

Station 3: Selective Service

Directions: For each station, read the handout with your partner and then complete each of the steps below:

- DISCUSS: Is your station about something you SHOULD do or something you HAVE to do?
- DISCUSS: What *level of community* does your station involve? Are there several levels?
- WRITE: Summarize the most important parts of your station with a few sentences or a political cartoon/drawing.
- WRITE: Briefly describe how the sources after the reading connect to the information you read. What is the message of these sources?

If you're a sports fan, when you hear the term "draft lottery" you probably think about which professional teams will get the best draft picks for NCAA college players. However, in government, the "draft" means something else entirely.

You'll learn later this year that Article 1, Section 8 of the **U.S. Constitution** says that "The **Congress** shall have power to...**provide for the common defense...to raise and support armies.**" So how will they get to do that if nobody voluntarily joins the military? During the first six weeks of World War I, the U.S. Government had hoped for 1 million soldiers to enlist (sign up) voluntarily. When only 73,000 volunteers enlisted, **Congress voted** to pass The Selective Service Act of 1917. This authorized the United States federal government to "draft" citizens into service during World War I and beyond. Selective Service has been used in the **American Revolution**, the American Civil War, **World War I**, **World War II**, the **Korean War** and the **Vietnam War**.

The United States is currently an "All-Volunteer" military force, but The Selective Service System remains in place as a backup plan; **all male-at-birth citizens between the ages of 18 and 25** are required to register so that a draft can be used if needed. Failing to register or comply with the Military Selective Service Act is a **felony** (serious crime) punishable by a fine of up to \$250,000 or a prison term of up to five years, or a combination of both.

During **Vietnam**, the draft lottery for selective service was very unpopular. "Old enough to fight, old enough to vote" became the rallying cry of anti-war protesters using their **1st amendment rights to freedom of speech, assembly, and protest**. In 1971, **Congress** proposed the **26th amendment** and the states ratified, which changed the **voting age from 21 to 18**. Selective service is still highly controversial today due to the inclusion of women in military combat roles.

