

CHALLENGE AND ENRICHMENT ACTIVITY

ELECTING LEADERS

Interpreting Election Results

The U.S. presidential election of 2000 was a cliffhanger. It took approximately five weeks to learn the official outcome of the election. To add to the drama, the winner of the popular vote was not the person who became president. Review the material below and answer the questions to determine whether you could have predicted the outcome.

THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OF 2000

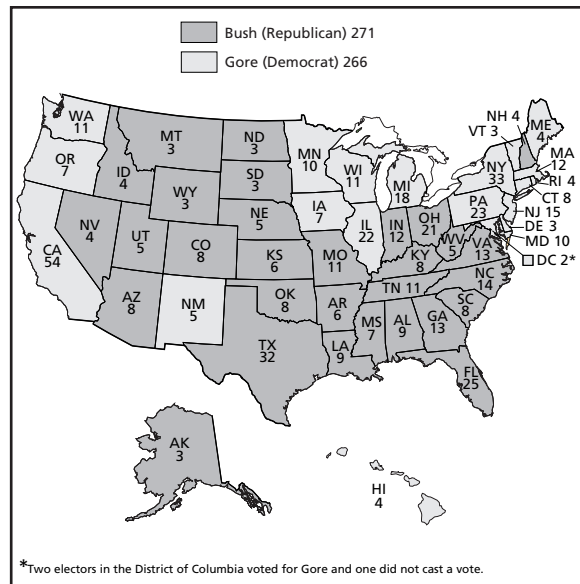
Candidate	Popular Vote	Percentage of the Popular Vote
George W. Bush (Republican Party)	50,456,002	47.87%
Albert Gore Jr. (Democratic Party)	50,999,897	48.38%
All Others	3,949,201	3.75%

1. On the basis of the popular vote alone, who do you think would have won the election?

2. Look at the map below. It shows how the states cast their electoral votes in the 2000 election. Add up the number of electoral votes for the two main candidates.

Bush _____ Gore _____

3. On the basis of this vote, who became president? _____



Explanation: George Bush became president even though he received fewer popular votes than Albert Gore Jr. Essentially, a state's electors are equal to its total number of senators and representatives. If a candidate wins the popular vote in larger states with more electors, then his or her total number of electoral votes may exceed that of the opponent.