

# Political Parties and Interest Groups

## Why It Matters

As American citizens, each of us has certain rights and responsibilities—to participate in political parties, vote, and express our opinions on government policies. To ensure the continuation of democracy in this country, Americans must constantly involve themselves in their government.



Use the **American History Primary Source Document Library CD-ROM** to find primary sources about political parties and interest groups.

### ★ BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN ★

Participate in an ongoing activity that demonstrates your American citizenship. For example, volunteer to work in a nursing home on Saturdays, help out at a shelter for the homeless, or work with a peer counseling group. Give ongoing reports of your experiences to the class.



A large crowd of people is gathered outdoors for a political event. In the background, a silver train car is visible with a person standing on its platform. To the right, a red train engine is decorated with American flags. The scene is dominated by tall, inflatable structures in red and blue, resembling stylized figures or arches. A large, colorful banner with the word "CALIFORNIA" is partially visible on the left. The sky is clear and blue. The overall atmosphere is festive and patriotic.

**George W. Bush campaigns for the presidency in California.**



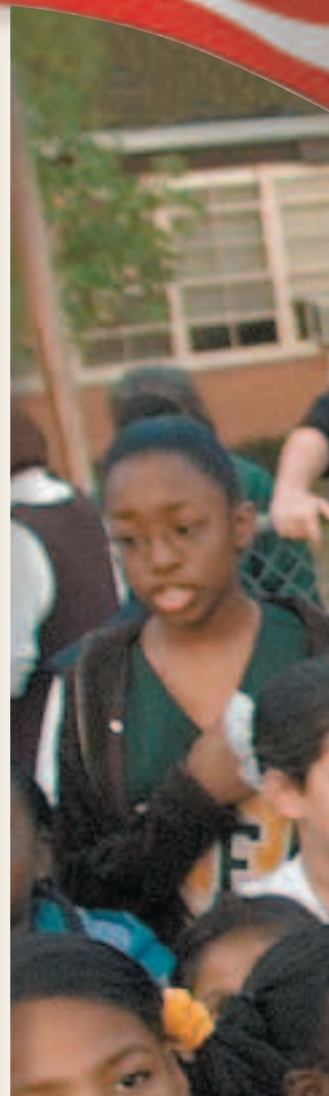
# Political Parties and Politics

## ★ CITIZENSHIP AND YOU ★

The Constitution does not mention political parties, but the first ones formed during the early days of our nation. Today the United States has several political parties. Find out how political parties in your state nominate candidates for office. Then interview neighbors who are active in a political party. Prepare a brochure using the information you find.



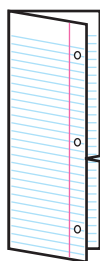
To learn more about American political parties, view the *Democracy in Action* video lesson 16: Political Parties.



### FOLDABLES™

#### Study Organizer

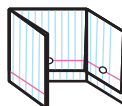
**Organizing Information Study Foldable** Make the following foldable to help you organize your thoughts and notes about political parties and politics.



**Step 1** Fold a sheet of paper in half from side to side.

Fold it so the left edge is about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch from the right edge.

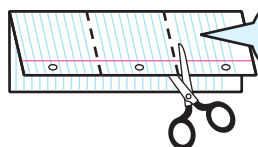
**Step 2** Turn the paper and fold it into thirds.



#### Reading and Writing

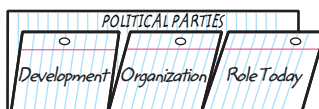
As you read the chapter, write what you learn about the development, organization, and role of political parties today under the appropriate tabs.

**Step 3** Unfold and cut the top layer only along both folds.



This will make three tabs.

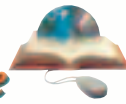
**Step 4** Label as shown.



Students rally for presidential candidate Al Gore in Arkansas in 2000. ▶

CLICK HERE

**CIVICS**  
*Online*



**Chapter Overview** Visit the *Civics Today* Web site at [civ.glencoe.com](http://civ.glencoe.com) and click on **Chapter Overviews—Chapter 9** to preview chapter information.

CONTENTS



# Development of American Political Parties

## GUIDE TO READING

### Main Idea

Shortly after our nation's birth, political leaders formed parties in an attempt to gain control of decision making in the government.

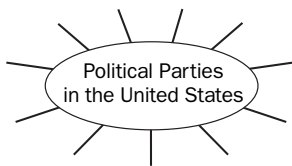
### Key Terms

political party, two-party system, third party, platform, plank

### Reading Strategy

#### Organizing Information

As you read, complete a web diagram similar to the one below by writing in political parties that have developed in the United States. Also include the time period in which each party originated.



### Read to Learn

- How have political parties formed throughout U.S. history?
- What are the differences between the two major parties?



## Americans in Action

It was the hope of some Founders of our nation, George Washington in particular, that parties—or factions, as he thought of them—would not develop. During Washington's presidency, his secretary of state, Thomas Jefferson, and his secretary of the treasury, Alexander Hamilton, had some major differences. Those two men became, in essence, the founders of today's political parties. In May of 1792, President Washington wrote to Jefferson: "How unfortunate, and how much is it to be regretted then, that whilst we are encompassed on all sides with avowed enemies and insidious friends, that internal dissensions should be harrowing and tearing our vitals."



