



**Educator Guide:  
IF I WERE PRESIDENT SIMULATION**

# **IF I WERE PRESIDENT SIMULATION**

## **Educator Guide**

**Overview:** Students will explore the decision making process of the Executive Branch through a simulation between the President and their key advisors. Students first discuss national interests and how it applies in this situation as well as learn about the simulation in a 40 minute lesson before engaging in an 80 minute simulation.

### **Envision Platform & National Standards Alignment:**

- CCSS ELA Alignment
  - High School Anchor: R.9-12.1
  - High School Anchor: SL.9-12.1
  - History/Social Studies – ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1
- C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards Alignment
  - High School: D2.Civ.10.9-12; D2.Civ.12.9-12; D2.Eco.1.9-12;
- Envision Education Platform
  - Dimension 1: Core Skills – Standard 1A. Communication
  - Dimension 1: Core Skills – Standard 1B. Collaboration
  - Dimension 2: Cognitive Strategies – Standard 2A. Problem Solving

### **Expected Outcomes & Desired Results:**

1. Students will be able to illustrate the challenges of national leaders.
2. Students will develop awareness of national interests and its role in the decision making process.
3. Students will role play a presidential decision making scenario.
4. Students will illustrate the complexities of presidential decision making.
5. Students will practice leadership skills of communication, decision making and analysis of viewpoints.
6. Students will work collaboratively to achieve a common goal.
7. Students will recognize consequences of decisions and possible conflict of values in reaching decisions.

### **Materials**

- Educator Guide
- Background PowerPoint
- Student Simulation Material
- President & Press Secretary Role Cards
- Role Cards
- Faxes
- Role Labels

## **MATERIAL DISTRIBUTION**

### **Background Lesson**

#### Facilitator

- Educator Guide
- Background PowerPoint
- Student Simulation Material
- Role Cards (Handed Out During Lesson)
- President & Press Secretary Role Sheets (Handed Out During Lesson)

#### Student

- Student Simulation Material

### **Simulation**

#### Facilitator

- Facilitation Guide
- Faxes (To Be Handed Out During Simulation)

#### Student

- Role Label
- Student Simulation Material
- Role Card (Students Received During Lesson)

## **Facilitating the Presentation on Background and National Interests:**

*Prior to the lesson students should have read the student material pages (focus on 1-3 & 23-25) to understand background of crisis and simulation.*

<b>Time</b>	<b>Description</b>
10 minutes	Simulation Overview & Setting the Scene
10 minutes	National Interest/DIME
10 minutes	Presidential Elections and Role Selection
10 minutes	Policy Making

Introduce the If I Were President Simulation to your class using the provided PowerPoint. Notes are attached for each slide.

- Overview/Introduction Talking Points:
  - a. Overview of Simulation and how fits into class time
  - b. There is a national security crisis and the President has called various officials to the White House to assist in resolving the crisis
  - c. Each student will have a role
- Slide 2 Objective: Students understand the Simulation
  - a. Talking Point: First point out that they will learn more about the simulation and about national security interests before they begin the simulation and pick roles
  - b. Review the Simulation timeline
- Slide 3 Objective: Students will understand the key elements of the scenario
  - a. Talking Point: Begin by asking the students “What are the key elements of the scenario?” Have a student write them on the board.
  - b. Some key points to make sure they mention:
    - i. *On 4 April 2019, Somalia collapsed once again to chaos and civil war after a coup d’état ousted the successful, but controversial,*

*President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, forcing the president and his government to flee into exile.*

- ii. *After years of relative peace and stability in Somalia, pirate attacks have been on the rise in recent months around the Horn of Africa (refer the scholars to the map of Somalia in on page 4)*
- iii. *On 22 June 2019, a U.S. flagged cargo ship carrying food aid to Kenya and military supplies to the Joint U.S./U.K. Naval Air Station on the island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean was hijacked by Somali pirates and taken to the port city of Eyl, where the ship and the crew are being held hostage and a ransom of \$7.5 million is being asked.*
- iv. *The entire crew is American citizens and the captain of the ship is a former U.S. Marine.*

- Slide 4 Objective: Students will understand National Interests and how they relate to the scenario
  - a. Talking point: Explain to students what national interests are and ask students how the interests of the US & Somalia might be different in this scenario. Page 18 has more information on National Interests.
- Slide 5 Objective: Students will understand that nations use different types of power to achieve national interests.
  - a. Talking Point: Use the Acronym DIME to explain national power
  - b. In order to better understand how to use DIME we are going to use our friends Chuck & Susie as an example.
    - i. Chuck is interested in asking Susie out. Ask students “How can Chuck use the DIME strategies to his advantage? “ Have students share responses.
      - Examples of how Chuck can use DIME:
        - a. **Diplomatic Power** - *In this situation, Chuck may get to know Suzie’s friends, talk to them and get them to help him get Suzie’s attention.*
        - b. **Informational Power** - *n this situation, Chuck would collect as much information about Suzie as possible to make sure that he is doing things that she likes and will get her attention.*
        - c. **Military Power** - *In this situation, Chuck would show up unannounced to a party or the movies and force his way in to a date with Suzie.*
        - d. **Economic Power** - *In this situation, Chuck would buy things for Suzie to get her to go out with him*
  - c. Remember to use National Interests and Tools of National Power to help you in the simulation.

Slide 6 Objective: Students will understand all the roles involved in the simulation There are 26 roles. If necessary two students can share roles.

