

Unit 3: Political Parties

Reading Questions - Chapter Seven

1. What is a political party? What are the three political arenas within which a party may be found?
2. In what ways are American political parties weaker than they used to be? (This is an **extremely important** point so be sure that you understand it and can explain all the reasons. This concept will turn up again and again in this class.) This would be a good question for writing a detailed answer. As you read through the chapter, any time you see a mention of weakened parties, add to this list.
3. **Briefly** summarize the differences between political parties in the United States and in Europe. You can make a bullet point chart.
4. **Briefly** trace the development of the party system through its four periods, and give reasons for why the parties have been in decline since the New Deal period. Make sure you're familiar with the parties and the terms and the chronology (that means DO make notes on those things).
5. What do the following terms mean: realignment, critical election, split-ticket voting, straight-ticket voting? (check your vocab list and add the definitions there, too)
6. Describe the structure of the major political parties, making sure you understand the roles of the national committees, congressional committees, and the national chairmen (write notes about the roles of each).
7. After reading the textbook and the article "How a little-known task force helped create Red State/Blue State America," answer this questions:
 - How have changes in how they choose delegates affected the last few Democratic nominating - conventions?
 - Take note of the 1972 McGovern changes (known as the McGovern-Fraser Commission) and the 1981 Hunt Commission and changes in 1992. Summarize the main reforms of each and state the effects of the changes.
 - Explain superdelegates (write the definition).
 - Tell the differences between proportional representation and winner-take-all systems of allocating delegates to the convention (write an explanation).
8. What is a political party machine? How has the power of party machines been weakened? What were some of the positive aspects of party machines?
9. Define and give examples of an ideological party.
10. How does having a personal following reflect a weakened party system? Make sure you know what a plurality system and winner-take-all system are (define them both).
11. What explanations does the book give for the persistence of the two-party system?
12. Explain why minor parties form, and briefly summarize the different kinds of parties.
13. Analyze why third parties are so rarely successful.
14. Who are the people who turn out to vote in primaries compared to those who vote in the general election?
15. Describe some of the issue differences between delegates at Democratic and Republican conventions, and indicate whether there are major differences between the parties. Compare these differences with those between delegates of each party and average voters.

VOCABULARY FOR THIS UNIT IS ON THE BACK.....

On your own, separate piece of paper, HANDWRITTEN, not typed, provide the definition/significance of each of the terms. These terms are due on test day. It is OKAY to divide and conquer as long as you hand write the work.

1.	political party	12.	plurality system	23.	Straight-ticket voting
2.	progressives	13.	Single-member district	24.	Party dealignment
3.	direct primary	14.	caucus	25.	“personal following”
4.	national convention	15.	linkage institutions	26.	coalition
5.	national committee	16.	“loyal opposition”	27.	party platform
6.	national chairman	17.	“out party”	28.	Progressives
7.	super-delegates	18.	realignment	29.	Dixiecrats
8.	winner-take-all-system	19.	New Deal Coalition	30.	Strom Thurmond
9.	political machine	20.	Spoils System	31.	Ross Perot
10.	Tammany Hall	21.	McGovern-Fraser Commission	32.	Critical Elections
11.	patronage	22.	Split-ticket voting	33.	Tea Party movement