voter ID laws disproportionately hinder the voting rights of people of color, the poor, and younger voters. And given the unprecedented conditions of this moment in time, ensuring that voting is safe for all Americans is critical. The right to vote is not a partisan issue - we must come together to ensure fair and equal access to the ballot for every American.

That is why we as filmmakers felt so moved to create ***ALL IN: The Fight for Democracy*** with Stacey Abrams, and the #ALLINFORVOTING campaign to educate and engage voters, and why we're so thankful that you are taking the time to watch the film and discuss it in your community.

As we write this—just weeks from an incredibly consequential election—the voting rights of millions of Americans are currently under attack. The same tactics that Brian Kemp used to steal the Georgia Governor's race from Stacey Abrams are being deployed to stop marginalized communities from voting across the country.

New and unprecedented suppression attacks have been waged against the USPS and the safety and security of the widely-used mail-in-ballot process.

But we have fought back before, and we will continue to—that is what ***ALL IN*** is all about. We hope that the film will allow you to take away with you the knowledge and tools necessary to protect your vote and help fight for your fellow Americans' voting rights.

Our film is about more than this moment in time—it is about a movement for civil rights that has been building for many generations and which we are honored to contribute.

As Stacey Abrams says in the film, "The fundamental power of democracy lies in the right to vote. If you protect that right, you create possibilities for everything else."

It is our sincerest hope that this film will leave you thinking of the possibilities that can come when we fight for a more just world and how we can realize that vision. Let's go #AllinForVoting together!

In solidarity and thanks,

Liz Garbus, Lisa Cortés, Dan Cogan, and the entire ***ALL IN*** filmmaking team

## END NOTES

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- 2 <https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/elections/right-to-vote/voting-rights-for-native-americans/>
- 3 <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p2957.html>
- 4 <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4p2957.html>
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- 6 <https://www.loc.gov/collections/continental-congress-and-constitutional-convention-from-1774-to-1789/articles-and-essays/to-form-a-more-perfect-union/>
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- 16 Erwin Chemerinsky, *Constitutional Law: Principles and Policies* 901 (4th ed. 2011).
- 17 Reuven Ziegler, *Article: Legal Outlier, Again? U.S. Felon Suffrage: Comparative and International Human Rights Perspectives*, 29 B.U. INT'L L.J. 197, 217 (2011).
- 18 Angela Behrens, *Voting—Not quite a Fundamental Right? A Look at Legal and Legislative Challenges to Felon Disenfranchisement Laws*, 89 MINN. L. REV. 231, 236 (2004).
- 19 U.S. CONST. amend. XV, § 1.
- 20 *Washington v. State*, 75 Ala. 582, 585 (Ala. 1884) (arguing that felony disenfranchisement is designed to "preserve the purity of the ballot box, which is the only sure foundation of republican liberty, and which needs protection against the invasion of corruption, just as much as against that of ignorance, incapacity, or tyranny.").
- 21 U.S. CONST. amend. XIV, § 2.
- 22 *Trop v. Dulles*, 356 U.S. 86 (1958).
- 23 Eric Foner, "Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution," Library of America lecture, March 13, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49McwjkZmlw>
- 24 These facts are excerpted from Eric Foner, "Reconstruction: America's Unfinished Revolution," Library of America lecture, March 13, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=49McwjkZmlw>
- 25 For a full listing of elected officials see Eric Foner, *Freedom's Lawmakers: A Directory of Black Officeholders during Reconstruction*, revised ed. (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), xi–xxxii.
- 26 [https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2018/Minority\\_Voting\\_Access\\_2018.pdf](https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2018/Minority_Voting_Access_2018.pdf)
- 27 <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/30/opinion/john-lewis-civil-rights-america.html?searchResultPosition=1>
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- 34 This explanation is excerpted from [https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2018/Minority\\_Voting\\_Access\\_2018.pdf](https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2018/Minority_Voting_Access_2018.pdf), p. 49, 50. Excerpts were also used from <https://www.justice.gov/crt/file/876246/download>.
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- 37 <https://journals.openedition.org/transatlantica/7462#tocto1n2>, Map 2
- 38 <https://journals.openedition.org/transatlantica/7462#tocto1n2>, Map 1.
- 39 [https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2018/Minority\\_Voting\\_Access\\_2018.pdf](https://www.usccr.gov/pubs/2018/Minority_Voting_Access_2018.pdf), p. 217.
- 40 <https://www.brennancenter.org/issues/gerrymandering-fair-representation/redistricting>
- 41 This "[Checklist for Evaluating Information Found on the Internet](#)" may be useful for students as they assess the credibility of resources they find on their own.
- 42 <https://www.usa.gov/voting-and-election-definitions>
- 43 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/elections-voting/#:~:text=Federal%20elections%20are%20administered%20by,in%20how%20they%20administer%20elections>
- 44 <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/interpretation/article-i/clauses/750>
- 45 [https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/Report\\_Democracy%20Agenda%202018.pdf](https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/Report_Democracy%20Agenda%202018.pdf)
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# #ALLINFOREVOTING

prime video

AMAZON  
STUDIOS

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THE EDUCATIONAL CONTENT FOR ALL IN: THE FIGHT FOR DEMOCRACY DEVELOPED BY

