In My Shoes:
Role Playing American Government and Politics

Oprah said it succinctly, "Leadership is about empathy. It is about having the ability to relate to and connect with people for the purpose of inspiring and empowering their lives." This is not new. Women's Rights advocate, suffragette and poet Mary T. Lathrap wrote in 1895:

> *Just walk a mile in his moccasins*
> *Before you abuse, criticize and accuse.*
> *If just for one hour, you could find a way*
> *To see through his eyes, instead of your own muse.*

In each of our five (5) units of study in American Government and Politics you will be invited to connect with relevant players. To better understand government and politics, walk in the shoes of those who have and continue to shape our government and politics. The end result will not only improve our understanding; provide practice of essential skills; but also inspire and empower our own civic engagement. Welcome. Get ready to "take the time to walk a mile in [their] moccasins."

Unit 1: Yesterday's Framer Meets Today's Political Scientist
Unit 2: Meet an Iron Triangle
Unit 3: Join the Fight for Civil Rights
Unit 4: Analyze Public Opinion Data
Unit 5: Join a Linkage Institution

Unit 4: POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES AND BELIEFS
Analyze Public Opinion Data

In this role-playing exercise, you will pretend to be a polling analyst. More and more, public opinion polls drive our politics. This has brought in high-level statisticians to our political process. Complete presentation slides that include the following findings:

- Collect data sets from each of the following two areas: (1) Public approval ratings of presidents over time; and (2) Polling results from swing states prior to at least two presidential election cycles.
- Assess the validity and credibility of each data set. Analyze the quality of the polls used in your data set.
- List key observations from each data set. List key conclusions from each data set.
- Write up an analysis. Imagine you have to give advice based on the data. What might the president do to improve his/her approval ratings? What campaign adjustments would you recommend?
- Create a hypothetical lunch conversation between you and your employers. This would include the president and his/her campaign staff.

- When all of the presentation slides have been completed and posted, you will be invited to eavesdrop 3-4 conversations and report back as to what you have learned.