

1. Mark your confusion.
2. Show evidence of a close reading.
3. Write a 1+ page reflection.

How Did Biden Do It? Wide Coalition Powered Win

Source: Josh Boak and Hannah Fingerhut, Associated Press, November 7, 2020

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former Vice President Joe Biden’s White House victory was powered by a broad and racially diverse coalition of voters driven to the polls by fierce opposition to President Donald Trump and anxiety over a surging, deadly pandemic.

Both nationwide and in key battleground states across the Midwest and Sun Belt, the Democrat dominated with voters worried about the coronavirus and hungry for the federal government to do more to contain its spread, according to AP VoteCast, an expansive survey of more than 110,000 voters nationwide. After four years of political turbulence under Trump, Biden handily won voters looking for a leader who could unify the country, and those pushing for racial justice. More saw him as empathetic and honest, and willing to stand up to extremism, compared with the Republican incumbent.

“It has to do with decency. This country has got integrity and hopefully we can get decency,” said Kay Nicholas, a 73-year-old retired teacher and school principal from Brighton, Michigan, a suburb of Detroit. “I think Joe Biden can do it and bring back kindness.”

The election ultimately emerged as a contest between two conflicting visions of America in a time of crisis. Biden voters saw a nation in chaos and a void in presidential leadership, while Trump’s supporters believed the economy was roaring back to health and that the president was delivering on the dramatic political change he campaign on four years ago.

“We love our president, we love our Constitution, we love everything that he’s promised and followed through on,” said Anastasia Theodoropoulos, a 50-year-old Trump supporter in Milford, Pennsylvania, a borough outside Scranton.

Biden’s coalition included clear majorities of college graduates, women, urban and suburban voters, young people and Black Americans -- all groups that have risen up in resistance to the Trump presidency. He made good on his promise to win over moderate voters, including some Republicans who rejected the president.

Trump, meanwhile, held his base of white voters without a college degree, rural voters and religious conservatives. And in some competitive states, like Nevada and Florida, Trump ate away at Biden's support among Latinos, according to the survey.

The two coalitions reflected a striking racial division. Roughly 40% of Americans identify as racial minorities, but just 14% of Trump supporters do. Biden voters more closely reflected America — 63% of his supporters were white, and 37% were people of color.

"We are a force to be reckoned with," said Linda Wilson, a Black woman and Biden voter, of the mobilization of Black voters. "Let us pray that this is just the beginning."

Ultimately, Biden's coalition was large enough for the former vice president to seal a victory, although not the sort of overwhelming wave that Democrats hoped would secure a commanding majority in the Senate. Biden's win was locked in Saturday when a narrow victory in Pennsylvania handed him an Electoral College majority after he had cemented leads in battlegrounds Wisconsin and Michigan on Wednesday.

Possible Response Questions:

- What are your thoughts about the election? Explain.
- Pick a word/line/passage from the article and respond to it.
- Discuss a "move" made by the writer in this piece that you think is good/interesting. Explain.