- a. Before roles can be selected a President needs to be elected.
  - i. Establish a way that works best for your class to choose 1 person to be president
  - ii. The President will be running the simulation, at the end of class/before the simulation make sure the President understand their role and that they

- will be responsible for reading ALL of the material and running the simulation.
- iii. Once a President has been elected hand them the President Role Sheet
  - b. Have all students select a role in a way that works best for your class.
    - i. An easy way to do it is have the Role Cards either taped to the board or on a table for students to select.
    - ii. The Press Secretary's gets the Press Secretary Role Sheet
  - Slide 7 Objective: Students will understand during the simulation they need to take on the role of their official. .
    - a. Pages 20-22 have policy suggestion ideas, but they can create their own as long as it fits within their role.
    - b. Remind students to review the simulation information and background pages 4-17 to help them prepare

## Facilitating the Simulation

<b>Time</b>	<b>Description</b>
10 minutes	Setting the Stage
20 minutes	Policy Group Meetings
20 minutes	Executive Meeting
10 minutes	Oval Office Meeting
10 minutes	Press Conference
10 minutes	Debrief

Notes:

- Make sure the President is comfortable with their role and answer any questions they may have before letting them begin.
- Arrange chairs in circles according to policy groups and set out signs for each group so students know where to sit as they walk in the room.
- **During the simulation:** The students, particularly the President, will run the simulation. You should be available to answer any questions and make sure that the simulation is running on time.
- **During the simulation:** There are faxes that need to be delivered to certain advisors that contain critical updated information. You will hand these out during the *Policy Group Meetings*. Have fun handing them out to the roles specified.
- **During the Debrief:** Facilitate the discussion.

### Setting the Stage (Teacher Led)

**10 minutes**

- Distribute the labels with their titles on them, and review how the simulation will run.
- Answer any questions about logistics and review the *If I Were President* goals and timeline. It may be helpful to have the timeline displayed during the simulation.
- Inform students that they are no longer in their high school, but rather in the *White House*. They should act professionally and address one another by title and they become their advisor to the President.
- The President should give the briefing on the scenario and share a summary of the key facts to begin the simulation.

### Policy Group Meetings

**20 minutes**

- Students break into their policy groups as defined by their role to either White House, Diplomacy, Intelligence & Security, Trade & Humanitarian and Legislative.
- Once in their policy groups, the students should select one group member to be the chairman, one to be the note taker and one to be the spokesperson.

- The students should take out the policy suggestions they were asked to brainstorm the previous meeting for preparation, and share their policy suggestions. Then collectively, they should figure out which 3-5 detailed policy options best address the crisis as their role. Remind each policy group that their decisions will have consequences both in the present and in the future.
- Encourage the students to role-play, discussing how they will advise the president.
- You should float around the room. If a group is stuck or says they are finished, pose challenging questions concerning the details of the group's proposed solutions. Ex: What if this country says they are willing to go to war? Will your advice change?
- **Give faxes to the appropriate roles at this time. It will take a few minutes to distribute, don't hand out all at once, but spread out throughout the policy group meeting. If other teachers or faculty are available to assist it makes it more exciting.**
- President's role during the policy group meetings:
  - The president meets briefly with each group to get an idea of what their suggestions will be once the executive meeting occurs. You should advise the president that after the group meeting that there will be an executive meeting. The president may run this meeting however s/he likes but offer any suggestions you might have at this time. A suggestion for running the meeting is to have a large discussion and have a spokesperson from each group present their group's policy options.

### **3. Executive Meeting**

**20 minutes**

- The president is in charge of conducting this meeting. The president leads the discussion and asks each group for recommendations.
- Encourage the president to ask high-level questions about the details of their recommendations.
- Students should identify their roles when speaking and address one another by the title of their role.
- After the discussion, the president retires with the press secretary and 1-2 other advisors of his/her choosing for a few minutes to decide a plan of action.

### **4. Oval Office Meeting**

**10 minutes**

- President and chosen advisors:
  - The president will retire to the Oval Office with advisors of his/her choosing either stepping out into the hall or a corner of the classroom.
  - Along with the press secretary, they will collaborate to determine how to present the decision at the press conference. The president should prepare a 2-3 minute speech of the actions they will take and be prepared to answer questions during a press conference.
  - Brief the press secretary on the proper protocol for the press conference.

- Rest of the Class:
  - During this time, the students will be setting up the room for the press conference. Change the chairs into rows to simulate a press conference. They should be instructed that they are changing roles and are now reporters. The backside of their role card has an optional reporter background.
  - Have them brainstorm possible questions, and run a practice round of the press conference while the president is out of the room making a decision.

### **5. Press Conference**

**10 minutes**

- Have the president stand at the front of the room, and the others should sit theater style facing the president.
- The president and/or the press secretary present the proposal on how to address the crisis.
- A short period follows during which the reporters ask the president questions about the proposed policy and the President answers to the best of their ability.
- At the end of the 10 minutes have the Press Secretary thank the reporters for coming.

### **6. Debrief (Teacher Led)**

**15 minutes**

- Thank the students for participating in the simulation!
- Lead a brief discussion with the students using the following questions to guide the conversation:
  - *To the president: What was it like to be president?*
  - *Is it important for the president to have advisors? Why or why not?*
  - *How does the motivation of presidential advisors compare to the motivation of the president?*
  - *How did you use national interests and tools of national power to make your policy decisions?*
  - *How effective is this decision making process?*
  - *How does the quality of the leader impact the effectiveness of this decision making process?*
  - *What leadership qualities did the President use in making their decision today?*
  - *What leadership qualities did you use in working with your peers today?*
  - *In what ways were the decision-making skills you used helping the President different from how you would normally make a decision? How were they similar?*

An after-simulation assignment might be a reflective journal on their simulation experience or an opinion piece on what decision they would have supported.