

The University of the State of New York

REGENTS HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATION

**REGENTS EXAMINATION**

IN

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

**(Common Core)**

**Thursday, August 13, 2015 — 12:30 to 3:30 p.m., only**

The possession or use of any communications device is strictly prohibited when taking this examination. If you have or use any communications device, no matter how briefly, your examination will be invalidated and no score will be calculated for you.

A separate answer sheet has been provided for you. Follow the instructions for completing the student information on your answer sheet. You must also fill in the heading on each page of your essay booklet that has a space for it, and write your name at the top of each sheet of scrap paper.

The examination has three parts. For Part 1, you are to read the texts and answer all 24 multiple-choice questions. For Part 2, you are to read the texts and write one source-based argument. For Part 3, you are to read the text and write a text-analysis response. The source-based argument and text-analysis response should be written in pen. Keep in mind that the language and perspectives in a text may reflect the historical and/or cultural context of the time or place in which it was written.

When you have completed the examination, you must sign the statement printed at the bottom of the front of the answer sheet, indicating that you had no unlawful knowledge of the questions or answers prior to the examination and that you have neither given nor received assistance in answering any of the questions during the examination. Your answer sheet cannot be accepted if you fail to sign this declaration.

**DO NOT OPEN THIS EXAMINATION BOOKLET UNTIL THE SIGNAL IS GIVEN.**

## Part 1

**Directions** (1–24): Closely read each of the three passages below. After each passage, there are several multiple-choice questions. Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you. You may use the margins to take notes as you read.

### Reading Comprehension Passage A

*An embittered Gulliver explains English law to someone who has no experience with it.*

...I assured his honor that law was a science, in which I had not much conversed, further than by employing advocates in vain, upon some injustice that had been done me; however, I would give him all the satisfaction I was able.

5 I said there was a society of men among us, bred up from their youth in the art of proving, by words multiplied for the purpose, that white is black, and black is white, according as they are paid. To this society all the rest of the people are slaves. For example, if my neighbor has a mind to my cow, he has a lawyer to prove that he ought to have my cow from me. I must then hire another to defend my right, it being against all rules of law that  
10 any man should be allowed to speak for himself. “Now, in this case, I, who am the right owner, lie under two great disadvantages: first, my lawyer, being practiced almost from his cradle in defending falsehood, is quite out of his element when he would be an advocate for justice, which is an unnatural office he always attempts with great awkwardness, if not with ill-will. The second disadvantage is, that my lawyer must proceed with great caution, or else he will be reprimanded by the judges, and abhorred by his brethren, as one that would  
15 lessen the practice of the law. And therefore I have but two methods to preserve my cow. The first is, to gain over my adversary’s lawyer with a double fee, who will then betray his client by insinuating that he has justice on his side. The second way is for my lawyer to make my cause appear as unjust as he can, by allowing the cow to belong to my adversary; and this, if it be skilfully done, will certainly bespeak the favor of the bench. Now your  
20 honor is to know that these judges are persons appointed to decide all controversies of property as well as for the trial of criminals, and picked out from the most dexterous lawyers, who have grown old or lazy; and having been biased all their lives against truth and equity, lie under such a fatal necessity of favoring fraud, perjury, and oppression, that I have known some of them refuse a large bribe from the side where justice lay, rather than injure  
25 the faculty by doing anything unbecoming their nature or their office.

“It is a maxim among these lawyers, that whatever has been done before may legally be done again; and therefore they take special care to record all the decisions formerly made against common justice and the general reason of mankind. These, under the name of precedents, they produce as authorities to justify the most iniquitous<sup>1</sup> opinions; and the  
30 judges never fail of directing accordingly.

“In pleading, they studiously avoid entering into the merits of the cause; but are loud, violent, and tedious in dwelling upon all circumstances which are not to the purpose. For instance, in the case already mentioned, they never desire to know what claim or title my adversary has to my cow, but whether the said cow were red or black, her horns long or  
35 short; whether the field I graze her in be round or square; whether she was milked at home or abroad; what diseases she is subject to, and the like; after which they consult precedents, adjourn the case from time to time, and in ten, twenty, or thirty years come to an issue.

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<sup>1</sup>iniquitous — immoral

40 “It is likewise to be observed that this society has a peculiar cant and jargon<sup>2</sup> of their own that no other mortal can understand, and wherein all their laws are written, which they take special care to multiply; whereby they have wholly confounded<sup>3</sup> the very essence of truth and falsehood, of right and wrong; so that it will take thirty years to decide whether the field left me by my ancestors for six generations belongs to me or to a stranger three hundred miles off.

