

As President, I will...

by Jackie McAvoy

Level: Pre-intermediate and above

Target age: Teenage and above

Time needed: 45 minutes plus recording time

Aim: For students to produce a short video / audio of a manifesto

Materials: Digital camera or mobile phone / mp3 recorder (e.g. iPod)

Lead in to the topic

1. Read out the following definition and ask students to tell you what the word is: *a written statement in which a group of people, especially a political party, explain their beliefs and say what they will do if they win an election.* Elicit or give *manifesto* and write this on the board.
2. Give an example of an issue that a manifesto usually covers, e.g. *health care*. Write this on the board as well. Put students in pairs / small groups and ask them to come up with at least five more issues. Get students to call their ideas out and write these on the board as well. Aim to have: *the economy, national security / defence, education, the environment, technology, fighting crime, agriculture*. If students suggest *immigration* or *faith / religion*, consider not writing these on the board unless you can trust your students not to say anything inappropriate.
3. Divide the class in two. Put half the students in A/A pairs and give each one the top text (*A Call to Action*). Put the other half in B/B pairs and give them the bottom text (*Plan for a Healthy America*). Ask them to read their texts and guess which American presidential candidate is speaking. Answer: A is McCain and B is Obama. Tell students they don't have to be interested in or know anything about these people, the texts are just examples. Students then work in pairs to read again and answer, in note form, the questions in part 1 of the worksheet. Pairs should help each other so that everyone answers all the questions. (Both McCain and Obama say health care is too expensive and not everyone has insurance, and they both want health care for every American).
4. Regroup the students into A/B pairs. Get the pairs to face each other and take it in turns to talk about the texts. They don't have to write, just ask and answer the questions on the worksheets. Do they agree with the particular problems (smoking / lead poisoning)

and the solutions (stop-smoking programs / lead-safe child care facilities)?

The task

1. Remaining in their A/B pairs, tell the students they are all leaders of a new party. They are going to write a short manifesto on one particular issue by answering the questions in part 2 of the worksheet. The first thing to decide is the issue – refer students to the board where these are written down. Once they have chosen one they have to complete the question *What are the problems regarding...?* and then consider the answers, again in note form. Make sure there's enough time for students to do this task.
2. Once they have their notes, get students to read the example texts once more to notice the modal verbs: *I believe we **can** and **must** provide... / Health care **should** be available... / As president, I **will** protect children...* etc. Students should add some of these to their notes to make strong political statements.

Preparing to record

1. They are now going to make a speech about their chosen issue, which will be recorded. This can either be recorded as a video, or just an audio. If students are interested, get them to come up with the name of their party, a slogan and perhaps a logo. The more involved they are in the project the more fun it'll be.
2. Using the notes, each student practises talking about their manifesto. They should do this enough times until they are confident to be recorded. Ideally students should aim for one minute, it can be longer of course but a short speech is more interesting to listen to than a long one. See the worksheet *Top tips on recording*.
3. After the speeches have been recorded the videos can be uploaded to YouTube or Google Video. They can then be watched by all the students in another lesson. The videos can also be watched by other students around the world. Remember to put *onestopenglish* in the title of the video, for example: *Onestopenglish Education manifesto for the ____ party*.
4. Audio recordings can also be listened to by all the students in another lesson. If your school has a website, perhaps you can upload the recordings there so that other students can listen to the manifestos too.

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Worksheet

Part 1

Read your paragraph about one of the American presidential candidate's views on health care. Can you tell if it is John McCain or Barack Obama speaking? Then read again and answer these questions:

What are the two problems regarding health care in the United States?
.....

What does the candidate want to do about this?
.....

What particular problem is he focussing on?
.....

What are the negative effects of this problem?
.....

How does he want to solve it?
.....

Part 2

Plan your manifesto.

What are the problems re _____?
.....

What do you want to do about this?
.....

What particular problem are you focussing on?
.....

What are the negative effects of this problem?
.....

How do you want to solve it?
.....

Look at the modal verbs used in the example paragraphs.

INTEGRATED SKILLS WORKSHEET

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**Worksheet****Student A***A "Call to Action"*

The problems with health care are well known: it is too expensive and 47 million people living in the United States lack health insurance.

I believe we can and must provide access to health care for every American.

We want a system of health care in which everyone can afford and acquire the treatment and preventative care they need. Health care should be available to all and not limited by where you work or how much you make.

In particular smoking: most smokers would love to quit but find it hard to do so. Working with business and insurance companies to promote availability, we can improve lives and reduce disease through stop-smoking programs.

**Student B***Plan for a Healthy America*

Millions of Americans are uninsured or underinsured because of rising medical costs: 46 million Americans — including over eight million children — lack health insurance with no signs of this trend slowing down.

My plan begins by covering every American.

We will make available a new national health plan to all Americans, including the self-employed and small businesses.

In particular lead poisoning: more than 430,000 American children have dangerously high levels of lead in their blood. Lead can cause irreversible brain damage, learning disabilities, behavioral problems and even death. As president, I will protect children from lead poisoning by requiring that child care facilities be lead-safe within five years.