Parties, Interest Groups, and Public Policy

**Political parties and interest groups: How do they influence our political decisions?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking of Politics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>political party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interest group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>platform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two-party system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PREVIEW**

If you were to register for a political party right now, which would you choose?
- Democrat
- Republican
- independent (no party affiliation)
- third party (Green Party, Libertarian, or the like)

What are some of the reasons for your choice?

**READING NOTES**

**Section 8.2**

Read the section, and then do the following:

1. Create a spoke diagram outlining what political parties do in a democracy. Off each spoke, write one function of political parties. Your diagram must have at least four spokes.

2. What was the major dividing factor between the two first political parties, the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans?

3. Create a T-chart with the headings “Democrats” and “Republicans.” List at least four beliefs held by each party.

4. What function do third parties serve in American politics?

5. Create a simple symbol or illustration to represent independent voters. Then write one sentence describing independents.
Section 8.3
Create a T-chart titled “Opinions on Special Interests” with the headings “Good for Democracy” and “Bad for Democracy.” Record at least eight examples of how interest groups are good or bad for democracy.

Section 8.4
A mnemonic is a memory device used to recall a variety of things, including a list of items or the steps required to complete a task. For example, Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally (Parenthesis Exponents Multiplication Division Addition Subtraction) is used to help remember the order in which to complete mathematical operations.

Create a mnemonic for the six steps of the policymaking process. Then explain which step in the process you think is the most important and which is the least important.

PROCESSING
Now that you have looked more closely at political parties and their function in government, choose the political party that you would like to be affiliated with. If you haven’t already registered to vote, obtain a voter registration form (or a pre-registration form, if you are not yet 18) from your local town or city hall.

Once you have selected a party or chosen to register as an independent with no party affiliation, answer these questions:
• Why did you choose your particular affiliation?
• Why are parties important in government?
• What can parties do for you? For society?
Public Opinion and the Media

To what extent do the media influence your political views?

PREVIEW
Analyze Adlai Stevenson’s 1952 campaign poster, shown at the beginning of Chapter 9, and record responses to these questions:
- What details do you see?
- According to the poster, why should people vote for Stevenson?
- To whom is this poster designed to appeal?
- Do you think such a poster could actually influence people’s views in an election?
- What other kinds of political media messages have you been exposed to? Did they have any influence on your political views?

READING NOTES
After you read each section, answer the corresponding questions in your notebook.

Section 9.2
1. List six forces that shape political socialization. Rank them in order from 1 (most influence on my political socialization) to 6 (least influence). For the top two items on your list, briefly explain why they have influenced your political socialization.
2. Create a simple diagram or illustration to represent each of the three ways that public opinion is shaped. Label each illustration.
3. Why is public opinion important in a democracy?

Section 9.3
1. Explain the difference between straw polls and the scientific sampling process.
2. Create a simple flowchart to show the steps of the polling process. Begin with the sentence shown below.

Identify the target population to be surveyed.

3. Create a symbol to represent each of these types of polls: benchmark polls, tracking polls, exit polls, and push polls. Then write one or two sentences explaining whether you think each type of poll should be used in political campaigns.
Section 9.4
1. Create a simple T-chart. In the first column, list at least three traditional media sources. In the second column, list at least five forms of “new” media. Check off all the forms of media that you have seen or used. Below your chart, identify at least two pros and one con of the new media.
2. What is the role of a free press in a democracy?
3. Describe two ways in which public officials can attract and shape media coverage.
4. Are the media biased? Explain your answer.

Section 9.5
How important do you think a candidate’s image is during a political campaign? Use at least two of these terms in your answer: media consultant, issue ad, image ad, photo op, soap opera story, mudslinging.

PROCESSING
Write a paragraph in response to each question.
1. Are campaign commercials a good source of information about candidates? Why or why not?
2. How much influence do you think political advertising has on voters during elections? Why?
Political Campaigns and Elections

Elections and voting: Why should they matter to you?