45 “In the trial of persons accused for crimes against the state, the method is much more short and commendable: the judge first sends to sound the disposition<sup>4</sup> of those in power, after which he can easily hang or save a criminal, strictly preserving all due forms of law.”

50 Here my master, interposing, said it was a pity that creatures endowed with such prodigious<sup>5</sup> abilities of mind as these lawyers, by the description I gave of them, must certainly be, were not rather encouraged to be instructors of others in wisdom and knowledge. In answer to which I assured his honor that in all points out of their own trade they were usually the most ignorant and stupid generation among us; the most despicable in common conversation, avowed enemies to all knowledge and learning, and equally disposed to pervert the general reason of mankind in every other subject of discourse as in that of their own profession.

—Jonathan Swift  
excerpted from *The Works of Jonathan Swift:*  
*Gulliver’s Travels*, 1932  
Black’s Readers Service Company  
First published 1726 by Ben J. Motte

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<sup>2</sup>cant and jargon — a specialized language of a profession

<sup>3</sup>confounded — confused

<sup>4</sup>disposition — inclination

<sup>5</sup>prodigious — enormous

- 1 The narrator introduces the hypothetical dispute over a cow (lines 6 through 9) in order to show the
- (1) illogical nature of the legal system
  - (2) importance of having many lawyers
  - (3) ignorance of the common man
  - (4) reasonable traditions of dispute resolution
- 2 Lines 8 and 9 convey a tone of
- (1) seriousness
  - (2) sarcasm
  - (3) empathy
  - (4) reluctance
- 3 In lines 19 through 25, the narrator observes that the practices of judges are
- (1) respected
  - (2) constructive
  - (3) indifferent
  - (4) insincere
- 4 As used in line 26, the word “maxim” most nearly means
- (1) rule
  - (2) question
  - (3) secret
  - (4) conflict
- 5 The details presented in lines 32 through 37 contribute to a central idea by
- (1) acknowledging a cow’s value
  - (2) stressing the legal system’s irrelevance
  - (3) validating the narrator’s memory
  - (4) recognizing the legal system’s history
- 6 In lines 38 through 43, the narrator describes lawyers’ “peculiar cant and jargon” as being
- (1) primarily ceremonial
  - (2) deceptively complex
  - (3) deliberately insulting
  - (4) consistently objective
- 7 Lines 44 through 46 suggest that, in crimes against the state, judges are inclined to
- (1) rely on common sense
  - (2) follow the accepted precedent
  - (3) impose a lengthy sentence
  - (4) submit to higher authority
- 8 The text supports the narrator’s point of view by
- (1) referencing historical examples
  - (2) using concrete evidence
  - (3) employing exaggerated descriptions
  - (4) describing fantastic experiences
- 9 The text as a whole supports the narrator’s opinion that lawyers and judges are
- (1) stubborn
  - (2) corrupt
  - (3) misunderstood
  - (4) inexperienced
-

## Reading Comprehension Passage B

### Monologue for an Onion

I don't mean to make you cry.  
I mean nothing, but this has not kept you  
From peeling away my body, layer by layer,  
The tears clouding your eyes as the table fills  
5 With husks, cut flesh, all the debris of pursuit.  
Poor deluded human: you seek my heart.  
Hunt all you want. Beneath each skin of mine  
Lies another skin: I am pure onion—pure onion  
Of outside and in, surface and secret core.  
10 Look at you, chopping and weeping. Idiot.  
Is this the way you go through life, your mind  
A stopless knife, driven by your fantasy of truth,  
Of lasting union—slashing away skin after skin  
From things, ruin and tears your only signs  
15 Of progress? Enough is enough.  
You must not grieve that the world is glimpsed  
Through veils. How else can it be seen?  
How will you rip away the veil of the eye, the veil  
That you are, you who want to grasp the heart  
20 Of things, hungry to know where meaning  
Lies. Taste what you hold in your hands: onion-juice,  
Yellow peels, my stinging shreds. You are the one  
In pieces. Whatever you meant to love, in meaning to  
You changed yourself: you are not who you are,  
25 Your soul cut moment to moment by a blade  
Of fresh desire, the ground sown with abandoned skins.  
And at your inmost circle, what? A core that is  
Not one. Poor fool, you are divided at the heart,  
Lost in its maze of chambers, blood, and love,  
30 A heart that will one day beat you to death.