Gilbert Stuart's painting of Washington

## The Two-Party System

Despite the wishes of our first president, political parties formed. A **political party** is an association of voters with broad, common interests who want to influence or control decision making in government by electing the party's candidates to public office. Party members usually share beliefs about politics and about the proper role of government. They pick candidates who agree with those beliefs. Then they try to persuade voters to support these candidates. In the United States anyone can join a political party. It is not necessary to pay dues, take a test, or even vote. It is only necessary to declare yourself a member of the party.

During most of American history there have been two major political parties. Other parties have sometimes run in elections, but they have seldom won. For these reasons, the United States is said to have a **two-party system**.

The Republican and Democratic Parties have been the two major parties for many years. Both parties have millions of supporters around the country. In fact, they have so much strength

that since 1860 one or the other has always held the presidency. Together they have held most seats in Congress as well.

## Roots of the Two-Party System

The U.S. Constitution says nothing about political parties. In fact, many delegates to the Constitutional Convention were against them. Despite Washington's warning, however, two rival political groups formed shortly after he became president. Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson led one group, and Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton led the other. They disagreed strongly about how the U.S. government should operate.

Hamilton, like Jefferson, favored protection for individual rights. Hamilton believed that individual rights were at risk if the government was too weak, so he favored a strong national government. He especially wanted the president to have more power. Jefferson wanted to limit the power of the national government. He argued for more power for state governments, which were closer to the citizens.

**The Democratic Party** At first Jefferson's group was called the Democratic-Republican Party. Then, in 1828, under the leadership of Andrew Jackson, the Democratic-Republican Party split and Jackson aligned with the **Democratic Party**. From 1800 to 1816 Jefferson's party grew stronger, while Hamilton's group, the **Federalist Party**, faded away. From 1816 to 1828 the Democratic-Republicans faced no serious challenges. In 1830 a new party, the **Whigs** (or National Republicans), rose to compete with the newly named Democrats. The Whigs and the Democrats remained the two major parties until the 1850s.

**The Republican Party** In 1854 a group of breakaway Democrats and Whigs, many of whom opposed slavery, formed the

**Republican Party.** It soon replaced the Whig Party, which had lost most of its support during the growing national dispute over slavery. In 1860 Abraham Lincoln won election as the first Republican president. Since then, Republicans and Democrats have been the major parties in our system.

**Reading Check Explaining** Why did Washington not want political parties to form?

## Third Parties

Throughout American history, third parties have arisen to influence politics. Because these parties almost always challenge the two major parties, they are called **third parties**. No third party has ever won a presidential election, and third parties rarely win other major elections, so these parties are also called minor parties. Third parties can, however, affect the outcome of elections, and they may influence government and social policy. Although third parties differ, they do share one thing: they believe that neither of the major parties is meeting certain needs.

Two third parties, the **Populists** and the **Progressives**, did have some impact on American politics. The members of the

Campaign bandanna for the Progressive, or Bull Moose, Party





**Other Party Systems** Members of India's multiparty legislature commemorate India's fiftieth anniversary of independence from Great Britain in 1997 (right), while Vietnam's legislators, representing the Communist Party, cast their votes for the country's most powerful post of party general secretary in 2001 (left).

**What type of party system does Vietnam have?**

Populist Party of the 1890s included a combination of farmers and laborers. The Populists called for the direct election of senators and an eight-hour working day. Although they never won the presidency, the two major parties adopted many of their ideas.

The Progressive, or Bull Moose, Party split from the Republicans in 1912, when Theodore Roosevelt, a former Republican president, ran for president as a Progressive. Roosevelt took so many votes away from the Republican candidate, William Howard Taft, that the Democratic nominee, Woodrow Wilson, won the election. In this way Roosevelt and his Progressive Party played a “spoiler” role in the election.

### Single-Issue Parties

Some third parties arise not to win elections but to promote a social, economic, or moral issue. For example, the Prohibitionist Party, formed in 1872, wanted to ban the sale of alcohol. The party's candidates did not expect to be elected. Instead, they used election campaigns to try to influence citizens to accept the party's ideas about drinking alcohol. They hoped to persuade legislators

to pass laws against the sale of alcoholic beverages. A single-issue party usually doesn't last long. It may fade away when the issue is no longer important or if a major party adopts the issue.

### Ideological Parties

Some third parties—called ideological parties—focus on changing society in major ways. For example, the Socialist Labor Party and the Communist Party USA support government ownership of factories, transportation, resources, farmland, and other businesses. The Libertarian Party wants to cut the size of the U.S. government in order to increase individual freedoms. The Green Party opposes the power of corporations and favors decision making at the grassroots level.

### Independent Candidates

Sometimes third parties form around well-known individuals who cannot get support from one of the two major parties. Such parties usually do not survive beyond the defeat of their candidate.