Speaking of Politics

As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers:
- plurality
- winner-take-all system
- primary election
- general election
- caucus
- party base
- stump speech
- coattail effect

Preview

Each event listed below is a step in the process of running for president. Based on what you know about elections, record the steps in the most logical order in your notebook. Then answer this question: Do you think this process helps or hinders us in electing the best individual as president?
- form a campaign organization
- run in primaries and caucuses
- participate in televised debates
- announce candidacy
- conduct electoral vote
- attend national convention
- raise funds
- hold popular vote
- build a coalition of supporters
- develop a campaign strategy

Reading Notes

Section 10.2

Create the table below in your notebook. Record any applicable dates when each group gained voting rights, and briefly explain what rights were gained at that time. Then answer the questions that follow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Voting Rights Gained</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White males</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Americans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-year-olds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Do you think Americans take voting for granted today? Why or why not?
2. What steps have been taken to increase voter turnout?
Section 10.3
Create a campaign to-do list for a presidential candidate trying to secure the party’s nomination. Your list should have nine steps: form an exploratory committee, join the race, set up a campaign organization, raise funds, develop a campaign strategy, campaign, run in primaries and caucuses, and attend the national convention. Record the steps in your notebook, and note what needs to be done to accomplish each one. See the example below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>To Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Form an exploratory committee. | • Gather a group of advisers to evaluate chances for election.  
                                | • Test the waters to determine the level of public support.  |
| Join the race.              |                                            |

Section 10.4
Create a list of important campaign terms. The list must include a brief description of each of these terms: presidential election, midterm election, off-year election, term limits, stump speech, polling place, battleground states, and electoral vote.

Section 10.5
Answer these questions:
1. How is money raised in political campaigns?
2. Do you see this as a problem? Why or why not?
3. What is one suggestion you would make for changing the role of money in political campaigns?

Section 10.6
Make a very simple sketch of an American voter. Around the body, draw spokes with explanations of how each of these factors influences whether a person is likely to vote: age, education, and income. Then add spokes with explanations of how each of these factors influences whom Americans vote for: party affiliation, issues, and candidate characteristics.

PROCESSING
Imagine that you have been hired by the Federal Election Commission to suggest one way to improve the U.S. electoral system. What would you suggest? Include the following information in your response:
• What changes would be involved?
• How would your suggestion change the electoral system?
• Why would your suggested change improve the electoral system?
Lawmakers and Legislatures

What makes an effective legislator?

As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers:

- constituent
- pork
- standing committee
- joint committee
- conference committee
- appropriations
- joint resolution
- casework

PREVIEW

Analyze the photograph of Congressman Joe Schwarz and read about his background.

Biographical Information

Congressman Joe Schwarz
Republican, Michigan Seventh District
Born: November 15, 1937, in Battle Creek, Michigan
Education: B.A. University of Michigan, 1959; M.D. Wayne State University, 1964

Section 11.2

1. List two formal and two informal qualifications for a member of Congress today (not 40 or 50 years ago). Do you think the informal qualifications for education and occupation help make an effective legislator? Why or why not?
2. Study the apportionment map in Section 11.2, and record information about any change to apportionment in your state. Then describe the process that determined why your state gained or lost representatives or why it stayed the same.
3. Explain the difference between a delegate and a trustee. Which do you think makes a more effective legislator, and why?
4. Create a bar graph or circle graphs to show the percentage of incumbents who have been reelected in the House and Senate since 1945. List three factors that help explain your graph or graphs.
Section 11.3
1. Fill in the blanks to complete this analogy: The Senate “cools” legislation from the House like a ________ cools ________. Create a simple illustration for your analogy. Finally, list at least two important differences between the House and the Senate that might allow the Senate to “cool” legislation from the House.
2. Which leadership position in Congress has the most power? List some specific powers of that position.
3. Create a simple table listing the five types of committees in Congress. Include these things in your table for each type of committee:
   - an appropriate symbol
   - one or two of the committee’s important functions
   - a concrete example of that type of committee (if possible)
4. Sketch a simple graph showing what has happened to the size of House and Senate staff since 1930. Then list two or three important jobs congressional staffers do.
5. Suppose you are a member of Congress and want to create a new caucus. Come up with a creative name for your caucus, and explain what issues or topics your caucus would focus on.

Section 11.4
1. According to Article I of the Constitution, what are the specific, or enumerated, powers of Congress? What part of the Constitution allows Congress to broaden its power beyond those enumerated powers?
2. Create a simple diagram that shows the six ways in which Congress checks the other two branches of government. Label each check, and indicate which other branch each check applies to.
3. Draw the spoke diagram below in your notebook. Fill in each rectangle with a key power of Congress.

