

# Purpose of Political Parties

Read the text and answer the questions.

Political parties are made up of groups of people who share similar beliefs and opinions. People support a political party that has the same values and ideas as they do. Large political parties may have many millions of members.

The main purpose of political parties is to win elections, to be in charge of the government, and to influence government policies.

The two major political parties in the United States are the Democratic Party and the Republican Party. Other parties exist, but they do not have as much influence as the two major parties. Having more than one party ensures that different ideas get heard.

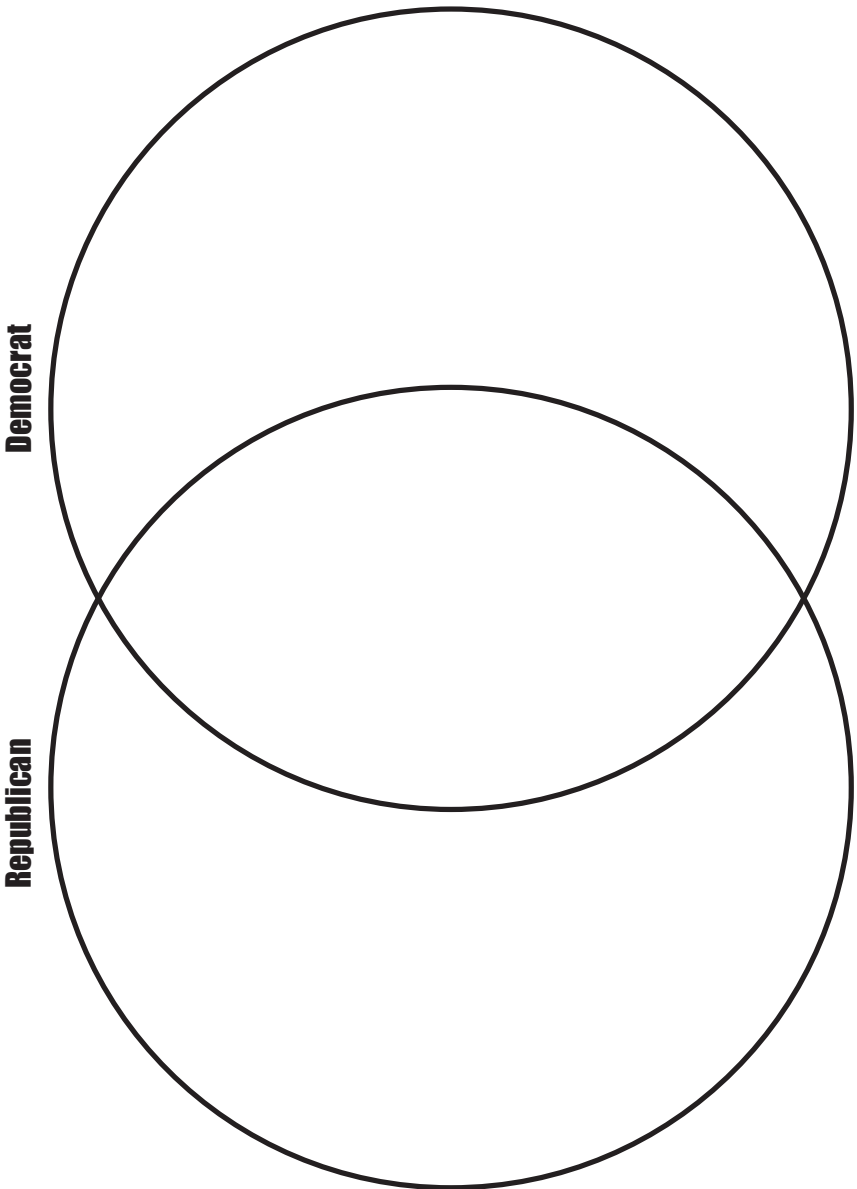
Political parties clearly establish their views on specific issues. Members of political parties work to get people from their party elected to public office. Information from the media, Internet, speeches, rallies, advertising, email, posters, and even yard signs all help political parties get their message to the voters and support their candidate. Once candidates from a political party are elected, the party hopes that laws will be passed that support the party's positions on issues.

- Use a dictionary to define policies as it is used in the text.
  - What is a "government policy"?
- Use a dictionary to define influence as it is used in the text.
  - Who or what do political parties want to influence?
- Summarize the main idea of the text.
- How do people choose a political party to support? Cite evidence from the text to support your answer.
- Why do political parties want to get people from their party elected to public office?
- Use online resources to research someone who has recently been elected to public office. Find out what political party they belong to and how their stand on the issues matched their party's beliefs.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

# Republicans and Democrats

Complete the graphic organizer by comparing and contrasting the Republican and Democratic Party platforms.



## VOCABULARY

# Political Parties and Elections Vocabulary

Use a dictionary and other resources to complete the graphic organizer for each vocabulary word.

absentee ballot

convention

liberal

ballot

delegate

nominee

bipartisan

electorate

platform

campaign

GOP

poll

conservative

incumbent

primary

<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>FACTS/CHARACTERISTICS</b>
<b>WORD</b>	
<b>EXAMPLES</b>	<b>NON-EXAMPLES</b>