

Unit 4

Content Area: **Social Studies**
Course(s):
Time Period: **Generic Time Period**
Length: **3 weeks**
Status: **Published**

Unit Introduction

Politics: American politics have always been marked by the two party system. From time to time third parties play important roles. Evaluating these trends shall be a central objective of this unit.

Standards

SOC.6.1.12.A.2.a	Assess the importance of the intellectual origins of the Foundational Documents (i.e., Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and Bill of Rights) and assess their importance on the spread of democracy around the world.
SOC.6.1.12.A.2.b	Compare and contrast state constitutions, including New Jersey's 1776 constitution, with the United States Constitution, and determine their impact on the development of American constitutional government.
SOC.6.1.12.A.2.e	Examine the emergence of early political parties and their views on centralized government and foreign affairs, and compare these positions with those of today's political parties.
SOC.6.1.12.A.14.a	Evaluate the effectiveness of the checks and balances system in preventing one branch of national government from usurping too much power during contemporary times.
SOC.6.1.12.A.14.d	Analyze the conflicting ideologies and actions of political parties regarding spending priorities, the role of government in the economy, and social reforms.
SOC.6.1.12.A.14.e	Evaluate the effectiveness and fairness of the process by which national, state, and local officials are elected and vote on issues of public concern.
SOC.6.1.12.A.14.g	Analyze the impact of community groups and state policies that strive to increase the youth vote (i.e., distribution of voter registration forms in high schools).
SOC.6.1.12.A.14.h	Assess the effectiveness of government policies in balancing the rights of the individual against the need for national security.
SOC.6.1.12.CS4	Civil War and Reconstruction: The Civil War was caused by ideological, economic, and political differences about the future course of the nation. Efforts to reunite the country through Reconstruction were contested, resisted, and had long-term consequences.
SOC.6.1.12.CS14	Contemporary United States: Domestic Policies: Differing views on government's role in social and economic issues led to greater partisanship in government decision making. The increased economic prosperity and opportunities experienced by many masked growing tensions and disparities experienced by some individuals and groups. Immigration, educational opportunities, and social interaction have led to the growth of a multicultural society with varying values and perspectives.

Essential Questions

How prevalent has the two party system been in the history of modern American politics?

What are some reasons for the status of the two party system in America?

When and why do third parties introduce themselves into the political process?

To what degree does it seem likely that America is headed towards a multi-party format?

How will the changing American political landscape effect the American constitutional system?

Content / Skills

Trace the development of the two party system from 1789-present day. Identify and provide the significance for each of the following: Federalist, Democratic-Republican, Whig, Democratic, and the Republican Party.

Define what Americans mean when they use the terms liberal, conservative, and moderate.

Define and provide significance for the following third parties: Free Soil, Republican, Green Back, Populist, Bull-Moose, and Green party. Contrast the success of third parties in America against those in Canada, England, Israel, and other European countries.

Identify the number of Americans who today consider themselves GOP, Dem's, or Independents. Identify several third party organizations that have performed well in recent state and national elections. Identify population and demographic trends that might impact future party affiliation.