

1 Parties and What They Do

Objectives You may wish to call students' attention to the objectives in the Section Preview. The objectives are reflected in the main headings of the section.

Bellringer Ask students whether they have ever ridden in a car with someone who was such a bad driver that they wanted to stop the car and take over the driving. Explain that in this section, they will learn about how the political party that is out of office can't wait to take control of government from the party that is in.

Vocabulary Builder Ask students to determine what word or word part links all four terms in the Political Dictionary. Have a volunteer look up *party* and *partisan* in a dictionary to compare their government-related definitions.

Lesson Plan

Teaching the Main Ideas L3


H-SS 12.6.1

1. Focus Tell students that the main purpose of the major political parties is to control government by winning election to public office. Ask students to discuss why parties want to control government.

2. Instruct Have students name the main function of a political party. Ask why nominating candidates is so important, and then discuss the other functions of political parties. Have students consider whether these functions are the same for issues-oriented and election-oriented parties.

3. Close/Reteach Remind students that political parties serve the democratic ideal by linking people with government and by blunting conflict. Have students write a Help Wanted ad seeking to "hire" a political party. Ads should include what the functions of that party will be.

Point-of-Use Resources

 **Block Scheduling with Lesson Strategies** Activities for Chapter 5 appear on p. 21.

Section Preview

OBJECTIVES

1. **Define** a political party.
2. **Describe** the major functions of political parties.

WHY IT MATTERS

Political parties are essential to democratic government. In the United States, political parties have shaped the way the government works. Today, the major parties perform several important functions without which our government could not function.

POLITICAL DICTIONARY

- ★ **political party**
- ★ **major parties**
- ★ **partisanship**
- ★ **party in power**

“Winning isn't everything; it's the only thing.” So said legendary football coach Vince Lombardi. Lombardi was talking about teams in the National Football League. His words, however, could also be used to describe the Republican and Democratic parties. They, too, are in the business of competing and winning.

What Is a Party?

A **political party** is a group of persons who seek to control government through the winning of elections and the holding of public office. This definition of a political party is broad enough to fit any political party. It certainly describes the two **major parties** in American politics, the Republican and the Democratic parties.

Another, more specific definition can be used to describe most political parties, both here and abroad. That is, a political party is a group of persons, joined together on the basis of common principles, who seek to control government in order to affect certain public policies and programs.



▲ Bumper stickers reveal party loyalty.

This definition, with its emphasis on principles and public policy positions, will not fit the two major American parties, however. The Republican and Democratic parties are not primarily principle- or issue-oriented. They are, instead, election-oriented.

What Do Parties Do?

It is clear from American history, as well as from the histories of other peoples, that political parties are essential to democratic government. Parties are the major mechanisms behind the development of broad policy and leadership choices; they are the medium through which those options are presented to the people.

Political parties are a vital link between the people and their government; that is, between the governed and those who govern. Many observers argue that political parties are the principal means by which the will of the people is made known to government and by which government is held accountable to the people.

Parties serve the democratic ideal in another important way. They work to blunt conflict; they are “power brokers.” Political parties bring conflicting groups together. They modify and encourage compromise among the contending views of different interests and groups, and so help to unify, rather than divide, the American people. They soften the impact of extremists at both ends of the political spectrum.

Again, political parties are indispensable to American government. This fact is underscored by the major functions they perform.



Block Scheduling Strategies

Consider these suggestions to manage extended class time:

■ Have small groups of students work together to create posters that describe a political party. Posters should describe the five functions of political parties, a definition of the party, and at least two illustrations. Tell students that posters will be used in elementary school classrooms and should be age-appropriate.

■ Write this sentence from the text on the board: “...both parties want to win elections, and that consideration has much to do with the stands they take on most issues.” Ask: Can a party that only wants to win an election be true to its ideals and philosophy? Why or why not? Have students write a 3–5 sentence response, taking a clear yes or no position. Then, conduct a class debate on this issue.

Nominating Candidates

The major function of a political party is to nominate—name—candidates for public office. That is, the parties select candidates and then present them to the voters. Then the parties work to help their candidates win elections.

To have a functioning democracy, there must be a procedure for finding (recruiting and choosing) candidates for office. There must also be a mechanism for gathering support (votes) for these candidates. Parties are the best device yet found to do those jobs.

The nominating function is almost exclusively a party function in the United States.¹ It is the one activity that most clearly sets political parties apart from all of the other groups in politics.

Informing and Activating Supporters

Parties inform the people, and inspire and activate their interest and participation in public affairs. Other groups also perform this function—in particular, the news media and interest groups.

Parties try to inform and inspire voters in several ways. Primarily, they campaign for their candidates, take stands on issues, and criticize the candidates and the positions of their opponents.

Each party tries to inform the people as it thinks they should be informed—to its own advantage. For example, a party selects information in order to present its own positions and candidates in the best possible light. It conducts this “educational” process through pamphlets, signs, buttons, and stickers; with advertisements in newspapers and magazines and on radio, television, and the Internet; in speeches, rallies, and conventions; and in many other ways.

Remember, both parties want to win elections, and that consideration has much to do with the stands they take on most issues. Both parties try to shape positions that will attract as many voters as possible—and that will, at the same time, offend as few voters as possible.

The Bonding Agent Function

In business, a bond is an agreement that protects a person or company against loss caused by a third party. In politics, a political party

¹The exceptions are in nonpartisan elections and in those rare instances in which an independent candidate enters a partisan contest. Nominations are covered at length in Chapter 7.



▲ **Campaign Fundraiser** Candidates rely on the money raised at political party fundraisers to help pay for their campaigns. Here President G. W. Bush waves from the podium at a fundraiser for his reelection campaign in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. **H-SS 12.6.1**

acts as a “bonding agent,” to ensure the good performance of its candidates and officeholders. In choosing its candidates, the party tries to make sure that they are men and women who are both qualified and of good character—or, at least, that they are not unqualified for the offices they seek.

The party also prompts its successful candidates to perform well in office. The democratic process imposes this bonding agent function on a party, whether the party really wants to perform it or not. If it fails to assume this responsibility, both the party and its candidates may suffer the consequences in future elections.

Governing

In several respects, government in the United States is government by party. For example, public officeholders—those who govern—are regularly chosen on the basis of party. Congress and the State legislatures are organized on party lines, and they conduct much of their business on the basis of **partisanship**—the strong support of their party and its policy stands. In addition, most appointments to executive offices, at both the federal and State levels, are made with an eye to party considerations.

Reading Strategy

Organizing Information/ Graphic Organizer

Have students create a web diagram with *Political Parties* in the center circle. As they read, students should complete the web by defining political parties in the center circle and noting each function in an outer circle. They should use additional circles to add details.

Universal Access

L2

Enrichment Remind students that informing and activating supporters is one of the main functions of political parties. Discuss a current issue (i.e. local curfews for minors or mandatory State comprehension exams for high school seniors) that is of interest or concern for students. Divide the class into small groups. Have groups take different sides of the issue. Ask groups to create a slogan, bumper sticker, pamphlet, or other type of advertisement that presents their side of the issue most favorably. Each group should elect a spokesperson to present their ad to the class. **LPR H-SS 12.6.4**

Point-of-Use Resources

Guided Reading and Review Unit 2 booklet, p. 2 provides students with practice identifying the main ideas and key terms of this section.

Lesson Planner For complete lesson planning suggestions, see the Lesson Planner booklet, section 1.

Political Cartoons See p. 18 of the Political Cartoons booklet for a cartoon relevant to this section.

Section Support Transparencies Transparency 21, *Visual Learning*; Transparency 120, *Political Cartoon*

Point-of-Use Resources



Guide to the Essentials Chapter 5, Section 1, p. 32 provides support for students who need additional review of section content. Spanish support is available in the Spanish edition of the Guide on p. 25.



Quiz Unit 2 booklet, p. 3 includes matching and multiple-choice questions to check students' understanding of Section 1 content.



Presentation Pro CD-ROM Quizzes and multiple-choice questions check students' understanding of Section 1 content.

Answers to . . .

Section 1 Assessment

1. A group of people who seek to control government by winning elections and holding political office.
2. Functions include nominating candidates, informing and activating supporters, acting as bonding agents, governing, and acting as watchdogs over the public's business.
3. Public officeholders and appointments are chosen based on party allegiance, and parties serve as channels for the legislative and executive branches to work together.
4. (a) Answers will vary. (b) Answers will vary.
5. They encourage compromise among different interests and groups.
6. Parties not in power serve as watchdogs over the party in power—they criticize and in so doing, attempt to gain public support.

Answer to . . .

Critical Thinking The nominating candidates function, the informing and activating supporters function, and the governing function.



▲ From left to right: Democratic presidential hopefuls Senator John Kerry of Massachusetts and former Vermont governor Howard Dean shake hands; Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist (R.-Tenn.) discusses passage of Medicare prescription drug legislation; the powerful House Ways and Means Committee holds a hearing. **Critical Thinking** What party functions are represented by these three photos?
H-SS 12.1.5

In yet another sense, parties provide a basis for the conduct of government. In the complicated separation of powers arrangement, the executive and legislative branches must cooperate with one another if government is to accomplish anything. It is political parties that regularly provide the channels through which these two branches are able to work together.

Political parties have played a significant role in the process of constitutional change. Consider this important example: The Constitution's cumbersome system for electing the President works principally because political parties reshaped it in its early years and have made it work ever since.

Acting as Watchdog

Parties act as watchdogs over the conduct of the public's business. This is particularly true

of the party out of power. It plays this role as it criticizes the policies and behavior of the **party in power**.

In American politics the party in power is the party that controls the executive branch of government—the presidency at the national level or the governorship at the State level.

In effect, the party out of power attempts to convince the voters that they should “throw the rascals out,” that the “outs” should become the “ins” and the “ins” the “outs.” The scrutiny and criticism by the “out” party tends to make the “rascals” more careful of their public charge and more responsive to the wishes and concerns of the people. In short, the party out of power plays the important role of “the loyal opposition”—opposed to the party in power but loyal to the people and the nation.

Section 1 Assessment

Key Terms and Main Ideas

1. What is a **political party**?
2. Identify two functions of political parties.
3. In what ways is American government conducted on the basis of **partisanship**?
4. (a) At this time, which is the **party in power** in your State?
(b) In the nation?

Critical Thinking

5. **Analyzing Information** In what ways do political parties tend to unify, rather than divide, the American people?



Standards Monitoring Online

For: Self-Quiz and vocabulary practice
Web Code: mqa-2051

6. **Drawing Conclusions** The party out of power serves an important function in American government. Explain that function.

Go Online
PHSchool.com

For: An activity on political parties
Web Code: mqd-2051



Standards Monitoring Online

For additional assessment, have students access **Standards Monitoring Online** at
Web Code: mqa-2051

Go Online
PHSchool.com

Typing in the Web Code when prompted will bring students directly to detailed instructions for this activity.

2 The Two-Party System

Section Preview

OBJECTIVES

1. **Identify** the reasons why the United States has a two-party system.
2. **Understand** multiparty and one-party systems and how they affect the functioning of government.
3. **Describe** party membership patterns in the United States.

WHY IT MATTERS

The two-party system in the United States is a product of historical forces, our electoral system, and the ideological consensus of the American people. It provides more political stability than a multiparty system and more choice than a one-party system.

POLITICAL DICTIONARY

- ★ **minor party**
- ★ **two-party system**
- ★ **single-member district**
- ★ **plurality**
- ★ **bipartisan**
- ★ **pluralistic society**
- ★ **consensus**
- ★ **multiparty**
- ★ **coalition**
- ★ **one-party system**

Does the name Earl Dodge mean anything to you? Probably not. Yet Mr. Dodge has run for President of the United States six times. He was the presidential candidate of the Prohibition Party in 1984, 1988, 1992, 1996, 2000, and most recently, 2004.

One reason Mr. Dodge is not very well known is that he belongs to a **minor party**, one of the many political parties without wide voter support in this country. Two major parties, the Republicans and the Democrats, dominate American politics. That is to say, this country has a **two-party system**. In a typical election, only the Republican or the Democratic Party's candidates have a reasonable chance of winning public office.

Why a Two-Party System?

In some States, and in many local communities, one of the two major parties may be overwhelmingly dominant. And it may remain so for a long time—as, for example, the Democrats were throughout the South from the post-Civil War years to the 1960s. But, on the whole, and through most of our history, the United States has been a two-party nation.

A number of factors help to explain why America has had and continues to have a

two-party system. No one reason alone offers a wholly satisfactory explanation for the phenomenon. Taken together, however, several reasons do add up to a quite persuasive answer.

The Historical Basis

The two-party system is rooted in the beginnings of the nation itself. The Framers of the Constitution were opposed to political parties. As you saw in Chapter 2, the ratification of the Constitution saw the birth of America's first two parties: the Federalists, led by Alexander Hamilton, and the Anti-Federalists, who followed Thomas Jefferson. In short, the American party system *began* as a two-party system.

The Framers hoped to create a unified country; they sought to bring order out of

► The symbols of the political parties turn up in many forms—especially in an election year.



