

# 2024 RI LAW DAY

## VOICES OF DEMOCRACY



The 2024 Law Day theme **Voices of Democracy** recognizes that in democracies, the people rule. For nearly 250 years, Americans have expressed their political views and wishes by speaking their minds and voting in elections. This year's theme encourages Americans to participate in the 2024 elections by deepening their understanding of the electoral process, discussing all issues in honest and civil ways, and fulfilling their civic duty to vote so that government remains responsive to the wishes "of the people, by the people". Let's Celebrate this year's Law Day by lifting our voices to strengthen our democracy. Listed below are curriculum units and additional resources supporting this year's theme.



### RESOURCES:

#### American Bar Association 2024 Law Day Lesson Plans

- [Voting and Elections 101](#)
- [Poetry Speaks in American Democracy](#)
- [American Voting Rights: Deep Dive Into Primary Sources](#)

#### Democracy - Background Information

- [Freedom House](#) is founded on the core conviction that freedom flourishes in democratic nations where governments are accountable to their people.
- [American Democracy Digital Resources](#): this site and exhibition by the Smithsonian's Museum on Main Street program poses compelling questions for discussions about voting, elections, civic engagement, and citizenship.
- [Democracy in the United States](#): This website goes through all the highlights on Democracy including the process to becoming a U.S. Citizen, rights, and responsibilities as citizens, dividing the power of government. Handouts and classroom materials are provided.
- [Democracy in America](#): is an unique 15 part course for high school teachers and students that combines video, print, and web resources to provide a deeper understanding of the tenets and policies of democracy related to civics education.
- [Journal of Democracy](#): The Journal of Democracy reviews critical discussions regarding the prospects for democracy around the world and includes debates on the major social, political, and cultural challenges that are confronted today.

- **Protect Democracy**: Protect Democracy is a nonprofit group dedicated to defending democracy. Advocates use litigation, legislative and communication strategies, technology, research, and analysis to stand up for free and fair elections.
- **National Democratic Institute**: National Democratic Institute is a nonprofit; nonpartisan organization working to support and strengthen democratic institutions worldwide through citizen participation and governmental accountability.
- **United States Agency for International Development**: In support of American's foreign policy, the U.S. Agency for International Development leads the U.S. Government's international development and disaster assistance programs.
- **The Economist**: This site provides several articles on the analysis of American politics ranging from voting rights, political parties and affiliations and other most current political events.
- **U.S. Mission to the Organization of American States**: This is the official website of the U.S. Mission to the Organization of American states. Democracy promotion and human rights are analyzed along with useful links from the Library Congress Study.
- **USA Today**: What is the state of American democracy? As July 4th nears, poll shows voters are worried Article written by Phillip Bailey & Terry Collins, published June 27, 2023
- **Democracies in America**: Keywords for the 10th Century and Today Paperback by D. Berton Emerson & Gregory Laski This book features 25 essays written by a diverse group of leading intellectuals in history, literature, religious studies, political philosophy, rhetoric, and other disciplines.
- **American Academy of Arts and Sciences American Democracy & the Common Good** Article is part of the Stewarding America Project Edited by Norman Jay Ornstein & William Arthur Galston, Spring 2013
- **Current Events: The State of Democracy in the World**: Created by the Civics Learning Project

## Student Based Teaching Resources:

- **National Geographic Society**: Greek Influence on U.S. Democracy Article and educational materials produced for grades 5-12 in the areas of social studies, civics and U.S. History
- **Kids encyclopedia facts**: Democracy Facts for Kids Facts are compiled about Democracy for middle school students including types of government, kinds of democracy, and democratic consolidation.
- **Education.com**: Democracy for the Kids, By the Kids This website is a comprehensive library of resources for learning including reading and writing activities and printable worksheets.
- **What Is A Democracy? (PDF)**: This lesson sequence introduces students to the role of citizens and the functions of elections in a democratic society.
- **What is Democracy? – Lesson for Kids**: This lesson provides a kid-friendly overview of Democracy. Learn about its definition and the birth of direct democracy in Athens, Greece, and gain an understanding of democracy's role in the United States