—Suji Kwock Kim  
from *Notes from the Divided Country*, 2003  
Louisiana State University Press

- 10 The phrase “poor deluded human” (line 6) conveys a sense of
- (1) compassion
  - (2) fear
  - (3) loneliness
  - (4) shyness
- 11 The search suggested in lines 6 and 7 can best be described as
- (1) boring
  - (2) simple
  - (3) futile
  - (4) brief
- 12 The shift in line 10 indicates a transition in tone that can best be described as
- (1) sympathetic to critical
  - (2) humorous to angry
  - (3) hopeful to cruel
  - (4) admiring to fearful
- 13 The narrator’s references to veils (lines 17 and 18) remind the reader of the need for
- (1) caution
  - (2) secrecy
  - (3) clarity
  - (4) investigation
- 14 The phrase “onion-juice” (line 21) contributes to the narrator’s purpose by
- (1) demonstrating that self-reflection is satisfying
  - (2) implying that the search for identity is noble
  - (3) observing that experimentation is often dangerous
  - (4) suggesting that the quest for truth is harsh
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## Reading Comprehension Passage C

The morning chill carried that clean-sheet crispness; that cleansing sort of air. Actually, for the tip of Long Island in early December, this weather was a little late in coming. But walking from our house to the shore of the bay, the new crystal air made me finally look ahead toward winter and turn my back to what had been a spectacular, lingering fall.

5 Every autumn here witnesses two great migrations: one axiomatic and one nearly unknown. Everybody knows birds fly south for the winter. Here, the marshes and barrier islands are interstate arteries for heavy traffic of songbirds, waterfowl, hawks and others. But except for people who fish, almost no one realizes the greater migration begins just beyond the beach.

10 This year, as usual, swarms of fish had arrived from New England in the last few weeks and departed down the coast in great migrating waves. They included millions and millions of anchovies and menhaden, pursued to the surface by armies of bluefish, striped bass, little tuna. Along the seafloor battalions of summer flounder, black sea bass, tautog, porgies and others moved to deeper grounds. Offshore, beyond sight of land on the rolling blue  
15 prairies of the sea, sharks and tunas passed like herds on the Serengeti (though now, like those herds, much diminished). Herring and mackerel had arrived mid-November with dolphins on their tails, and the remaining schools of striped bass, fattening for their long run to winter grounds, gobbled them greedily. Even now, into December, a few boats were still hunting bass. But we had caught enough, our freezer was stocked for winter and our smoker  
20 racks were busy, and we'd just hauled the boat.

Patricia and I put our footsteps to the gravelly beach and walked to the inlet to see who'd recently arrived. Bonaparte's gulls, a few long-tailed ducks, some black scoters and in the distance the feathered missiles called gannets were sending geysers skyward as a flock  
25 poured into a herring school. To me, this seasonal sense of place in the path of migrations, this finger on the pulse of the planet, is the purest joy.

We were just rounding the inlet entrance when, among the shells and tide-wrack, my gaze caught something so unexpected — here, and in this near-frost — it seemed improbable as a fallen angel: a sea turtle.

30 It was a baby, with a platter-sized shell. Species: Kemp's ridley, most endangered of all Atlantic turtles. Stunned by the boreal air and 49-degree water, the turtle's only sign of life was a mark in the wet sand suggesting a flipper had moved sometime since high tide had left it and withdrawn.

This nation that sees itself stretching from sea to shining sea conceals beneath her broad, waving skirts of bordering oceans some of the greatest wildlife in the world. And  
35 because it's so effectively hidden, it's some of the least understood.

Though the saltiness of our blood and tears speaks from within of our parent ocean, for most people oceans seem distant, out of sight and generally out of mind. Even many who love nature, who see our landscape and imagine herds of bison and skies darkened by  
40 passenger pigeons and clouds of waterfowl, who escape into the woods or mountains or even the shore, seem to get their vision stranded on the beach as though wildlife stops at the high-tide line, where our little stunned turtle reminded us that so much actually begins.

The water makes a perfect disguise that heightens the mystery, but in some ways that's a great pity, because the closest thing we have left to the thundering herds and great flocks  
45 is in the sea. Extending your vision into the grand swirl and suck of the many-fingered tides and beyond will grant you a renewed sense of both the abundance and fragility of life.

Whether or not we can see, hear, or feel the ocean from our own home territory, the ocean certainly feels all of us. Between a third and half the world's people now live within 50 miles of a coast (as any traveler can attest). In China, population density is three times higher in coastal areas than elsewhere. The collective weight of humanity may rest on

50 land, but we levy heavy pressure on the sea. Most of us exert our most direct interaction  
with the sea through the seafood we buy. But even air quality affects water quality because  
what goes up alights elsewhere, and climate change is challenging ocean habitats by melting  
sea ice and cooking corals, undermining food supplies for penguins, polar bears and reef  
fishes.

