



Running for Office: SS.7.C.2.8
Political Parties
VIDEO #2 SCRIPT



The Impact of Political Parties

1. Political parties in the United States have a significant impact on society, government, and the political system. But just how do they do that? In this video, we're going to take a look at how political parties actually influence our country.
2. Following this video, you will be able to
 - evaluate the impact that political parties have on society, government and the political system.Be sure to watch the other video on the Democratic Party, Republican Party, and third parties in order to compare current political parties ideas about government. We'll do a refresher on those ideas in this video as we talk about impact.
3. A political party is a group of citizens or voters with similar views on public issues. Political parties play a major role and have a large impact on American society. These groups of citizens work together to put candidates into public office because by working together they can try to put their ideas into action in the government.
4. One of the most important jobs of a political party is to nominate a candidate to run for office as a representative of the party. The candidate that they pick will agree with the parties beliefs and help persuade voters to support them. But keep in mind that a candidate is just someone who runs for office. You don't need to be part of a political party to run for office.
5. Competing political parties give voters a choice among candidates and issues. Political parties will educate citizens about where they stand on issues through the party platform, which is often the length of a short book. It's a written statement that shows the party's principles, beliefs, and positions on the important issues of the election. You can learn more about party platforms by looking at the other video in this series, on the Democratic Party, Republican Party, and third parties to get more sense of the ideas of political parties.
6. So let's take a look at the most recent party platforms of 2016 deal with some issues.
7. This is a pretty common one: minimum wage. The Republican Party platform says that 'Minimum wage is an issue that should be handled at the state and local level', while the Democratic Party platform says that the "current minimum wage is a starvation wage and must be increased to a living wage."

8. Another issue in the platforms that can impact us all is on trade. The Republican Party platform says that “we need better negotiated trade agreements that put American first”, while the Democratic Party platform says that “we will oppose trade agreements that do not support good American jobs, raise wages, and improve our national security.” Huh, pretty similar there.

9. Let’s look at an area in the platform where the two parties really disagree: healthcare. The Republican Party says that it will “start with repeal of the dishonestly named Affordable Care Act of 2010, Obamacare” while the Democratic Party is “proud to be the party that passed the Affordable Care Act.” Two big differences that could have a huge impact on society.

10. Party platforms are so important that they contain many different issues that could impact us all, such as national defense, foreign policy, the Bill of Rights, Court Rulings, Immigration, and many others. You can see the party platforms at the addresses on the screen.

11. Let’s check in: try to answer the following question in your own words.

12. Based on what you have learned, how could party platforms impact an election?

13. ANSWER TO QUESTION

14. Let’s recap what we’ve learned so far. A political party is a group of citizens or voters with similar views on public issues. Political parties work to elect candidates that agree with them on the issues in order to put their ideas into action in the government. The ideas of a political party can be found in its platform. Examples of issues in platforms are health care, trade, and the minimum wage. You can learn about a party’s candidate by looking at its platform. So let’s look at how the parties and their platforms impact society, government, and the political system.

15. Political parties seek to gain control in multiple areas of government. They try to influence society, government, and the political system by implementing the goals of their platform.

16. One area of government they seek to control is Congress. The political party that wins more seats in one house of the national or state legislature, the law making branch of government, becomes the majority party in that house of the legislature. The party that wins fewer seats in one house of the national or state legislature becomes the minority party in that house.

17. So why do these political parties fight so hard for control of Congress and the state legislatures? Well, it’s because they have a greater ability to influence society, government, and the political system if they are in control. The majority party in the legislature often has more control over the lawmaking process than the minority party, and so this naturally gives them more influence. Even though the majority party has a great deal of control of the lawmaking process, the minority party remains active and uses its influence as much as possible. It is important to remember that elected members of political parties represent citizens with very different political ideas so it is important that the majority and minority party work together when making decisions in order to represent all the people.

18. Let's check in: Try to answer the following questions in your own words.

19. How can political parties influence society, the government, and the political system?

20. ANSWER TO QUESTION

21. What's the difference between a majority party and a minority party in a lawmaking body like Congress or a state legislature?

22. ANSWER TO QUESTION

23. So let's recap what we've learned in the second half of this video. Political parties try to influence society, government, and the political system by winning elections and implementing their platforms. Parties seek to gain control of Congress and state legislatures to control the lawmaking process and implement their platforms. A majority party has more elected officials in Congress or a state legislature than a minority party. Parties need to work together to best represent all of the people.

24. Well, political parties have certainly had a huge impact on our society, government, and the political system, especially when they control state legislatures and the Congress. Be sure to view the other video in this module, on the ideas of the Republicans, Democrats, and third parties in order to really get a great sense of how political parties work in the United States.