

## THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM : Listening Comprehension exercises

1. What kind of website is « BrainPOP » and what is « The mysteries of Life » ?

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2. How would you define Tim's accent ?



3. What kind of hat is Moby wearing ? « Whose » hat is it ?

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4. Listen to the whole document, and circle the words you hear (they are in chronological order):

- |                            |                         |                     |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Yankee                  | fancy                   | clumsy              |
| 2. Newborn                 | Nature borne            | natural-born        |
| 3. run for president       | won for President       | come for President  |
| 4. at last                 | at least                | at the least        |
| 5. the complaint hell      | the companion           | the campaign trail  |
| 6. wealthy                 | weighty                 | healthy             |
| 7. raise                   | erase                   | rise                |
| 8. picket                  | wicked                  | ticket              |
| 9. the Green Party         | the Gene Party          | the Queen's Party   |
| 10. strikes out            | starts out              | stands out          |
| 11. bunch                  | brunch                  | branch              |
| 12. prove their birth      | prove their worth       | prove they're worse |
| 13. rolling mate           | running late            | running mate        |
| 14. welfare                | health care             | hair care           |
| 15. heavy-duty campaigning | have a duty campaigning | utility campaigning |
| 16. quit the street        | hit the street          | heat the street     |
| 17. tricky                 | picky                   | tacky               |
| 18. clicked                | picked                  | ticked              |
| 19. divided by state       | divided up by state     | divvied up by state |
| 20. the greatest           | the great « r »         | the greater         |
| 21. Representatives        | Representants           | Represented         |
| 22. pretty rare            | pity rare               | teddy bear          |
| 23. swore and              | sworn in                | sworded             |
| 24. takes an oath          | takes a bath            | takes a boat        |
| 25. fight                  | slight                  | tight               |
| 26. president's ears       | residency               | presidency          |
| 27. pretty hazy            | pretty lazy             | pretty crazy        |
| 28. lawyers                | sawyers                 | employers           |
| 29. put a legal end to     | put illegal hands to    | put a legal hand to |
| 30. vote rally             | vote's allies           | vote tally          |

1 **Fill in the blanks with the words you hear:**

2  
3 “Dear Tim and Moby, / How do people get to be President of the United States ? / From Samir”

4 [You’ve gotta have more than a \_\_\_\_\_ hat to be president, Moby.]

5 The United States is a \_\_\_\_\_. That means that the people elect \_\_\_\_\_ to  
6 represent them. In the United States you have to be a natural-born \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_  
7 president, and you gotta be at least \_\_\_\_\_ years old. You also have to be ready to be on the campaign trail for a long  
8 time : the process of becoming president can take years. And you don’t have to be \_\_\_\_\_ to run, but you  
9 do need to raise a lot of money for your campaign to have a chance of winning.

10 Presidential elections happen every \_\_\_\_\_ in the US. On \_\_\_\_\_, people  
11 vote for a presidential \_\_\_\_\_ — the candidate team for President and Vice President nominated by each  
12 political party. There are two \_\_\_\_\_ political parties in the States : the Democratic Party, and the Republican  
13 Party. In recent years, more parties, like the \_\_\_\_\_ Party, and the Reform Party, have sprung up too.

14 Well, the race starts out well before that, with a bunch of candidates who wanna be their party’s nominee .They  
15 debate and campaign to prove \_\_\_\_\_. The parties then hold \_\_\_\_\_  
16 \_\_\_\_\_ to decide who’ll represent them. After the presidential nominee is chosen, he or she selects a  
17 \_\_\_\_\_, the person who’ll serve as Vice-President if the nominee wins.

18 The \_\_\_\_\_ the final presidential election, each party holds a nominating  
19 convention to officially nominate their party’s \_\_\_\_\_. The nominating convention is also the time for a  
20 party to decide its \_\_\_\_\_ – you know, where they stand on the issues — education,  
21 \_\_\_\_\_ care, foreign \_\_\_\_\_, the state of the economy, that stuff ! Then, heavy-duty campaigning  
22 starts. The presidential and vice-presidential candidates hit the street, and meet and speak to \_\_\_\_\_  
23 \_\_\_\_\_ people and organizations \_\_\_\_\_.

24 Election Day in the US is the first \_\_\_\_\_ in November, but never \_\_\_\_\_.

25 Well, this is when it gets a little \_\_\_\_\_. The president isn’t \_\_\_\_\_ by the majority of popular  
26 votes, or votes from \_\_\_\_\_. Instead, the president is picked by something  
27 called « The Electoral \_\_\_\_\_ ». In the US, there are \_\_\_\_\_ presidential \_\_\_\_\_, divvied up  
28 by state who each cast an electoral vote for the president. To be elected, a candidate has to receive a majority of electoral  
29 votes — \_\_\_\_\_ or more. The number of electoral votes each state casts is based on population : \_\_\_\_\_  
30 \_\_\_\_\_ the state population, \_\_\_\_\_ electoral votes.

31 Right, so when you vote for president, you’re actually voting for your state’s electoral votes. Generally, the  
32 candidate who receives the most popular votes in a state wins all that \_\_\_\_\_’s electoral votes, which means that  
33 every person’s vote really does \_\_\_\_\_.

34 On the second Monday in December, all the electors meet and officially vote on the President. If no candidate wins  
35 a simple electoral majority, the \_\_\_\_\_ chooses the president from the  
36 top three candidates. That’s pretty rare, though : it’s only happened a couple of times in US history.

37 Finally, on January \_\_\_\_\_ of the following year, the new president is \_\_\_\_\_. He or she  
38 takes an \_\_\_\_\_ to faithfully execute the Office of the President, and to preserve, protect and defend the  
39 \_\_\_\_\_ of the United States.

40 Well, the system isn’t perfect : in the 2000 Presidential Election, the electoral votes from \_\_\_\_\_ states were  
41 split between George W. Bush, and Al Gore, with neither candidate having \_\_\_\_\_ to win. It all came  
42 down to Florida, where the race was extremely tight. With a margin of just \_\_\_\_\_ popular votes, George W. Bush  
43 was initially declared the winner of Florida’s \_\_\_\_\_ electoral votes, and the presidency. But, since the margin was so  
44 close, state \_\_\_\_\_ required a recount of the popular votes. That’s when things got pretty crazy : Gore challenged  
45 the recount process, and both sides hired \_\_\_\_\_. Finally, the \_\_\_\_\_  
46 stepped in and put a legal \_\_\_\_\_ to the argument. They decided that the recount could not be fairly conducted, and  
47 that the original vote tally had to stand, making George W. Bush president.

48 Yeah, it was definitely a strange ending. It actually marked only the third time in US history that a president was  
49 elected without winning the popular vote. [Wait, you WHAT? Oh no... ]

50 *You can listen again at home by logging on to: <http://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/ushistory/presidentialelection/>*