In 1980 John Anderson, a member of Congress from Illinois, lost the Republican presidential nomination and ran as the



candidate of a campaign organization he created called the Independent Party. In 1992 wealthy business leader H. Ross Perot challenged both major party candidates as an independent. Perot ran again in 1996, under the banner of the Reform Party.

Third parties rarely win major elections because of the United States's two-party tradition. While the names of the Republican and Democratic candidates are automatically placed on the ballot in many states, third-party candidates must obtain a large number of voter signatures in order to get on the ballot. Also, nearly all elected officials in the United States are selected by single-member districts. This means that only one candidate wins each district. Because most voters support the major parties, the winners are usually Democrats and Republicans. Third parties also often have trouble raising enough money to compete in campaigns against the major-party candidates.

**Reading Check** **Describing** Why do single-issue parties form?

## Other Party Systems

Political parties are not unique to the United States. They exist in most countries. Two-party systems, however, are rare. The role that political parties play differs with each nation's political system.

Most democracies have multiparty systems. In these systems, three or more parties compete for control of the government. For example, Canada has 3 major parties, Germany has 5, and Israel has more than 20. In these countries, voters face many options on Election Day. The parties all represent different ideas about government. In multiparty systems, one party rarely wins enough support to control the government, so several parties often must work together. This is a

situation that may easily break down and become politically unstable because of so many competing interests of the parties.


In a one-party system, the party and the government are nearly the same thing. In the People's Republic of China, for instance, only one party—the Communist Party—is allowed to exist, and only Communist candidates may run for office. As a result, only Communist Party members fill government positions, where they carry out the party's orders. Elections are an empty exercise since there are no rival candidates. One-party systems, obviously, are not democratic systems.

One-party systems also exist in some non-Communist nations. The government of Iran, for example, is dominated by religious

# American Biographies

## H. Ross Perot (1930– )

In 1992 H. Ross Perot sensed American anger over high unemployment and the huge national debt. Perot, a self-made billionaire from Texas, founded the Reform Party and promised to improve the economy. Perot, who made his fortune in computer technology, had the money to finance his campaign. He also had “name recognition.” In 1969 Perot started a crusade to free American prisoners of war (POWs) in Vietnam. In 1978 he organized a commando raid to free two of his employees from an Iranian jail. When voters went to the polls in 1992, 19 percent cast their ballots for Perot. Because many Republicans voted for Perot, some people say he cost George H.W. Bush reelection as president.



★★★★



leaders. Muslim leaders control the Islamic Republican Party. All major opposition parties have been outlawed or are inactive.

## Today's Major Parties

Competing political parties are a necessary part of democratic government. They are a key link between citizens and their elected officials. They give voters a choice among candidates and ideas. They help make elections meaningful.

A basic difference between the major parties is their belief in how much the government should be involved in the lives of Americans. For example, the Democrats tend to believe that the federal government should be more directly involved in regulating the economy and in providing housing, income, education, and jobs for the poor. The Republicans tend to believe that if they help the nation's economy grow, poor people will have a better chance of finding jobs and meeting their needs on their own. They favor less government regulation of the economy as the best way to promote the growth of production.

Sometimes it can be difficult to tell the difference between the two parties. Both try to appeal to as many voters as possible because ignoring large numbers of voters may lead to defeat on Election Day. By adopting moderate and mainstream positions and avoiding extreme or radical positions, the major parties hope to attract the largest number of votes and win elections. The parties are also similar because the majority of American people generally agree about many political and social issues.

One way to find out how the parties differ is to read the political document, or platform, that each party writes at its presidential nominating convention, held every four years. The **platform** is a series of statements expressing the party's principles, beliefs, and positions on election issues. Each individual part of the platform is called a **plank**. The platform communicates to voters what the party claims it will do if it wins the White House.

**Reading Check Explaining** Why do the two major parties seem so similar?

## SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

**1. Key Terms** Write sentences or short paragraphs about political parties in which you use the following terms: **political party**, **two-party system**, **third party**, **platform**, **plank**.

### Reviewing Main Ideas

- 2. Contrast** Describe the basic differences between the views of Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton regarding how government should operate.
- 3. Explain** In what way have third parties been influential in U.S. politics?

### Critical Thinking

- 4. Making Inferences** Which view of how government should operate—Jefferson's or Hamilton's—is most evident in the United States today? Explain.
- 5. Making Comparisons** In a chart like the one below, describe the differences between the Democratic and Republican Parties.

Democratic Party	Republican Party

### Analyzing Visuals

- 6. Infer** Examine the campaign party artifact on page 219. What party does it represent? Which type of third party described in the text do you think this party was? Explain your answer.

### ★ BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN ★

- 7. Research** Make a list of major local and state government offices where you live. Name the people who hold each office along with their political party.

# Organization of American Political Parties

## GUIDE TO READING

### Main Idea

Both the Republicans and the Democrats have highly organized political organizations at the local, state, and national levels.

### Key Terms

**national committee, national party chairperson, delegate, caucus, precinct, ward, county chairperson, political machine**

### Reading Strategy

#### Summarizing Information

As you read, use a chart like the one below to help you take notes about the three levels of political party organizations.

