



What Have You Done For Me Lately; A Tale of Two Parties

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Introduction

One of the fears expressed by our Founding Fathers was the creation of factions within our government as famously penned by Alexander Hamilton in *The Federalist* No. 9, where he addressed the destructive role of factions in breaking apart the republic.¹ James Madison in *Federalist* No. 10 outlines that factions can lead to disputes over fundamental issues arising from the unequal distribution of property.² Yet factions existed throughout the Constitutional Convention in various matters. In a reversal of Madison's position in the *Federalist* Paper #10, James Madison with Thomas Jefferson "soon came to realize, without an organized political party to mobilize their voters in the states and their fellow supporters in the Congress, they could not possibly overcome the entrenched political domination of their political adversaries, the Federalists."³ Political parties are so ingrained into our political system and now are an essential component to representative democracy.

When it comes to political parties, my students immediately associate the parties with politicians, not policies. The Democratic Party is the party of Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez. The Republican Party is the party of Donald Trump—the man who associated Mexican immigrants as drug dealers, criminals, and rapists.⁴ They don't see the Republican Party as the party of Abraham Lincoln, the man who emancipated slaves during the Civil War or the Democratic Party as the party of Andrew Jackson, who was responsible for the mass removal of Native Americans from their indigenous lands.

The contrast between the demographics of these two political parties has become even more stark in the last few years of the current Trump administration. Through this curriculum unit, I intend to help students better understand the complexity of the political party system and analyze the differences between the Democratic and the Republican views on significant issues that matter to my students. As students delve deeper into the intricacies of our political systems, students will gain a better understanding of the political platforms of the two major parties and where they stand on key policy issues and how these parties have historically served people of color. Also, it is important to realize the stark contrast on the demographics of each political party. Why does the Democratic Party attract more people of color while the Republican party has a more substantial base among white males? Students will have an opportunity to investigate this phenomenon and have a chance to ponder the advantages and disadvantages of a two-party system and whether, with the growing divide in America, there is another party system that might work better to serve the needs of all Americans.

As students investigate the complexities of our political party system, students will gain a better understanding of our government and make a more informed decisions going forward in their lives. I want my students to ponder the question Janet Jackson once said, “What have you done for me lately?”

Rationale

The East Side Union High School District is committed to creating a more equitable community by ensuring that “all students are provided tasks that demand production through and beyond DOK3 so that they can communicate like a scientist, mathematician, historian, artist, literary critic, and more.”⁵ Depth of Knowledge (DOK) is a category of tasks and questions that increases in complexity as it increases in level. At a DOK3+ level, students are asked to use more abstract thinking in planning and using evidence. Students must not only provide an answer but also justify their answer. This information will be relevant in the teaching strategy section.

William C. Overfelt High School is part of the East Side Union High School District in San Jose, California. Overfelt High School is located a few miles southeast of the heart of Silicon Valley—home of the likes of Google, Facebook, Cisco, and eBay. While we are surrounded by major affluent corporations, many of our Overfelt students do not share in that affluence. Overfelt students come from working-class and low-income families that struggle financially. Out of our approximately 1450 students, over 85% of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch. With the high rate of poverty in our community, also comes high crime. The Overfelt High School community is known as a “gang hotspot”.

Over 80% of Overfelt’s 1450 students identify as Hispanic or Latino. Less than 15% identify as Asian and about 2% black. While I have never done a formal survey in my government class, many, if not all, of my students proclaim to be a Democrat. This seems to somewhat align with the party affiliation of the county. San Jose is part of the larger Santa Clara County. Of its almost 2 million residents, 47% identify as a Democrat, with 16% identifying as a Republican. The rest identify as either independent, non-affiliation, or other parties.⁶

A recent study by Pew Research Center found that most blacks, Asians, Hispanics, and Millennials identify as Democrats, while white male who have less education and are also evangelical Christians identify as Republican.⁷ And this is very evident at Overfelt High School. Every year I have my students take a non-scientific, informal survey that determines where one falls along the political spectrum. The survey consists of a series of statements and students with which students strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. Their choices are given a numerical value that they then add up, giving them a score of where they fall along a political spectrum of being more Democratic or more Republican. They are often surprised that despite verbally identifying as Democrats, the results of the survey places most of them close to the center of the spectrum. Commotion ensues as a result of their scores, and many demand to retake the survey because there’s no way they can be “middle of the road” or be leaning slightly Republican.