From each of those key powers, add at least two more spokes with important pieces of information about that power of Congress.
4. Create a political cartoon that shows why casework is such an important aspect of being an effective legislator.

Section 11.5
1. Create a Venn diagram comparing state legislatures with Congress. Identify at least three significant similarities and at least four important differences between the two. Be specific.
2. Overall, do you think term limits are a good idea? Why or why not?

Processing
Create a report card that evaluates how effective a legislator is.
- Select one of your own members of Congress—representative or senator—or another national or state legislator.
- Identify three to five criteria that you will use to evaluate that legislator’s effectiveness. Use topics from the chapter—such as committee assignments, casework, and getting reelected—or other criteria that you think are important.
- Find information about what your selected legislator has done in each area. Consider starting your search on the legislator’s own Web site, or visit Congresspedia, which has useful information and links for every member of Congress.
- Based on your research, design a report card and assign a letter grade for each item, along with supporting evidence—such as facts, statistics, or quotations—to justify the grade. Then give an overall grade for the legislator’s effectiveness, along with a summary explaining the grade.
Congressional Lawmaking

How do laws really get made?

PREVIEW

Think of a bill that you would like to see passed into law to improve the lives of high school seniors across the country. Give your bill a catchy title, and write a two- or three-sentence description of its main features.

Now draw a mental flowchart of the steps you think it would take to get your bill passed into law, from beginning to end. Include as many steps as you think are necessary, with a minimum of three. (A mental flowchart is a representation of what you think is true. There are no wrong answers as long as you rely only on what is in your head.)

After you complete your mental flowchart, star the step that you think is particularly important. Then briefly explain why you think that step is so important.

Speaking of Politics

As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers:

- congressional page
- seniority rule
- filibuster
- cloture
- hold
- rider
- Christmas tree bill
- logrolling

READING NOTES

Complete the following tasks for each section.

Section 12.2

Create a spoke diagram like the one below. On each spoke, note one important task or ceremony that is completed at the start of each new Congress. Then select one of these tasks, and explain how it might be used to influence or affect how laws really get made.
Section 12.3

1. Given the current makeup of Congress, choose which of the following members would most likely be selected as chair of the House Armed Services Committee, and explain why.

*Congressperson W*: Democrat, 28 years in Congress, 12 years on committee

*Congressperson X*: Republican, 24 years in Congress, 18 years on committee

*Congressperson Y*: Republican, 20 years in Congress, served as a military officer

*Congressperson Z*: Democrat, 16 years in Congress, former Democratic candidate for president

2. Create a flowchart showing three phases that typically occur when subcommittees consider a bill. For each phase, list two or three important things that happen during that step in the legislative process.

3. Imagine that you are a member of the majority on the House Rules Committee. You are reviewing a bill that the speaker of the House strongly supports. What kind of rule—closed or open—would you likely ask for this bill and why?

Section 12.4

1. Create a Venn diagram comparing how the House and Senate conduct debates, amend bills, and vote on bills. List at least three similarities and three differences in your diagram.

2. List at least four groups or individuals who typically influence or pressure legislators. Which of these groups or individuals do you think should have the most impact on how laws really get made? Why?

Section 12.5

Create a flowchart of all the possible things that can happen to a bill after it passes the House and Senate. Be sure your diagram includes these terms: conference committee, presidential veto, and congressional override.
Chief Executives and Bureaucracies

What qualities do modern presidents need to fulfill their many roles?

PREVIEW

Carefully examine the appointments in the daily diary of a modern president. Then answer these questions:
1. What observations can you make about the president’s schedule on this day?
2. Why do you think the president has so many different types of appointments?
3. Based on this daily diary, what are some of the president’s roles and responsibilities?
4. What qualities do you think the president needs to fulfill these many roles?

Speaking of Politics

As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers:
- reprieve
- pardon
- cabinet
- executive order
- bureaucracy
- pocket veto
- administration
- whistle-blower

READING NOTES

Complete the given tasks as you read each section.

Section 13.2

Compare the job descriptions of national, state, and local chief executives by completing a table like the one below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Government</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Qualifications (formal and informal)</th>
<th>How are they elected?</th>
<th>How can they be removed from office?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 13.3
1. Briefly explain how one of the presidents described in this section defined or exercised the powers of the presidency.
2. In what ways do you think presidents today are more powerful today than they were in the past?

