**ELECTORAL COLLEGE**

The Electoral College The United States has a kind of democracy called a Representative Democracy. In a representative democracy, the citizens elect people to represent them in the government, and then these elected representatives vote for or against the actual issues. The Electoral College is the process by which the United States elects its president. This is how it works. When the U.S. people go to the polls to vote during a presidential election, they are not actually voting for the president — they are voting for an elector from their state. The electors then vote for the president. The number of electors that each state has varies, depending on its population. Each state gets one elector for each member of congress had by that state, and two more for each of the state’s senators. A state with a large population, like California, has many more electors than a sparsely populated state like Wyoming.

Anyone can be an elector, though Senators and Representatives are not allowed to be electors. Electors are typically long-time, loyal, and dedicated members of their political parties. Every state has its own rules about choosing electors, and they are chosen by the political party of the presidential candidate that received the most votes in that state. In most states, all the electors are given to one presidential candidate. Only two states, Maine and Nebraska, split up the electors between the candidates. Though the electoral college protects state’s rights and keeps high-population states from determining the presidency, it is controversial, because it is possible for a candidate to receive the greatest number of popular votes and still not be elected president.

**QUESTIONS: The Electoral College**

1. What kind of democracy does the United States have?

2. What is the electoral college?

3. In a representative democracy, what are people voting for?

4. When people vote in a presidential election, what are they voting for?

5. How many electors does each state have? Explain

6. Why do some states have a lot of influence in presidential elections?

7. How are electors chosen?

8. Is anyone prohibited from being an elector?

9. Which states split up electors between political candidates?