To counteract/dispel this negative association of the Republican Party, this unit will dive into the history of political parties and its function in a democracy. Students will then be given an opportunity to explore the political affiliation and beliefs of their family members and friends to see the representation in their immediate community and to have a discussion within their immediate community about why they lean towards a

specific party. I hope students will collect this information dispel any misconception they might have about either party.

Unit 4 and 5 of the AP U.S. Government and Politics curriculum requires knowledge of political parties and political participation. This includes topics on the ideologies of the Democratic and Republican parties and how their ideologies affect policies. Topics will also cover the influence of interest groups and other linkage institutions that influence policies and examine why it is difficult for third parties and independent candidates to succeed.⁸

This unit will begin by establishing the historical context of how political parties were created and how it has transformed and changed over time. Students will analyze and understand various primary sources, such as select readings from the Federalist Papers and George Washington's Farewell Address. Students will also be given an opportunity to analyze demographic data to determine voting trends and voting behavior of various groups, especially minority groups.

Content Objective

Early Political Parties

If George Washington was alive today, he would be appalled at the political discord that exists in our country today. The faction of political parties was never intended. At the inception of our newly formed government, our Founding Fathers—the framers of the Constitution--worked to avoid creating political parties, believing them to be “self-serving factions that cultivated dissent and were...detrimental to good government.”⁹ But their best efforts failed. The first President of the United States, George Washington, was not affiliated with any political party when he took office; however, political discord existed within his own cabinet. Alexander Hamilton, George Washington's Secretary of Treasury, emerged as the leader of the Federalist Paper, which advocated for a strong central government during the Constitution's ratification process. Hamilton wanted to implement a national economic program by establishing the Bank of the United States to assume the debts of all the states. He believed that doing so would force the states to unite under a single banking entity and foster a prosperous and stable country.¹⁰ Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson strongly opposed Hamilton's economic plan and foreign policies because the bank would give too much power to the federal government and would disenfranchise the agrarian society. This growing faction ultimately led to Jefferson's followers calling themselves the Democratic-Republicans. James Madison even went onto proclaim that political parties were inevitable and necessary as a system of checks and balances¹¹ contrary to his warning about the dangers of a political faction in Federalist Paper #9 & #10 during the Constitutional ratification process. While political parties originated in response to the ratification of the Constitution, it was soon expanded by Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton in an effort to gain supporters for various causes.

After serving two terms as President, George Washington decided to step down from power. He was fearful of dying while in office, which might set the precedent that a President can serve indefinitely, which was akin to a monarchy. On his way out, he wrote a letter addressing the American citizen a serious of advice. In his address, Washington advised the American citizen to avoid political parties. George Washington warns of the dangers of political parties as an enemy to democracy as each of the parties has a tendency to seek out more power than the other groups, and disagreements of parties will eventually weaken the government.¹²

History of the Democratic Party

John Quincy Adams was elected president in 1824 despite no candidate receiving the majority of electoral votes needed. The vote went to the House of Representative, where Quincy emerged victoriously. This led to an outcry from Andrew Jackson's supporters who firmly believed that Henry Clay, the third candidate in this election made a "corrupt bargain" to convince Congress to elect John Q. Adams in exchange for a post in the State Department. Many of Jackson's supporters claimed that Adams' presidency was illegitimate which signaled the split in the Democratic-Republican Party, and in 1828, the modern day Democratic Party was founded. After enjoy over a decade of the United States government operating under a single party in an era dubbed 'The Era of Good Feeling,' the Jacksonian democracy, as it was also known, created a split in the Democratic-Republican Party into the now Democratic Party and the Republican Party. With Andrew Jackson's "common" background, the Democratic Party became the party for the common man. Andrew Jackson represented many qualities of a common man. Despite lacking a formal education, Andrew Jackson managed to self-study and became a lawyer. He mostly gained prominence through his military career fighting in the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. Jackson was also the first President to hail from the western state of Tennessee, which brought an end to the long reign of the "Virginia Dynasties," hence why the Democratic Party was the party for the common man.

