Interactive Exercise: Voting Practice

Hold a practice election with a group of people! Follow the instructions below and use the ballots at the end of this activity to create your own election.

Before election day

1. Make a voters list
Add each participant to a voters list. If possible, have them register officially by showing the proper identification (ID) listed on page 15. This list will be your official voters list for the election. Write down any accessibility help that will let every voter participate in the election.

2. Create political parties and candidates
Divide everyone into three or more groups, and create your own political parties. Each party should work as a team to decide what's important to them, and to build their party's platform.

3. Host candidate speeches or presentations
Each political party should pick someone to act as their party leader. They'll be the candidate in this practice election. Each party leader can present their party's ideas to the whole group. Speakers can share what makes them different from the other parties.

4. Discuss and debate
Ask the group to think about which candidate and political party best represents what's important to them. Remember that voters can vote for any candidate.

5. Prepare the ballots
Pick a few people to be election workers and create the ballots. Write each candidate and their political party on the ballots. Fold each ballot so the candidate names are hidden. Use the sample ballots at the end of this activity to guide you. Make enough ballots for everyone, plus a few extras.

6. Prepare the polling station
Every election needs a place to vote. To set up your polling station, you'll need a voters list, a ballot box, folded ballots, and one or two election workers. The ballot box can be any container with a lid or cover. Make sure voters can fill out their ballots in private.

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How to Vote

1. Arrive at the polling station and give your name. Show ID if you have it.
2. An election helper checks the list and gives you a folded ballot.
3. Go to a private space, mark an X next to your chosen candidate using a pencil, and fold the ballot again.
4. Give the folded ballot to the election helper. (In a real election, part of the ballot would be removed first — but for this activity, that step is skipped.)
5. The helper gives the ballot back to you, and you place it in the ballot box.
6. Make sure everyone has a chance to vote — and that's it, you've voted!

Voting tip

If a voter makes a mistake, they can ask for a new ballot—but they can only do that once.

Count the votes

1. Remove all ballots from the ballot box.
2. Read each vote aloud and write down the chosen candidate on a tally sheet.
3. Group the ballots by candidate and create a separate pile for spoiled ballots.
4. Count the ballots for each candidate, then recount to confirm the totals.
5. Announce the winner and celebrate your newly elected representative!

Voting tip

If someone chose more than one candidate on a ballot, the ballot is **spoiled**. Don't count this ballot.

Voting Terms

Spoiled A ballot is considered spoiled when it's filled out incorrectly or damaged, making it invalid and unable to be counted.