55 People who think of themselves as conservationists carry a concern for wildlife, wildlands  
and habitat quality as part of their sense of right and wrong. It is time to take these concerns  
below high tide. Most people would not question a hawk's place in the sky, nor ask what  
good is a gazelle, nor wonder whether the world really needs wild orchids. Yet when told of  
the plight of, say, sharks, many still think it quite reasonable to inquire, "What good are they;  
60 why do we need them?" Fifty million buffalo once roamed the rolling green prairies of  
North America. Gunners reduced them to near-extinction. Now, hunters cut from the same  
cloth are at work on the rolling blue prairies of the sea and, already, the big fish — including  
miracles like thousand-pound, warm-blooded bluefin tuna — are 90 percent gone. What we  
regret happening on land may again happen in the sea. Those who care about wildlife  
65 should get to know about oceans.

We brought the turtle home and warmed it a bit in the sun. It began to shed tears, a sign  
of ongoing glandular function and, for us, heightened hope. Soon a flipper waved — a certain  
signal of persistent life. Shortly thereafter, the aquarium people arrived to bring our little  
patient into veterinary rehab. Slowly warmed, within a few hours it was conscious and  
70 swimming, safe until release next spring.

Whether we help one unlucky creature or wish to save the world, for each of us the  
challenge and opportunity is to cherish all life as the gift it is, envision it whole, seek to know  
it truly, and undertake — with our minds, hearts and hands — to restore its abundance.  
Where there's life there's hope, and so no place can inspire more hopefulness than  
75 the great, life-making sea, home to creatures of mystery and majesty, whose future now  
depends on human compassion, and our next move.

—Carl Safina  
"Comes a Turtle, Comes the World"  
<http://www.patagonia.com>, Winter 2006



- 15 A purpose of the second paragraph is to draw attention to
- (1) a popular vacation spot
  - (2) the activities of the fishermen
  - (3) the beauty of the islands
  - (4) a lesser known event
- 16 The details in lines 11 through 18 reinforce the idea of
- (1) diversity
  - (2) discovery
  - (3) adaptation
  - (4) rehabilitation
- 17 The phrase “who’d recently arrived” in line 22 refers to
- (1) predatory species
  - (2) other observers
  - (3) migrating wildlife
  - (4) fishing boats
- 18 The figurative language in line 23 is used to suggest
- (1) confusion
  - (2) speed
  - (3) fear
  - (4) sound
- 19 Knowing the turtle’s species in lines 29 and 30 serves to make its discovery more
- (1) serious
  - (2) mysterious
  - (3) natural
  - (4) controversial
- 20 As used in line 30, the word “boreal” most nearly means
- (1) clean
  - (2) cold
  - (3) salty
  - (4) hazy
- 21 The author’s reference to “the saltiness of our blood and tears” (line 36) exposes the irony of our
- (1) disinterest in the ocean
  - (2) efforts in conservation
  - (3) destructive habits
  - (4) current situation
- 22 Which lines establish an important cause and effect relationship in the passage?
- (1) lines 5 and 6
  - (2) lines 19 and 20
  - (3) lines 49 and 50
  - (4) lines 55 and 56
- 23 Which lines best reflect a central claim?
- (1) “Actually, for ... in coming” (lines 1 and 2)
  - (2) “This year, as usual ... migrating waves” (lines 10 and 11)
  - (3) “Most of us ... we buy” (lines 50 and 51)
  - (4) “What we regret ... about oceans” (lines 63 through 65)
- 24 The author waits until lines 66 through 70 to reveal the fate of the baby turtle in order to
- (1) present a counterclaim
  - (2) inject humor
  - (3) introduce irony
  - (4) maintain reader interest

## Part 2

### Argument

**Directions:** Closely read each of the *four* texts provided on pages 11 through 16 and write a source-based argument on the topic below. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response. Write your argument beginning on page 1 of your essay booklet.

**Topic:** Should American citizens be required to vote in national elections?

**Your Task:** Carefully read each of the *four* texts provided. Then, using evidence from at least *three* of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding whether or not American citizens should be required to vote. Clearly establish your claim, distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims, and use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least *three* of the texts to develop your argument. Do *not* simply summarize each text.

