

Kennedy is elected president

1960 | Grade 4 · Explain with evidence

Words to know

election — a process in which people vote to choose leaders or decide questions

represent — speak or act for others

government — the system that makes and carries out public decisions

Look closely



John F. Kennedy

Read the story

Massachusetts senator John F. Kennedy won the presidential election. He became the thirty-fifth president. An election joins voters, campaigns, rules, and public decisions.

Kennedy took office in January 1961. Distinguish election day from the start of a term. Investigating a campaign includes both candidates' claims and the people excluded from equal political participation.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. State the main idea. Support it with two details from the reading.
2. Explain a change or challenge described in the text. Which words support your answer?
3. Use one vocabulary word in a new sentence about this event.
4. What can the image and caption help explain? What can they not tell you?

Follow-up reading: Boston crimes and the search for evidence

1962–1964

A series of murders frightened people in the Boston area. Investigators tried to find who was responsible. Later DNA work helped resolve one case. Evidence matters more than a frightening nickname.

The label Boston Strangler can hide differences among cases. Later DNA evidence connected Albert DeSalvo to Mary Sullivan's murder; it did not independently prove every crime attributed to that series.

Compare the two readings. Explain one similarity or difference using a detail from each. Their order does not prove that one caused the other.

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.4.1: refer to details; RI.4.2: main idea and summary; RI.4.3: explain events; RI.4.7: interpret visual information; W.4.2 and SL.4.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: Massachusetts senator John F. Kennedy won the presidential election. He became the thirty-fifth president. An election joins voters, campaigns, rules, and public decisions. Kennedy took office in January 1961. Distinguish election day from the start of a term. Investigating a campaign includes both candidates' claims and the people excluded from equal political participation.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

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The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event's [HTML page](#). External sources may need adult guidance.