2 The Two-Party System

Objectives You may wish to call students' attention to the objectives in the Section Preview. The objectives are reflected in the main headings of the section.

Bellringer Ask students to explain the saying "Two's company, three's a crowd." Tell them that in this section, they will learn about how that saying can be applied to the American party system.

Vocabulary Builder Ask students how most of the terms in the Political Dictionary are similar. (They contain words or word parts that suggest amounts.) Discuss how those words and word parts (*two*, *single*, *plural*, *bi-*, *multi-*, *one*) affect the meaning of these government terms. Note that even *co-* and *con-* suggest a number of people or groups getting together.

Lesson Plan

Teaching the Main Ideas L3

H-SS 12.6.1

1. Focus Tell students that the two-party system is an established fact of American political life. Ask students to discuss what they know about why the United States has a two-party system.

2. Instruct Ask students how the two-party system developed in the United States. Discuss why the two-party system continues to be strong today. Extend the discussion to the advantages and disadvantages of multiparty and one-party systems.

3. Close/Reteach Remind students that they are free to join any political party. Ask: Are you likely to join one of the two major parties? Why or why not?

Block Scheduling Strategies

Consider these suggestions to manage extended class time:

■ Have students list details about each of the four reasons discussed in the section that the U.S. has a two-party system. Then have each student choose which reason they believe is the most compelling for keeping this system, and which is the least compelling for keeping it. Ask students to share their opinions with the class.


■ Point out to students that while the United States has a two-party system, many democracies around the world have multiparty systems. Ask student groups to consider how political life in the United States might be different with a multiparty system. Have each group create a profile of a multiparty system. What would be the benefits and drawbacks to such a system?

Reading Strategy

Self-Questioning


Ask students to stop at each heading as they read the section. Have them turn each heading into a question that begins with *What*, *How*, or *Why* and then read to answer that question.

Point-of-Use Resources

 **Guided Reading and Review** Unit 2 booklet, p. 4 provides students with practice identifying the main ideas and key terms of this section.

 **Lesson Planner** For complete lesson planning suggestions, see the Lesson Planner booklet, section 2.

 **Political Cartoons** See p. 19 of the Political Cartoons booklet for a cartoon relevant to this section.

 **Section Support Transparencies** Transparency 22, *Visual Learning*; Transparency 121, *Political Cartoon*

Voices on Government

Mary Matalin is a leading Republican campaign consultant. She worked in the Bush campaign in 2000 and 2004. She was an Assistant to the President and Counselor to the Vice President from 2001 to 2003. Here, she comments on political campaigns from the inside:



“ Politics is about winning. . . . Participating in a presidential campaign full-time, as a professional, is very emotional and very draining. You don’t want to put that much effort into a race unless you have a real chance. . . . In the culture of campaigns it’s not ideological. Most of us have a philosophical grounding—we’re working for Republicans only—but in terms of issues the differences between candidates are often pretty small. ”

Evaluating the Quotation

How does Matalin’s view of political campaigns fit in with what you have read about the two major parties?

the chaos of the Critical Period of the 1780s. To most of the Framers, parties were “factions,” and therefore agents of divisiveness and disunity. George Washington reflected this view when, in his Farewell Address in 1796, he warned the new nation against “the baneful effects of the spirit of party.”

In this light, it is hardly surprising that the Constitution made no provision for political parties. The Framers could not foresee the ways in which the governmental system they set up would develop. Thus, they could not possibly know that two major parties would emerge as prime instruments of government in the United States. Nor could they know that those two major parties would tend to be moderate, to choose middle-of-the-road positions, and so help to unify rather than divide the nation.

The Force of Tradition

Once established, human institutions are likely to become self-perpetuating. So it has been with the two-party system. The very fact that the

nation began with a two-party system has been a leading reason for the retention of a two-party system. Over time, it has become an increasingly important, self-reinforcing reason.

The point can be made this way: Most Americans accept the idea of a two-party system simply because there has always been one. This inbred support for the arrangement is a principal reason why challenges to the system—by minor parties, for example—have made so little headway. In other words, America has a two-party system *because* America has a two-party system.

The Electoral System

Several features of the American electoral system tend to promote the existence of but two major parties. That is to say, the basic shape, and many of the details, of the election process work in that direction.

The prevalence of **single-member districts** is one of the most important of these features. Nearly all of the elections held in this country—from the presidential contest on down to those at the local levels—are single-member district elections. That is, they are contests in which only one candidate is elected to each office on the ballot. They are winner-take-all elections. The winning candidate is the one who receives a **plurality**, or the largest number of votes cast for the office. Note that a plurality need not be a majority, which is more than half of all votes cast.

The single-member district pattern works to discourage minor parties. Because only one winner can come out of each contest, voters usually face only two viable choices: They can vote for the candidate of the party holding the office, or they can vote for the candidate of the party with the best chance of replacing the current officeholder. In short, most voters think of a vote for a minor party candidate as a “wasted vote.”

Another important aspect of the electoral system works to the same end. Much of American election law is purposely written to discourage non-major party candidates.² Republicans and Democrats regularly act in a **bipartisan** way in

²Nearly all election law in this country is State, not federal, law—a point discussed at length in the next two chapters. But, here, note this very important point: Nearly all of the nearly 7,400 State legislators—nearly all of those persons who make State law—are either Democrats or Republicans. Only a handful of minor party members or independents now sit, or have ever sat, in State legislatures.

Answer to . . .

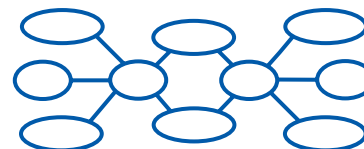
Evaluating the Quotation She emphasizes that while the two major parties are not radically different, they take their competition seriously.

Organizing Information

To make sure students understand the main points of this section, you may wish to use the double web graphic organizer to the right.

Tell students that a double web graphic organizer can be used to compare and contrast two topics. Have students use the double web to compare two-party systems with multiparty systems.

Teaching Tip A template for this graphic organizer can be found in the Section Support Transparencies, Transparency 2.



this matter. That is, the two major parties find common ground and work together here.

They deliberately shape election laws to preserve, protect, and defend the two major parties and the two-party system, and thus to frustrate the minor parties. In most States it is far more difficult for minor parties and independent groups to get their candidates listed on the ballot than for the major parties to do so.

The 2004 presidential election offered a striking illustration of the point. George W. Bush and John Kerry were on the ballots of all 50 States and the District of Columbia. None of the several other serious presidential hopefuls made the ballot everywhere in 2004.

To this point, non-major party candidates have made it to the ballot everywhere in only seven presidential elections. The Socialist Party's Eugene V. Debs was the first to do so, in 1912. The Socialist candidate in 1916, Allan L. Benson, also appeared on the ballots of all of the then 48 States. In 1980 Ed Clark, the Libertarian nominee, and independent John Anderson, and in 1988 Lenora Fulani of the New Alliance Party made the ballots of all 50 States and the District of Columbia. So, too, did Libertarian Andre Marrou and independent Ross Perot in 1992. Every ballot contained the names of Libertarian Harry Browne and the Reform Party's Ross Perot in 1996.

In 2004 Libertarian Michael Badnarik was on the ballot in 48 States and the District of Columbia. Michael Peroutka of the Constitution Party was listed in 38 States, and the Green Party's nominee, David Cobb, in 28. All of the other minor party aspirants fell far short of those totals, however. (Independent candidate Ralph Nader made it to the ballots of 34 States in 2004.)

The American Ideological Consensus

Americans are, on the whole, an ideologically homogeneous people. That is, over time, the American people have shared many of the same ideals, the same basic principles, and the same patterns of belief.

This is not to say that Americans are all alike. Clearly, this is not the case. The United States is a **pluralistic society**—one consisting of several distinct cultures and groups. Increasingly, the members of various ethnic, racial, religious, and other



Interpreting Political Cartoons What does the cartoon imply about what parties—and candidates—stand for?

social groups compete for and share in the exercise of political power in this country. Still, there is a broad **consensus**—a general agreement among various groups—on fundamental matters.

Nor is it to say that Americans have always agreed with one another in all matters. Far from it. The nation has been deeply divided at times: during the Civil War and in the years of the Great Depression, for example, and over such critical issues as racial discrimination, the war in Vietnam, and abortion.

Still, note this very important point: this nation has not been regularly plagued by sharp and unbridgeable political divisions.



▲ Alabama Senator Richard Shelby was elected as a Democrat in 1986 and reelected in 1992. He became a Republican in 1995 and was easily reelected in 1998 and 2004. **Critical Thinking** What might cause a politician to switch parties? **H-SS 12.6.4**

Universal Access

L4

Ask students to conduct research on presidential election results for the past two decades. Based on their findings, have them create color-coded U.S. maps for each election that illustrate which candidate won the electoral votes in each State. Ask students to compare maps for each election, and write a report summarizing any trends they notice between States/regions and political party lines. Encourage volunteers to share their results.

GT

Preparing for Standardized Tests

Have students read the passages under *The American Ideological Consensus* on pp. 121–122 and then answer the question below.

Which sentence best describes consensus in the United States?

- Ⓐ Americans generally agree on basic political issues.
- Ⓑ Sharp political divisions in the nation make consensus difficult.
- Ⓒ All Americans hold the same political views.
- Ⓓ Consensus has produced two major parties that are exactly alike.

Answers to . . .

Interpreting Political Cartoons

Possible answer: That they are more concerned with gaining votes than with party issues.

Critical Thinking Possible answers: A feeling that the party is not addressing important issues; a shift in the politician's own ideology.

Universal Access

L3

Time 90 minutes.**Purpose** Hold a classroom debate over the issue of having a two-party system of politics versus having a multiparty system.**Grouping** Divide the class in half. Each half will take one side of the issue.**Activity** Have teams consider topics such as voter turnout, public involvement in politics, tradition, stability, and diverse representation. Give each side a set amount of time to speak, as well as a set amount of time for rebuttal.**Roles** Discussion leader, recorder, idea generators, spokesperson, timekeeper.**Close** Appoint a group of students to act as a jury to decide which side made the best arguments for its case.**H-SS 12.6.1****Point-of-Use Resources****Government Assessment Rubrics**

Oral Presentation, p. 24

**Block Scheduling with Lesson****Strategies** Additional activities for Chapter 5 appear on p. 21.

▲ **Multiparty System** Like many European countries, Italy has a multi-party system. Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi (right) heads Italy's center-right coalition government.

The United States has been free of long-standing, bitter disputes based on such factors as economic class, social status, religious beliefs, or national origin.

Those conditions that could produce several strong rival parties simply do not exist in this country. In this way, the United States differs from most other democracies. In short, the realities of American society and politics simply do not permit more than two major parties.

This ideological consensus has had another very important impact on American parties. It has given the nation two major parties that look very much alike. Both tend to be moderate. Both are built on compromise and regularly try to occupy “the middle of the road.” Both parties seek the same prize: the votes of a majority of the electorate. To do so, they must win over essentially the same people. Inevitably, each party takes policy positions that do not differ a great deal from those of the other major party.

This is not to say that there are no significant differences between the two major parties today. There are. For example, the Democratic Party, and those who usually vote for its candidates, are more likely to support such things as social welfare programs, government regulation of business practices, and efforts to improve the status of minorities. On the other hand, the Republican Party and its adherents are much more likely to favor the play of private market forces in the economy and to argue that the Federal Government should be less extensively involved in social welfare programs.

Multiparty Systems

Some critics argue that the American two-party system should be scrapped. They would replace it with a **multiparty** arrangement, a system in which several major and many lesser parties exist, seriously compete for, and actually win, public offices. Multiparty systems have long been a feature of most European democracies, and they are now found in many other democratic societies elsewhere in the world.

In the typical multiparty system, the various parties are each based on a particular interest, such as economic class, religious belief, sectional attachment, or political ideology. Those who favor such an arrangement for this country say that it would provide for a broader representation of the electorate and be more responsive to the will of the people. They claim that a multiparty system would give voters a much more meaningful choice among candidates and policy alternatives than the present two-party system does.

Clearly, multiparty systems do tend to produce a broader, more diverse representation of the electorate. At the same time, that strength is also a major weakness of a multiparty system. It often leads to instability in government. One party is often unable to win the support of a majority of the voters. As a result, the power to govern must be shared by a number of parties, in a **coalition**. A coalition is a temporary alliance of several groups who come together to form a working majority and so to control a government.

Several of the multiparty nations of Western Europe have long been plagued by governmental crises. They have experienced frequent changes in party control as coalitions shift and dissolve. Italy furnishes an almost nightmarish example: It has had a new government on the average of once every year ever since the end of World War II.

Historically, the American people have shunned a multiparty approach to politics. They have refused to give substantial support to any but the two major parties and their candidates. Two of the factors mentioned above—single-member districts and the American ideological consensus—seem to make the multiparty approach impossible in the United States.

One-Party Systems

In nearly all dictatorships today, only one political party is allowed. That party is the party of the ruling clique. For all practical purposes, it is quite accurate to say that in those circumstances the resulting **one-party system** is really a “no-party” system.