#### Guidelines:

##### Be sure to:

- Establish your claim regarding whether or not American citizens should be required to vote
- Distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims
- Use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least *three* of the texts to develop your argument
- Identify each source that you reference by text number and line number(s) or graphic (for example: Text 1, line 4 or Text 2, graphic)
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

#### Texts:

Text 1 – Telling Americans to Vote, or Else

Text 2 – Compulsory Voting

Text 3 – Does Mandatory Voting Restrict or Expand Democracy?

Text 4 – How Compulsory Voting Subverts Democracy

## Text 1

### Telling Americans to Vote, or Else

Jury duty is mandatory; why not voting? The idea seems vaguely un-American. Maybe so, but it's neither unusual nor undemocratic. And it would ease the intense partisan polarization<sup>1</sup> that weakens our capacity for self-government and public trust in our governing institutions.

5 Thirty-one countries have some form of mandatory voting, according to the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. The list includes nine members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and two-thirds of the Latin American nations. More than half back up the legal requirement with an enforcement mechanism, while the rest are content to rely on the moral force of the law.

10 Despite the prevalence of mandatory voting in so many democracies, it's easy to dismiss the practice as a form of statism<sup>2</sup> that couldn't work in America's individualistic and libertarian political culture. But consider Australia, whose political culture is closer to that of the United States than that of any other English-speaking country. Alarmed by a decline in voter turnout to less than 60 percent in 1922, Australia adopted mandatory voting in  
15 1924, backed by small fines (roughly the size of traffic tickets) for nonvoting, rising with repeated acts of nonparticipation. The law established permissible reasons for not voting, like illness and foreign travel, and allows citizens who faced fines for not voting to defend themselves. ...

20 Proponents offer three reasons in favor of mandatory voting. The first is straightforwardly civic. A democracy can't be strong if its citizenship is weak. And right now American citizenship is attenuated — strong on rights, weak on responsibilities. There is less and less that being a citizen requires of us, especially after the abolition of the draft. Requiring people to vote in national elections once every two years would reinforce the principle of reciprocity at the heart of citizenship.

25 The second argument for mandatory voting is democratic. Ideally, a democracy will take into account the interests and views of all citizens. But if some regularly vote while others don't, officials are likely to give greater weight to participants. This might not matter much if nonparticipants were evenly distributed through the population. But political scientists have long known that they aren't. People with lower levels of income and education are less  
30 likely to vote, as are young adults and recent first-generation immigrants.

Changes in our political system have magnified these disparities.<sup>3</sup> During the 1950s and '60s, when turnout rates were much higher, political parties reached out to citizens year-round. At the local level these parties, which reformers often criticized as "machines,"  
35 connected even citizens of modest means and limited education with neighborhood institutions and gave them a sense of participation in national politics as well. (In its heyday, organized labor reinforced these effects.) But in the absence of these more organic forms of political mobilization, the second-best option is a top-down mechanism of universal mobilization.

40 Mandatory voting would tend to even out disparities stemming from income, education and age, enhancing our system's inclusiveness. It is true, as some object, that an enforcement mechanism would impose greater burdens on those with fewer resources. But this makes it all the more likely that these citizens would respond by going to the polls, and they would stand to gain far more than the cost of a traffic ticket.

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<sup>1</sup>partisan polarization — one-sidedness

<sup>2</sup>statism — central governmental control of economic and social policy

<sup>3</sup>disparities — inequalities

45 The third argument for mandatory voting goes to the heart of our current ills. Our low turnout rate pushes American politics toward increased polarization. The reason is that hard-core partisans are more likely to dominate lower-turnout elections, while those who are less fervent about specific issues and less attached to political organizations tend not to participate at levels proportional to their share of the electorate. ...

50 The United States is not Australia, of course, and there's no guarantee that the similarity of our political cultures would produce equivalent political results. For example, reforms of general elections would leave untouched the distortions generated by party primaries in which small numbers of voters can shape the choices for the entire electorate. And the United States Constitution gives the states enormous power over voting procedures. Mandating voting nationwide would go counter to our traditions (and perhaps our  
55 Constitution) and would encounter strong state opposition. Instead, a half-dozen states from parts of the country with different civic traditions should experiment with the practice, and observers — journalists, social scientists, citizens' groups and elected officials — would monitor the consequences.

60 We don't know what the outcome would be. But one thing is clear: If we do nothing and allow a politics of passion to define the bounds of the electorate, as it has for much of the last four decades, the prospect for a less polarized, more effective political system that enjoys the trust and confidence of the people is not bright.

