



## LESSON 2: DEBATE WATCHING 101

### Before the Debate

Thinking about and preparing for the debate before it takes place will enable you to get the most from watching it.

- Follow the campaign to learn about the candidates and their backgrounds.
- Decide what issues are most important to you.
- Think about the questions you may have and the information you want to get from the debate to help you in your decision making.
- Open your mind to new opinions/impressions of the candidate regardless of party affiliation.

### During the Debate

When watching the debate, ask yourself questions like these to help you judge the fairness of the debate and the performance of the candidates:

#### THE DEBATE

- Are the questions clear, fair and equally tough on all candidates?
- Do the questions cover the issues that are important to you?

#### THE CANDIDATES

- Do they answer questions directly, or do they evade them or fail to answer the specific question?
- Do they give specifics about their stands on the issues, or do they speak in generalization? Do they support their positions and arguments with facts and figures?
- Do they talk about their own policies and positions, or do they mostly attack their opponents?
- Do they appear sincere, confident and relaxed?
- Do they show how their backgrounds and experience qualify them to hold the office?

### After the debate

It will help clarify your thoughts about the candidates and the issues if you take some time after the debate to reflect on what you have just seen and heard. You can do this by:

- Turning off the TV and avoid listening to the commentaries.
- Identifying the issues on which you agree with a candidate and those on which you disagree, and deciding whether that makes you more or less likely to vote for a particular candidate.
- Thinking about whether you have more questions about the issues or the candidates that you want to follow up on.

## ★ UPCOMING DEBATES ★

# OCTOBER 16 & OCTOBER 22

Debates broadcast on ABC, NBC, CBS, FOX, CNN,  
Fox News & MSNBC and can also be found live  
streaming on the internet.

*Newspapers for this educational program provided by:*