As the party for the common man, the Democratic Party wanted to protect domestic enterprise through import tariffs, and expansion of new farmlands. Under President Martin Van Buren, the Democratic Party began to take shape by officially adopting a party platform during the 1840 Democratic Convention where the Democratic delegates reaffirmed their beliefs, among which advocated for a decentralization of power and state rights. The Democratic Convention also adopted the policy regarding slavery as Congress having no power to interfere in domestic institutions of individual states.¹³ (The issue of slavery will create a split within the Democratic Party into the Northern Democrats and the Southern Democrats). Democrats were also supporters of expansion and the philosophy of Manifest Destiny, which led to the United States government's involvement with Mexico over Texas and with Great Britain over Oregon.

On the verge of the Civil War, the Democratic Party opposed the expansion of slavery into the newly acquired territories during the Mexican-American War. However, not all Democrats agreed with this policy. While Northern Democrats supported the ideas of popular sovereignty spouted by Stephen Douglas, Southern Democrats were advocated for maintaining the institution of slavery. This split in the Democratic Party continued throughout the Civil War when the War Democrats supported the policies of Abraham Lincoln (despite being a Republican) and supported the war efforts. The Democrats in the North, known as Copperhead, strongly opposed them. It was due to the split that the Democrats were unable to win the Presidential election in 1864. It wasn't until the late 19th Century that the Democrats finally gained power in the Congress due to a nationwide depression in 1873 that led to resentment of the Republican Party and the election of a Democratic president in 1876 of Rutherford B. Hayes.

Woodrow Wilson became President in 1912 as a result of a split within the Republican Party when they were divided among two candidates—Theodore Roosevelt and William H. Taft. After the end of World War I Woodrow Wilson attempted to involve the United States in international affairs through the League of Nations. the Democratic Party will lose control of Congress

History of the Republican Party

The Republican Party emerged as a dominant party in 1854 amid the national debate on the expansion of

slavery. Historically, the Republican Party attracted membership from businessmen, prosperous farmers, evangelical Protestants, and former black slaves. With the election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860, the Republican Party's popularity grew, especially after the success of the Union in the American Civil War and popular amongst blacks as a result of the Republican Party's role in abolishing slavery. Some Republicans felt that not enough was being done for the civil rights of the former slaves, so a faction of the Republican Party known as the Radical Republicans emerged. During the Reconstruction era, the Radical Republicans slowly took control of Congress and helped pushed for the passage of the 14th Amendment. The Radical Republicans were responsible for vetoing the Civil Rights Act of 1866 when they felt that it wasn't doing enough to forbid discrimination against African Americans. It was the Radical Republicans that righteously led the Reconstruction effort in the South.

During the early 20th Century, America was experiencing tremendous economic growth known as the Progressive Era. This era was dominated by Republican Presidents and Republican agenda of maintaining high tariffs to promote domestic business interests and its isolationist policy (before entering WWI). During the 1928 Presidential election, blacks voted for Herbert Hoover, a Republican. In 1932, we many black voters moving towards Franklin D. Roosevelt. And by the end of the Great Depression, majority of black voters voted Democratic. This was largely in part due to Roosevelt's New Deal policy that allowed blacks to share in many of the relief programs. Unfortunately, Roosevelt and the Democratic Party will not address the issue of legal segregation across the country and the Jim Crow Laws in the South.

Following the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision in 1973, the Republican Party opposed abortion and made it part of its party platform. As a result, the Republican Party grew its support from evangelicals.¹⁴ The Republican Party also placed on its platform a strong defense of gun rights, capital punishment, and restriction on labor union and a conservative economic policy. The Republican Party's platform attracts a large number of white male proportionally as many of their platform positions protected white male pursuits by not regulating liquor, guns, and motorcycle helmets to name a few. Women and African Americans tend to lean away from the Republican Party since they tend to control women and black pursuits, such as abortion and the wearing of baggy pants (in Louisiana).¹⁵

When people think of the Republican Party today, many Americans think of Donald Trump. In my U.S. History class, my students are surprised when they discover that Abraham Lincoln was a Republican. They are surprised to learn that the Republican Party has a reputation for supporting blacks and minorities. Wyoming was the first state to grant women the right to vote under the leadership of a Republican governor, John Allen Campbell. Many of the first minorities and disenfranchised groups that was elected into state or federal legislatures were of the Republican Party. There was Romualdo Pacheco who was elected as the first Hispanic governor of California in 1875, Jeannette Rankin became the first women to be elected into Congress in 1916, as well as Charles Curtis. He was the first person of Indigenous descent to be named Vice President to Republican President, Herbert Hoover. And until the 1930s, every African American who served in the legislative branch were Republicans. Other prominent speakers like Frederick Douglas and Booker T. Washington were all Republicans. It was also the Republican-run Senate that made the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 possible despite a Democratic Senators attempt at a filibuster¹⁶.