—William A. Galston  
excerpted from “Telling Americans to Vote, or Else”  
<http://www.nytimes.com>, November 5, 2011

## Text 2

### Compulsory Voting

All democratic governments consider participating in national elections a right of citizenship and a citizen's civic responsibility. Some consider that participation in elections is also a citizen's duty. In some countries, where voting is considered a duty, voting at elections has been made compulsory and has been regulated in the national constitutions or electoral laws. Some countries impose sanctions<sup>1</sup> on non-voters.

Compulsory voting is not a new concept. Belgium (1892), Argentina (1914) and Australia (1924) were among the first countries to introduce compulsory voting laws. Countries such as Venezuela and the Netherlands practised compulsory voting at one time but have since abolished it.

Advocates of compulsory voting argue that decisions made by democratically elected governments are more legitimate when higher proportions of the population participate. They argue further that voting, voluntarily or otherwise, has an educative effect upon the citizens. Political parties can save money as a result of compulsory voting, since they do not have to spend resources convincing the electorate that it should turn out to vote. Lastly, if democracy is government by the people, presumably this includes all people, so that it is every citizen's responsibility to elect his or her representatives.

The leading argument against compulsory voting is that it is not consistent with the freedom associated with democracy. Voting is not an intrinsic<sup>2</sup> obligation and the enforcement of such a law would be an infringement of the citizen's freedom associated with democratic elections. It may discourage the political education of the electorate because people forced to participate will react against the perceived source of oppression. Is a government really more legitimate if high voter turnout is achieved against the will of the voters? Many countries with limited financial resources may not be able to justify the expense of maintaining and enforcing compulsory voting laws. It has been proved that forcing the population to vote results in an increased number of invalid and blank votes compared to countries that have no compulsory voting laws.

Another consequence of compulsory voting is the possible high number of "random votes". Voters who are voting against their free will may check off a candidate at random, particularly the top candidate on the ballot paper. The voter does not care whom they vote for as long as the government is satisfied that they have fulfilled their civic duty. What effect does this immeasurable category of random votes have on the legitimacy of the democratically elected government? ...

—Maria Gratschew  
excerpted from "Compulsory Voting"  
*Voter Turnout Since 1945: A Global Report*  
International Institute for Democracy and  
Electoral Assistance (International IDEA), 2002

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<sup>1</sup>sanctions — penalties

<sup>2</sup>intrinsic — essential

### Text 3

#### Does Mandatory Voting Restrict or Expand Democracy?

Does mandatory voting restrict or expand democracy? For many people who have never heard about the idea, mandatory voting sounds very strict: requiring people to go to the polls on Election Day. In the United States, it seems strange to present an action many consider a right as a required duty. Nevertheless, in many foreign countries, mandatory voting (sometimes referred to as compulsory voting) is an obvious democratic option.

The system in fact is present in more than 30 democracies around the world. However, all policies are not the same. Mandatory voting can be used to elect all political representatives or it can be restricted to specific elections. For example, in France, mandatory voting is only used for Senatorial elections.

The two most notable examples of compulsory voting occur in Belgium and Australia. Belgium has the oldest tradition of [a] compulsory voting system. The system was introduced in 1892 for men and 1949 for women. Today, all Belgian citizens age 18 or over have to vote in every electoral event. If an individual fails to vote in at least four elections, he or she lose[s] the right to vote for the next 10 years and as a result face a general social stigma and specific problems like near impossibility in having a job in the public sector. In Australia, compulsory voting was adopted as a way of integrating the large population of immigrants that the country welcomes and is endorsed through non-voters facing potential fines.

Many people compare voting to taxes. In fact, one of mandatory voting's biggest advocates, former American Political Science Association president Arend Lijphart, uses this comparison in his writings like *Patterns of Democracy*. According to him, just as taxes are a way to feed the national economy, voting can be seen as a way to feed the civic economy. Moreover, when compelled to vote, citizens begin to be more involved in political life and in turn are encouraged to take a more active role in other areas of civic society. And no other change comes close to having as sweeping an impact on rates of voter participation.

Given Lijphart's arguments, would compulsory voting make sense in the United States? Not necessarily— for many Americans the right to vote also implies the right not to vote. In fact, some people might even interpret mandatory voting as a violation of [the] First Amendment's prohibition of compelled speech. Moreover, mandatory voting opposition argues that a forced electorate would not necessarily be the most politically intelligent electorate.

Some apolitical citizens might choose candidates arbitrarily or for the wrong reasons because they do not want to be fined or punished for not doing their hypothetical duty. Finally, voters in fact gain a certain kind [of] influence from their ability not to vote — elected officials can't take their vote for granted.

