

## Thinking Activity: Choosing a Running Mate

When a Presidential candidate chooses a running mate, he or she has to think of these criteria:

1. Would this person make a good President? If anything happens to me, can this person lead the country?
2. Where is this person from? It might be a good idea to choose a running mate from a different part of the country, to reach more voters. For example, if I'm from the South, maybe I should choose someone from the North.
3. What does this person believe? A running mate should agree with me on the most important issues, but should have his or her own ideas too. Choosing someone with different ideas can reach out to more voters. For example, if protecting the environment is my most important issue, my running mate should agree with me on that, but also have another issue to talk about, like improving health care.
4. Who is this person? If I choose someone too much like me, then the ticket will be **redundant**. If I choose someone that's too different from me, the ticket will be **unbalanced**. I should choose someone who is similar but different.

If the Presidential candidate chooses a great running mate, the ticket is **balanced** and voters can get excited about both candidates.

### Invent a Running Mate:

1. What is your running mate's name?
2. What makes your running mate a good leader?
3. Where did he or she grow up?
4. What are his or her most important issues?
5. How is he or she like you? How is he or she different?

### Challenge Questions:

1. Define these words: Redundant, balanced, criteria.
2. Write an introductory speech for your pretend running mate.
3. Does having a good-sounding last name help a candidate? Would we ever elect Mr. John Hoogleboogleton?
4. Research why a team of candidates is called a ticket.
5. Should running mates also be friends?