

# The King Has Croaked!



## A Good Method is Hard to Find

Civics 1  
Grades K-3

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**Lesson Description:** After reading *Shrek the Third: A Good King is Hard to Find* students will examine alternate ways of filling positions of leadership as a way of exploring the question “should leaders be elected?”

**Rationale:** Those who live in a democratic society should understand why elections are used widely to select leaders.

**Audience:** K-3

**Benchmark Addressed [Civics 1, Grades K-3]:** Students will understand that leaders are sometimes chosen by election, and that elected officials are expected to represent the interests of the people who elected them.

**Essential Question:** Should leaders be elected?

**Enduring Understanding:** Elections are regarded by many as the best way to fill positions of leadership in a democracy because both democracy and the outcomes of elections are based on the will of the majority. Elections also empower people to grant and retract authority and provide legitimacy to those in power.

## Vocabulary:

- Leader – a person who directs or is in charge of something.
- Election – a way of making a choice whereby people vote and the person who receives the most votes wins.

## Materials Needed

- Paperback (\$3.99): *Shrek the Third: A Good King is Hard to Find* by Catherine Hapka. Available from [www.icanread.com](http://www.icanread.com)
- Attachment 1: Story Map – Shrek the Third (one copy for every 2 students).
- Attachment 2: Proclamation
- Attachments 3-14: Methods for Selecting Leaders (one copy of each).
- Transparency copies of Attachments 3 and 14 (one copy of each).
- Copies of Attachment 15: T-Chart Summary (one copy for each pair of students).
- (Optional) Attachment 16: Character Map for Shrek III Characters - (one copy for each pair of students).

**Time to Complete:** 1-2 days.

## Procedures

1. Introduce the lesson. Tell students that today we are going to talk about leaders and how they are chosen. Our essential question is “should leaders be elected?”

2. Brainstorm:
  - a. What is a leader?
  - b. Who are some leaders that you know?
  - c. What are the qualities of a good leader?
  
3. Show a picture of King Harold as a frog from Shrek II or III. Ask students – does anyone know who this might be? (King Harold of the Kingdom of Far Far Away was turned into a frog in Shrek II)
  
4. Read the book *Shrek the Third: A Good King is Hard to Find* aloud. Then, have students work with a reading buddy to complete the Problem/Solution Story Map (see **Attachment 1**). Ask the students...
  - a. What was the central problem in the story? (the struggle to determine who would be king)
  - b. How was the problem resolved? (a distant member of the Royal family named Arthur accepted the crown after defeating Charming and winning popular support)
  
5. Recap *Shrek the Third*. The King croaked. The Kingdom of Far Far Away was without a king (leader) and some bad things happened.
  - a. What were some of the bad things that happened after the king croaked?
    - Shrek had to leave his pregnant wife Fiona – p. 9;
    - Arthur was teased by his classmates – p. 11;
    - the boat carrying Shrek, Donkey, and Puss crashed – p. 17;
    - Prince Charming made the city look terrible – p 21;
    - Charming captured Shrek in an attempt to take over as king – p. 25;
    - Charming almost stabbed Shrek – p. 27;
    - Charming and Arthur almost get into a fight - p. 27.
  - b. Why did the bad things happen? (the method that Far Far Away used for selecting a leader was unacceptable to some and undesirable for others. Shrek did not want to be king. Arthur did not want to be king. And the person who wanted to be king - Charming - was evil).
  - c. What method did the Kingdom of Far Far away use to select a king? (may not be clear to students. The line of succession was supposed to be determined by bloodline but some like Charming did not see this as a legitimate method).

Tell students that the people of Far Far Away don't want to have to go through what they just went through ever again. The new King Arthur, being the good guy that he is, has issued his very first Proclamation. Make a trumpet noise then unfurl **Attachment 2** and read it aloud as if it were being delivered by a king's

messenger. Then, ask for a volunteer to explain the King's proclamation (i.e., check for comprehension).

6. Small Group work: place students in small groups then ask them to come up with some reasons why one method for selecting a leader might be better than other methods? (answers might include: everyone has a chance to be a leader; the method is fair; the method is viewed as legitimate, the person elected has the support of most people; the method allows people to show policy preferences; the method does not leave the people stuck with the same leader for too long; the method does not call for service from those who do not want to serve etc.).
7. Ask students to work in their groups to come up with a list of ways that the people of Far Far Away (or anywhere) might use to select a leader. Ask volunteers to offer possibilities and record them on the board.
8. Present students with the options that appear below. Say "here are some ways that might be used to select a leader:"
  - Lottery – pick a leader out of a hat.
  - Measure for Size – tallest becomes leader.
  - Appoint – have teacher select the leader.
  - Race – fastest becomes the leader.
  - Auction – leadership goes to the highest bidder.
  - Wrestle – whoever wins becomes leader.
  - Quiz – whoever earns the highest score becomes leader.
  - Date – whoever is the oldest becomes the leader.
  - Coin toss – heads leads.
  - Genetic testing – bloodline or family.
9. Model How to Analyze One Method (see **Attachment 3**): Tell students that one way to select leaders is to calculate their wealth. Ask students how this method would work? Then ask students to describe what is good or not good about this method. Record their answers in the appropriate cells. Sample answers are provided on **Attachment 3**.
10. Jigsaw: Place students in pairs. Distribute copies of **Attachment 4-13 (not 14) – Method for Selecting Leaders** (one to each pair). Have each pair work collaboratively to identify the advantages and disadvantages of one method then report back to the class as a whole.