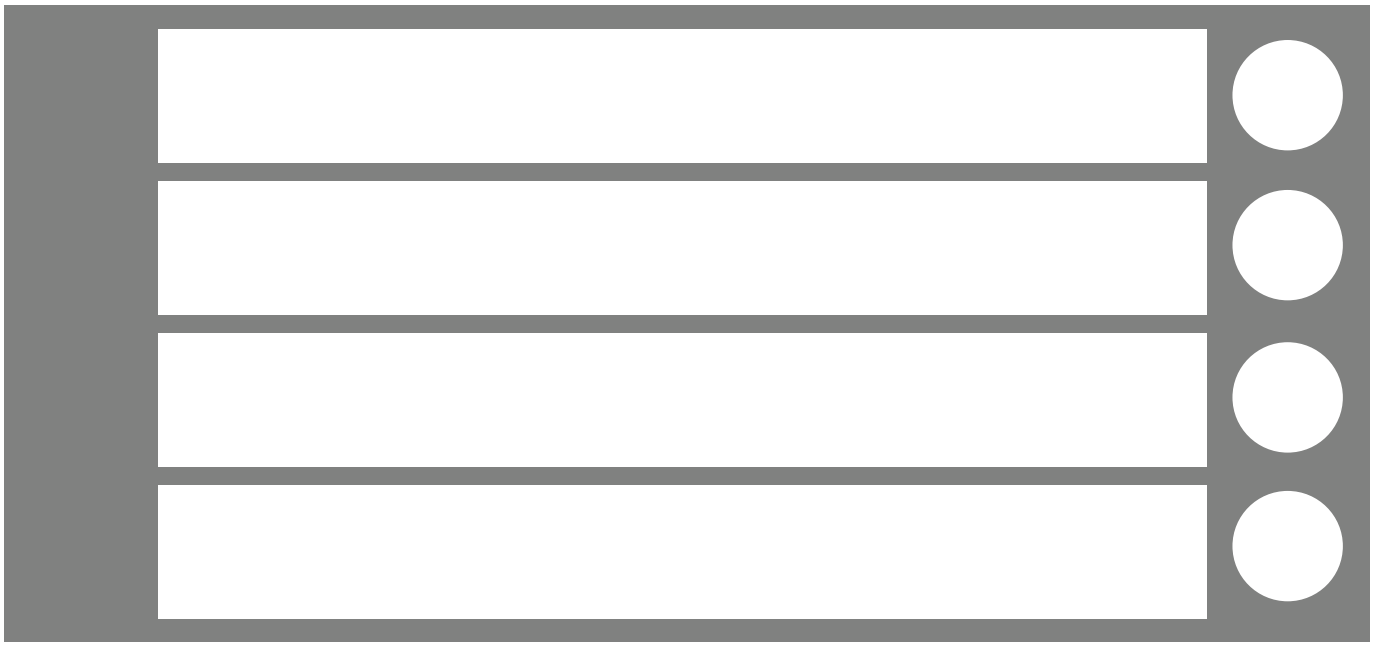
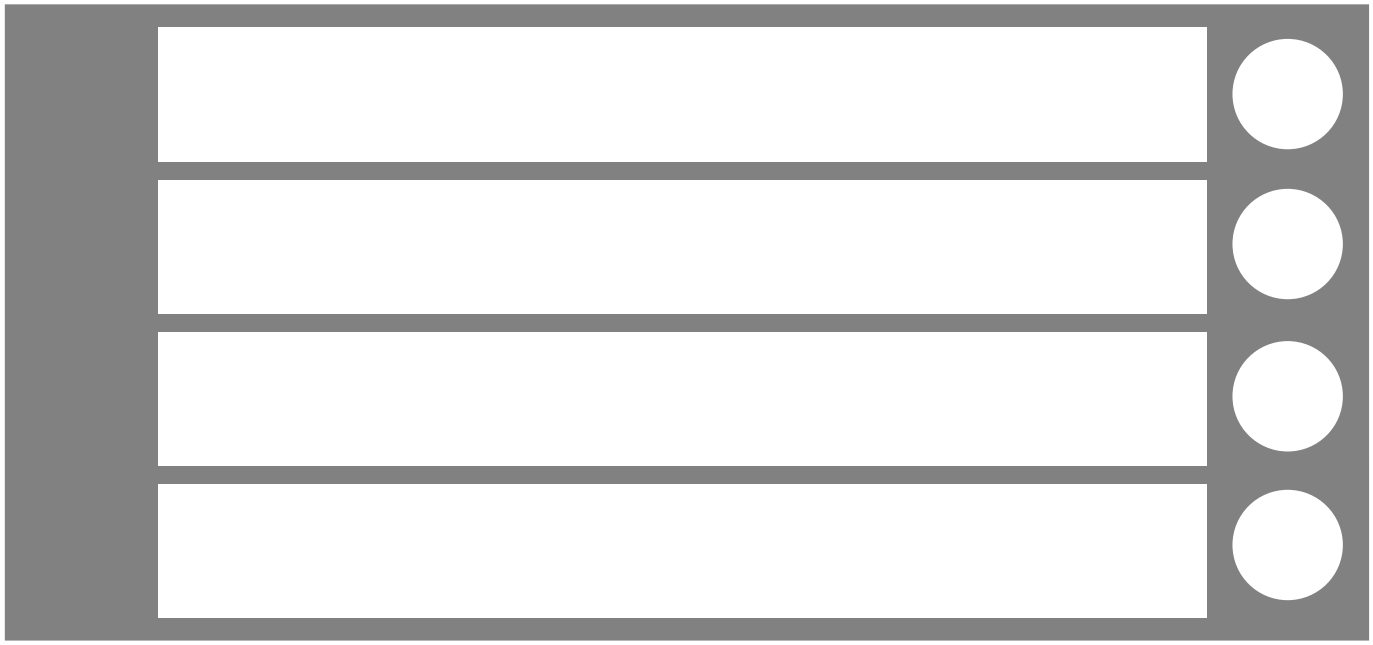
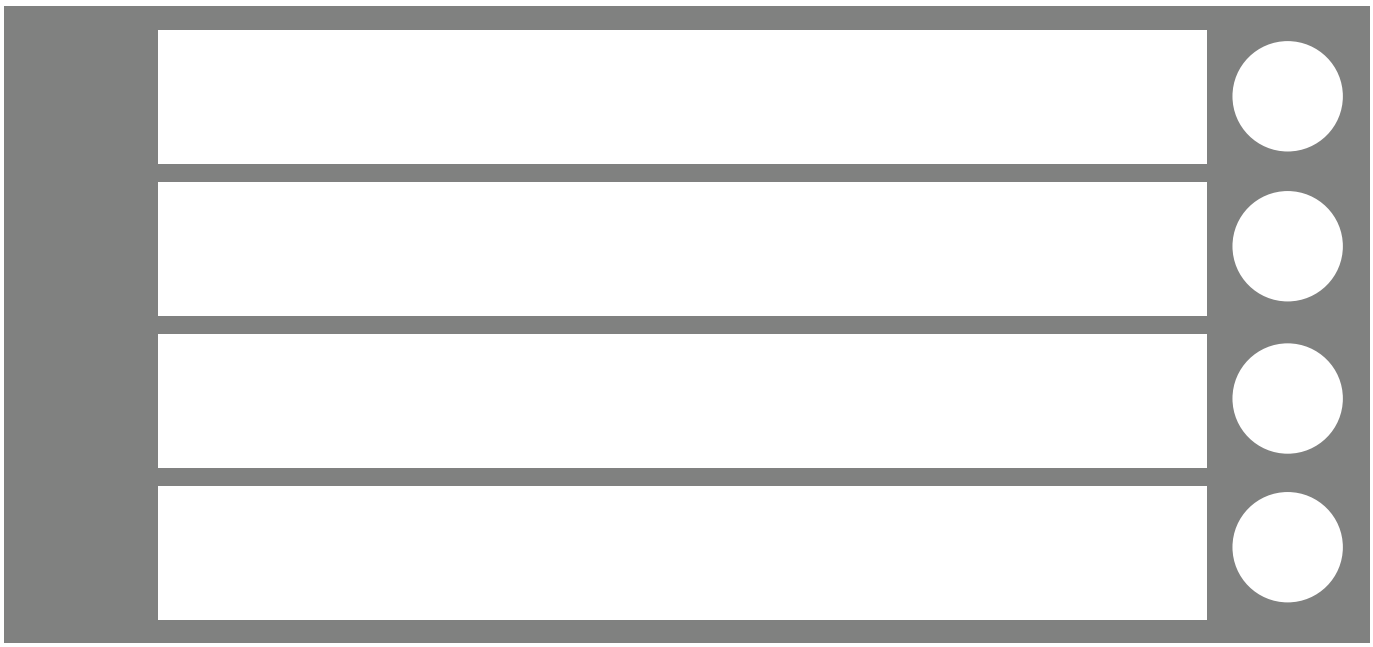
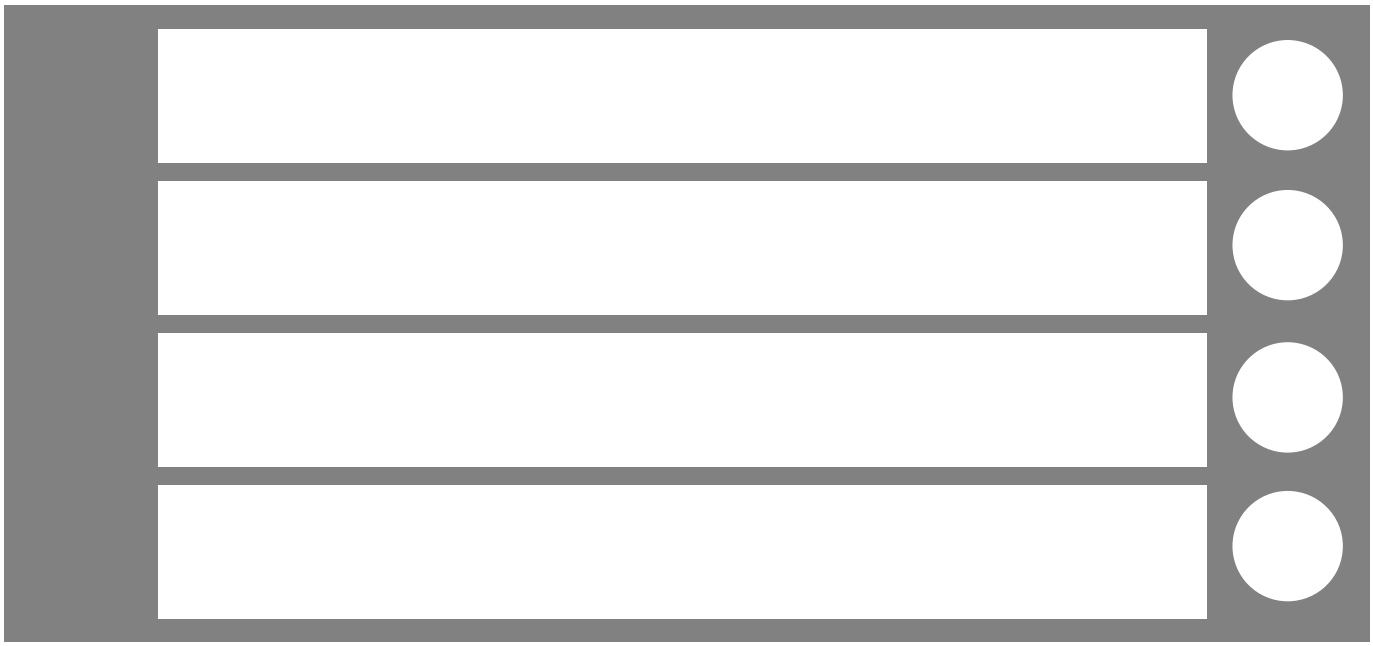
