**The Presidential Electoral System**

* The President and Vice President of the United States are not elected by popular vote. Instead, they are elected directly by presidential electors as specified in Article II of the Constitution.
* Each state has as many presidential electors as it has Senators and Representatives in Congress. In addition, by the 23rd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the District of Columbia is entitled to the same number of presidential electors as it would have if it had Senators and Representatives in Congress, but this number cannot be greater than that of the least populous state.
* Each political party in each state, through a caucus or primary election, select a "Slate" (group) of electors to stand for its presidential and vice presidential candidates.
* When the voters go to the polls in November of a presidential election year, they vote for that slate of electors which stands for their presidential and vice presidential choice.
* That party’s slate of electors which gets the most popular votes in that state will cast that states electoral votes for president and vice president in December of the presidential election year. Each elector cast two votes – one for his choice for president and one for his choice for vice president.
* The sealed list of electoral votes is sent to Washington DC and is open by the President of the Senate at a joint session of Congress.
* The total number of electors is 538. This figure is equivalent to the total number of representatives (435) plus the number of senators (100) plus the electors from the District of Columbia (3).
* The candidate receiving a majority of the electoral votes for the presidency shall be the President, and the candidate receiving a majority of electoral votes for the vice president shall be the Vice President.
* If no candidate for the presidency gets a majority of electoral votes, or if there is a tie, the President shall be chosen by the House of Representatives. Here, each state would have one vote and the successful candidate must have a majority of these votes.
* If no one candidate for the vice presidency gets a majority of the electoral votes, or if there is a tie, the Senate shall choose the Vice President. Here, each senator would have one vote, and the successful candidate must have a majority of these votes.

**Did you know…**

* In 1800, Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr received the same number of electoral votes. The election was decided by the House or Representative, who chose Jefferson. The XII Amendment mandated that electors now cast separate votes for President and Vice President.
* In 1824, The House again had to choose the President when neither candidate received a majority. Andrew Jackson had the most electoral votes, but the House chose John Quincy Adams.
* In 1876, Rutherford B. Hayes defeated Samuel Tilden by one electoral vote.
* Five times, most recently in 2016, the winner of the popular vote did not win the electoral vote.
* 16 times, the candidate with the majority of the electoral vote had less than a majority of popular votes.