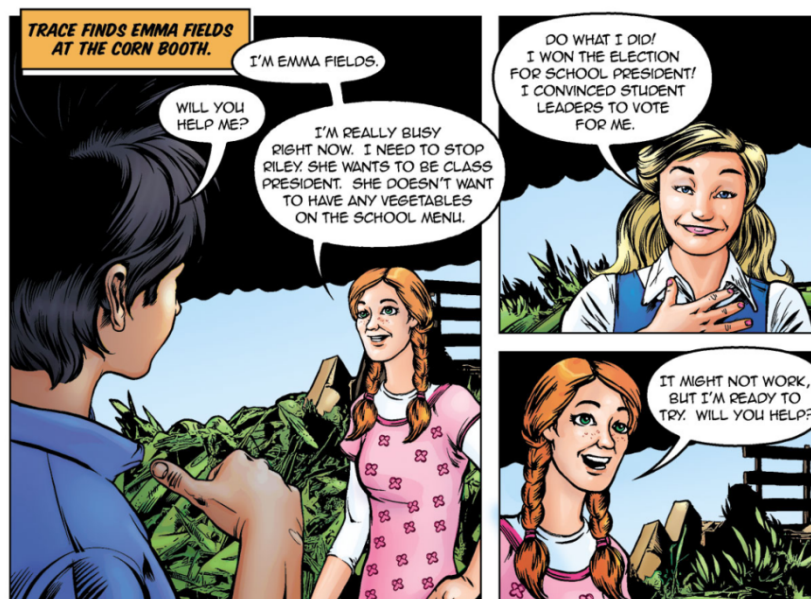


Public Debate: International Day of Democracy Reading



Classroom Democracy – School President Elections

In America, many young people first experience democracy in school elections. Elections take place in individual classes or in the entire school. Students who win the election are known as the **class president** or school president.

In *Trace Effects* Emma Fields wants to be class president because she disagrees with Riley. Riley wants the school to have junk food for lunch. Emma wants the school to only serve health food for lunch like vegetables.

To decide who will be class president students can announce their **candidacy**, or volunteer to become class president. Usually several students will announce their candidacy. This requires the class to have an election. Each student candidate will have a **campaign**. A campaign is when students take time to convince their class to vote for them. Campaigns can be simple, with each student giving a speech, or campaigns can be much bigger with speeches, posters, and **debates**. In a debate, candidates choose a topic important to the voters and try to persuade voters to agree with them. For Emma and Riley, they debated on the topic: **The school should serve junk food at lunch**. Emma's **argument** is vegetables should be served for lunch. Riley's **counter-argument** is vegetables should not be served for lunch.

After the campaigns are over, the class will have an election day. On election day, all the students – including the candidates – cast their votes for class president. Students write their favorite candidate's name on a **ballot**. With voting over, the **ballots** are counted and the candidate with the most votes wins.