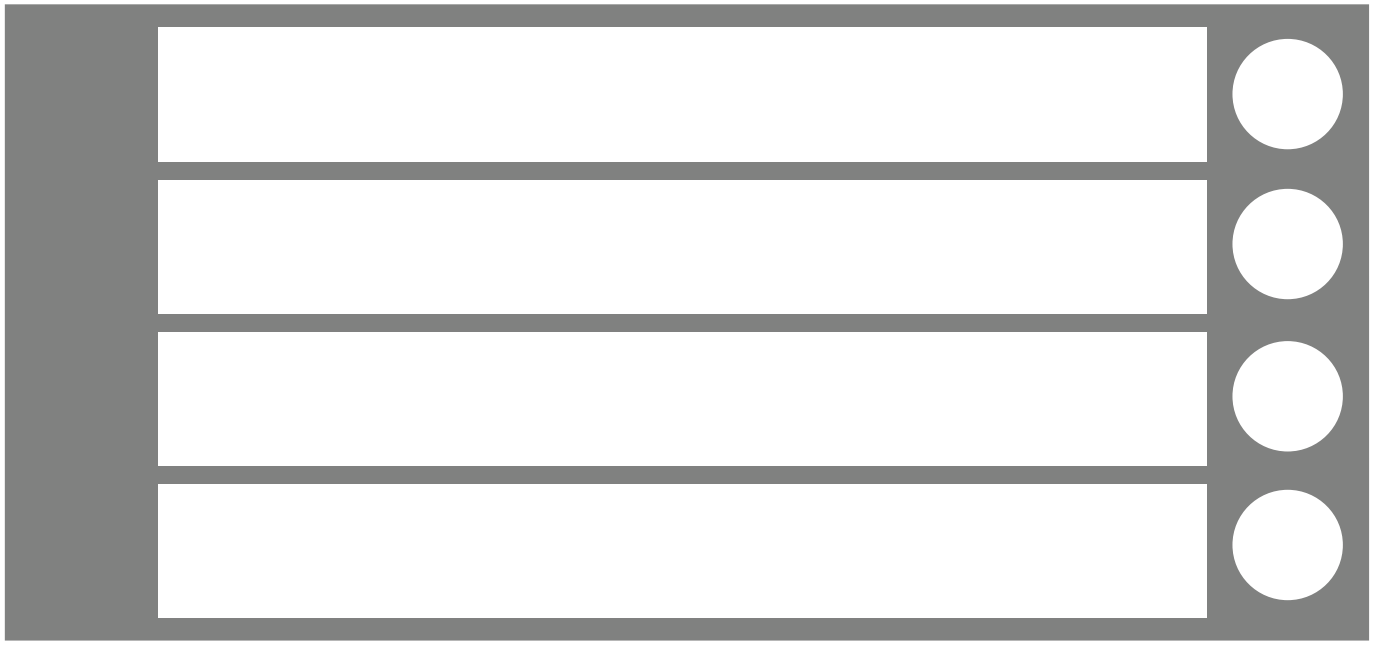
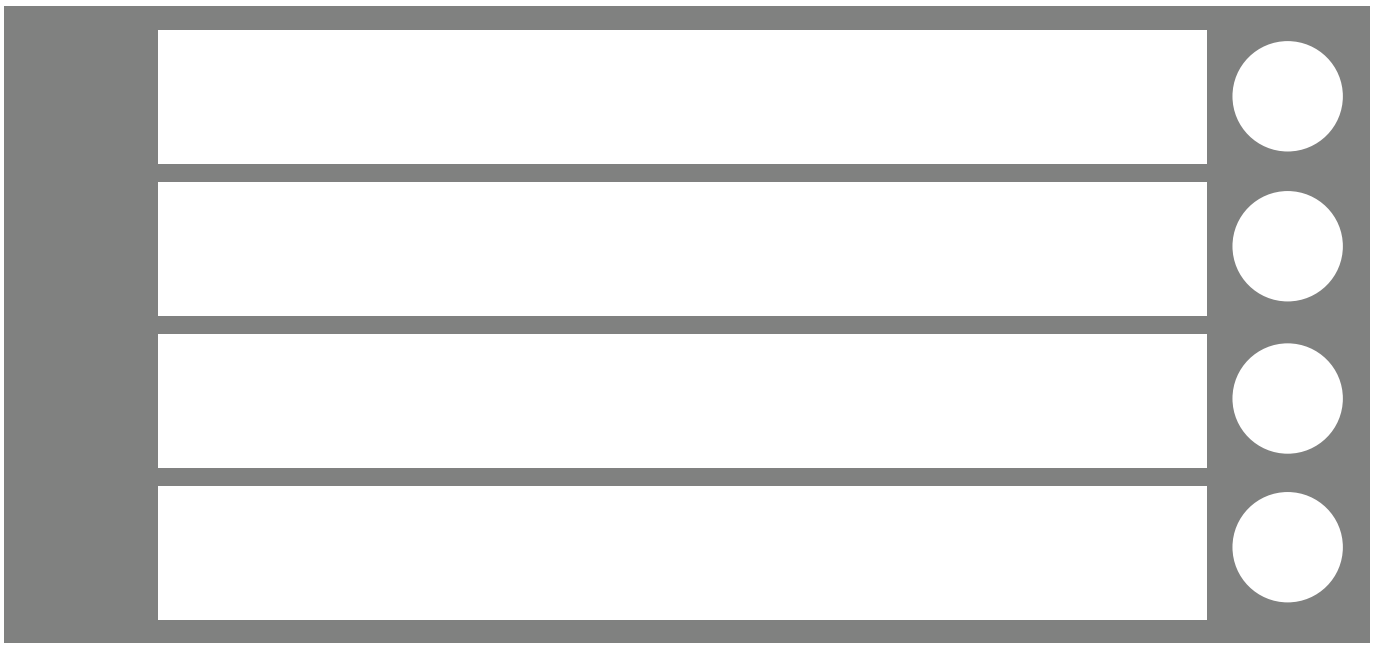
A sample ballot

DOE, John
Independent/Indépendant

DOE, Sandra
Political Affiliation/Appartenance politique

UNETELLE, Anne
Political Affiliation/Appartenance politique

UNTEL, Pierre
Political Affiliation/Appartenance politique

Discussion questions:

- Was it easy or hard to cast your vote?
- Is there anything you would do differently if you were voting in a real election?