In quite another sense, this country has had several States and many local areas that can be described in one-party terms. Until the late 1950s, the Democrats dominated the politics of the South. The Republican Party was almost always the winner in New England and in the upper Midwest.

Effective two-party competition has spread fairly rapidly in the past 30 years or so. Democrats have won many offices in every northern State. Republican candidates have become more and more successful throughout the once “Solid South.” Nevertheless, about a third of the States can still be said to have a modified one-party system. That is, one of the major parties regularly wins most elections in those States. Also, while most States may have vigorous two-party competition at the Statewide level, within most of them are many areas dominated by a single party.

Party Membership Patterns

Membership in a party is purely voluntary. A person is a Republican or a Democrat, or belongs to a minor party, or is an independent—belonging to no organized party—because that is what he or she chooses to be.³

Remember, the two major parties are broadly based. In order to gain more votes than their opponents, they must attract as much support as they possibly can. Each party has always been composed, in greater or lesser degree, of a cross section of the nation’s population. Each is made up of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews; whites, African Americans, Latinos, and other minorities; professionals, farmers, and union members. Each party includes the young, the middle-aged,

³In most States a person must declare a preference for a particular party in order to vote in that party’s primary election. That declaration is usually made as a part of the voter registration process, and it is often said to make one “a registered Republican (or Democrat).” The requirement is only a procedural one, however, and wholly a matter of individual choice.



▲ Dictator Joseph Stalin, who was both leader of the Communist Party and premier of the Soviet Union, ruthlessly crushed all political opposition. **Critical Thinking** Why might silencing other political points of view be a disadvantage to a government?

and the elderly; city-dwellers, suburbanites, and rural residents among its members.

It is true that the members of certain segments of the electorate tend to be aligned more solidly with one or the other of the major parties, at least for a time. Thus, in recent decades, African Americans, Catholics and Jews, and union members have voted more often for Democrats. In the same way, white males, Protestants, and the business community have been inclined to back the GOP.⁴ Yet, never have all members of any group tied themselves permanently to either party.

Individuals identify themselves with a party for many reasons. Family is almost certainly the most important among them. Studies show that nearly two out of every three Americans follow the party allegiance of their parents.

⁴GOP is common shorthand for the Republican Party. The initials stand for Grand Old Party, a nickname acquired in the latter part of the 19th century. The nickname may owe its origins to British politics. Prime Minister William Gladstone was dubbed “the Grand Old Man,” often abbreviated “GOM,” by the English press in 1882. Soon after, “GOP” appeared in headlines in the *New York Tribune*, the *Boston Post*, and other American papers.



Provides a complete set of powerful teaching tools to make lesson planning and administering tests quicker and easier.

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L2

Ask students to create a two-column chart with these headings: *Democrats* and *Republicans*. In the left-hand margin students should write the following categories: *social welfare, race, gender, religion, income level, unions, business, government involvement*. Have students look for these context clues in the text, and next to each, record what is said in the text about either party, or both. **ELL**

H-SS 12.1.5

Background Note

Global Awareness

In multiparty parliamentary systems, the largest parties are often unable to command a majority of representatives in the parliament, and are forced to form coalitions with smaller parties in order to govern. Thus, a party that receives only a few percent of the popular vote may end up in a partnership that runs the country! In the 2005 federal elections in Germany, for example, no one party won a majority of the 614 Bundestag seats. As a result, neither candidate for chancellor, Angela Merkel (Christian Democratic Union, CDU) and Gerhard Schröder (Social Democratic Party, SPD), could form a majority government, even with their traditional partners (the CDU allied with the Christian Social Union and the Free Democratic Party, and the SPD traditionally joined with the Green Party). Intense negotiations began. In the end, Angela Merkel was confirmed as the leader of a surprising Grand Coalition composed of the CDU (180 seats), Christian Social Union (46 seats), and SPD (222 seats). This was an unusual partnership, however, since the CDU and the SPD had historically been opposed on many issues.

Answer to . . .

Critical Thinking Possible answer: A government that does not consider all viewpoints can never have the broad support of all the people, and could be unstable.

Point-of-Use Resources



Guide to the Essentials Chapter 5, Section 2, p. 33 provides support for students who need additional review of section content. Spanish support is available in the Spanish edition of the Guide on p. 26.



Quiz Unit 2 booklet, p. 5 includes matching and multiple-choice questions to check students' understanding of Section 2 content.



Presentation Pro CD-ROM Quizzes and multiple-choice questions check students' understanding of Section 2 content.

Answers to . . .

Section 2 Assessment

1. Historical precedents, tradition, an electoral system that promotes dominance by two major parties, and ideological consensus.
2. The U.S. is pluralistic because it has several distinct cultures and groups, but Americans have reached consensus on many matters, for example, having a two-party system.
3. (a) A multiparty system has several major and minor parties that all compete for public office. (b) Some people favor it because it provides a broader representation of the electorate and gives voters more choices.
4. Factors include family tradition, significant political or societal events, economic status, age, place of residence, level of education, and occupation.
5. That parties and the Americans supporting them have reached consensus on maintaining a strong two-party system.
6. Ads will vary, but should include the distinguishing factors discussed in the text.

Answer to . . .

Interpreting Tables The Communist Party.

Political Party Contacts

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES



Republican Party
310 First St. SE, Washington, DC 20003
<http://www.rnc.org>



Democratic Party
430 So. Capitol St. SE, Washington, DC 20003
<http://www.democrats.org>

SIGNIFICANT MINOR PARTIES

Libertarian Party (Founded 1971)
2600 Virginia Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20037 <http://www.lp.org>
Stresses individual liberty; opposes taxes, foreign involvements, government intrusion into private lives.

Reform Party (Founded 1995)
Box 126437, Fort Worth, TX 76126 <http://www.reformparty.org>
Formed by Ross Perot; advocates trade agreements to protect American jobs, balanced budget, tax and electoral reforms, term limits.

Constitution Party (Founded 1992)
23 North Lime St., Lancaster, PA 17602 <http://www.constitutionparty.org>
Anti-tax party; strongly pro-life; pro-school prayer; opposes gun control, immigration, free trade, UN, gay rights.

Communist Party USA (Founded 1919)
235 West 23rd St., New York, NY 10011 <http://www.cpusa.org>
Promotes Communist ideology; seeks complete restructuring of American political and economic institutions.

America First Party (Founded 2002)
1630-A 30th St., Boulder, CO 80301 <http://www.americafirstparty.org>
Splinter from Reform Party; promotes Christian beliefs and originalist interpretation of the Constitution; opposes immigration, free trade, UN.

Green Party of the United States (Founded 1996)
1700 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009 <http://www.gp.org>
Committed to "environmentalism, nonviolence, social justice, and grass-roots democracy."

Socialist Labor Party (Founded 1891)
P.O. Box 218, Mountain View, CA 94042 <http://www.slp.org>
Marxist party; seeks "a classless society based on collectivist ownership of industries and social services."

Socialist Party USA (Founded 1900)
339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012 <http://www.sp-usa.org>
Staunchly anti-Communist; advocates democratic socialism; seeks "a non-racist, classless, feminist, socialist society."

Interpreting Tables Which of the minor parties shown in the table has the most specific platform? **H-SS 12.1.5**

Major events can also have a decided influence on the party affiliation of voters. Of these, the Civil War and the Depression of the 1930s have been the most significant in American political history.

Economic status also influences party choice, although generalizations are quite risky. Historically though, those in higher income groups are more likely to be Republicans, while those with lower incomes tend to be Democrats.

Several other factors also affect both party choice and voting behavior, including age, place of residence, level of education, and work environment. Some of those factors may conflict with one another in the case of a particular individual—and they often do. Therefore, predicting how a person or group will vote in any given election is a risky business, which keeps the pollsters and the analysts busy until the votes are counted.

Section 2 Assessment

Key Terms and Main Ideas

1. Briefly explain four reasons why the United States has a **two-party system**.
2. How do the terms **pluralistic** and **consensus** both apply to American society?
3. (a) What is a **multiparty system**? (b) Why do some people favor it for the United States?
4. Many factors tend to influence party choice. Name four.

Critical Thinking

5. **Synthesizing Information** What does the fact that the major parties cooperate to discourage minor parties and yet compete vigorously against each other during elections tell you about party politics in the United States?



Standards Monitoring Online

For: Self-quiz with vocabulary practice
Web Code: mqa-2052

6. **Recognizing Ideologies** You are campaigning for one of the two major parties. Create a short political advertisement to appeal to large numbers of voters and to distinguish your party from the other major party.



For: An activity on political polling
Web Code: mqd-2052



Standards Monitoring Online

For additional assessment, have students access **Standards Monitoring Online** at
Web Code: mqa-2052



Typing in the Web Code when prompted will bring students directly to detailed instructions for this activity.

3 The Two-Party System in American History

Objectives You may wish to call students' attention to the objectives in the Section Preview. The objectives are reflected in the main headings of the section.

Bellringer Ask students to name a team that has dominated its sport for a long period of time. Explain that in this section, they will learn about political parties that have dominated national politics for long periods of American history.

Vocabulary Builder Point out the terms in the Political Dictionary. Ask students which two terms suggest things that might have helped break up a dominant political party. Tell them that they will learn more about the destructive power of factions and sectionalism as they read the section.

Lesson Plan

Teaching the Main Ideas L3

H-SS 12.6.1

1. Focus Tell students that throughout much of American history, one of the two major parties has dominated national politics. Ask students to name as many of these political parties as they can and list them on the board in order by when they were founded.

2. Instruct Ask students to name the four major eras in the history of the American party system. Discuss which parties dominated the first three eras, how they came to power, why they lost power, and who led each party. Then have students explain why the fourth era has been marked by divided government.

3. Close/Reteach Remind students that no political party has dominated both Congress and the presidency in recent years. Have students draw a time line to show the dominant political party and other political parties throughout American history.

Section Preview

OBJECTIVES

- 1. Understand** the origins of political parties in the United States.
- 2. Identify** and describe the three major periods of single-party domination and describe the current era of divided government.

WHY IT MATTERS

The origins and history of political parties in the United States help explain how the two major parties work today and how they affect American government.

POLITICAL DICTIONARY

- ★ **incumbent**
- ★ **faction**
- ★ **electorate**
- ★ **sectionalism**

Henry Ford, the great auto maker, once said that all history is “bunk.” Ford knew a great deal about automobiles and mass production, but he did not know much about history or its importance.

Listen, instead, to Shakespeare: “The past is prologue.” Today is the product of yesterday. You are what you are today because of your history. Therefore, the more you know about your past, the better prepared you are for today, and for tomorrow.

Much the same can be said about the two-party system in American politics. The more you know about its past, the better you will understand its workings today.

The Nation's First Parties

The beginnings of the American two-party system can be traced to the battle over the ratification of the Constitution. The conflicts of the time, centering on the proper form and role of government in the United States, were not stilled by the adoption of the Constitution. Rather, those

conflicts were carried over into the early years of the Republic. They led directly to the formation of the nation's first full-blown political parties.

The Federalist Party was the first to appear. It formed around Alexander Hamilton, who served as secretary of the treasury in the new government organized by George Washington. The Federalists were, by and large, the party of “the rich and the well-born.” Most of them had supported the Constitution.

Led by Hamilton, the Federalists worked to create a stronger national government. They favored vigorous executive leadership and a set of policies designed to correct the nation's economic ills. The Federalists' program appealed to financial, manufacturing, and commercial interests. To reach their goals, they urged a liberal interpretation of the Constitution.

Thomas Jefferson, the nation's first secretary of state, led the opposition to the Federalists.⁵ Jefferson and his followers were more sympathetic to the “common man” than were the Federalists. They favored a very limited role for the new government created by the Constitution. In their view, Congress should dominate that new government, and its policies should help the nation's small shopkeepers, laborers, farmers, and planters. The Jeffersonians insisted on a strict construction of the provisions of the Constitution.

⁵As you recall, George Washington was opposed to political parties. As President, he named arch foes Hamilton and Jefferson to his new Cabinet to get them to work together—in an unsuccessful attempt to avoid the creation of formally organized and opposing groups.



▲ This ticket provided admission to the convention that nominated President Roosevelt for a second term.



Block Scheduling Strategies

Consider these suggestions to manage extended class time:

■ Write the following pairs of headings on the board: *Republicans in the 1990s*, *Democrats in the 1990s*, *Federalists in the 1790s*, *Anti-Federalists in the 1790s*. Have students compare and contrast the groups by providing details under each heading, using information from the textbook (have them review Chapters 2 and 3 in preparation).

■ Present students with the following two quotes: “I don’t belong to an organized political party—I’m a Democrat” (Will Rogers); “There’s not a dime’s worth of difference about the two parties” (George Wallace). Ask students to infer how these two people felt about the two major parties. Then have them write a letter to either George Wallace or Will Rogers, supporting or refuting their quote.

Jefferson resigned from Washington's Cabinet in 1793 to concentrate on organizing his party. Originally, the new party took the name Anti-Federalist. Later it became known as the Jeffersonian Republicans or the Democratic-Republicans. Finally, by 1828, it became the Democratic Party.