Use the results of the ratings to list the best and worst methods for selecting a leader.

Option 2 (Whole Group Approach): With younger students you may want to analyze a sampling of methods outlined in Procedure 8 and work with the

students in whole group to identify the merits and drawbacks of each method for selecting leaders.

11. Whole Class Analysis: project a copy of **Attachment 14** (Election) on the overhead. Have the entire class analyze the costs and benefits of elections as a way of filling vacancies in leadership.
12. T-Chart Summary:
13. Sticky Poll: Write the various methods that one might use for selecting leaders on the chalk board. Distribute a sticky note to each student. Have them write their names on the sticky note then invite the students to place their sticky notes under the method that they believe is the best method for selecting leaders.

### **Debrief**

Revisit the essential question for this lesson. Ask students “should leaders be elected? Explain why.”

### **Bibliography**

Hapka, Catherine (2007). *Shrek the Third: A Good King is Hard to Find*. HarperCollins Publishers. NY.

### **Extensions/Enhancements**

1. Have the students create a “Character Map” for Shrek, Prince Charming, and Arthur (see Attachment 16). Then, use each of the methods outlined in Procedure 8 to select a leader from among the three main characters in *Shrek the Third* – Shrek, Arthur, and Charming. See who wins using each method then poll the students to see if they would be happy with the results as citizens of Far Far Away.
2. Present students with a list of leaders in their school, community, or nation and how they became leaders (e.g. elected, appointed, merit system). Ask them why some might be elected while others are not? Might changes be considered?
3. The official *Shrek the Third* website contains clips from *Shrek the Third* that might be used to introduce the lesson. The scene where King Harold as frog croaks offers a somewhat humorous introduction to the lesson. Visit <http://www.shrek.com/main.html>, click on “Video” on the top toolbar, then “I’m Dying” on the left sidebar.

# Problem/Solution Story Map



Setting

1. \_\_\_\_\_



Time

2. \_\_\_\_\_



Main Characters

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



**Shrek  
the  
Third**



Problem

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Solution

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Hear ye, hear ye!

King Arthur has proclaimed that his first deed as king shall be to recruit you to help the Kingdom of Far Far Away find the very best method for selecting leaders.

Never again shall the problems caused by the death of King Harold plague this land.

You shall examine the various methods that could be used to select leaders and identify the one that you think is best for the Kingdom of Far Far Away.

By order of the King, Arthur











Attachment 7  
**Method for Selecting Leaders**



**Race**

**How would this method work?**

<p><b>Why might this be a good method for selecting a leader?</b></p>	<p><b>Why might this <u>not</u> be a good method for selecting a leader?</b></p>
<p><b>Rate this Method</b></p> <p>0 1 2 3 4 5</p> <p>Not Good Excellent</p>	

Attachment 8  
**Method for Selecting Leaders**



**Auction**

**How would this method work?**

<p><b>Why might this be a good method for selecting a leader?</b></p>	<p><b>Why might this <u>not</u> be a good method for selecting a leader?</b></p>
<p><b>Rate this Method</b></p> <p style="font-size: 24px; letter-spacing: 40px;"> <span style="margin-right: 20px;">0</span> <span style="margin-right: 20px;">1</span> <span style="margin-right: 20px;">2</span> <span style="margin-right: 20px;">3</span> <span style="margin-right: 20px;">4</span> <span>5</span> </p> <p style="font-size: 18px;"> <span style="margin-right: 20px;">Not Good</span> <span style="margin-right: 20px;"></span> <span style="margin-right: 20px;"></span> <span style="margin-right: 20px;"></span> <span style="margin-right: 20px;"></span> <span>Excellent</span> </p>	









Attachment 12  
**Method for Selecting Leaders**



**Coin Toss**

**How would this method work?**

<p><b>Why might this be a good method for selecting a leader?</b></p>	<p><b>Why might this <u>not</u> be a good method for selecting a leader?</b></p>				
<p><b>Rate this Method</b></p>					
<p><b>0</b> Not Good</p>	<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>5</b> Excellent</p>





**Attachment 15**  
**T-Chart Summary**

**Which methods for selecting leaders are good? Which are not good?**

<b>(+)</b> <b>Good Methods for Selecting Leaders</b>	<b>(-)</b> <b>Methods that are Not Good</b>

# Character Map for

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**Why he might make  
a good leader**

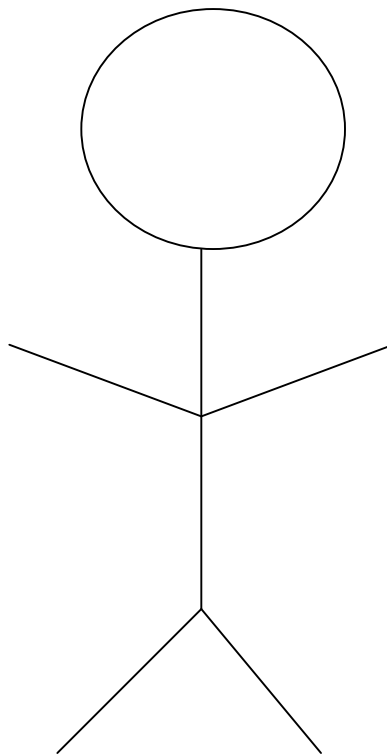
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**Why he might not  
make a good leader**

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## Assessment



3 votes



7 votes



1 vote



9 votes

- a. Circle the person who should be leader.**
- b. Explain why.**