National	State	Local

### Read to Learn

- How are local, state, and national political party committees organized?
- How do political machines sometimes emerge?



## Americans in Action

Gary Risley, a corporate lawyer, was 38 years old when he attended the Republican National Convention in 1996. It was his first time serving as a delegate. After working on his candidate's platform committee, Risley looked forward to convention week, when he could listen to good speeches and nominate "the next president of the United States." As a delegate, Risley also considered it his job to return home and "spread the message" about the issues and his chosen candidates.



The Republican National Convention of 1996

## National Party Organization

Both major political parties today hold national conventions like the one Gary Risley attended. In fact, the Democratic and Republican Parties are organized at the local, state, and national levels. These different levels are only loosely tied together. There is no chain of command that lets the national organization control state or local party leaders. All the levels do, however, have roughly the same political beliefs, and they are united in their ultimate goal—to help the party win as many offices as possible.

Each party has a **national committee** made up of representatives from every state. This committee helps raise funds for presidential elections and organizes the party's national convention. A **national party chairperson** runs the committee. The chairperson's main job is to manage the office, direct the committee staff, and lead fund-raising efforts.

In recent years the national committees of both parties have become increasingly active. For example, they have created Web sites with information about candidates and positions. They recruit candidates, teach them effective campaign strategies, and give them some campaign funds. They also create television and radio advertisements.



**S**andra Valasquez used to be on the shy side, but that was before she joined the Oregon Latino Voter Registration Education Project in 1998. These days, the 17-year-old high school junior from Salem, Oregon, is front and center as she pounds the pavement to get out the minority vote.

Whenever Valasquez has free time, she's out talking up the value of the democratic process. She canvasses the community for potential new voters—going to colleges and meeting centers with brochures and registration forms in hand.

"I think a lot of the time people don't think of voting as a positive thing," Valasquez says. "They always complain about the government, but most of those people aren't even registered. If you want to get your voice out there, you have to register and vote."

Evidently, that message is beginning to sink in: the Oregon Latino Voter Registration Education Project signed up 5,000 new Latino voters before the 2000 presidential election. If you would like to get involved in registering people to vote in your community, contact your local board of elections.

### **Sandra Valasquez from Oregon**



A key job of the national committee is to hold the national convention every four years. At the convention, party **delegates** from all the states nominate candidates for president and vice president. Each party

chooses its delegates through a combination of presidential primary elections and **caucuses**, or meetings, of state and local party organizations.

The delegates' first job is to write the platform. This task can cause conflict because each party includes members with a wide range of positions on key issues. In 1968, for example, Democratic delegates fought long and hard over a plank calling for an end to the Vietnam War.

Once the platform has been prepared and approved, delegates nominate the party's presidential candidate. There are speeches and demonstrations supporting the candidate. Historically, conventions were exciting and suspenseful events where delegates from around the country decided upon their presidential candidate. The conventions were a grand spectacle on television. Today the increasing use of early primary elections, where voters narrow down the list of candidates, has caused the nomination for president to be almost entirely decided by the time of the convention.

Both parties also have House and Senate campaign committees made up of members of Congress. These committees work to help elect and reelect party members as senators and representatives.

The congressional campaign committees have been growing more important because they have begun raising large amounts of money. The money—mostly from private sources—goes to the party's congressional candidates and to state and local party organizations.

## **State and Local Organization**

Each party has 50 state committees or organizations. In some states the parties are well organized, have large staffs, and spend a lot of money each year. In others the organization is weak. State committees focus on

electing party candidates to state offices—governor, attorney general, state legislators, and others. They also work to elect their party’s candidates for national offices.

Local party organizations consist of thousands of city, town, and county committees across the country. These committees include people elected by their fellow party members.

### Precinct Captains

Each city or county is divided into election districts or precincts. A **precinct** is a geographic area that contains a specific number of voters. A precinct may consist of an entire small town or, in a large city, a group of adjacent neighborhoods. All voters in a precinct cast their ballots at the same voting place.

For each precinct, the local party has a volunteer precinct captain, whose job is to organize other party volunteers during campaigns and encourage voters on Election Day. The volunteers distribute leaflets, register voters, and try to convince voters to support the party’s candidates.

