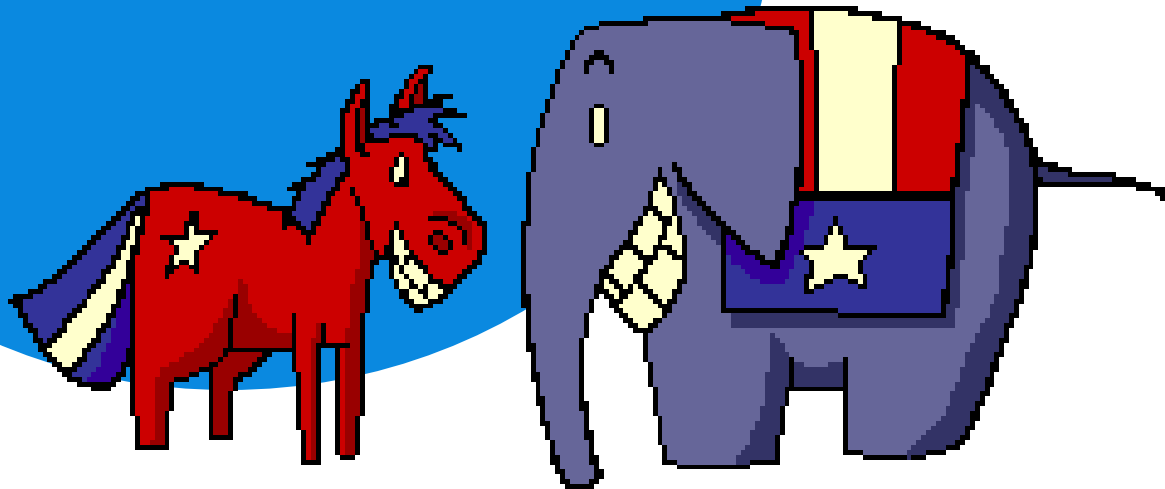


Party Time!

Exploring Political Parties in the United States

Benchmarks

SS.7.C.2.8 Identify America's current political parties, and illustrate their ideas about government.



What comes to mind when you see:

DEMOCRAT

Write down the first three words that come to mind.

What comes to mind when you see:

REPUBLICAN

Write down the first three words that come to mind.

IN your group:

- Share your list of words for each political party
- Combine your lists into one master list for all of the terms your group members came up with (do not include duplicates)

Questions for Discussion

Where have you heard these terms before?

What made you think of a particular word in reference to a political party?



Two Party System

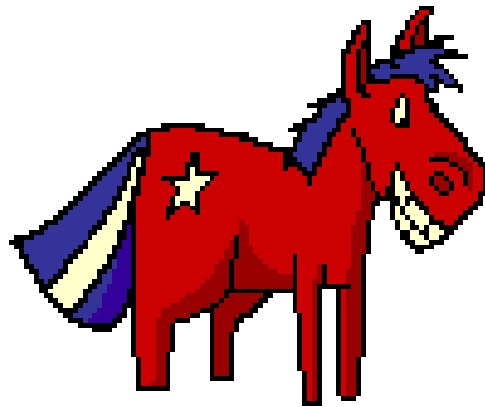
- The United States has what is known as a **two-party system**.

What does that mean?

- This is a form of party system where two major political parties, more or less equal in strength and influence, dominate in elections at all levels.

Did you know:
Political parties are never
mentioned in the Constitution.

Party Animals?



Democrats use a donkey as the symbol for their party.

The donkey was first used as a symbol of the Democratic Party by Andrew Jackson. He had often been called a donkey, as they are known for being strong willed.



Republicans use an elephant as the symbol for their party.

The elephant first came into use in the 1800's when it was used in a political cartoon to represent the Republican Vote.

To see the cartoon, click [HERE](#).

Does that mean there are only two political parties?

- No, there are many political parties in the United States
- There are three minor parties recognized in more than 10 states:



- There are also other, smaller parties, like the Communist Party and the Socialist Party