Advantages and Disadvantages of a Two-Party System

The two-party system has consistently existed in the United States, with a few instances in which a third party might emerge. With the demise of the Federalist Party, the Democratic-Republican Party dominated under the Presidency of James Monroe. However, the Democratic-Republican Party split during the 1824 Presidential

election into the now modern Democratic Party, formed in support of Andrew Jackson. And the Republican Party formed in support of John Quincy Adams. Third parties have occasionally emerged, but there have been very few instances in which third party candidates won an election. While other parties such as the Whig Party, National Republican Party, even the Bull-Moose party have emerged, United States government have always been dominated by two major parties with seats in Congress having no more than two that belonged to a third party.¹⁷ Among them is Bernie Sanders, who was elected as a Vermont Senator as an independent. Even then, he is relegated to competing and debating as a Democratic candidate during Presidential primaries.

During the ratification of the Constitution, James Madison previously warned of the dangers of political factions. He believed that as differing wealth and the status of land ownership will create factions within the people and those who share similar views and ideology would always ally together. Madison later changed his view to assert that party factions are necessary as it held politicians accountable and held them in checks and balances.¹⁸

Despite the polarization of parties, a two-party system can be beneficial. Political parties can benefit voters by organizing and presenting information in a convenient way. Each party will present its policies in a way voters can understand, thereby allowing voters to choose a side to support. This, in turn, will force parties to serve the voters by competing with the other party.¹⁹ Having a two-party system also creates political stability (but can also cause instability as the two parties constantly quarrel with each other, which creates disruptions in Congress) since parties are better able to pass their policies through the legislature, especially when they are the majority party.

Entering the United States government under a third party system has never been easy. Third Parties have encountered various blocks in getting onto ballots from the local to the national level. Some of these obstacles included being denied access to general election debates. To date, there has only been one instance where a third-party candidate has been admitted to a televised presidential debate, Ross Perot in 1992.²⁰ Candidates who break off from their political parties to run as a third party candidate have never fared well. Theodore Roosevelt split from the Republican Party to run as a third-party candidate, under the Bull Moose Party, which resulted in the splitting of the Republican Party, which allowed the Democratic nominee Woodrow Wilson to win the presidency with a 42% plurality of the votes.

While the United States has operated under a two-party system, it is important to recognize that criticism to the two-party system exists. The American political parties are weak because of a variety of reasons. It has a staged election system and a bicameral system that frequently causes division in party in an attempt to gain control; and the existence of primaries and caucuses that take away parties from leadership in determining who is going to represent the constituents.²¹ Over time, political parties have moved away from their constituents need. One of the downsides of a two-party system creates party division, which in turn causes each side to diffuse accountability.²² Despite the impact and influence of political parties, they are generally weak, partly due to the existence of primary elections.²³ Before the 1960s, respective parties would host national conventions to communicate party positions.²⁴ But as the medium of communications has expanded over time to TV, radio, and social media, these conventions have become nothing more than a large party for political candidates. Primaries were introduced back in the 1960s as a way for political parties to test the viability of a candidate and nominate him/her, especially during a presidential election. At the height of the very unpopular Vietnam War, many Americans voted for anti-war candidates in the state primaries. This led the Democratic and the Republican Parties to reform the primaries. Basically, a candidate is awarded a

certain number of delegates based on how they fare in nominating contests. The final vote for the nominee takes place at a national party convention in July and August of an election year. Party leaders vet candidates and choose front-runners to support during a campaign, and nearly always their preferred candidate gets selected. Instead of voters directly selecting a particular person running for president, they determine how many number of delegates each political party will receive from their respective state. These delegates then, in turn, select their party's presidential nominee.