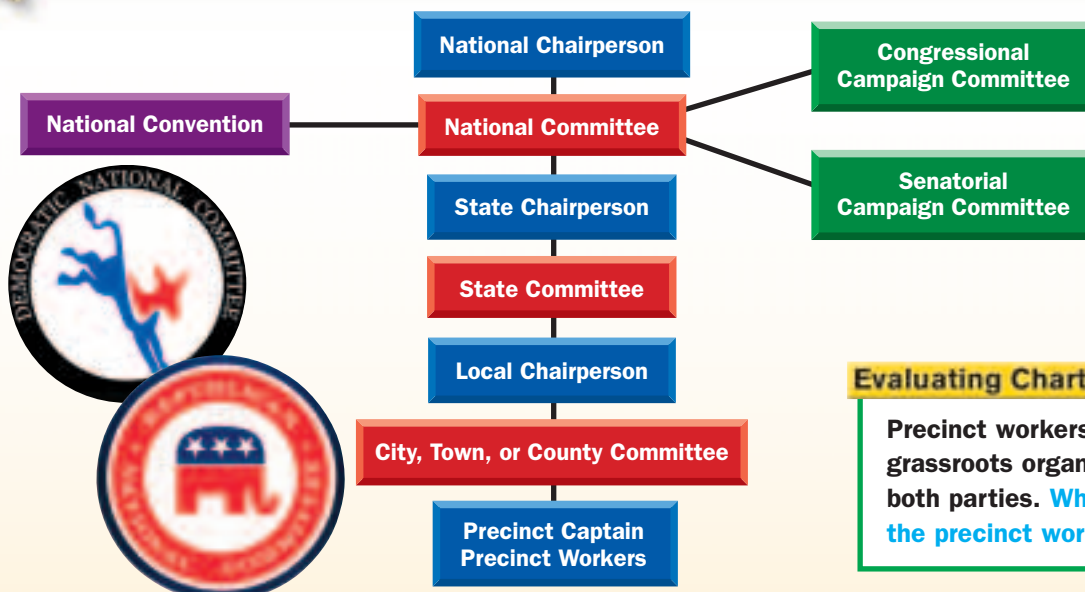
Several adjoining precincts make up a larger election unit called a **ward**. Party members in each ward typically elect a volunteer to represent the ward at the local party’s next level of organization—the county committee.

### County Committees

Counties are the largest political units in a state. There are more than 3,000 of them across the country. Both major parties have county committees. A **county chairperson**, who runs the committee, often has a great deal of political power in the county. If the county is large, state party leaders such as the governor or a U.S. senator may consult with the county chairperson about important appointments, such as judgeships.

Local party people are very important. Higher-level party leaders depend on precinct and ward leaders to build the party at the “grassroots,” or neighborhood, level. These local leaders have to know what issues their neighbors are worried about and keep track of how local political sentiment is running. At election time they must “deliver

## Organization of Political Parties



### Evaluating Charts

Precinct workers form the grassroots organization of both parties. Who controls the precinct workers?



the vote” for party candidates at every level of government, from school board member to president of the United States.

## Political Machines

At times in the past some local party organizations became so powerful that, year after year, their candidates swept almost every election. Such a strong party organization is called a **political machine**. One of the most famous—and notorious—political machines was New York City’s Tammany Hall. This organization ruled New York City in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Its leader, William Marcy “Boss” Tweed, and his friends grew rich from bribes and kickbacks given by building contractors seeking to do business with the city. Eventually, many members of the Tweed ring ended up in prison.

At a time in American history when no social service agencies existed to help poor people and immigrants, political machines often served a useful purpose, though. The machines provided needy citizens with jobs, food, fuel, and help with medical care

in return for their votes. Today most people think of political machines as harmful. When one party is in power for too long, it may become unresponsive to the needs of the community. Political leaders are less accountable to citizens when the leaders do not have to worry about getting reelected.

## Joining a Political Party

You don’t need to join a political party in the United States to vote. However, political parties offer every citizen a great way to get involved in politics. Political parties do everything they can to attract members, and they welcome whomever wishes to belong. Party membership involves no duties or obligations other than voting. If a member of a party chooses to do more, then he or she may contribute money, do volunteer work, or participate in other activities, especially during election campaigns. The parties depend on citizen involvement to accomplish their goals.

**Reading Check** **Concluding** Why is it important to build grassroots support for a party?

## SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

### Checking for Understanding

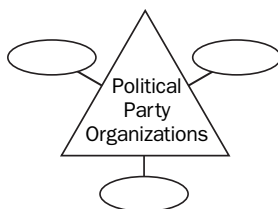
**1. Key Terms** Explain the following terms by using each in a complete sentence: **national committee, national party chairperson, delegate, caucus, precinct, ward, county chairperson, political machine.**

### Reviewing Main Ideas

- 2. Describe** What is the first order of business for delegates at a national convention?
- 3. Explain** What do congressional campaign committees do? Why have congressional campaign committees become more important in recent years?

### Critical Thinking

- 4. Drawing Conclusions** Why do you think citizens in the past allowed political machines to exist?
- 5. Categorizing Information** On a web diagram like the one below, categorize the structure and functions of political party organizations at all levels.



### Analyzing Visuals

- 6. Describe** Review the organization of political parties on page 225. According to this diagram, what body is responsible for the party’s national convention?

### ★ BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN ★

- 7. Interview** Choose one of the two major parties. Research its local organization. Who is the precinct, ward, or county chairperson? Set up an appointment to interview that person, or with your teacher’s permission, invite the person to speak to your class.

# Role of Political Parties Today

## GUIDE TO READING

### Main Idea

Although selecting candidates and running campaigns are the most important roles of political parties, they also serve other significant functions.

### Key Terms

**nomination, direct primary, closed primary, open primary, plurality, runoff primary, petition**

### Reading Strategy

#### Summarizing Information

As you read, write the roles performed by political parties in a chart similar to the one below.