These two parties first clashed in the election of 1796. John Adams, the Federalists' candidate to succeed Washington as President, defeated Jefferson by just three votes in the electoral college. Over the next four years, Jefferson and James Madison worked tirelessly to build the Democratic-Republican Party. Their efforts paid off in the election of 1800. Jefferson defeated the **incumbent**, or current officeholder, President Adams; Jefferson's party also won control of Congress. The Federalists never returned to power.

American Parties: Four Major Eras

The history of the American party system since 1800 can be divided into four major periods. Through the first three of these periods, one or the other of the two major parties was dominant, regularly holding the presidency and usually both houses of Congress. The nation is now in a fourth period, much of it marked by divided government.

In the first of these periods, from 1800 to 1860, the Democrats won 13 of 15 presidential elections. They lost the office only in the elections of 1840 and 1848. In the second era, from 1860 to 1932, the Republicans won 14 of 18 elections, losing only in 1884, 1892, 1912, and 1916.

The third period, from 1932 to 1968, began with the Democrats' return to power and Franklin Roosevelt's first election to the presidency. The Democrats won seven of the nine presidential elections, losing only in 1952 and 1956. Through the fourth and current period, which began in 1968, the Republicans have won seven of ten presidential elections, and they hold the White House today. But the Democrats have controlled both houses of Congress over much of this most recent period—although they do not do so today.

The Era of the Democrats, 1800–1860

Thomas Jefferson's election in 1800 marked the beginning of a period of Democratic domination that was to last until the Civil War. As the time line on pages 128–129 shows, the Federalists, soundly defeated in 1800, had disappeared altogether by 1816.

For a time, through the Era of Good Feeling, the Democratic-Republicans were unopposed in national politics. However, by the mid-1820s, they had split into **factions**, or conflicting groups.



Interpreting Political Cartoons Political cartoonist Thomas Nast is credited with popularizing the party symbols in his 1874 cartoons for *Harper's Weekly*. At left, the Republican elephant trumpets Democratic Party defeats. At right, the Democratic donkey kicks Lincoln's Secretary of War. **What characteristics of the elephant and the donkey do you think Nast wanted to associate with each party?** **H-SS 12.6.1**

Preparing for Standardized Tests

Have students read the passages under *The Era of the Democrats, 1800–1860* and then answer the question below.

From the passages, what can you infer was the main reason that Democrats had lost power by the end of this era?

- A The Whigs could not be defeated.
- B Because of so many factions, the Democratic Party had become fragmented.**
- C The Civil War caused disunity.
- D President Jackson was not reelected.

Reading Strategy

Predicting

Tell students that historically, a single party has tended to dominate national politics for many years at a time, before a major historical event brings its domination to an abrupt end. Have students predict two major events that ended single-party domination and suggest why the events had this effect. Students should verify their predictions as they read the section.

Point-of-Use Resources

Guided Reading and Review Unit 2 booklet, p. 6 provides students with practice identifying the main ideas and key terms of this section.

Lesson Planner For complete lesson planning suggestions, see the Lesson Planner booklet, section 3.

Political Cartoons See p. 20 of the Political Cartoons booklet for a cartoon relevant to this section.

Close Up on Primary Sources Jefferson's First Inaugural Address (1801), p. 34

Section Support Transparencies Transparency 23, *Visual Learning*; Transparency 122, *Political Cartoon*

Answer to . . .

Interpreting Political Cartoons Answers will vary; students should be able to explain why they chose certain characteristics.

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L3

Enrichment Separate the class into four groups. Assign each group one of the following time periods: 1800–1860, 1860–1932, 1932–1968, and 1968–present. Using historical resources, newspapers, magazines, and any necessary art supplies, have groups create a collage depicting the significant historical events and major contributions of the dominant party during this era. Encourage groups to include the names and years served of Presidents in the dominant political party. Ask for group volunteers to present their collage to the class.

H-SS 12.6.1

Point-of-Use Resources



Close Up on the Supreme Court
Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857), pp. 32–33

Universal Access

L1

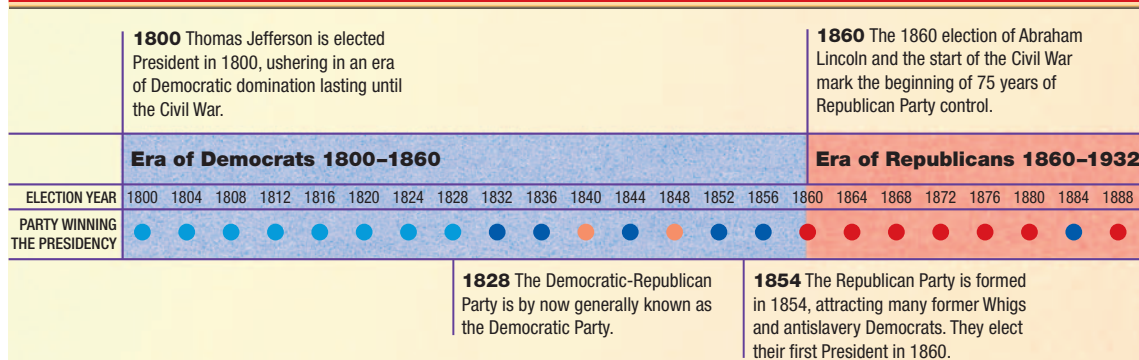
Give students a date from 1800 to 2004. Have them look at the time line and locate that date on the time line. Then ask: Which party was in the White House that year? Continue this until students have an understanding of the contents of the time line.

SN

Answer to . . .

Interpreting Time Lines The Republican Party.

Four Eras of Political Parties



Interpreting Time Lines This time line shows the parties that have won each presidential election. *Since 1860, which party has controlled the presidency for the longest period of time?* **H-SS 12.6.1**

By the time of Andrew Jackson's administration (1829–1837), a potent National Republican (Whig) Party had arisen to challenge the Democrats. The major issues of the day—conflicts over public lands, the Second Bank of the United States, high tariffs, and slavery—all had made new party alignments inevitable.

The Democrats, led by Jackson, were a coalition of small farmers, debtors, frontier pioneers, and slaveholders. They drew much of their support from the South and West. The years of Jacksonian democracy produced three fundamental changes in the nation's political landscape: (1) voting rights for all white males, (2) a huge increase in the number of elected offices around the country, and (3) the spread of the spoils system—the practice of awarding public offices, contracts, and other governmental favors to those who supported the party in power.

The Whig Party was led by the widely popular Henry Clay and the great orator, Daniel Webster. The party consisted of a loose coalition of eastern bankers, merchants and industrialists, and many owners of large southern plantations. The Whigs were opposed to the tenets of Jacksonian democracy and strongly supported a high tariff. However, the Whigs' victories were few. Although they were the other major party from the mid-1830s to the 1850s, the Whigs were able to elect only two Presidents, both of

them war heroes: William Henry Harrison in 1840 and Zachary Taylor in 1848.

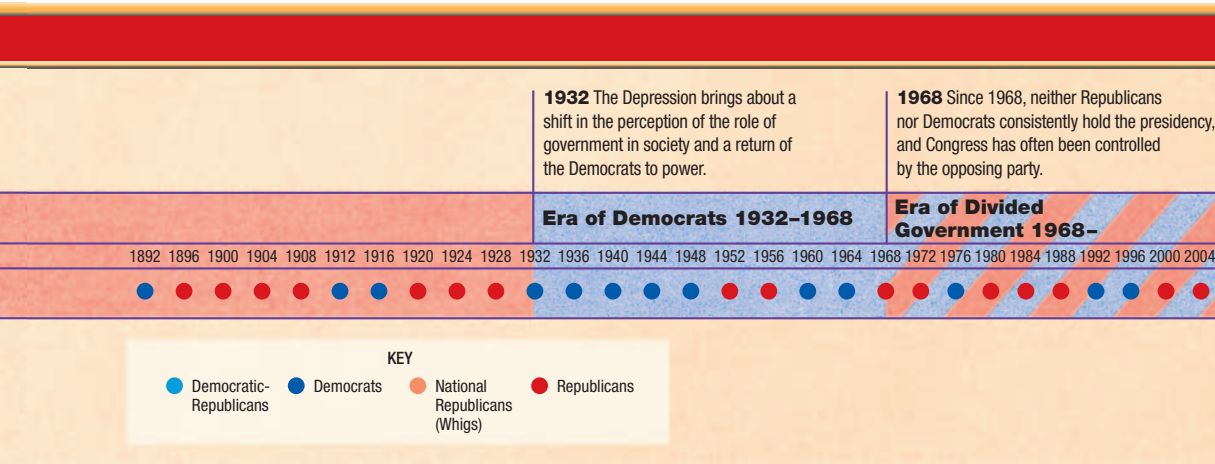
By the 1850s, the growing crisis over slavery split both major parties. Left leaderless by the deaths of Clay and Webster, the Whigs fell apart. Meanwhile, the Democrats split into two sharply divided camps, North and South. During this decade, the nation drifted toward civil war.

Of the several groupings that arose to compete for supporters among the former Whigs and the fragmented Democrats, the Republican Party was the most successful. Founded in 1854, it drew many Whigs and antislavery Democrats. The Republicans nominated their first presidential candidate, John C. Frémont, in 1856; they elected their first President, Abraham Lincoln, in 1860.

With Lincoln's election, the Republican Party became the only party in the history of American politics to make the jump from third-party to major-party status. As you will see, even greater things were in store for the Republicans.

The Era of the Republicans, 1860–1932

The Civil War signaled the beginning of the second era of one-party domination. For nearly 75 years, the Republicans dominated the national scene. They were supported by business and financial interests, and by farmers, laborers, and newly freed African Americans.



The Democrats, crippled by the war, were able to survive mainly through their hold on the “Solid South,” after the era of Reconstruction came to a close in the mid-1870s. For the balance of the century, they slowly rebuilt their electoral base. In all that time, they were able to place only one candidate in the White House: Grover Cleveland in 1884 and again in 1892. Those elections marked only short breaks in Republican supremacy. Riding the crest of popular acceptance and unprecedented prosperity, the GOP remained the dominant party well into the twentieth century.

The election of 1896 was especially critical in the development of the two-party system. It climaxed years of protest by small business owners, farmers, and the emerging labor unions against big business, financial monopolies, and the railroads. The Republican Party nominated William McKinley and supported the gold standard. The Democratic candidate was William Jennings Bryan, a supporter of free silver, who was also endorsed by the Populist Party.

With McKinley’s victory in 1896, the Republicans regained the presidency. In doing so, they drew a response from a broader range of the **electorate**—the people eligible to vote. This new strength allowed the Republicans to maintain their role as the dominant party in national politics for another three decades.

The Democratic Party lost the election of 1896, but it won on another score. Bryan, its young, dynamic presidential nominee, campaigned

throughout the country as the champion of the “little man.” He helped to push the nation’s party politics back toward the economic arena, and away from the divisions of **sectionalism** that had plagued the nation for so many years. Sectionalism emphasizes a devotion to the interests of a particular region.

The Republicans suffered their worst setback of the era in 1912, when they renominated incumbent President William Howard Taft. Former President Theodore Roosevelt, denied the nomination of his party, left the Republicans to become the candidate of his “Bull Moose” Progressive Party. Traditional Republican support was divided between Taft and Roosevelt. As a result, the Democratic nominee, Woodrow Wilson, was able to capture the presidency. Four years later, Wilson was reelected by a narrow margin.

Again, however, the Democratic successes of 1912 and 1916 proved only a brief interlude. The GOP reasserted its control of the nation’s politics by winning each of the next three presidential elections: Warren Harding won in 1920, Calvin Coolidge in 1924, and Herbert Hoover in 1928.

The Return of the Democrats, 1932–1968

The Great Depression, which began in 1929, had a massive impact on nearly all aspects of American life. Its effect on the American political landscape was considerable indeed. The landmark election of 1932 brought Franklin Roosevelt to the presidency and the Democrats back to power at the

Universal Access

L3

Share the following quotation with students:

“Conservative, n. A statesman who is enamored of existing evils, as distinguished from the Liberal, who wishes to replace them with others.”

—Ambrose Bierce,
The Devil’s Dictionary

Discussion Have students explain what Bierce meant by his definition. Ask: How might this definition apply to the two major political parties?

Background Note

Common Misconceptions

American political parties are an excellent example of what Abraham Lincoln (himself a good Republican) famously called “government of the people, by the people, for the people” in his 1863 Gettysburg Address. Interestingly, a clergyman and social reformer named Theodore Parker wrote of “government of all the people, by all the people, for all the people” 13 years earlier, in 1850. He used a similar phrase in a sermon in the Boston Music Hall in 1858. Lincoln’s law partner, William Herndon, gave Lincoln a copy of the sermon. Herndon later wrote that Lincoln underlined this phrase in Hall’s sermon: “Democracy is direct self-government, over all the people, by all the people, for all the people.” Thus, historians have come to agree that Lincoln’s famous phrase was in fact borrowed—although most Americans are unaware of it.

CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES

Separation of Powers

The issue of separation of powers took on a new urgency for the nation in 1937. The Supreme Court was in an era of conservative judicial activism, and had struck down many social laws, particularly those protecting workers’ rights. In an attempt to balance the Court, FDR attempted to increase the number of sitting justices, in what became known as the “Court-packing scheme.” Though his plan gained some support, it was

quickly defeated by a large number of Americans who were horrified by what they saw as an overreach of power by the executive branch.

Activity

Have students role-play FDR and his advisors who support the Court-packing scheme, and Americans who oppose it, including reporters, citizens, and Republicans. Encourage them to supply reasons and examples for their views.

Point-of-Use Resources

The Enduring Constitution
Separation of Powers, p. 5

Basic Principles of the Constitution
Transparencies Transparencies 23–29,
Separation of Powers

Background Note

Recent Scholarship

Criticisms of the two major parties and their campaigning techniques run high during an election year. Negative advertising, in particular, repulses many voters—some to the point where they refuse to vote. According to political marketer Bill Hillsman, this result is considered acceptable and even desirable to some Washington political strategists. In his scathing critique of the tactics employed by the Democratic and Republican parties, *Run the Other Way: Fixing the Two-Party System, One Campaign at a Time*, Hillsman exposes the shallow, greedy world of political campaigning. Known for his contentious political advertisements, Hillsman ran the winning campaigns of Senator Paul Wellstone and Governor Jesse Ventura, and the third-party bid of Ralph Nader for the White House. In his book, Hillsman takes a controversial stand against “inside the beltway” politics, but he also empowers the American people to take back control of the political process.



▲ This 1900 campaign poster uses powerful imagery to win Republican votes. **Critical Thinking** How does the poster contrast Republican achievements since 1896 with earlier conditions when the Democrats were in power?

national level. Also, and of fundamental importance, that election marked a basic shift in the public's attitude toward the proper role of government in the nation's social and economic life.

Franklin Roosevelt and the Democrats engineered their victory in 1932 with a new electoral base. It was built largely of southerners, small farmers, organized labor, and big-city political organizations. Roosevelt's revolutionary economic and social welfare programs, which formed the heart of the New Deal of the 1930s, further strengthened that coalition. It also brought increasing support from African Americans and other minorities to the Democrats.

President Roosevelt won reelection in 1936. He secured an unprecedented third term in 1940 and yet another term in 1944, each time by heavy majorities. Roosevelt's Vice President, Harry S. Truman, completed the fourth term following FDR's death in 1945. Truman was elected to a full term of his own in 1948, when he turned back the GOP challenge led by Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York.

The Republicans did manage to regain the White House in 1952, and they kept it in 1956. World War II hero Dwight Eisenhower led the Republicans to victory in these elections. Both times, Eisenhower defeated the Democratic nominee, Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois.

The Republicans' return to power was short-lived, however. Senator John F. Kennedy of

Massachusetts recaptured the White House for the Democrats in 1960. He did so with a razor-thin win over the Republican standard bearer, then Vice President Richard M. Nixon. Lyndon B. Johnson succeeded to the presidency when Kennedy was assassinated in late 1963. Johnson won a full presidential term in 1964, by overwhelming his Republican opponent, Senator Barry Goldwater of Arizona.

The Start of a New Era

Richard Nixon made a successful return to presidential politics in 1968. In that year's election, he defeated Vice President Hubert Humphrey. Humphrey was the candidate of a Democratic Party torn apart by conflicts over the war in Vietnam, civil rights, and a variety of social welfare issues. Nixon also faced a strong third-party effort by the American Independent Party nominee, Governor George Wallace of Alabama. The Republicans won with only a bare plurality over Humphrey and Wallace.

In 1972, President Nixon retained the White House when he routed the choice of the still-divided Democrats, Senator George McGovern of South Dakota. However, Nixon's role in the Watergate scandal forced him from office in 1974.

Vice President Gerald Ford then became President and filled out the balance of Nixon's second term. Beset by problems in the economy, by the continuing effects of Watergate, and by his pardon of former President Nixon, Ford lost the presidency in 1976. The former governor of Georgia, Jimmy Carter, and the resurgent Democrats gained the White House that year.

A steadily worsening economy, political fallout from the Iranian hostage crisis, and his own inability to establish himself as an effective President spelled defeat for Jimmy Carter in 1980. Led by Ronald Reagan, the former governor of California, the Republicans scored an impressive victory that year. Reagan won a second term by a landslide in 1984, overwhelming a Democratic ticket headed by former Vice President Walter Mondale.

The GOP kept the White House with a third straight win in 1988. Their candidate, George H.W. Bush, had served as Vice President through the Reagan years. He led a successful campaign against the Democrats and their nominee, Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts.

Answer to . . .

Critical Thinking It shows a booming economy and successful foreign policy under the Republican administration, in contrast to former Democratic administrations.

The Reagan and Bush victories of the 1980s triggered wide-ranging efforts to alter many of the nation's foreign and domestic policies. President George H.W. Bush lost his bid for another term in 1992, however. Democrat Bill Clinton, then the governor of Arkansas, defeated him and also turned back an independent challenge by Texas billionaire Ross Perot. Mr. Clinton won a second term in 1996—defeating the Republican candidate, long-time senator from Kansas, Bob Dole, and, at the same time, thwarting a third-party effort by Mr. Perot.

The GOP regained the White House in the very close presidential contest of 2000. Their candidate, George W. Bush, was then the governor of Texas, and is the son of the former Republican President. Mr. Bush failed to win the popular vote contest in 2000, but he did capture a bare majority of the electoral votes and so the White House. His Democratic opponent, Vice President Al Gore, became the first presidential nominee since 1888 to win the popular vote and yet fail to win the presidency; see pages 379–381.

The years since Richard Nixon's election in 1968 have been marked by divided government. Through much of the period, Republicans have occupied the White House while the Democrats have usually controlled Congress.⁶ That situation was reversed in the midst of President Clinton's first term, however. The GOP took control of both houses of Congress in 1994, and they kept their hold on Capitol Hill on through the elections of 2000.

Historically, a newly elected President has almost always swept many of his party's

candidates into office with him. But the victories of several recent Presidents—most recently, George W. Bush in 2000—have not carried that kind of coattail effect.

The Republicans lost seats in the House and Senate in 2000. They did manage to keep a narrow hold on both chambers, however—by a nine-seat margin in the House and by virtue of a 50-50 split in the Senate. But the Democrats reclaimed the upper house in mid-2001, when Senator James Jeffords of Vermont bolted the Republican Party and became an independent.

Sparked by the prodigious campaign efforts of President Bush, the Republicans won back the Senate and padded their slim majority in the House in the off-year congressional elections of 2002. The GOP had not picked up seats in both houses of Congress in a midterm election with a Republican in the White House in 100 years—not since Theodore Roosevelt's first term, in 1902.

The Republicans continued their winning ways in 2004. Mr. Bush defeated his Democratic opponent, Senator John F. Kerry of Massachusetts, in a bruising campaign—and, this time, he won a clear majority of the popular vote. The President also led his party to substantial gains in both the House and Senate. Has the era of divided government that began in 1968 now come to an end? Only time will tell.

⁶The Democrats held almost uninterrupted control of Congress from 1933 to 1995. Over those years, the Republicans controlled both houses of Congress for only two two-year periods—first, after the congressional elections of 1946 and then after those of 1952. The GOP did win control of the Senate (but not the House) in 1980; the Democrats recaptured the upper chamber in 1986.

Section 3 Assessment

Key Terms and Main Ideas

1. When did the American two-party system begin to emerge?
2. Why would the development of **factions** within a political party hurt that party's chances for success?
3. Explain how **sectionalism** played an important role in party politics during at least one period of American history.
4. Describe one period of single-party domination.

Critical Thinking

5. **Drawing Conclusions** To which of the major parties of today do you think Thomas Jefferson would belong? Alexander Hamilton? Explain your reasoning.



Standards Monitoring Online

For: Self-Quiz and vocabulary practice
Web Code: mqa-2053

6. **Predicting Consequences** Do you think that the GOP's decisive victories in 2004 signal the end of the fourth era in the history of the two-party system? Why or why not?



For: An activity on comparing political parties
Web Code: mqd-2053



Standards Monitoring Online

For additional assessment, have students access **Standards Monitoring Online** at
Web Code: mqa-2053



Typing in the Web Code when prompted will bring students directly to detailed instructions for this activity.

Point-of-Use Resources



Guide to the Essentials Chapter 5, Section 3, p. 34 provides support for students who need additional review of section content. Spanish support is available in the Spanish edition of the Guide on p. 27.



Quiz Unit 2 booklet, p. 7 includes matching and multiple-choice questions to check students' understanding of Section 3 content.



Presentation Pro CD-ROM Quizzes and multiple-choice questions check students' understanding of Section 3 content.

Answers to . . .

Section 3 Assessment

1. The American two-party system began to emerge during the battle over the ratification of the Constitution.
2. If the people within the same party are divided, they are unlikely to present a united front as a party.
3. A move away from sectionalism by Democrats in the election of 1896 helped the nation return to economic issues.
4. The period of 1932–1952 was dominated by the Democratic Party, with FDR being elected for four terms and then his Vice President, Truman, elected for another two.
5. Answers will vary; students might suggest that Thomas Jefferson's Anti-Federalists evolved into today's Democratic Party, which has maintained its support of the “common man.” Alexander Hamilton would be sympathetic to many goals of today's Republicans, particularly with regard to economic matters.
6. Possible answer: No; The Republicans' recent capture of both the White House and Congress is not significant in terms of the overall trend of divided government. The outcome of the next several elections will be more telling.

4 The Minor Parties

Objectives You may wish to call students' attention to the objectives in the Section Preview. The objectives are reflected in the main headings of the section.

Bellringer Ask students to explain why minor league teams are important to baseball. Explain that in this section, they will learn about minor political parties and why they are important to the American political system.

Vocabulary Builder Point out the four kinds of minor political parties listed in the Political Dictionary. Have students, using the descriptive words as clues, try to explain the origin of or give an example of a typical party in each of the four categories.

Lesson Plan

Teaching the Main Ideas L3

H-SS 12.6.1

1. Focus Tell students that many minor parties have played a vital role in American politics. Ask students to discuss what they know about why minor parties are important to the political system.

2. Instruct Ask students to explain why the Communist Party is considered an ideological party. Have students describe the other three kinds of minor parties and offer examples of parties in each category. Then lead a discussion of how minor parties influence government.

3. Close/Reteach Remind students that minor parties arise for different reasons. Have them choose one of the minor parties named in the section and create a billboard advertisement touting the party's candidate for President.

Section Preview

OBJECTIVES

1. **Identify** the types of minor parties that have been active in American politics.
2. **Understand** why minor parties are important despite the fact that none has ever won the presidency.

WHY IT MATTERS

Many minor parties have played important roles in American politics. They have provided alternatives to the positions of the major parties, and sometimes have affected particular elections and shaped public policies.

POLITICAL DICTIONARY

- ★ **ideological parties**
- ★ **single-issue parties**
- ★ **economic protest parties**
- ★ **splinter parties**

Libertarian, Reform, Socialist, Prohibition, Natural Law, Communist, American Independent, Green, Constitution—these are only some of the many parties that fielded presidential candidates in 2004. You know that none of these parties or their candidates had any real chance of winning the presidency. But this is not to say that minor parties are unimportant. The bright light created by the two major parties too often blinds us to the vital role several minor parties have played in American politics.

Minor Parties in the United States

Their number and variety make minor parties difficult to describe and classify. Some have limited their efforts to a particular locale, others to

a single State, and some to one region of the country. Still others have tried to woo the entire nation. Most have been short-lived, but a few have existed for decades. And, while most have lived mothlike around the flame of a single idea, some have had a broader, more practical base.

Still, four distinct types of minor parties can be identified:

1. The **ideological parties** are those based on a particular set of beliefs—a comprehensive view of social, economic, and political matters. Most of these minor parties have been built on some shade of Marxist thought; examples include the Socialist, Socialist Labor, Socialist Worker, and Communist parties.

A few ideological parties have had a quite different approach, however—especially the Libertarian Party of today, which emphasizes individualism and calls for doing away with most of government's present functions and programs. The ideological parties have seldom been able to win many votes. As a rule, however, they have been long-lived.

2. The **single-issue parties** focus on only one public-policy matter. Their names have usually indicated their primary concern. For example, the Free Soil Party opposed the spread of slavery in the 1840s and 1850s; the American Party, also called the "Know Nothings," opposed Irish-Catholic immigration in the 1850s; and the Right to Life Party opposes abortion today.

Most of the single-issue parties have faded into history. They died away as events have



▲ Earl Dodge has been the nominee of the Prohibition Party in every presidential election since 1984.