Demographic

In a survey conducted by Pew Research Center in 2017, 37% of registered voters identified as independent, 33% as Democrats, and 26% as Republicans. Among the 37% of independents, about 50% said they lean Democratic while 42% lean Republican. Upon further breakdown of the demographic, 56% of women registered voters lean towards the Democratic Party. Pew Research saw a slight increase from 54% in 2016 to 56% in 2017. 84% of African American voters identify as Democratic, with only 8% of black voters identifying as a Republican. 63% of Hispanic voters identify as Democratic, whereas 28% identify as a Republican. The same trend follows among Asian Americans, with 65% identifying as a Democrat and 27% identifying as Republican.²⁵ Data clearly shows that people of color overwhelmingly support the Democratic Party, and Black Americans “nearly unanimously support Democratic Presidential candidates.”²⁶ When African Americans gained the right to vote under the 15th Amendment, nearly all blacks identified and supported the Republican Party—the party of Abraham Lincoln. When the Southern Democrats gained political power in the South, they enacted a series of Jim Crow laws.

If people typically vote in their own self-interest based on their personal cultural values,²⁷ why do minorities lean towards the Democratic Party in large numbers? Historically the Democratic Party has produced very “little in the way of substantive policy changes with regard to race over the last several decades.”²⁸ Historically, the Southern Democrats were responsible for the passage of Jim Crow Laws that created discriminatory laws that disenfranchised blacks in the South.

Historically, blacks have been part of both major political parties. When the 15th Amendment was passed in 1870, nearly all blacks identified as a Republican and supported its candidates. Blacks saw the Republican Party as the power of Abraham Lincoln—the man who was committed to ending slavery and expanding black civil rights. But since the 1960s, no Republican candidates have received more than 13% of black voters. Upwards of 80% of African American voters identify as Democrats today.²⁹ Even though the Republicans were more progressive on the civil rights issues during the civil rights era, a vast majority of black voters have voted Democratic since the Great Depression.³⁰ During the 1944 presidential election, Republican presidential nominee Thomas Dewey gave a stirring speech about racial equality, yet black voters flocked to the Democrats. White and Laird argued that black voters are more likely to vote Democratic if a majority of their friends are black. It isn't that black voters aren't rational voters, but they are concerned about what other black people will think and prioritize group solidarity.³¹ Being united in supporting the Democratic Party has become a way for black Americans to come together and empire the racial group.

Current Trend in Political Parties

The two political parties are further apart than it's ever been with “33% of Democrats and 40% of Republicans believing that partyism is a significant source of divisive prejudice.”³² With the growing polarization of political parties, 50% of Millennials have chosen to not identify with either political parties, instead of remaining

independent. While they may not formally identify with either political parties, Millennials are more likely to lean towards the Democratic Party.³³ According to a Gallup poll conducted in May of 2020, 40% of voters consider themselves independent.³⁴

In the 2020 election, it is projected that one-third of eligible voters will be made up of minorities, which is an increase from one fourth in the 2000 election. From what we know about the history of the two political parties and how minority groups have voted historically, this trend might indicate a Democratic victory in the 2020 Presidential election. However, as noted before, voter turnout in major elections has also been historically low, especially among people of color. Eligible Hispanic voters who didn't vote far exceeds the number of those who did vote in presidential elections.³⁵

Teaching Strategies

This unit is expected to take three to four weeks to complete while incorporating a variety of strategies. During our last accreditation process, William C. Overfelt High School established three primary goals with the commitment to implement it across all departments. One of these goals is to implement a student-center instruction with the use of DOK-3 and task with rigorous common core standards. Subsequently, AP U.S. Government and Politics were offered as a course for the first time in 2018 as a result of a student-driven campaign. There was an increase in student voice to offer a rigorous course that delved deeper into understanding the founding principles and the political structure of the American Government system. While this unit is created for highly motivated and high academic achievement students, I believe the nature of the divisive rhetoric of political parties in our society will make this unit appeal to a greater number of students. Ultimately, unit's goal is to empower students with the skills and knowledge to make informed voting decisions at all levels so that they feel embolden to make positive changes for their community.

I will use various strategies from direct instruction, independent reading, pair/share, and analysis of primary and secondary sources to build background knowledge in this study of government. While students may be eager to jump right into the discussion of the current political climate, it is important that they have foundational knowledge to increase their historical perspective. Students will read primary and secondary sources connected to the philosophy and policies of Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and George Washington to gain a better understanding of the first political parties in the United States. Students will create an annotated timeline from George Washington to today outlining party trends and positions on major issues. As a cumulating assignment, students will be asked to choose a modern-day issue relevant to their own lives. They will research and write a 2-3 page paper presenting their findings on the roles of both the Democratic and the Republican (and a 3rd party if applicable) in how they have historically engaged in this issue from the past to today.

