



Name: _____ Date: _____

A Race to Watch: Vote 2008, the Role of Technology in the Election Process

Directions: Using the Internet, find your candidate’s official presidential election Web site. Review the content of the Web site carefully as you answer each question below.

1. The candidate I researched is: _____

2. Use the checklist below to mark all of the features your candidate’s site contains:

- Candidate blog
- Videos
- Live chat options
- Opportunity for involvement in the campaign (volunteering, hosting an event, etc.)
- Biography/Background
- Opportunity to contribute to the campaign fund
- New Releases/Media
- Email: Receive communication from or send it to the candidate
- Political Issues/Platform
- Other

3. Comment on the effectiveness of each of the features contained on the candidate’s Web site by completing the charts below:

Feature	What did this feature teach you about the candidate?	How would this feature impact a voter’s decision about whether or not to support this candidate, particularly an undecided voter?	This feature was an effective campaign tool—yes or no? Why?
Blog			
Videos			

Live Chat			
Involvement			
Bio/Background			
Contribute			
News/Media			
Email			
Issues/Platform			
Other			

4. Now that you have reviewed your candidate's Web site content, do you believe using the Internet to campaign for office will help or hinder your candidate. Explain your answer.

5. Did the ability to use technology to interact and/or communicate with and about your candidate make you feel like your candidate was more connected with the voters and his/her supporters than if s/he did not have this medium available for campaigning? Why?

6. What dangers do you think candidates might encounter if they rely too heavily on the use of technology in their campaigns rather than using traditional forms of mass media such as television, radio, and print ads? Give specific examples/ideas.

7. The digital divide refers to the gap between people who have the equipment and ability to access digital technology at a high level and can benefit from it, and those who do not. In what ways does Internet campaigning and the use of technology to garner votes exclude some voters? Explain using specific examples.

8. You've looked at your candidate's official Web site. Does your candidate have a presence in other parts of the Web, such as MySpace.com? If so, how do these sites compare to the candidate's original site? Do you think your candidate is reaching out to the same audience here? Why or why not?