Block Scheduling Strategies

Consider these suggestions to manage extended class time:

■ Review the four kinds of minor parties. Divide the class into four groups, assigning each one of the types of minor parties. Have them create party platforms for a new party that show the party's name, belief, issue, or economic concern; or for the splinter party, the issues over which the party has split. (Refer students to platforms on the Internet.) www.phschool.com

■ Remind students that, given the entrenched two-party system, it is unlikely that a minor party would ever win a major election. Have students debate the necessity of minor parties given that fact. Begin by eliciting any names of minor parties that students can recall. Ask them which issues these parties have publicized. Then ask them to consider whether these issues would be as well-known to the public were there only the two major parties.

Four Types of Minor Parties

Ideological



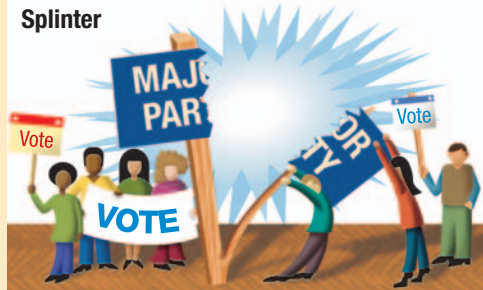
Single Issue



Economic Protest



Splinter



Interpreting Charts (a) According to the chart, which type of minor party is the most closely related to a major party? (b) Which type is likely to be the most cohesive and united?

passed them by, as their themes have failed to attract voters, or as one or both of the major parties have taken their key issues as their own.

3. The **economic protest parties** have been rooted in periods of economic discontent. Unlike the socialist parties, these groups have not had any clear-cut ideological base. Rather, they have proclaimed their disgust with the major parties and demanded better times, and have focused their anger on such real or imagined enemies as the monetary system, “Wall Street bankers,” the railroads, or foreign imports.

Most often, they have been sectional parties, drawing their strength from the agricultural South and West. The Greenback Party, for example, tried to take advantage of agrarian discontent from 1876 through 1884. It appealed to struggling farmers by calling for the free coinage of silver, federal regulation of the railroads, an income tax, and labor legislation. A descendant of the Greenbacks, the Populist Party of the 1890s also demanded public ownership of railroads, telephone and telegraph

companies, lower tariffs, and the adoption of the initiative and referendum.

Each of these economic protest parties has disappeared as the nation has climbed out of the difficult economic period in which that party arose.

4. **Splinter parties** are those that have split away from one of the major parties. Most of the more important minor parties in our politics have been splinter parties. Among the leading groups that have split away from the Republicans are Theodore Roosevelt’s “Bull Moose” Progressive Party of 1912, and Robert La Follette’s Progressive Party of 1924. From the Democrats have come Henry Wallace’s Progressive Party and the States’ Rights (Dixiecrat) Party, both of 1948, and George Wallace’s American Independent Party of 1968.


Most splinter parties have formed around a strong personality—most often someone who has failed to win his major party’s presidential nomination. These parties have faded or collapsed when that leader has stepped aside. Thus, the Bull Moose Progressive Party passed away


Reading Strategy


Finding Evidence

Tell students that minor political parties are important to the American political system. Have them find evidence that supports this statement, and also have them find evidence that contradicts this statement.


Point-of-Use Resources

 **Guided Reading and Review** Unit 2 booklet, p. 8 provides students with practice identifying the main ideas and key terms of this section.

 **Lesson Planner** For complete lesson planning suggestions, see the Lesson Planner booklet, section 4.

 **Political Cartoons** See p. 21 of the Political Cartoons booklet for a cartoon relevant to this section.

 **ABC News Civics and Government Videotape Library** *Third-Party Candidates* (time: about 3 minutes)

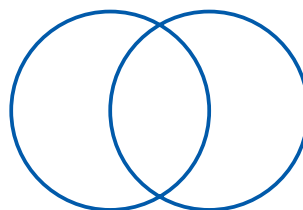
 **Section Support Transparencies** Transparency 24, *Visual Learning*; Transparency 123, *Political Cartoon*

Organizing Information

To make sure students understand the main points of this section, you may wish to use the Venn diagram to the right.

Tell students that a Venn diagram is useful for comparing two groups by showing characteristics that they have alone and those they share. Have students use a Venn diagram to compare major and minor parties. Characteristics that both parties share should appear in the space where the circles overlap.

Teaching Tip A template for this graphic organizer can be found in the Section Support Transparencies, Transparency 6.



Answer to . . .

Interpreting Charts (a) Splinter parties. (b) Single-issue parties or ideological parties.

Universal Access

L4

Have students construct an annotated time line that illustrates the impact minor parties have had on American politics throughout history. Encourage them to include examples of the different types of minor parties (ideological, single-issue, economic protest, splinter) and also discuss some of the most important issues these parties have brought to the forefront. Ask for volunteers to present their time lines to the class.

GT H-SS 12.7.5

Background Note

Political Talk

In the 2004 election, a total of 5,795 seats were open in State legislatures across the nation, according to Ballot Access News. Of that total, minor party candidates vied for 765 seats. Of those 765 minor party candidates, eight won. In Vermont, six Progressive party candidates were elected. One Green party candidate won in Maine. The final minor party victor sought a seat in the Montana legislature. In this race, the results were close enough to warrant a recount. That recount showed a tie between Rick Jore, the Constitution party candidate, and Jeanne Windham, the Democratic candidate. In the case of a tie in Montana electoral law, the governor chooses the winner. Governor Judy Martz chose Rick Jore, but Windham filed suit in a district court over seven ballots that contained marks for both Jore and the Republican candidate, Jack Cross. The courts ruled the votes were invalid and Windham was the victor.

when Theodore Roosevelt returned to the Republican fold after the election of 1912. Similarly, the American Independent Party lost nearly all of its brief strength when Governor George Wallace rejoined the Democratic Party after his strong showing in the 1968 election.

The Green Party, founded in 1996, points up the difficulties of classifying minor parties in American politics. The Greens began as a classic single-issue party but, as the party has evolved, it simply will not fit into any of the categories set out here. The Green Party came to prominence in 2000, with Ralph Nader as its presidential nominee. His campaign was built around a smorgasbord of issues—environmental protection, of course, but also universal health care, gay and lesbian rights, restraints on corporate power, campaign finance reform, opposition to global free trade, and much more.

The Greens refused to renominate Ralph Nader in 2004. They chose, instead, David Cobb—who built his presidential campaign around most of the positions the Greens had supported in 2000.

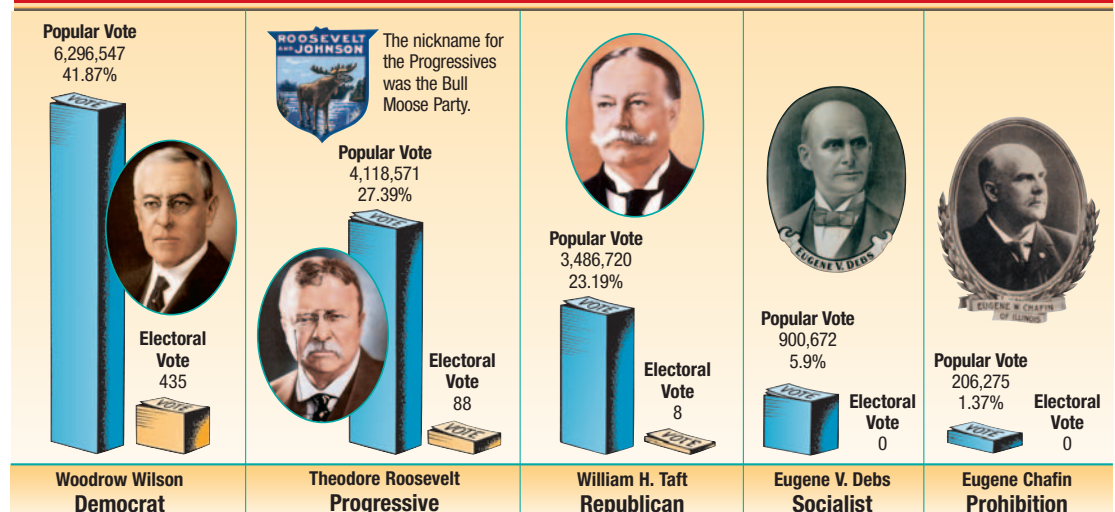
Why Minor Parties Are Important

Even though most Americans do not support them, minor parties have still had an impact on American politics and on the major parties. For example, it was a minor party, the Anti-Masons, that first used a national convention to nominate a presidential candidate in 1831. The Whigs and then the Democrats followed suit in 1832. Ever since, national conventions have been used by both the Democrats and the Republicans to pick their presidential tickets.

Minor parties can have an impact in another way. A strong third-party candidacy can play a decisive role—often a “spoiler role”—in an election. Even if a minor party does not win any electoral votes, it can pull votes from one of the major parties, as the Green Party did in 2000. This spoiler effect can be felt in national, State, or local contests, especially where the two major parties compete on roughly equal terms.

The 1912 election dramatically illustrated this point. A split in the Republican Party and Roosevelt’s resulting third-party candidacy produced the results shown below. Almost certainly, had Roosevelt not quit the Republican

The 1912 Presidential Election



Interpreting Graphs This bar graph shows the votes received by the major and the minor parties in 1912. (a) Which party “came in second”? (b) Even though the Bull Moose Progressives were a minor party, how did they help determine which major party won the election? H-SS 12.6.1

Point-of-Use Resources



Simulations and Data Graphing
CD-ROM offers data graphing

tools that give students practice with creating and interpreting graphs.

Answer to ...

Interpreting Graphs (a) The Bull Moose Progressives. **(b)** By splitting the Republican Party, the Bull Moose Party drew voters away from Taft, giving the victory to Wilson—who may not have won otherwise.

Spotlight on Technology



Magruder's American Government
Video Collection

The Magruder's Video Collection explores key issues and debates in American government. Each segment examines an issue central to chapter content through use of historical and contemporary footage. Commentary from civic leaders in academics, government, and the media follow each segment. Critical thinking questions focus students' attention on key issues, and may be used to stimulate discussion.

Use the Chapter 5 video segment to explore the historical and contemporary role of minor-party presidential candidates. (time: about 5 minutes) This segment will examine how minor-party candidates siphon votes from the two major parties, often causing the winner to gain less than the popular majority.

Party, Taft would have enjoyed a better showing, and Wilson would not have become President.

Historically, however, the minor parties have been most important in their roles of critic and innovator. Unlike the major parties, the minor parties have been ready, willing, and able to take quite clear-cut stands on controversial issues. Minor-party stands have often drawn attention to some issue that the major parties have preferred to ignore or straddle.

Over the years, many of the more important issues of American politics were first brought to the public's attention by a minor party. Examples include the progressive income tax, woman suffrage, railroad and bank-regulation, and old-age pensions.

Oddly enough, this very important innovator role of the minor parties has also been a major source of their frustration. When their proposals have gained any real degree of popular support, one and sometimes both of the major parties have taken over those ideas and then presented the policies as their own. The late Norman Thomas, who was the Socialist Party's candidate for President six times, complained that "the major parties are stealing from my platform."

Seventeen minor party presidential candidates, some of them nominated by more than

Significant Minor Parties in Presidential Elections, 1880–2004*

Year	Party	Candidate	% Popular Vote	Electoral Vote
1880	Greenback	James B. Weaver	3.36	—
1888	Prohibition	Clinton B. Fisk	2.19	—
1892	Populist	James B. Weaver	8.54	22
	Prohibition	John Bidwell	2.19	—
1904	Socialist	Eugene V. Debs	2.98	—
1908	Socialist	Eugene V. Debs	2.82	—
1912	Progressive (Bull Moose)	Theodore Roosevelt	27.39	88
	Socialist	Eugene V. Debs	5.99	—
1916	Socialist	Allan L. Benson	3.17	—
1920	Socialist	Eugene V. Debs	3.45	—
1924	Progressive	Robert M. La Follette	16.61	13
1932	Socialist	Norman M. Thomas	2.22	—
1948	States' Rights (Dixiecrat)	Strom Thurmond	2.41	39
	Progressive	Henry A. Wallace	2.37	—
1968	American Independent	George C. Wallace	13.53	46
1996	Reform	Ross Perot	8.40	—
2000	Green	Ralph Nader	2.74	—

*Includes all minor parties that polled at least 2% of the popular vote
Source: *Historical Statistics of the United States, Colonial Times to 1970*; Federal Election Commission

Interpreting Tables Which of these minor-party presidential candidates played a spoiler role? **H-SS 12.6.1**

one party, appeared on the ballots of at least one State in 2004. The most visible minor-party presidential campaigns in 2004 were those of the Libertarian, Constitution, and Socialist parties. More than a thousand candidates from a wide variety of minor parties also sought seats in Congress or ran for various State and local offices around the country.

Section 4 Assessment

Key Terms and Main Ideas

- Why do **single-issue parties** tend to be short-lived?
- (a) What are **economic protest parties**? (b) Why are they formed in times of economic distress?
- Most of the more important minor parties in our history have been of which type? Explain the effect of one such party.
- Why is the innovator role a source of frustration to minor parties?