Whether you are an advocate for or against mandatory voting, the concept is a thought provoking idea that should not be overlooked just because it seems so foreign to the United States. But it should never be used to avoid tackling the root of political disengagement.

Democracies don't just need active citizens; they need educated and active citizens, which is why at FairVote we advocate for strong learning democracy programs for students. Americans also need faith in the power of elected officials to represent them effectively and the motivation that comes from elections having real choices from across the spectrum. Such changes can't happen overnight, the way passage of compulsory voting could take place. But they are essential building blocks of a successful democracy.

—Wael Abdel Hamid  
adapted from “Does Mandatory  
Voting Restrict or Expand Democracy?”  
<http://www.fairvote.org>, October 18, 2010

## Text 4

### How Compulsory Voting Subverts Democracy

...Democracy is an achievement that has come about through determination, hard work, struggle, even bloodshed. On these grounds alone, it deserves to be honoured. But democracy can only be honoured if we appreciate the gift we're fortunate enough to possess in the first place. Sadly, a considerable number of people do not appreciate it, and have never given the matter a moment's thought. I'd argue that the massive indifference towards politics that now pervades the general populace will only be overcome by removing the compulsion to vote. Politicians would then be forced to argue their cases with more conviction, and to educate their constituents about the historical struggle that was necessary to achieve what most of us now take for granted.

People have to be persuaded of the importance of voting to the democratic process. Yet compelling people to do so subverts our democratic rights. Democracy is about freedom; it is the antithesis of compulsion. Compulsory voting raises a question we shouldn't even be asking: whether voting is a civil right or a civic duty.

The right *not* to vote in an election is as fundamental as the right to vote. Both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN's International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights refer to people's rights to "freely chosen representatives". This right is something we each possess and can each choose to use, but it should never become a dictate. ...

It's certainly true that in countries where voting is voluntary, like the USA and UK, voter apathy is highest among the poor and uneducated. It's also hard to dispute the fact that, because these people—in Western countries at least—do not vote, they're ignored, and because they're ignored, they don't bother to vote. But the argument falls down with the claim that, by forcing these people to vote, politicians will be compelled to pay attention to them, and take steps to improve their situation. It's much more likely politicians will fight for the welfare of the poor and uneducated if they have to go out and *seek* their vote. ...

Those who believe countries with compulsory voting are more democratic argue that it legitimises democracy, that the election results in countries like the USA, where voting isn't compulsory and voter turnout is low, do not accurately reflect the country's political opinion. But I believe that not having an opinion *is* an opinion, that being indifferent to the outcome of an election and disliking all of the options put before one are both opinions. If people don't turn out to vote, they're definitely stating their opinions, many of which are both strongly held and well thought through. ...

Perhaps the clinching argument as to whether or not compulsory voting is more democratic is that, according to the experts, coercing<sup>1</sup> everyone to the polling booth in fact makes little or no difference to the final outcome. The experts (academics, pollsters and civil servants) have all calculated that in the last four Australian federal elections the results would have been the same even had the voting been voluntary. ...

Although falling voting figures around the world may be a worry, compelling people to vote is not the answer. Too many people feel they're powerless in the face of both the political system and the huge, undemocratic power of the modern corporation. They also feel that one politician is little different from another, and that none of them is going to deal in a meaningful way with any of the big issues. So it takes a politician who can galvanise<sup>2</sup> the public to get them voting. In the 2008 US Presidential election,

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<sup>1</sup>coercing — forcing

<sup>2</sup>galvanise — excite into action

45 people sensed a new political star in Obama, someone who would make a difference,  
and voter turnout was the highest for forty years. ...

50 Numbers are unimportant. Quality rather than quantity should be the focus of a healthy  
democracy. Voting should be carried out by those who care, by those who want to vote. It  
isn't too hard to argue that those who want to vote deserve to be heard more than those who  
do not. Is it truly worth listening to someone who has nothing to say or who doesn't *want* to  
say anything? ...

—Peter Barry  
excerpted from “How Compulsory  
Voting Subverts Democracy”  
<http://quadrant.org.au>, September 1, 2013

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## Part 3

### Text-Analysis Response

**Your Task:** Closely read the text provided on pages 18 and 19 and write a well-developed, text-based response of two to three paragraphs. In your response, identify a central idea in the text and analyze how the author's use of **one** writing strategy (literary element or literary technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea. Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis. Do *not* simply summarize the text. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response. Write your response in the spaces provided on pages 7 through 9 of your essay booklet.