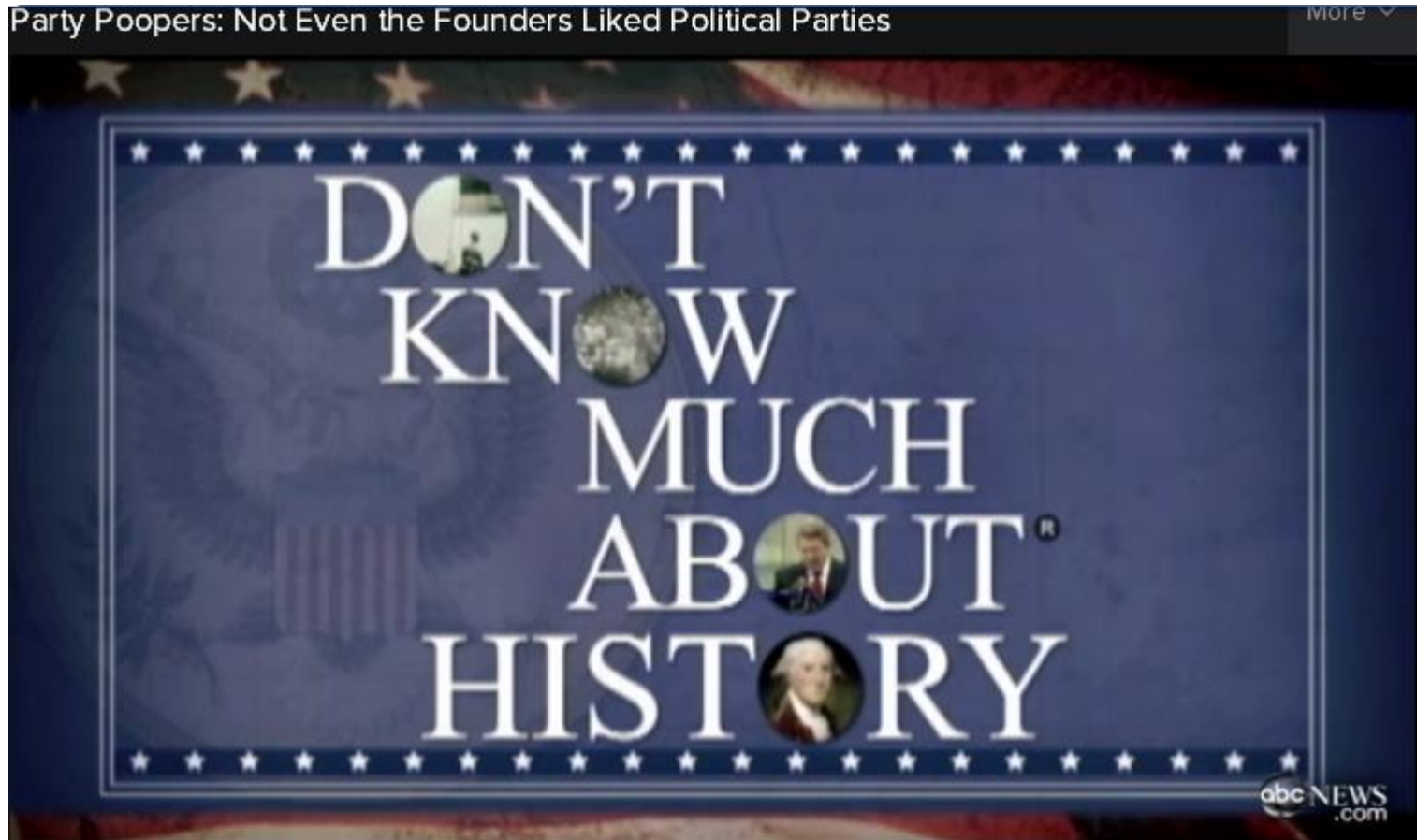
[Click each logo to view the respective party's platform on their website.](#)

Membership in Political Parties

State affiliates for each political party

Democratic Party	50 states, District of Columbia
Republican Party	50 states, District of Columbia
Libertarian Party	34 states
Green Party	21 states
Constitution Party	12 states

Click the Image Below to View “Party Poopers: Not even the Founders Liked Political Parties”



WebQuest:

What are the parties' ideas
about government?

IDENTIFYING THE ISSUES

Role of Political Parties

- Political parties are composed of individuals who share similar ideas about government.
- Those within a party share similar views on:
 - The role of government
 - Foreign policy
 - Environment
 - Military and defense
 - The economy & taxes
 - Healthcare
 - And many other topics...



Political Parties Today

- What function do political parties serve today?
 - Provide a forum to discuss public policies and issues with like-minded individuals and try to influence government
 - Establish a networking system where people can nominate candidates for office, raise money for candidates, and set up campaigns
 - Serve as an entry point for people to become involved in government
 - Give people a choice of candidates
 - Serve as a connection between state and national government

Who do you side with?



Who do you side with?

- The Democratic Party was founded in 1828.
- In its beginnings, the party stressed its ties to common people.
- Today, the party believes the government should become directly involved in regulating the economy. It also believes the government should provide job, housing, and other assistance to the poor.

- The Republican Party was founded in 1854.
- Originally, the party was founded by people who opposed slavery.
- Today, the party believes the government should have minimal involvement in the economy.

Checking for Understanding

In the modern political system, which issue represents a basic disagreement between Republicans and Democrats?

- ★. the responsibilities of government
- ~~B. the frequency of national elections~~
- ~~C. the legality of the U.S. Constitution~~
- ~~D. the support for the U.S. military soldier~~