Classroom Activities

Week 1

To introduce the unit on Political Parties, I will begin by reviewing the Federalist Paper No 9 & 10 and Washington's Farewell Address through direct instruction and having students read excerpts from it with guided questions. Through direct instruction, students will have good foundational knowledge on the formation of the political factions created during the Constitutional ratification process. While many of my seniors have taken Advanced Placement United States History, this time of direct instruction will fill any gaps the students may have.

Some of the other classroom activities involved during this week include a jigsaw activity where students will read from the textbook *Government Alive!* On the different party systems. Each group will consist of three members (four if necessary) to define: one-party system, two-party system, and multi-party system and to brainstorm two advantages and two disadvantages of each type of systems. Each group will share out their answers and record new advantages and disadvantages shared.

To conclude this week, I will assess student understanding through exit tickets:

According to George Washington in his Farewell Address, what are the problems caused by parties?

What type of party system best meets the needs of our society today? Explain your answer with evidence from class discussion.

Week 2

At the beginning of the school year, I establish a clear expectation that students are encouraged to participate in classroom discussion. As it is an advanced placement class, students are expected to engage in high-level discussions. But none of this is possible if I don't create an environment where students feel safe and inclusive. As AP Government will be taught in the second semester, we will have had an entire semester to practice and establish an environment where students feel safe and comfortable to speak up in class. One of the ways I help my students lessen the stress of speaking up during the class discussion is by providing a few minutes of silence to jot down their thoughts. The students will also be allowed to share their ideas with a partner before opening the discussion to the whole class. The second week of this unit will require a lot of class discussion so it is important to establish class discussion rules from the beginning of the school year. I also frequently provide incentives for students to share their answers in the form of extra credit points.

Students will take a survey provided through the supplemental materials in their textbook, *Government Alive!* to determine where they fall along the political spectrum. The survey places students along a spectrum of being very liberal to very conservative. After students take the survey, many of my students will fall along the middle of the spectrum, as well as most Americans. This activity will allow open discussion about their understanding of what it means to be liberal, moderate or conservative. I will also share with my students during the discussion of demographic data of political party affiliation broken down into gender, age, race, ethnicity, income, educational attainment, and geography.

Another topic that we will be discussing is the importance of young people in the voting process. Statistically, 18-24 year olds represent the lowest turnout of any election. I would begin the class by posing the question,

“What percentage of young people (age 18-24) do you think vote? In the 2016 presidential election, only 46% of eligible voters in the 18-29 year old demographic voted—the lowest percentage of all age group³⁶ . Through a round table discussion, I will pose several questions for students.

1. Why do young voters turn out in low numbers?
2. What is preventing young voters from voting? Are there any barriers to voting for young voters?
3. What do you think needs to change in order to increase young voter turnout?
4. What are some issues that are important to young people?
5. Over 50% of young voters identify as independent. Do you think it is crucial to identify a political party?
6. How much does family or your immediate community influence how you think politically?
7. Why is it important for young voters to vote?

From this discussion, I will end the day with an exit ticket asking my students to revisit Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and George Washington’s belief on political factions and see if their warnings and convictions still hold true today.

This week, students will also view the debate episode from *The West Wing* (Season 4, Episode 1) where two opposing presidential candidates President Barlet and Florida Governor Ritchie face off on a national debate. While watching the episode, students will identify 12 issues that commonly divide the two major political parties in America and where they stand on those positions. At the end of the episode, I will pose the question, “Do you see certain issues as belonging to a party over the other?”

Week 3

This week, students will examine the two political party system in the United States and the effect third parties have had upon it. Students will be introduced to excerpts from Robert Dahl and the introduction written by Ian Shapiro to gain another perspective of why having a two-party system creates a weak government. Students will also read several news articles to gain a better understanding of why it is so difficult for third parties to enter elections in the United States. They will read an article from PBS titled “Third Parties in the United States Political Process,”³⁷ and write down four obstacles third parties face in the United States. Students will also be given a New York Times article “Third Party Candidates Need to Get on the Debate Stage to Make a Difference”³⁸ . Using the model outlined in Facing History And Ourselves outline, students will prepare, then conduct a Socratic seminar on whether the United States should allow a third party candidate to debate on a national election.³⁹

Week 4

This week, students get into groups of no more than three members and choose an issue that is either effecting young people or their community. They will research the history of the issue and create a timeline of the roles of both the Democratic Party and the Republican (and a third-party or outside organization if applicable) have taken in tackling these issues. While the bulk of the research will be done outside of the classroom as homework, I will be meeting with groups throughout this week and next week to gauge their progress and to provide any assistance needed and to direct them to any additional resources. As they are working on their research, they will be working to present their research to the class.

