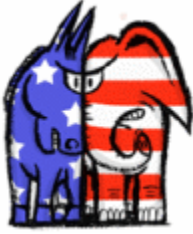


Civics and Economics



CE.5 Study Guide

STANDARD CE.5A -- POLITICAL PARTIES

The functions of political parties

Political parties **play a key role in government and provide opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process.**

*What roles do **political parties** play in the American political process?*

Functions of political parties

- Recruiting and nominating **candidates**
- **Educating the electorate** about campaign issues
- **Helping candidates** win elections
- **Monitoring** actions of officeholders

STANDARD CE.5B -- TWO-PARTY SYSTEM

Similarities and differences of political parties.

A **two-party system** characterizes the American political process.

Although **third parties rarely win** elections, they can play an **important role** in public politics.

*How are the **two major political parties** similar, and how do they differ?*

Similarities between parties

- Organize to win elections
- Influence public policies
- Reflect both **liberal and conservative** views
- Define themselves in a way that wins **majority support** by appealing to the **political center**

Differences between parties

- Stated in **party platforms** and reflected in campaigning

*How do **third parties** differ from the two major parties?*

Third parties

- **Introduce new ideas** and/or press for a **particular issue**
- Often revolve around a **political personality** (e.g., Theodore Roosevelt)

STANDARD CE.5C -- ROLE OF MEDIA IN CAMPAIGNS



Campaigns for elective office, with emphasis on the role of the media.

Voters **evaluate information** presented in political campaigns to make reasoned choices among candidates.

The **media** play an important role in the political process.

How do citizens make informed choices in elections?

Strategies for evaluating campaign speeches, literature, and advertisements for accuracy

- Separating **fact from opinion**
- Detecting **bias**
- Evaluating **sources**
- Identifying **propaganda**

*How does the **media** play a role in the political process?*

Mass media roles in elections

- Identifying candidates
- Emphasizing selected issues
- Writing editorials, creating political cartoons, publishing op-ed pieces
- Broadcasting **different points of view**



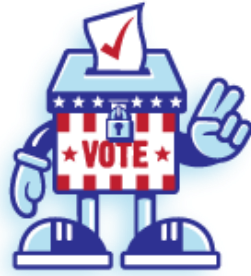
STANDARD CE.5D -- CAMPAIGN COSTS

The student will demonstrate knowledge of the political process at the local, state, and national levels of government by

d) examining the role of campaign contributions and costs.

Running for political office is **expensive**.

*How has the **high cost** of getting elected changed campaigning for public office?*



Rising campaign costs

- require candidates to conduct **extensive fund-raising** activities
- **limit opportunities** to run for public office
- give an **advantage** to **wealthy individuals** who run for office
- encourage the development of **political action committees (PACs)**
- give issue-oriented **special interest groups** increased influence.

Campaign finance reform

- Rising campaign costs have led to efforts to **reform campaign finance laws**.
- **Limits** have been placed on the amount **individuals may contribute** to political candidates and campaigns.



STANDARD CE.5E -- VOTER REGISTRATION

The student will demonstrate knowledge of the political process at the local, state, and national levels of government by

e) describing voter registration and participation.

Voting is a basic responsibility of citizenship.

Voter **registration** is required before a citizen may vote.

The number of citizens who **register and vote** is related to how **important** election issues are to citizens.

*What are the **qualifications** for voter registration in Virginia?*

Only citizens who **register** may participate in primary and general elections.

Qualifications to **register** to vote in Virginia

- **Citizen** of the United States
- **Resident** of Virginia and precinct
- At least **18 years** of age by day of general election

How to register to vote in Virginia

- In person at the registrar's office, at the Division of Motor Vehicles, or at other designated sites
- By mail-in application

Voter registration is closed **22 days** before elections.

*What factors **influence** voter registration and turnout?*

Factors in predicting which citizens will vote

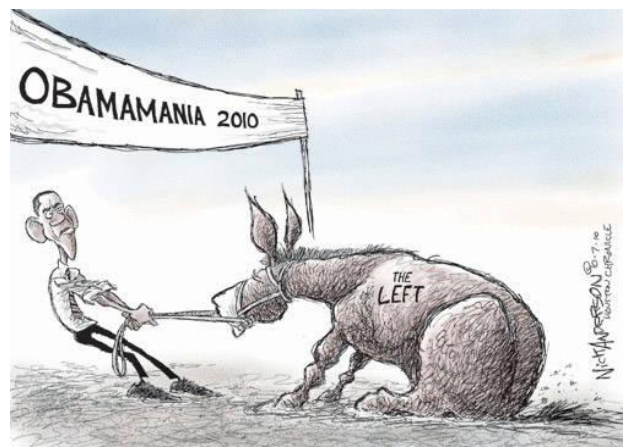
- **Education**
- **Age**
- **Income**

Reasons why citizens fail to vote

- Lack of **interest**
- Failure to **register**

The percentage of voters who participate in **presidential elections** is usually **greater** than the percentage of voters who participate in state and **local elections**.

Every vote is important.



STANDARD CE.5F -- ELECTORAL COLLEGE

The role of the Electoral College in the election of the president and vice president.

The **Electoral College** process is used to select the **president** and **vice president** of the United States.

*How does the **Electoral College** select the **president** and **vice president** of the United States?*

Electoral College process

- A **slate of electors** for each state is chosen by **popular vote**.
- Most states have a **winner-take-all** system.
- The **electors meet** to vote for president and vice president.

The **winner-take-all** system leads to the targeting of **densely populated states** for campaigning, although candidates must pay attention to less populated states whose electoral votes may make the difference in tight elections.

The **number of electors** of each state is based on the size of the **state's Congressional representation**, which is based on the state's population.

The requirement for a **majority vote** to win in the Electoral College favors a **two-party system**.

STANDARD CE.5G -- PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS

Participate in simulated local, state, and/or national elections.

All citizens can learn the **importance** of the individual's **participation** in the political process either through **direct involvement** in campaigns or through **simulations**.

*How can students **under 18** participate in the democratic process?*

Student participation in the democratic process can include

- participating in **campaigns**
- participating in classroom and online simulations.

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