

## KEY VOCABULARY

**CAST A BALLOT =**  
To hand in the piece of  
paper used for voting

**FRAUDULENT =**  
Something done with  
deceit or trickery

**CALLED =**  
When a news network calculates  
that a candidate will inevitably win



JOE  
**BIDEN**

DONALD  
**TRUMP**



# NEWS CYCLE

## WHAT'S HAPPENED SO FAR?

### Why did it take so long to reveal the American election results?

Every four years, America holds a presidential election and November 3rd saw the climax of this year's race between President Donald Trump, the Republican Party's candidate, and former Vice-President Joe Biden, the Democratic Party's candidate. On Saturday November 7th, Joe Biden was called the winner by America's major news networks.

In the United States, presidential elections are decided using a system called the electoral college. America is made up of 50 states plus the District of Columbia, and each is worth a certain number of electoral votes (like points). Voters cast their ballot in their state and the most popular presidential candidate in most places wins all of the state's electoral votes. To be elected president, a candidate has to collect over half of these electoral votes – that's 270.

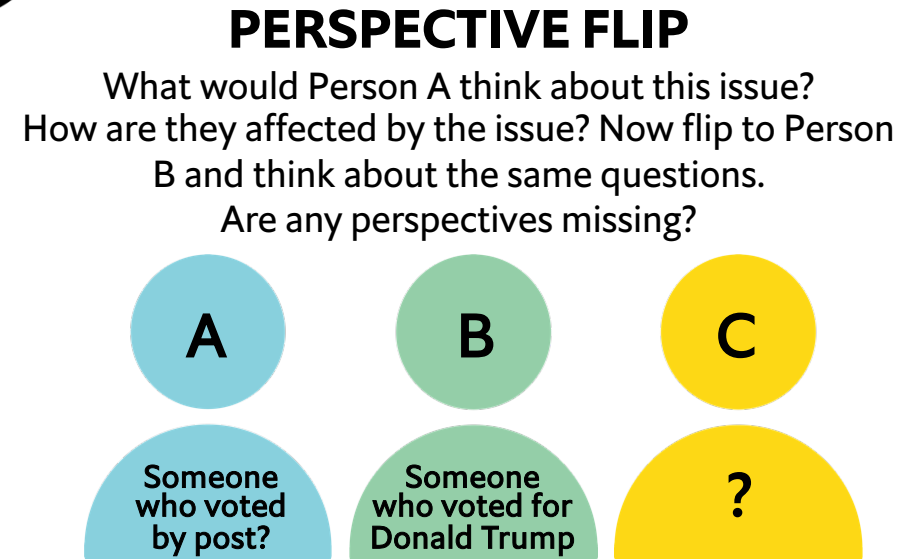
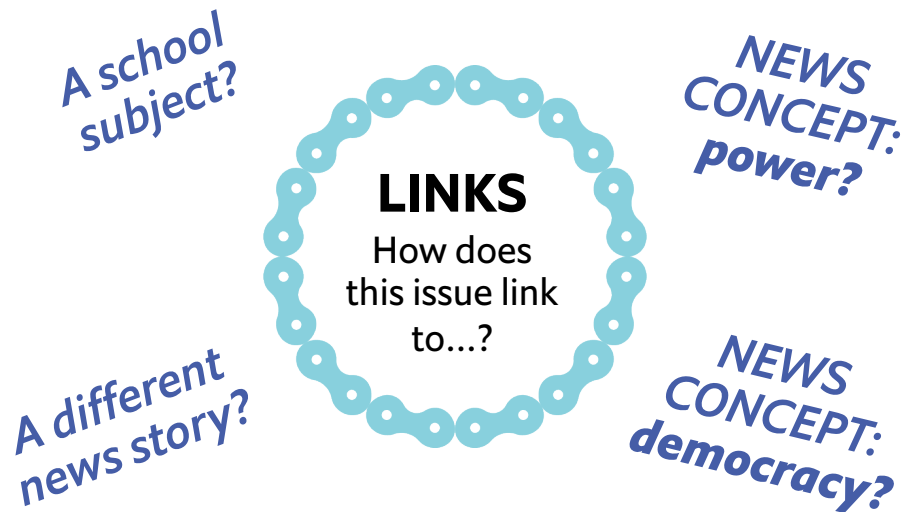
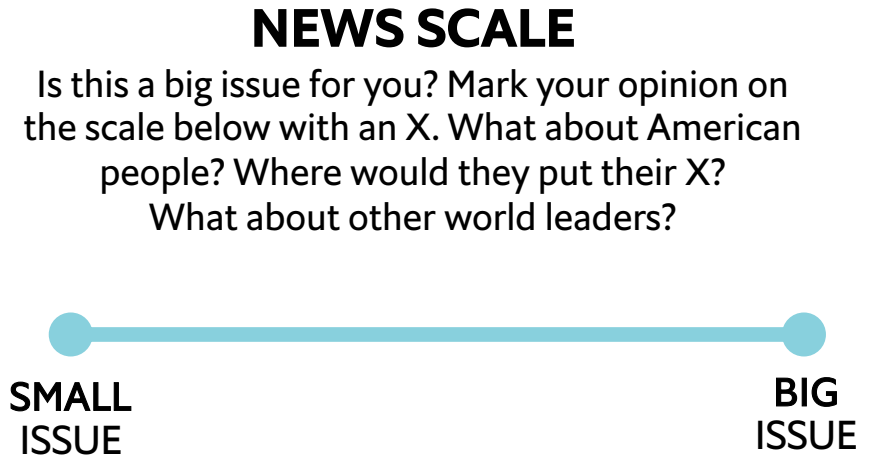
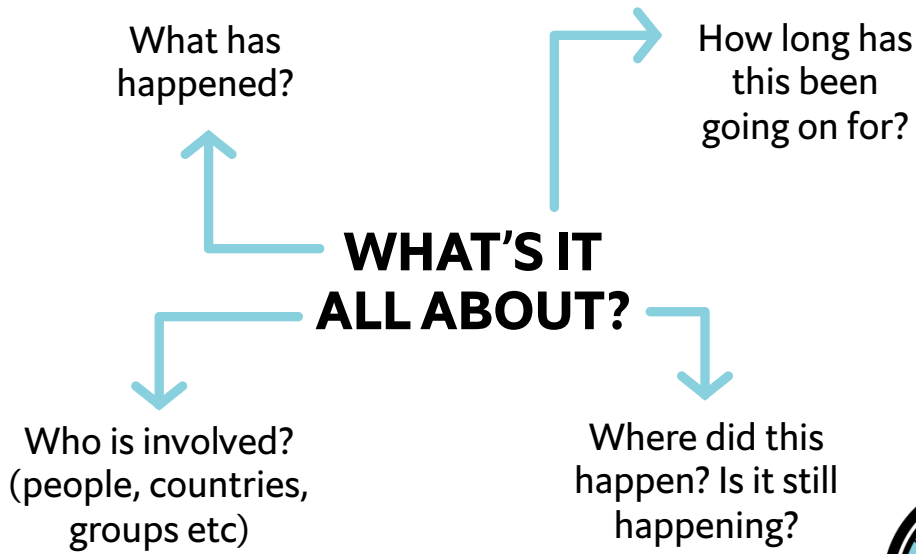
It is common to know the result on the night of the election. However, this year saw the highest voter turnout of the past century and, due to the covid-19 pandemic, over 100 million votes (compared to 33 million in 2016) were cast by post. This meant that it took a lot longer for states to count their votes.