Roles of Political Parties					

### Read to Learn

- How do political parties nominate and campaign for candidates?
- What other roles are performed by political parties?



## Americans in Action

It isn't only elected officials who make a career out of politics. Terry McAuliffe is certainly a career politician, even though he has never held an elected position. He has, however, held many appointed positions. In fact, he has worked for every Democratic presidential candidate since Jimmy Carter's reelection campaign in 1980. McAuliffe's personal business experience gives him special expertise in finance and business. As a result, he has served as finance director for the Democratic National Committee and for various individual presidential and congressional campaigns. As National Chair of the Democratic National Committee, McAuliffe plays a vital, although somewhat behind-the-scenes, role in national politics.



Terry McAuliffe

## Nominating Candidates

The people who make up political parties, like Terry McAuliffe, play an important role in the American system of government. They select candidates for office. They keep people informed and interested in the issues and the candidates. They try to see that party members elected to office do a good job. They keep an eye on the opposition party, publicly criticizing many of its actions. They also act as a link between different branches and levels of government. The parties carry out these activities throughout the year. They are busiest, however, at election time. Political parties are the only organizations that select and offer candidates for public office. They do this through the **nomination** process.

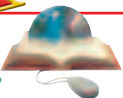
## Primary Elections

Today major parties in all states nominate candidates at all levels of government through **direct primaries**. The direct primary is an election in which voters choose candidates to represent each party in a general election. In recent years, these elections have been very competitive, and the winner of the most primaries is often nominated by his or her party. There



CLICK HERE

**CIVICS**  
*Online*



**Student Web Activity** Visit [civ.glencoe.com](http://civ.glencoe.com) and click on **Student Web Activities—Chapter 9** to learn more about political parties today.

are two main forms of the direct primary: closed and open.

Most states hold a **closed primary**. This is an election in

which only the declared members of a party are allowed to vote for that party's nominees. Thus, only Republicans can vote in the Republican Party's primary.

Rules for how voters declare their party affiliation vary by state. In some states you must declare your party when you register. In others, you do not have to declare your party preference until you actually vote.

A few states hold an **open primary**, in which voters do not need to declare their party preference in order to vote for the party's nominees. In most open-primary states, you choose a party in the privacy of the voting booth.

People who favor the closed primary claim that it helps keep the members of one party from crossing over into the other party's primary to try to promote weak candidates (who would then be easy to defeat). An argument against the closed primary is that it does not permit a truly secret ballot, since voters must first declare a party preference. It also prevents unaffiliated voters from taking part in primary elections in most states.

Sometimes a political office can have more than one vacancy, and thus each party can nominate more than one candidate. Most offices, however, are open to only one winner. In these cases, most states award the party's nomination to the candidate who receives a **plurality**—the most votes among all those running. In a few states, however, the winner must have a majority. (A majority is a number greater than half of the total.) If no candidate receives a majority, the party holds a **runoff primary** between the two

## Leading Third-Party Presidential Candidates

DATE	CANDIDATE	PARTY	POPULAR VOTE (thousands)
1948	Strom Thurmond	States' Rights	1,176
1952	Vincent Hallinan	Progressive	104
1956	T. Coleman Andrews	States' Rights	111
1960	Eric Hass	Socialist Labor	48
1964	Eric Hass	Socialist Labor	45
1968	George Wallace	American Independent	9,906
1972	John Schmitz	American	1,099
1976	Eugene McCarthy	Independent	757
1980	John Anderson	Independent	5,720
1984	David Bergland	Libertarian	228
1988	Ron Paul	Libertarian	432
1992	H. Ross Perot	Independent	19,742
1996	H. Ross Perot	Reform	8,085
2000	Ralph Nader	Green	2,883



### Evaluating Charts

This chart shows the significant third-party candidates in presidential elections for part of American history. Which of the candidates listed was most successful in gaining popular votes?

Source: Federal Election Commission and United States Census Bureau, 2000.

top vote getters. The winner then becomes the party's candidate in the general election.

**Unaffiliated Candidates** Candidates who are not affiliated with one of the two major parties can get on the ballot for the general election in most states by **petition**. If enough qualified voters sign papers declaring support for a candidate, he or she goes on the ballot for the general election.

**Reading Check** **Contrasting** What is the difference between an open and closed primary?

## Other Party Roles

Nominating candidates for office is just one of many roles that political parties perform.

### Campaigning for Candidates

Once a party has nominated its candidates for office, it begins to campaign for them in the general election. The parties raise money for the campaign. They also help candidates get across their ideas and views on public issues to voters. A key role for party volunteers is to make sure party supporters are registered to vote and to ensure that on Election Day these voters go to the polls.

### Informing Citizens

The party's goal during the campaign is for its candidates to win office. However, running a campaign serves another important purpose in a democracy: it informs citizens about public issues and the way government works through informational pamphlets; speeches; and TV, radio, and newspaper advertisements.