#### Guidelines:

##### Be sure to:

- Identify a central idea in the text
- Analyze how the author's use of **one** writing strategy (literary element or literary technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea. Examples include: characterization, conflict, denotation/connotation, metaphor, simile, irony, language use, point-of-view, setting, structure, symbolism, theme, tone, etc.
- Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

## Text

*The following excerpt is a diary entry from the novel Dracula.*

When I found that I was a prisoner a sort of wild feeling came over me. I rushed up and down the stairs, trying every door and peering out of every window I could find; but after a little the conviction of my helplessness overpowered all other feelings. When I look back after a few hours I think I must have been mad for the time, for I behaved much as a rat  
5 does in a trap. When, however, the conviction had come to me that I was helpless I sat down quietly—as quietly as I have ever done anything in my life—and began to think over what was best to be done. I am thinking still, and as yet have come to no definite conclusion. Of one thing only am I certain; that it is no use making my ideas known to the Count. He knows well that I am imprisoned; and as he has done it himself, and has doubtless his  
10 own motives for it, he would only deceive me if I trusted him fully with the facts. So far as I can see, my only plan will be to keep my knowledge and my fears to myself, and my eyes open. I am, I know, either being deceived, like a baby, by my own fears, or else I am in desperate straits;<sup>1</sup> and if the latter be so, I need, and shall need, all my brains to get through.

I had hardly come to this conclusion when I heard the great door below shut, and knew  
15 that the Count had returned. He did not come at once to the library, so I went cautiously to my own room and found him making the bed. This was odd, but only confirmed what I had all along thought—that there were no servants in the house. When later I saw him through the chink of the hinges of the door laying the table in the dining-room, I was assured of it; for if he does himself all these menial offices, surely it is proof that there is  
20 no one else to do them. This gave me a fright, for if there is no one else in the castle, it must have been the Count himself who was the driver of the coach that brought me here. This is a terrible thought; for if so, what does it mean that he could control the wolves, as he did, by only holding up his hand in silence. How was it that all the people at Bistritz and on the coach had some terrible fear for me? What meant the giving of the crucifix, of  
25 the garlic, of the wild rose, of the mountain ash? Bless that good, good woman who hung the crucifix round my neck! for it is a comfort and a strength to me whenever I touch it. It is odd that a thing which I have been taught to regard with disfavour and as idolatrous should in a time of loneliness and trouble be of help. Is it that there is something in the essence of the thing itself, or that it is a medium, a tangible help, in conveying  
30 memories of sympathy and comfort? Some time, if it may be, I must examine this matter and try to make up my mind about it. In the meantime I must find out all I can about Count Dracula, as it may help me to understand. To-night he may talk of himself, if I turn the conversation that way. I must be very careful, however, not to awake his suspicion. ...

*Later.*—I endorse the last words written, but this time there is no doubt in question.  
35 I shall not fear to sleep in any place where he is not. I have placed the crucifix over the head of my bed—I imagine that my rest is thus freer from dreams; and there it shall remain.

When he left me I went to my room. After a little while, not hearing any sound, I came out and went up the stone stair to where I could look out towards the South. There was some sense of freedom in the vast expanse, inaccessible though it was to me, as of compared with  
40 the narrow darkness of the courtyard. Looking out of this, I felt that I was indeed in prison, and I seemed to want a breath of fresh air, though it were of the night. I am beginning to feel this nocturnal existence tell on me. It is destroying my nerve. I start at my own shadow, and am full of all sorts of horrible imaginings. God knows that there is ground for my terrible fear in this accursed place! I looked out over the beautiful expanse, bathed  
45 in soft yellow moonlight till it was almost as light as day. In the soft light the distant hills became melted, and the shadows in the valleys and gorges of velvety blackness.

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<sup>1</sup>straits — difficult situations

50 The mere beauty seemed to cheer me; there was peace and comfort in every breath I drew. As I leaned from the window my eye was caught by something moving a storey below me, and somewhat to my left, where I imagined, from the order of the rooms, that the windows of the Count's own room would look out. The window at which I stood was tall and deep, stone-mullioned,<sup>2</sup> and though weatherworn, was still complete; but it was evidently many a day since the case had been there. I drew back behind the stonework, and looked carefully out. ...

55 What manner of man is this, or what manner of creature is it in the semblance of man? I feel the dread of this horrible place overpowering me; I am in fear—in awful fear—and there is no escape for me; I am encompassed about with terrors that I dare not think of. ...

—Bram Stoker  
excerpted from *Dracula*, 1897  
The Modern Library  
Random House, Inc.

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<sup>2</sup>mullioned — divided into panes

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