Section 13.4
1. Describe the roles of the modern president by completing a spoke diagram like the one below. For each role, identify at least three powers or responsibilities and create a simple symbol.

![Roles of the Modern President diagram]

2. What checks does the president have on the legislative and judicial branches?

Section 13.5
Fill in a table like the one below by summarizing the main function of each group in the executive branch. Include at least two examples of individuals, departments, or agencies within each group.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The President</th>
<th>White House Staff</th>
<th>Executive Office of the President</th>
<th>Executive Departments</th>
<th>Independent Agencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Section 13.6
Create an analogy that evaluates the role and impact of government bureaucracies on the lives of Americans by completing this statement: Government bureaucracies are like . . .

Use one of these options to complete your analogy, or create your own:
- an overbearing parent who controls your life
- an overloaded computer hard drive that keeps crashing
- a well-oiled engine that keeps a car running
- an emergency room doctor who saves lives

Illustrate your analogy with a simple drawing. Then write at least two statements beginning with the word because to explain your analogy.

PROCESSING
Create and conduct an opinion survey to evaluate the current president’s job performance.

- Your survey will have nine questions. The first eight questions will focus on the eight presidential roles. For each of these questions, provide a brief description of that role and then ask, Do you approve or disapprove of the way the president is performing in this role? Add a final question that assesses the president’s overall job performance.
- Conduct the survey by polling at least 10 individuals outside your class.
- Compile your survey results for each of the nine questions. Then write a paragraph summarizing your results.
How is the U.S. judicial system organized to ensure justice?

**Speaking of Politics**

As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers:

- criminal law
- civil law
- burden of proof
- defendant
- prosecution
- plaintiff
- writ of certiorari
- legal brief

**Preview**

Examine the collage of photographs on the first page of Chapter 15. Then answer these questions:

1. What do all of these images relate to?
2. Have you had a personal experience with the court system? If so, what was it like? If not, what are your impressions of the court system from film, television, newspapers, magazines, and books?
3. What is the overall goal of the judicial system?
4. A primary purpose of the U.S. court system is to ensure justice. Do you think it does that?

**Reading Notes**

Follow these directions to complete your Reading Notes for this chapter.

1. Read the question on Card 1. Locate the answer to the question in Sections 15.3 to 15.7.
2. Find the box numbered 1 on Notebook Handout 15. Label the diagram as directed on Card 1.
3. Repeat the procedure for Cards 2 through 16, completing them in order.
4. Tape the completed diagrams into your notebook. Then answer these questions:
   - What did you learn about the judicial branch that you did not know before?
   - What are some characteristics of the U.S. court system that help ensure justice?
You have learned about the structure and operation of the judicial branch. Now read the following postings from the fictional Web site "Pursuing Justice." Then write your own comment in response to one or both of the postings. Include the following in your response:

- your online name
- the date and time of your response
- your position on the topic being discussed
- support for your argument, including two specific courts that you have read about and how their structure or function adds to or detracts from justice being served

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**America’s Court System: Two Thumbs Up**

From: courtwatcher, 2:34pm, 09.31.08

It’s become all too common to hear people grumbling about our judicial system. “Too many cases, too complicated, too political, too biased.” Many Americans have become disenchanted with our courts and those who run them.

I couldn’t disagree more. In today’s society, our courts provide an open forum for raising grievances, asserting one’s rights, and resolving conflicts. And they do it in a more efficient way than any other nation on this planet.

Our court system ensures that every citizen will receive justice. From the defendant accused of a crime to the employee suing for breach of contract, all have an avenue to seek justice. No system is perfect, but our system of courts does indeed ensure justice for those seeking it.

On 10.03.08, gavel_pounder says:

**Two thumbs up?** I’d like to know if courtwatcher has ever been inside a courtroom! A survey conducted for the American Bar Association revealed that 78% of Americans believe “it takes too long for courts to do their jobs” while 77% believe “it costs too much to go to court.” Our legal system today is a mess. Judges are overwhelmed with crowded dockets, cases are appealed far too often, and frivolous lawsuits take judicial attention away from serious cases. Ensure justice? Not likely.