

The County Election, 1852 by George Caleb Bingham [1811–1879]

1. What is happening in this painting?
2. Find these elements.
 - a. A white dog:
 - b. A seated man in a top hat who might be sketching or writing:
 - c. A man pouring drinks:
 - d. A man with a bandaged head and a horse and rider:
3. Where is this scene taking place?
4. Describe how Bingham unified this scene so that many figures form a connected group.
5. How did Bingham create an illusion of depth?
6. Why are there no women in this scene?
7. Describe the different shapes of hats in this painting. What do the hats suggest about the occupations of these individuals?
8. What message does Bingham give in this crowded scene about the election process in American democracy?
9. Compare this election scene to a contemporary American voting scene.

Historical Connections: American frontier; Jacksonian era

Historical Figures: Andrew Jackson; Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton; Lucretia Mott; Sojourner Truth; Lyndon B. Johnson

Civics: U.S. Constitution; elections (local, state, federal); Voting Rights Act of 1965; Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments

Literary Connections and Primary Documents: *Vote!*, Eileen Christelow (elementary); *Democracy in America*, Volume I (1835) and Volume II (1839), Alexis de Tocqueville; Susan B. Anthony's speech at her trial of 1873; *The Ballot or the Bullet*, Malcolm X

Arts: American Realism; genre painting