### Helping Manage Government

Things slow down for political parties once an election is over, but work does continue. In fact, parties are involved in one of



**Watchdogs** Ralph Nader, a third-party candidate in the 2000 presidential election, writes a weekly column called "In the Public Interest." In it, Nader closely examines and criticizes governmental actions. **What benefit might the public get from Nader's actions?**

the first tasks that comes up after an election—handing out government jobs.

Most government jobs are civil service jobs gained on the basis of open, competitive examinations and merit. However, the president, governors, and some mayors have the power to appoint their trusted supporters to many high-level jobs. These supporters will usually be party members who believe in their party's ideas and want the opportunity to serve in government. If a chief executive has jobs to fill but does not have enough high-level supporters to fill them, he or she often seeks recommendations from party leaders.

## Linking the Different Levels of Government

Party ties are important in helping different levels of government and branches of government cooperate with each other. For example, suppose the mayor of Columbia, South Carolina, and the governor of South Carolina are both Democrats. They are likely to have similar goals and ideas. They may be personal friends. Perhaps they have worked together on election campaigns or

Political Cartoons



and it seems to be diverted toward money and time. Making the world a more convenient place. Schneider, two men with little b... ing the company's reve... h... h...

**Analyzing Visuals** In many elections, more than half of all eligible voters fail to cast ballots. What do you think of the concept of a “nonvoters’ party”? What course of action is the cartoonist supporting?

Acting as a Watchdog

Finally, parties play an important “watchdog” role after an election. The party that is out of power—the party that lost the election for president, governor, or Congress—watches the actions of the party in power for any mistakes or misuse of power. This opposition party may criticize the party in power and offer its own solutions to political problems. In this way, the opposition party hopes to attract voters to support it in future elections. Competition between parties forces the party in power to pay attention to the will of the people.

**Reading Check Explaining** Why do parties out of power act as watchdogs?

party business in the past. These connections may make it easier for them to join forces to tackle mutual problems. Likewise, when a majority of legislators belong to the same party as a chief executive, cooperation between the two branches is likely to be better than if they belong to opposing parties.

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT

Checking for Understanding

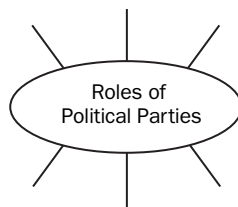
**1. Key Terms** Write a paragraph that summarizes the key points of this section. Use all of the following terms: **nomination, direct primary, closed primary, open primary, plurality, runoff primary, petition.**

Reviewing Main Ideas

- 2. Identify** When does a runoff primary occur? Where does the winner go from there?
- 3. Describe** How does a candidate who is not affiliated with either major party get on the ballot?

Critical Thinking

- 4. Drawing Conclusions** In your opinion, which is a better system, the open primary or the closed primary? Explain.
- 5. Organizing Information** On a web diagram like the one below, write the roles that political parties play in our nation and give an example of each role.



Analyzing Visuals

**6. Identify** Examine the chart on page 228. What party did George Wallace represent in 1968? How much of the popular vote did he receive?

★ BE AN ACTIVE CITIZEN ★

**7. Research** Contact the local Democratic and Republican Party offices. Find out what jobs are available for volunteers. Make a list of the jobs and categorize them according to the six roles of political parties.



# Citizenship SKILLBUILDER

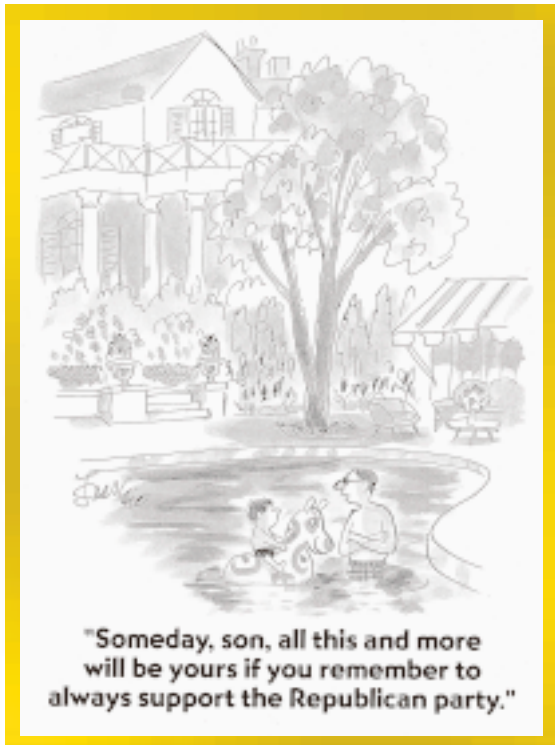
## Interpreting a Political Cartoon

### Why Learn This Skill?

The First Amendment assures Americans the freedom to express their views on political matters. Political cartoonists use art to express political opinions. Their work appears in newspapers, magazines, and books, and on the Internet. Political cartoons are drawings that express an opinion. They usually focus on public figures, political events, or economic or social conditions. Reading a political cartoon can give you a summary of an event or circumstance and the artist's opinion in a quick and entertaining manner.

### Learning the Skill

To interpret a political cartoon, follow the steps listed in the next column.