- **Educating for American Democracy**: This lesson recommends approached to learning that inspire students to want to become involved in their constitutional democracy and help to sustain history.
- **U.S. Embassy in Georgia**: In the U.S., Democracy Begins In The Classroom, Article written by U.S. Embassy Tbilisi, December 9, 2021
- **Resources for Talking about Democracy – Civic Engagement**: This website includes engaging conversations between students and community leaders on the state of American democracy and is hosted by the Department of Service Learning and Civic Engagement
- **Annenberg Learner**: This website is compiled of a directory of topics related to Democracy in America and covers topics of civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions recommended by the Civics Framework for the National Assessment of Educational Progress developed by the U.S Department of Education.
- **Civic Action – Educating for Democracy Resource Collection**: This resource provide the educational standards that support teaching about voting and elections.
- **iCivics: Home**: iCivics is an online resource to engage students in meaningful civic learning. Included are free resources that teachers may use in preparation for Constitution Day. There are short term comprehensive videos that explain the text, history and relevance of the United States Constitution, Bill of Rights, and additional amendments in everyday language.
- **Democracy Now!**: Classroom resources are included that will build news literacy and critical thinking skills as students examine national and global events and learn about a variety of topics related to democracy.
- **Voting Rights: A Short History**: These materials set forth a timeline of the history of voting rights in American and discusses the struggle for egal voting right. The dates start back at the earliest days of US history (1700's) and moves forward to (2019) current time where once again Americans face new obstacles in voting.

## Historical Speeches - Citizenship & Civic Identity

- **Bella Abzug, “Women and the Fate of the Earth” (17 March 1990)**
- **Susan B. Anthony, “Is It a Crime for a U.S. Citizen to Vote” (3 April 1873)**
- **Jimmy Carter, “Crisis of Confidence” (15 July 1979)**
- **Thomas Jefferson, “First Inaugural Address” (4 March 1801)**
- **Lyndon B. Johnson, “Let Us Continue” (27 November 1963)**
- **Lyndon B. Johnson, “We Shall Overcome” (15 March 1965)**
- **Abraham Lincoln, “Speech of Hon. Abraham Lincoln at Cooper Institute, New York City” (27 February 1860)**
- **Abraham Lincoln, “A House Divided” (16 June 1858)**
- **Horace Mann, “The Necessity of Education in a Republican Government” (Fall 1839)**
- **Barack Obama, “Notre Dame Commencement Address” (17 May 2009)**

- Eleanor Roosevelt, “Address by Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, The Chicago Civil Liberties Committee” (4 March 1940)
- Franklin D. Roosevelt, “1941 State of the Union Address, The Four Freedoms” (6 January 1941)
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “Address on Woman’s Rights” (September 1848)
- Elizabeth Cady Stanton, “The Solitude of Self”: Speech to the House Judiciary Committee (18 February 1892)
- Mabel Vernon, “The Picketing Campaign Nears Victory” (7 December 1917)
- George Wallace, “Speech at Serb Hall, Milwaukee, Wisconsin” (26 March 1976)
- Frances “Fanny” Wright “Address Delivered in the New Harmony Hall, at the Celebration of the Fourth of July” (4 July 1828)

## Historical Speeches - Freedom of Speech

- George H.W. Bush, “Speech at Penn State University” (23 September 1992)
- John F. Kennedy, “Address: ‘The President and Press’ (27 April 1961)
- Robert M. La Follette, Sr., “Free Speech and the Right of Congress to Declare the Objects of War” (6 October 1917)
- Theodore Roosevelt, “Address of President Roosevelt at the Laying of the Corner Stone of the Office Building of the House of Representatives, April 14 1906” (“The Man with the Muck- Rake”)(14 April 1906)



*The 2024 RI Law Day Program Guide & Additional Resources are presented by the Rhode Island Law Day Committee comprised of members of the Rhode Island Judiciary, Rhode Island Bar Association, Rhode Island Police Chief’s Association, Rhode Island Department of Education, and the Roger Williams University School of Law.*