

# Political Parties

## Summary

### **Enduring Understanding**

:

Students will understand the similarities and differences between the various political parties in the United States.

#### **Essential Questions:**

How did political parties develop?

What is the difference between the numerous political ideologies?

How do the viewpoints of the dominant political parties differ on the main issues affecting the United States?

## Time Frame

5 class periods of 45 minutes each

## Group Size

Small Groups

## Life Skills

Thinking & Reasoning, Communication, Social & Civic Responsibility

## Materials

### **U.S. News Classroom**

06-04-01

U.S. History book

Whiteboard or overhead

Media center

Internet

## Background for Teachers

### **U.S. News**

06-04-01,

U.S. History book

Definitions:

**a. Radical:** Seen as being on the far left of the political spectrum, radical wide-sweeping rapid change in the basic structure of the political, social and economic system. They may be willing to resort to extreme methods to get change, including some violence and revolution.

**b. Liberal:** liberals believe that the government should be actively involved in the promotion of social welfare of a nation's citizens. Liberals usually can stand gradual change within the existing political system. They reject violence as a way of changing the way things are, often called the status-quo.

**c. Moderates:** moderates may share viewpoints with both liberals and conservatives. They are seen as tolerant of other people's views, and they do not have views of their own. They advocate "go slow" or "wait and see" approaches to political change.

**d. Conservatives:**, people who hold conservative ideals favor keeping things as they are or maintaining the status-quo if it is what they desire. Conservatives are hesitant or cautious about adopting new policies, especially if they increase government activism in some way. They feel that less government is better. They agree with Jefferson's view that "the best governments govern least."

**e. Reactionary:** sitting on the far right of the ideological spectrum, reactionaries go back to the way things were- "good ol' days". Often reactionaries are willing to use extreme methods, such as repressive use of government force to achieve goals.

### Intended Learning Outcomes

- Students will understand the similarities and differences between the various political parties in the United States.
- Students will explain how political parties developed.
- Students will research the difference between the numerous political ideologies.
- Students will show how the viewpoints of the dominant political parties differ on the main issues affecting the United States.

### Instructional Procedures

**Students should be given the grading rubric ahead of time.**

1. Put a chart on the board with the headlines: **radical, liberal, moderate, conservative, reactionary**
2. Have students copy and write their own definition to these words.
3. Pass out handout with appropriate definitions on or have them look them up in a dictionary.
4. Make a list of the important political issues of the day. Based on true definitions, how would each political ideology treat those issues. (Put on the board).
5. Show how these names have evolved over the years.
6. Now have students put down which political parties belong in which category.
7. Using a prepared list assign one or two students to research a certain political party. Assign them one that will stretch his or her thinking away from their dominant belief system.
8. Have them do an oral presentation with the information they have researched.

### Assessment Plan

The students will give a Key-note political speech that addresses the key issues of the day and show stands that the party may take. Use a standard rubric to evaluate the presentation.

### Bibliography

**U.S. News**

6-04-01

### Authors

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