- Read the title, caption, or conversation balloons. Most cartoons will carry at least one of these elements. They help you identify the subject of the cartoon.
- Identify the characters. They may be caricatures, or unrealistic drawings that exaggerate the characters' physical features.
- Identify the symbols. Some caricatures may stand for something else. Commonly recognized symbols may not be labeled. Unusual symbolism will be labeled.
- Examine the actions in the cartoon to determine what is happening and why they are important.
- Identify the cartoonist's purpose. State the point the cartoonist makes about the actual situation. Decide if the cartoonist wants to persuade, criticize, or provoke thought.

### Practicing the Skill

On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about the political cartoon on this page.

- 1 Who are the main characters in the cartoon? What do they represent?
- 2 In what ways is the main character a caricature?
- 3 Describe the action in the drawing.
- 4 What is the cartoonist's comment on the situation represented?

### Applying the Skill

Use a current news source to locate two political cartoons. Write a brief summary of the cartoonist's message and purpose for each cartoon.



Practice key skills with Glencoe's **Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook CD-ROM, Level 1.**

# Assessment & Activities

## Review to Learn

### Section 1

- Shortly after our nation began, two political parties formed.
- The basic difference between the two parties today is their belief in how much the government should be involved in Americans' lives.



### Section 2

- Each party has a national committee and congressional campaign committees. Each party also has 50 state committees and many local party organizations.
- Some local party organizations became so powerful in the past that their candidates won almost every election. These were known as political machines.

### Section 3

- Political parties nominate candidates through a nomination process of direct primaries.
- Political parties campaign for their candidates by raising money, informing voters, and getting people to vote.


**FOLDABLES™**
**Study Organizer**

#### Using Your Foldables Study Organizer

Use your completed foldable to create a time line that includes information to answer the following question: Why have political parties been important throughout American history?

## Reviewing Key Terms

Write the term from the chapter that best matches the clues below.

1. the party system of the United States
2. they nominate the presidential candidate at the national convention
3. New York's Tammany Hall
4. helps prevent crossover voting
5. a party that is not a major party
6. the party system of China
7. advocates claim that it preserves the secret ballot
8. read this to find out what a party stands for
9. the smallest geographical unit of a party
10. part of a party's platform

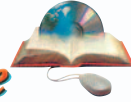
## Reviewing Main Ideas

11. What were the first two political parties in the United States, and who were their leaders?
12. Name three third parties that organized around independent candidates for president.
13. What party replaced the Federalists as the main challenger to the Democratic-Republicans in 1830?
14. What two mechanisms are used by parties to select delegates to the national convention?
15. What role do congressional campaign committees play in the political arena?
16. Prior to nominating the party's candidate for president and vice president, what is the main job of delegates at a national convention?
17. Even if a party's candidate for office loses, how has the party benefited the community?
18. In what way do political parties help manage the government?

## Critical Thinking

19. **Analyzing Information** Why do you think there has never been a successful third-party candidate for president?

CLICK HERE



Self-Check Quiz Visit the Civics Today Web site at civ.glencoe.com and click on Self-Check Quizzes—Chapter 9 to prepare for the chapter test.

20. Making Comparisons In a chart like the one below, compare the basic beliefs of the major parties.

Democratic Party	Republican Party

Practicing Skills

21. Interpreting a Political Cartoon

Examine the political cartoon. In it, cartoonist Thomas Nast portrayed Boss Tweed of the political machine. How is Tweed's head portrayed? Why?

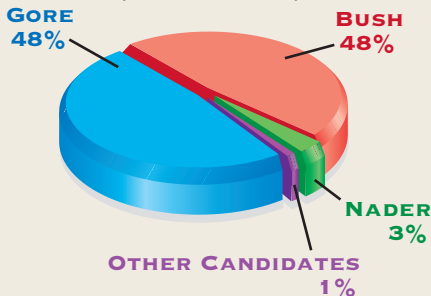


Analyzing Visuals

Study the circle graph below; then answer the following questions.

22. What percentage of the popular vote did the third-party candidate receive? How might the results have been different if there had been only two candidates?

2000 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION (POPULAR VOTE)



CITIZENSHIP COOPERATIVE ACTIVITY

23. As a class, organize a poll to see how many plan to register and vote when they are of age. Discuss the results of your poll.

Economics Activity

24. When politicians talk about political capital, they mean a special kind of property—the influence, prestige, and fame “owned” by a politician. Look up the term “capital,” and explain its economic meaning. If you were a businessperson, how would you acquire capital? How would you acquire it as a politician?

Technology Activity

25. Search for both the Republican and Democratic platforms from the 2000 election on the Internet. Read through each platform. With which platform did you most agree? Why?



Standardized Test Practice

Directions: Choose the answer that best completes the following statement.

All of the following are key roles that political parties play in the U.S. political process EXCEPT

- A bring charges of misconduct against the presidency if necessary.
- B nominate candidates for office.
- C monitor the activities of government officials.
- D educate the American public about campaign issues and candidates.

Test-Taking Tip

Remember, when a question contains the term except, you must find the answer choice that is not true.