

### What My Vote Will Mean To Me

There are many milestones that people reach in their lifetime. Walking, talking, kindergarten, teenage years, graduation. But turning 18 and voting is a milestone that is unique from all others, because it is not personal anymore, it makes me responsible to something that is bigger than myself. It makes me responsible to society.

This year in class, I have studied many historical topics on voting such as Women's Suffragist Movement, protesting, amendments, and Reconstruction. Through these topics, I have learned about the suffering and strength that women and African Americans endured to receive basic rights in America. Through the violence and mistreatment, these strong individuals triumphed for what was right and equal.

Learning about the history of others has taught me that voting is more than just a right, it is a responsibility. I will need to be responsible to make sure that I do not participate in a popularity contest, because my parents have always taught me that what is popular is not always right. I will need to be responsible to educate myself on issues and candidates. I will have to be responsible to look into topics that may not always affect me, but may affect the people around me. I have to be responsible to look into topics that may not mean much to me now, but will affect my future. I will have to be responsible to make up my own mind, and lastly, I will need to be responsible to defend my ideas and thoughts.

Voting is more than a right, it is a power. With power comes change. Change to correct things that are wrong, change to better society, change to make the world a better place. With power comes unity. Though we may all have different thoughts or opinions, we are all united in knowing that we can share our differences through our votes. I think our world could use a little more unity. As John Quincy Adams once said, "Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost."