Name Date

Enrichment and Extension

10.6

The Electoral College

The President of the United States is chosen by the Electoral College. The electors usually vote for whichever presidential candidate won the popular vote in their state. The number of electors from each state is equal to the number of senators plus the number of representatives in the House. Every state has two senators, regardless of its population. The number of representatives in the House is proportional to the state's population. The District of Columbia gets three electors even though they do not have representation in Congress.

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| Distribution of 2004 and 2008 Electoral Votes | | | |
| State/District | Senators | House Representatives | Electors |
| California | 2 | 53 | 55 |
| District of Columbia | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Florida | 2 | 25 | 27 |
| Louisiana | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| Montana | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| Total | 100 | 435 | 538 |

1. Do the Electoral College votes represent a sample of each state's population? Explain your reasoning.

2. Your school is holding a mock election, in which all 1308 students will participate in a popular vote. Each student will be assigned to represent one   
of the fifty states or the District of Columbia. How many of the students in   
your school should represent California? District of Columbia? Florida? Louisiana? Montana?

3. The presidential election results in 2000 were delayed because the popular vote results were so close in Florida. In the end, George W. Bush won the presidency without winning the most popular votes nationwide. The presidents elected in 1824, 1876, and 1888 also did not win the most popular votes. Explain how this is possible. Research one of the four elections and summarize what you find most interesting about it.

4. Research how television stations make projections for presidential elections. Include information about pre-election polls, exit polls, and actual votes reported. Also, describe how the sample precincts are chosen. How do they ensure that the sample data is representative of the state's population?