



This week's big news



HAVING THEIR SAY
More than 158.4 million Americans voted in the 2020 election—the highest voter turnout in decades.

An early voting location

Democracy in action



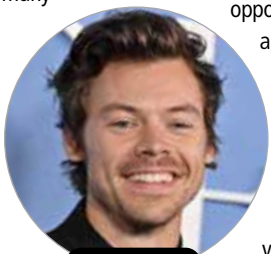
America is a representative democracy, meaning citizens elect their leaders. Although our readers are too young to vote, we know you have opinions about America's democratic process and the issues at stake in our elections. We want to hear them! On p28 you will find instructions for sharing your thoughts with us.

US votes in midterm elections

When *The Week Junior* went to press on November 8, millions of Americans were casting their ballots in the midterm elections. Millions of others had voted in the days leading up to Election Day. A midterm is the election held halfway through a President's four-year term. Hundreds of federal, state, and local races were on the ballot, and their outcome will play an important part in shaping the nation's future.

What is happening?

Americans went to the polls to decide who should hold positions in Congress (branch of government that makes laws) and many other key offices. Candidates have been campaigning hard for months, and many races across the US were extremely close going into Election Day. That means a small number of votes could put one candidate ahead of another. Congressional races included all 435 seats in the House of Representatives (one half of Congress) and 34 out of the 100 seats in the Senate (the other half of Congress). Voters in 36 states also cast ballots for governor (a state's top leader). Also at the state level, people voted for hundreds of



Harry Styles

judges. The makeup of each state's top courts is important because they often send major cases to the US Supreme Court (most powerful court of law). Local races, including positions on school boards, were also on the ballot.

Why are the midterms important?

The midterm elections determine which of the two major political parties (Democrats and Republicans) controls half or all of Congress. The party in charge decides which laws to consider and vote on. Democrats have controlled Congress for the past two years. If Republicans take control, Democratic President Joe Biden will have fewer opportunities to pursue his agenda. In

a speech, Biden urged all eligible Americans to vote. "We want every American's voice to be heard," he said on November 2.

How are people voting?

Voters can participate in early voting, mail in an absentee ballot, or vote in person on Election Day. More

than 44 million people cast their vote early, including more than 24 million who mailed in ballots and 20 million who voted early in person. Overall, the numbers were higher than early voting numbers in 2018, when the last midterm

elections took place. That year, turnout was higher than at any point in the past 100 years, and experts predicted that the 2022 turnout would be similar. Americans who are 18 or older are eligible to vote and must register to do so. British pop star Harry Styles participated in a registration drive run by the nonprofit HeadCount and set a record by helping to register more than 54,000 new voters.

What are voters saying?

Many polls found that the issue voters are most concerned about is the economy. Bob Smith of Pennsylvania said he was voting Republican because inflation (the cost of goods and services) has risen over the past two years while Democrats were in power. Many Democrats said they will vote for candidates who support people's right to privacy, access to healthcare, and voting rights. For others, integrity was the highest priority. Ron Flores of California told AP News that his main questions for candidates are, "Are you honest? Are you going to do what we want you to do?"

What will happen next?

Once the polls close on November 8, votes will be counted, which may take several days in some places. Winners will be sworn in and take office by early January. The newly elected Congress begins its next session on January 3, 2023.