As results came in it was clear the race was tight in many states. But, whilst Joe Biden said he was "on track" to win, Donald Trump declared on November 4th that he had already won - which he has been criticised for, as many votes were yet to be counted.

After four days of counting, the news networks were confident enough to declare Joe Biden as the true winner. In his acceptance speech he pledged to unify the country, saying it was a "time to heal". Donald Trump responded by calling the election fraudulent but has so far provided no evidence to support this claim.

Mr Biden and his running-mate, Kamala Harris - who will be the first female, the first black person and the first Asian-American to be Vice-President - will be sworn in on January 20th 2021.

Want to know more? Look here! [bbc.co.uk/newsround/54855171](https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/54855171)



**CHALLENGE:** how is this issue developing in the news?

# NEWS CYCLE WEEK 2 OF 2 THINKING HARDER

First, limber up by thinking about everything you learnt last week:

- What was the key information about this issue? (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?)
- Why was this issue news? (How big was this piece of news? How many people does it affect? Is it global or local news?)
- What did you think about it? Did everyone you talked to have the same opinion?
- What have you seen about this in the news? How is this issue developing?

Then, take a ride through this week's activities.

## KEY VOCABULARY

### INAUGURATION =

The official ceremony when the president and vice-president are sworn in

# WHAT'S THE FULL STORY?

Voter turnout has been a concern in past American elections. In the 2016 election, 61% of eligible adults voted. Despite the covid-19 pandemic, this rose to over **65% in 2020.**

Joe Biden said that this has proved

*"that democracy is the heartbeat of this nation."*



Kamala Harris will be the first black person, the first Asian-American and the first woman to be the vice-president of America. In a speech on November 8th she said:

*"While I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last—because every little girl watching tonight sees that this is a country of possibilities."*

**With over 78 million votes,** Joe Biden has broken the record for the highest number of votes ever received by a presidential candidate. The record was previously held by Barack Obama, who got almost **70 million** votes. Donald Trump received over **73 million** votes.

Usually in elections, the losing candidate concedes, which means they accept defeat and congratulate the winner. Donald Trump is so far refusing to do this. On November 11th he tweeted,



*"People will not accept this Rigged Election!"*

Mr Trump has filed lawsuits to challenge the results in several states but he is yet to show any evidence.



**The period between the election result and the inauguration of a new president and vice-president is called the transition.**

Mr Biden and Ms Harris will use this to assemble their team and discuss their priorities. Unless Mr Trump concedes, Mr Biden's transition team cannot access \$9.9m of federal funds, nor can they send staff to key departments to prepare a smooth handover.

## TURN THE COGS

1. This issue is about more than the election result.  
Can you explain the bigger picture?
2. Read Kamala Harris' words. What does she mean?  
Do you agree or disagree?
3. Look at the facts on the previous page.
  - What might some people view to be successes of this election? What about the failures?
  - Why might Donald Trump's claims make it harder for Joe Biden to govern, even if the legal proceedings fail?

**Support your answers with a fact and explain why.**

## SHOW OFF YOUR SKILLS



How do you feel about the situation in America?  
Is there anything that would change your mind?



What key vocabulary should we use when talking about this issue?



What consequence should Donald Trump face if his claims are found to be false?



Is there a better way America could organise its elections??

## PUSH YOURSELF

Despite a lack of evidence for Mr Trump's claims that the election was fraudulent, about 40% of Republican Party supporters believe him. "Stop the Steal" rallies have been organised across America.

At one rally in Texas, one of Mr Trump's supporters said, "I have come here to show my love and support for our president, Donald Trump. It's total fraud."

- Should people trust the word of their president without evidence? Why / why not?
- What might happen if people stop trusting the result of elections?

## TYRE CHANGE

Brakes on! Let's change the scenario.



Donald Trump provides evidence to show the election was fraudulent?



Millions of Donald Trump supporters refuse to accept Joe Biden as president?



Courts rule that the election was not fraudulent?

**Challenge: can you spot this issue in the news? How has the issue developed since last week?**