Appendix on Implementing District Standards

College Board Standards: The readings students will do for this unit and the research will satisfy the AP U.S. Government and Politics project requirement where students must show students being engaged in exploring how they can affect, and are affected by the government and politics throughout their lives. ⁴⁰

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.6 Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8 Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

California State Content Standards

12.1.4 Explain how the Founding Fathers' realistic view of human nature led directly to the establishment of a constitutional system that limited the power of the governors and the governed as articulated in the Federalist Papers.

12.1.5 Describe the systems of separated and shared powers, the role of organized interests (Federalist Paper Number 10), checks and balances (Federalist Paper Number 51), the importance of an independent judiciary (Federalist Paper Number 78), enumerated powers, rule of law, federalism, and civilian control of the military.

12.3.2 Explain how civil society makes it possible for people, individually or in association with others, to bring their influence to bear on government in ways other than voting and elections.

12.6.1 Analyze the origin, development, and role of political parties, noting those occasional periods in which there was only one major party or were more than two major parties.

12.6.3 Evaluate the roles of polls, campaign advertising, and the controversies over campaign funding.

12.6.4 Describe the means that citizens use to participate in the political process (e.g., voting, campaigning, lobbying, filing a legal challenge, demonstrating, petitioning, picketing, running for political office).

12.6.6 Analyze trends in voter turnout; the causes and effects of reapportionment and redistricting, with special attention to spatial districting and the rights of minorities; and the function of the Electoral College.

Footnote

¹ Alexander Hamilton. Federalist No 9 (1787).

² James Madison. Federalist No. 10 (1787).

³ Robert Dahl and Ian Shapiro, *On Democracy*, p. 30.

⁴ Donald Trump speech.

⁵ [.http://www.esuhd.org/Community/Strategic-Plan/index.html](http://www.esuhd.org/Community/Strategic-Plan/index.html).

⁶ <https://siliconvalleyindicators.org/data/governance/civic-engagement/partisan-affiliation/percentage-of-registered-voters-by-political-party/>.

⁷ <https://www.people-press.org/2015/04/07/a-deep-dive-into-party-affiliation/>

⁸ College Board/AP Central.

⁹ The Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence.

¹⁰ Sean Welentz. *The Rise of American Democracy; Jefferson to Lincoln*, p. 44-45.

¹¹ Robert Dahl and Ian Shapiro, *On Democracy*, introduction.

¹² Stanley Elkins and Eric McKittrick, *The Age of Federalist*, p. 489-499.

¹³ Proceedings of the National Democratic Convention, held in Baltimore, on the 5th of May, 1840.

¹⁴ Geoffrey Layman, *The Great Divide: Religious and Cultural Conflict in American Party Politics*, p. 115, 119, 120.

¹⁵ Arlie Russel Hochschild. *Strangers in their Own Land and Mourning on the American Right*, p. 8.

¹⁶ Louis Bolce, Gerald De Maio, and Douglas Muzzio, p. 255-270.

¹⁷ <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/04/27/why-are-there-only-two-parties-in-american-politics/>.

¹⁸ Robert Dahl and Ian Shapiro, *On Democracy*, Introduction.

¹⁹ Frances McCall Rosenbluth and Ian Shapiro, *Responsible Parties: Saving Democracy from Itself*, p. 4.

²⁰ Thom Fain.

- ²¹ Frances McCall Rosenbluth and Ian Shapiro, *Responsible Parties: Saving Democracy from Itself*, p. 97 and seminar lecture July 14, 2020.
- ²² Robert Dahl and Ian Shapiro, *On Democracy*, introduction.
- ²³ Ian Shapiro, seminar lecture, July 14, 2020.
- ²⁴ Goldberg, Jonah, *The Hollowing Out of American Political Parties*.
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