Critical Thinking

- Expressing Problems Clearly** Suppose you are considering voting for a presidential candidate from a minor party. Explain the benefits and drawbacks of casting your vote that way.



Standards Monitoring Online

For: Self-Quiz and vocabulary practice
Web Code: mqa-2054

- Predicting Consequences** Minor parties usually are willing to take definite stands on controversial issues. How might voters react to this tendency?



For: An activity on minor parties
Web Code: mqd-2054



Standards Monitoring Online

For additional assessment, have students access **Standards Monitoring Online** at
Web Code: mqa-2054



Typing in the Web Code when prompted will bring students directly to detailed instructions for this activity.

Point-of-Use Resources



Guide to the Essentials Chapter 5, Section 4, p. 35 provides support for students who need additional review of section content. Spanish support is available in the Spanish edition of the Guide on p. 28.



Quiz Unit 2 booklet, p. 9 includes matching and multiple-choice questions to check students' understanding of Section 4 content.



Presentation Pro CD-ROM Quizzes and multiple-choice questions check students' understanding of Section 4 content.

Answers to . . .

Section 4 Assessment

- The issue around which such parties form might fail to attract voters or be addressed by one of the major parties.
- (a) Economic protest parties form to express economic discontent with the major parties. (b) They tend to form in times of economic distress because if the country were thriving economically, they would have nothing to protest.
- Most have been splinter parties. Effects will vary; some have been to divide support for the major parties.
- Because usually when a minor party brings an issue to the forefront, it is taken over by the major parties and claimed for their own.
- Answers will vary, but should draw on examples from the text.
- Some students might suggest that voters are glad that someone is finally addressing important issues; others might say that voters tend to shy away from controversial issues and would be more likely to support the major parties.

Answer to . . .

Interpreting Tables All of these candidates played a spoiler role to some degree. The point can be seen most clearly in those contests where the minor-party candidate won a significant portion of the popular vote, such as James Weaver in 1892, Theodore Roosevelt in 1912, Robert La Follette in 1924, and George Wallace in 1968.

5 Party Organization

Section Preview

OBJECTIVES

1. **Understand** why the major parties have a decentralized structure.
2. **Describe** the national party machinery and how parties are organized at the State and local levels.
3. **Identify** the three components of the parties.
4. **Examine** the future of the major parties.

WHY IT MATTERS

The major parties of the United States have a decentralized structure, and the different parts and elements work together primarily during national elections. The parties themselves have been in decline, or losing influence, since the 1960s.

POLITICAL DICTIONARY

- ★ ward
- ★ precinct
- ★ split-ticket voting

How strong, how active, and how well organized are the Republican and Democratic parties in your community? Contact the county chairperson or another official in one or both of the major parties. They are usually not very difficult to find. For starters, try the telephone directory.

The Decentralized Nature of the Parties

The two major parties are often described as though they were highly organized, close-knit, well-disciplined groups. However, neither party is anything of the kind. Rather, both are highly decentralized, fragmented, disjointed, and often beset by factions and internal squabbling.

Neither party has a chain of command running from the national through the State to the local level. Each of the State party organizations is only loosely tied to the party's national structure. By the same token, local party organizations are often quite independent of their parent State organizations. These various party units usually cooperate with one another, of course—but that is not always the case.

⁷The party does have a temporary leader for a brief time every fourth year: its presidential candidate, from nomination to election day. A defeated presidential candidate is often called the party's "titular leader"—a leader in title, by custom, but not in fact. What's more, if he lost by a wide margin, the defeated candidate's leadership may be largely discredited.

The Role of the Presidency

The President's party is usually more solidly united and more cohesively organized than the opposing party. The President is automatically the party leader. He asserts that leadership with such tools as his access to the media, his popularity, and his power to make appointments to federal office and to dispense other favors.

The other party has no one in an even faintly comparable position. Indeed, in the American party system, there is seldom any one person in the opposition party who can truly be called its leader. Rather, a number of personalities, frequently in competition with one another, form a loosely identifiable leadership group in the party out of power.⁷



▲ The parties have many local headquarters, such as this one in Bennington, Vermont.



Block Scheduling Strategies

Consider these suggestions to manage extended class time:

■ As students read, have them take notes about what the text calls "the decentralized nature" of American political parties. Then have them consider the following question: If the two parties are in fact so decentralized, why don't they splinter into smaller parties more frequently? Have students poll family members, other adults, and other students on this question, and then present their polls as charts or graphs.

■ Have students reread the section of the text "The Future of the Major Parties." Ask small groups to write newspaper articles, set in 2050, about what has happened to the major parties. Articles should include historical precedents. Have groups read their articles to the class.

5

Party Organization

Objectives You may wish to call students' attention to the objectives in the Section Preview. The objectives are reflected in the main headings of the section.

Bellringer Have students suppose they are attending a huge family reunion with all their relatives. Would this group support one another in a crisis? Might they disagree on some family matters? Does any one person control everyone in the group? Explain that in this section, students will discover that political parties have characteristics similar to huge families.

Vocabulary Builder Point out the terms in the Political Dictionary. Ask students to predict which one names a factor that contributes to the weakening of the two major parties. (*split-ticket voting*) Have them explain their reasoning.

Lesson Plan

Teaching the Main Ideas L3

H-SS 12.3.1

1. Focus Tell students that the major American political parties have a decentralized structure. Ask students to discuss how decentralization might affect relationships among national, State, and local party units.

2. Instruct Ask students why the major parties are decentralized. Discuss the two main reasons. Then have students construct an organization chart on the board, showing the main elements of the parties' national, State, and local machinery. Then discuss the future of the two major parties.

3. Close/Reteach Remind students that the decentralized structure of each major party makes for a fragmented, disjointed organization. Ask each student to write five questions about party organization, along with the answers. Then have students quiz one another.

Reading Strategy

Organizing Information/Outline


Have students outline the structure of party organization as they read. Encourage them to use headings and subheads as outline entries.


Background Note


Shifting Alliances


Although the nominating process involves intraparty contests, even the most bitter primary battles often end in renewed party unity. During the 1980 presidential primaries, for example, George Bush and Ronald Reagan fought each other for the Republican nomination. Bush criticized Reagan harshly, calling his proposals for tax cuts and increased defense spending “voodoo economics.” But when Reagan won the nomination, he selected Bush as his running mate. Bush abandoned his criticisms of his former opponent, and the two went on to capture the White House together.

Point-of-Use Resources

 **Guided Reading and Review** Unit 2 booklet, p. 10 provides students with practice identifying the main ideas and key terms of this section.

 **Lesson Planner** For complete lesson planning suggestions, see the Lesson Planner booklet, section 5.

 **Political Cartoons** See p. 22 of the Political Cartoons booklet for a cartoon relevant to this section.

 **Section Support Transparencies** Transparency 25, *Visual Learning*; Transparency 124, *Political Cartoon*

Government Online

Taking the Public Pulse “When I die, I want to come back with real power—I want to come back as a member of a focus group,” a powerful campaign strategist once said. Joking aside, the strategist was attesting to the growing influence of focus groups on who gets elected in this country, and who doesn’t.

Focus groups were first used by businesses to test consumer products. Used as part of a political campaign, these groups can vary in number from 10 to as many as 30 or more people, typically members of the general public. They usually meet in two-to-three-hour sessions. Guided by trained monitors, their discussions help candidates identify issues that are important to voters. Focus groups are also used to test reactions to political commercials, speeches, and debates. They can be employed to probe opponents for weaknesses, as well.

Focus groups have had an important place in presidential campaigns since at least 1988. That year, they helped the Republican candidate George H. W. Bush defeat his Democratic opponent, Governor Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts, by identifying several weaknesses in the Dukakis campaign.



Use Web Code mqd-2058 to find out more about the use of focus groups in political campaigns and for help in answering the following question: *What kinds of issues might a campaign strategist address in order to find out about the opposition’s weaknesses?*

The Impact of Federalism

Federalism is one major reason for the decentralized nature of the two major political parties. Remember, the basic goal of the major parties is to gain control of government by winning elective offices.

Today there are more than half a million elective offices in the United States. In the American federal system, those offices are widely distributed at the national, the State, and the local levels. In short, because the governmental system is highly decentralized, so too are the major parties that serve it.

The Role of the Nominating Process

The nominating process is also a major cause of party decentralization. Recall, from page 117, that the nominating process has a central role in the life of political parties. You will consider the selection of candidates at some length in Chapter 7, but, for now, look at two related aspects of that process.

First, candidate selection is an intraparty process. That is, nominations are made *within*

the party. Second, the nominating process can be, and often is, a divisive one. Where there is a fight over a nomination, that contest pits members of the same party against one another: Republicans fight Republicans; Democrats battle Democrats. In short, the prime function of the major parties—the making of nominations—is also a prime cause of their highly fragmented character.

National Party Machinery

The structure of both major parties at the national level has four basic elements. These elements are the national convention, the national committee, the national chairperson, and the congressional campaign committees.

The National Convention

The national convention, often described as the party’s national voice, meets in the summer of every presidential election year to pick the party’s presidential and vice-presidential candidates. It also performs some other functions, including the adoption of the party’s rules and the writing of its platform.

Beyond that, the convention has little authority. It has no control over the selection of the party’s candidates for other offices nor over the policy stands those nominees take. You will take a longer look at both parties’ national nominating conventions in Chapter 13.

The National Committee

Between conventions, the party’s affairs are handled, at least in theory, by the national committee and by the national chairperson. For years, each party’s national committee was composed of a committeeman and a committeewoman from each State and several of the territories. They were chosen by the State’s party organization. However, in recent years, both parties have expanded the committee’s membership.

Today, the Republican National Committee (RNC) also seats the party chairperson from each State in which the GOP has recently had a winning record and members from the District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. Representatives of such GOP-related groups as the National Federation of Republican Women also serve on the RNC.

Answer to . . .

Government Online The strategist might ask questions that gauge public opinion about the opponent’s commercials, physical appearance, personality, character, past record, or stands on specific issues.



▲ **Step Right Up** Volunteers of all ages help their parties in national, State, and local races.



▲ **Madam Chairperson** Mary Louise Smith was national chairperson of the Republican Party in the 1970s.

The Democratic National Committee (DNC) is an even larger body. In addition to the committeeman and -woman from each State, it now includes the party's chairperson and vice-chairperson from every State and the several territories. It also includes additional members from the party organizations of the larger States, and up to 75 at-large members chosen by the DNC itself. Several members of Congress, as well as governors, mayors, and Young Democrats, also have seats.

On paper, the national committee appears to be a powerful organization loaded with many of the party's leading figures. In fact, it does not have a great deal of clout. Most of its work centers on staging the party's national convention every four years.

The National Chairperson

In each party, the national chairperson is the leader of the national committee. In form, he or she is chosen to a four-year term by the national committee, at a meeting held right after the national convention. In fact, the choice is made by the just-nominated presidential candidate and is then ratified by the national committee.

Only two women have ever held that top party post. Jean Westwood of Utah chaired the DNC from her party's 1972 convention until early 1973; and Mary Louise Smith of Iowa headed the RNC from 1974 until early 1977. Each lost her post soon after her party lost a presidential election. Ron Brown, the Democrats' National Chairman from 1989 to 1993, is the only African American ever to have held the office of national chairperson in either major party.

The national chairperson directs the work of the party's headquarters and its small staff in Washington. In presidential election years, the committee's attention is focused on the national convention and then the campaign. In between presidential elections, the chairperson and the committee work to strengthen the party and its fortunes. They do so by promoting party unity, raising money, recruiting new voters, and otherwise preparing for the next presidential season.

The Congressional Campaign Committees

Each party also has a campaign committee in each house of Congress.⁸ These committees work to reelect incumbents and to make sure that seats given up by retiring party members remain in the party. The committees also take a hand in selected campaigns to unseat incumbents in the other party, at least in those House or Senate races where the chances for success seem to justify such efforts.

In both parties and in both houses, the members of these campaign committees are chosen by their colleagues. They serve for two years—that is, for a term of Congress.

State and Local Party Machinery

National party organization is largely the product of custom and of the rules adopted by the national conventions. At the State and

⁸They are the National Republican Campaign Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in the House; in the Senate, they are the National Republican Senatorial Committee and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee.

Time 90 minutes.

Purpose Hold a mock national convention.

Grouping Groups of six students.

Activity Assign half the groups to act as members of the Republican National Convention and the other half as members of the Democratic National Convention. Each six-person group should nominate one of its members as a presidential candidate and one as a vice-presidential candidate. In addition, groups should prepare a list of party rules and should outline their party's platform.

Roles Presidential candidate, vice-presidential candidate, discussion leader, recorder, spokesperson.

Close Spokespersons for each group should present their party's rules and platform and introduce the candidates. Presidential and vice-presidential candidates should give brief speeches accepting the party's nomination and discussing future campaign plans.

H-SS 12.3.1

Point-of-Use Resources

Government Assessment Rubrics

Cooperative Learning Project: Process, p. 20

Block Scheduling with Lesson Strategies Additional activities for Chapter 5 appear on p. 21.



