

MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES

During most of U.S. history there have been two major political parties. Other parties have sometimes run in elections, but they seldom win. Therefore, the U.S. is said to have a _____ - _____ system. Political parties play a key role in government and provide opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process.

I. Functions of a Political Party:

- A. Recruiting and _____.
- B. _____ for _____ to help them win the election.
- C. Informing _____ about campaign _____. (educating the electorate)
- D. Helping to manage _____. (handing out _____ by getting recommendations from party leaders.
- E. Linking the different _____ and _____ of government.
- F. Acting as a _____ (the party out of power - they lost the election- watches the actions of the _____ in power for _____ or misuses of power).

II. Similarities Between Political Parties:

- A. All parties organize to win _____.
- B. All parties try to influence public _____.
- C. All parties reflect views of the people, both _____ and _____.
- D. All parties try to win majority support by appealing to the political _____ on the political spectrum. They avoid the extremes.

III. Differences Between Political Parties:

- A. The basic difference between the major parties is their belief in how much the government should be involved in the lives of _____. For example, Democrats tend to believe that the federal government should be _____ involved in American's lives. Republicans favor _____ government involvement.

B. Main differences between political parties are stated in the party's _____.
It is written every four years at the presidential nominating convention. Differences are also reflected in the party's _____ strategies.

IV. Third Parties:

- A. Third parties rarely _____ major elections, but they challenge the two _____ parties. They can effect the _____ of elections and may influence government and social policy. They introduce new _____ or press for a particular issue.
- B. Third parties often revolve around a well-known _____ or personality who cannot get support from one of the two major parties (For example, Theodore _____ in 1912, and Ross _____ in 1992 and 1996).