

# Education Matters

*Aida Shtiwi*

**BEFORE YOU READ:** What type of government does your home country have? What are some political differences between your home country and the U.S.?

I have never voted in my home country of Syria. Even though I was born in Syria, I am the daughter of Palestinian refugees. This means I was considered a temporary resident of Syria, and I didn't have the right to vote. All other Syrians over the age of 18 can vote.

Now I am a citizen of the United States, and for the first time in my life, I have the right to vote! I am especially excited to participate in the local election in my town because I am very interested in education. Education builds strong communities, reduces crime, and improves the economy. Education is important for everyone because it expands our horizons.

Before I vote for school board candidates, I try to get to know them, check their resumes, and see what they are offering to improve public school education. Is the candidate trustworthy for this

position? Can they improve the public school?

Think carefully about the candidates running in your local election. And don't forget to participate on election day! This day is important to our community.

**AFTER YOU READ:**

Can you name an implied difference between voting rights in Syria and the U.S.?

Note: the author does not state the difference explicitly. You will have to use inference.



*Aida Shtiwi is a student at the Community Learning Center in Cambridge, MA. She came to the United States 6 years ago.*

## Looking for clear, unbiased information for elections?

**[www.vote411.org](http://www.vote411.org)** asks for your address and then tells you who in your area is running, the dates of events, and facts on the issues. "VOTE411 is committed to ensuring voters have the information they need to successfully participate in every election."

**[www.factcheck.org](http://www.factcheck.org)** monitors the factual accuracy of political candidates in their TV ads, debates, speeches, interviews and news releases. You can read articles and post questions for them to research about the current news and elections.

**[ballotpedia.org](http://ballotpedia.org)** allows you to look up elections at the local, state, and federal levels. "Ballotpedia is the digital encyclopedia of American politics and elections. Our goal is to inform people about politics by providing accurate and objective information about politics at all levels of government."

*Divide into groups and visit these websites. Try them out. Report back what you find.*