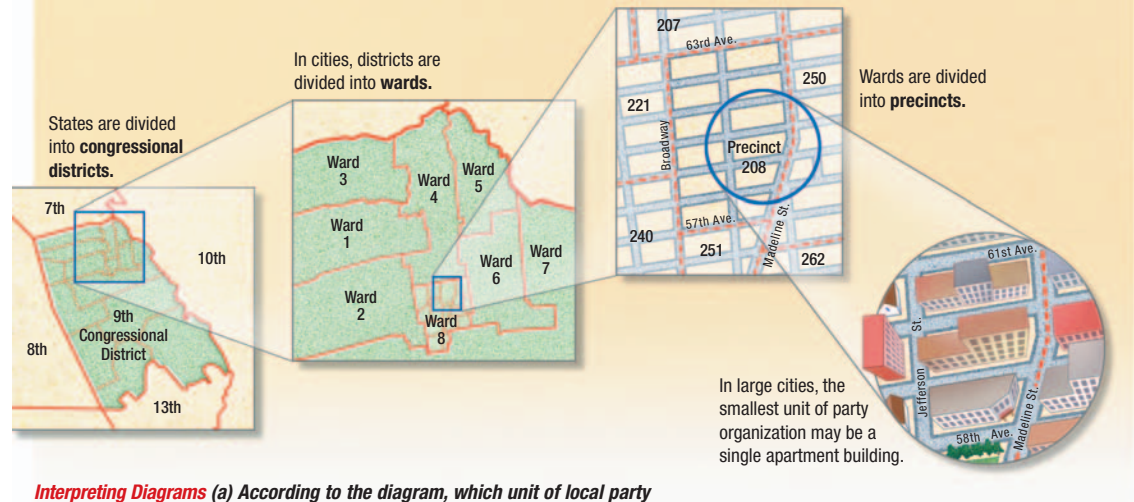
Provides a complete set of powerful teaching tools to make lesson planning and administering tests quicker and easier.

Make It Relevant

Students Make a Difference

Joe Franco was named one of *Teen People Magazine's* "20 teens who will change the world." This was even before he ran for the Denver, Colorado, Regional Transportation District (RTC) Board of Directors, at the age of 20. When he was just 18, and still in high school, Joe managed successful campaigns for Lakewood Mayor Steve Burkholder and state representative Kelley Daniel. He is a firm believer in teen involvement in politics and other community projects: "There's a lot of people with needs that aren't met by governments or other organizations. By the youth going out and volunteering their time, they can make changes in their communities." His main goal in running for the RTC board was "reducing traffic congestion for Colorado families so we can spend more time with our loved ones."

Local Party Organization



Interpreting Diagrams (a) According to the diagram, which unit of local party organization is the largest in a State? (b) Which is the smallest?

local levels, however, party structure is largely set by State law.

The State Organization

At the State level, party machinery is built around a State central committee, headed by a State chairperson.

The chairperson may be an important political figure in his or her own right. More often than not, however, the chairperson fronts for the governor, a U.S. senator, or some other powerful leader or group in the politics of the State.

Together, the chairperson and the central committee work to further the party's interests in the State. Most of the time, they attempt to do this by building an effective organization and party unity, finding candidates and campaign funds, and so on. Remember, however, both major parties are highly decentralized, fragmented, and sometimes torn by struggles for power. This can complicate the chairperson's and the committee's job.

Local Organization

Local party structures vary so widely that they nearly defy even a brief description. Generally, they follow the electoral map of the State, with a party unit for each district in which elective

offices are to be filled: congressional and legislative districts, counties, cities and towns, wards, and precincts. A **ward** is a unit into which cities are often divided for the election of city council members. A **precinct** is the smallest unit of election administration; the voters in each precinct report to one polling place.

In most larger cities, a party's organization is further broken down by residential blocks and sometimes even by apartment buildings. In some places, local party organizations are active year-round, but most often they are inactive except for those few hectic months before an election.

The Three Components of the Party

You have just looked at the makeup of the Republican and Democratic parties from an organizational standpoint. The two major parties can also be examined from a social standpoint—that is, in terms of the various roles played by their members. From this perspective, the two major parties are composed of three basic and closely interrelated components.

1. *The party organization.* These are the party's leaders, its activists, and its hangers-on—"all those who give their time, money, and

Answers to . . .

Interpreting Diagrams

(a) Congressional districts.

(b) Precincts, except in large cities, where precincts may be further subdivided into units as small as an apartment building.

skills to the party, whether as leaders or followers.”⁹

2. *The party in the electorate.* This component includes the party’s loyalists who regularly vote the straight party ticket, and those other voters who call themselves party members and who usually vote for its candidates.

3. *The party in government.* These are the party’s officeholders, those who hold elective and appointive offices in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches at the federal, State, and local levels of government.

You have taken a quick look at the party as an organization here. You will consider the party in the electorate in the next chapter, and the party in government in several later chapters.

The Future of the Major Parties

Political parties have never been very popular in this country. Rather, over time, most Americans have had very mixed feelings about them. Most of us have accepted parties as necessary institutions, but, at the same time, we have felt that they should be closely watched and controlled. To many, political parties have seemed little better than necessary evils.

Political parties have been in a period of decline since at least the late 1960s. Their decline has led some analysts to conclude that the parties not only are in serious trouble, but that the party system itself may be on the point of collapse.

The present, weakened state of the parties can be traced to several factors. They include:

1. A sharp drop in the number of voters willing to identify themselves as Republicans or Democrats, and a growing number who regard themselves as independents.

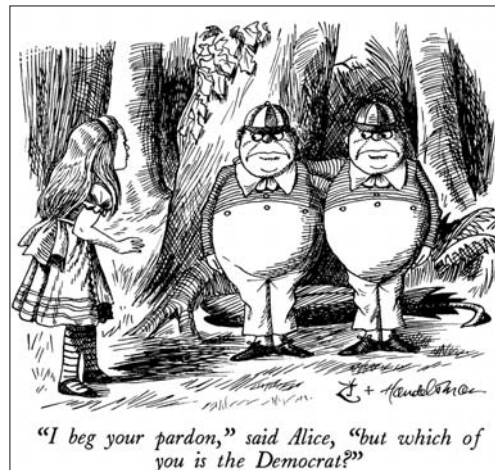
2. A big increase in **split-ticket voting**—voting for candidates of different parties for different offices at the same election.



▲ **Direct Access** Voters can judge the candidates for themselves by watching televised events such as this Democratic debate during the 2004 presidential primary campaign. From left to right: Florida Senator Bob Graham, Missouri Representative Dick Gephardt, former Illinois Senator Carol Mosley Braun, Massachusetts Senator John Kerry, Ohio Representative Dennis Kucinich, North Carolina Senator John Edwards, Connecticut Senator Joe Lieberman, and former Vermont Governor Howard Dean. **H-SS 12.8.2**

3. Various structural changes and reforms that have made the parties more “open,” but have also led to greater internal conflict and disorganization. These changes range from the introduction of the direct primary in the early 1900s to the more recent and far-reaching changes in campaign finance laws.

4. Changes in the technology of campaigning for office—especially the heavy use of television and of the Internet, professional campaign managers, and direct-mail advertising. These changes



Interpreting Political Cartoons The two major political parties have been criticized as failing to distinguish themselves from one another. **Do you agree with the point of view presented in the cartoon? Explain your answer using specific current issues.**

⁹Frank J. Sorauf and Paul Beck, *Party Politics in America*, 6th ed.

Universal Access

L2

Ask students to prepare a five-question quiz for another classmate based on section content. Students can create a multiple choice, fill in the blank, or matching quiz. Each quiz should ask at least one question on each of the following topics: Decentralization of parties, State and local party machinery, national party machinery, the three components of parties, and the future of the major parties. Encourage students to use headings, subheadings, and bolded words as clues in writing their questions. After taking a quiz, students should return it to its owner for grading. **LPR**



For career-related links and activities, visit the *Magruder's American Government* companion Web site in the Social Studies area at the Prentice Hall School Web site.

Make It Relevant

Careers in Government—Accountant

The Federal Election Campaign Act requires political parties to report a great deal of financial information, especially campaign contributions and expenses, to the Federal Election Commission (FEC). This data is audited by accountants. In fact, accountants are at work in all levels of government, in most agencies and departments, keeping track of the multi-trillion dollar enterprise

that is American government.

Skills Activity Distribute copies of blank tax returns to small groups of students. Give them sets of data, and have groups work together to fill out the form. Then have individual students write paragraphs explaining why they would or would not be interested in a career as a government accountant.

Answer to . . .

Interpreting Political Cartoons Students should recognize that the cartoonist also believes that the two major parties are very similar to one another. Specific current issues might include such matters as the economy or campaign finance.

Point-of-Use Resources



Guide to the Essentials Chapter 5, Section 5, p. 36 provides support for students who need additional review of section content. Spanish support is available in the Spanish edition of the Guide on p. 29.



Quiz Unit 2 booklet, p. 11 includes matching and multiple-choice questions to check students' understanding of Section 5 content.



Presentation Pro CD-ROM Quizzes and multiple-choice questions check students' understanding of Section 5 content.

Answers to . . .

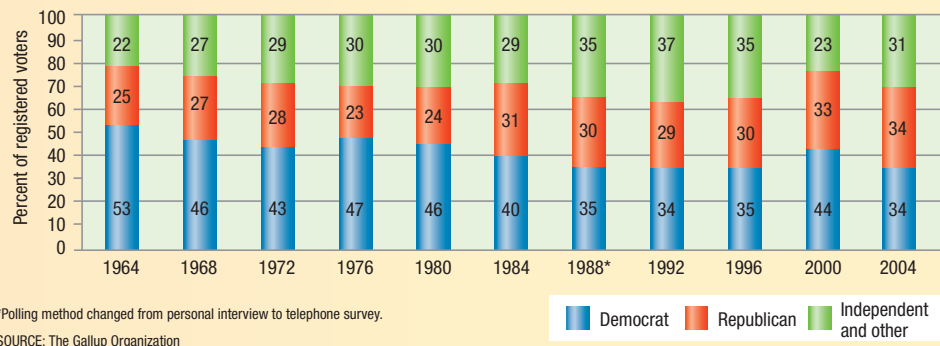
Section 5 Assessment

1. The power not in party doesn't have a strong central leader (the President), federalism results in a division of power in parties, and the nominating process encourages competition and divisiveness.
2. The national convention, the national committee, the national chairperson, and congressional campaign committees.
3. Wards and precincts are party units created for the purposes of elections.
4. (a) Split-ticket voting is voting for candidates of different parties at the same election. (b) It weakens parties because it encourages lack of allegiance to a particular party.
5. Possible answer: With broad support of the American people for federalism and local and State autonomy, it is no surprise that local party organizations vary widely.
6. Questions will vary, but should refer to reasons why voters are disillusioned with the two major parties or the two-party system.
7. Answers will vary, but should reflect themes mentioned in the text.

Answers to . . .

Interpreting Graphs (a) Independents. (b) Democrats.

Political Party Identification, 1964–2004



Interpreting Graphs This graph shows the percentage of voters who identify with the two major parties and the percentage of independents. (a) Which group shows the biggest gain in support between 1964 and 2004? (b) Which group lost the most support during that time? **H-SS 12.3.1**

in campaign technology have made candidates much less dependent on party organizations since, in many cases, they can now “speak” directly to the electorate.

5. The growth, in both numbers and impact, of single-issue organizations in our politics. These groups support (or more often, oppose) candidates on the basis of the group's own closely defined views in some specific area of public policy—for example, the environment, gun control, or abortion—rather than on a candidate's stands on the full range of public policy questions.

You will look at these and several other matters affecting the condition of the parties over the next four chapters. As you do so, remember these points: Political parties are indispensable to democratic government—and so, then, to American government. Our two major parties have existed far longer than has any other party anywhere in the world. And, as you have seen, they perform a number of quite necessary functions. In short, the reports of their passing may not only be premature, they might in fact be quite farfetched.

Section 5 Assessment

Key Terms and Main Ideas

1. What are the major causes of the decentralized nature of political parties?
2. What are the four main elements of major party organization at the national level?
3. Describe how **wards** and **precincts** are part of the local party organization.
4. (a) What is **split-ticket voting**? (b) How has its increase contributed to the weakened state of the two major parties?

Critical Thinking

5. **Drawing Conclusions** Based on what you know about parties, their goals, and the American people, why do you think local party organizations vary so widely?
6. **Formulating Questions** A growing number of voters consider themselves to be independents. Compose three



Standards Monitoring Online

For: Self-quiz with vocabulary practice
Web Code: mqa-2055

questions that a pollster might ask in an attempt to learn why this is the case.

7. **Predicting Consequences** Do you think the major parties will survive and emerge from their current period of decline? Why or why not?

Go Online
PHSchool.com

For: An activity on State-level political parties
Web Code: mqd-2055



Standards Monitoring Online

For additional assessment, have students access **Standards Monitoring Online** at
Web Code: mqa-2055

Go Online
PHSchool.com

Typing in the Web Code when prompted will bring students directly to detailed instructions for this activity.