The 21ˢᵗ Century Political Party

Patrick O'Neil

Introduction

As a 19 year-old soldier in the United States Army, I decided to become an educator. Following my military service, I attended college and I began my teaching career having since taught various subjects in Social Studies in three different states—Virginia, Florida, and North Carolina. I have had numerous memorable encounters as a teacher from the classroom experience to the many professional development workshops I've attending over the years including those offered by the Charlotte Teachers Institute, the National Endowment for the Humanities, and the Gilder-Lehrman Institute. I am solidly convinced that I positively touch lives every day in the school community as I follow the advice of one of my mentors "respect your subject and your students." I proudly serve as a teacher because I have a tremendous passion for working with and helping young people to reach their greatest potential.

School District Profile

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS) in North Carolina is one of the nation's 25 largest school districts. Our focus is on the development of the total student – academically, culturally and socially and we are determined to prepare every student to compete locally, nationally and internationally. CMS provides academic instruction, rigor and support each school day to more than 141,100 students in kindergarten through 12th grade in 159 schools throughout the cities and towns of Mecklenburg County. CMS believes setting high standards for all students creates a greater opportunity for future success – in our communities, within the region and across our diverse and global society. CMS is proud of its diverse mix of students who represent 160 different countries and various cultural and ethnic backgrounds. CMS offers an extensive range of magnet programs in 40 of its schools to nurture the talents of students who have interest and ability in specific areas.

Vision: To provide all students the best education available anywhere, preparing every child to lead a rich and productive life.

Mission: To maximize academic achievement by every student in every school.[i]

School Profile

We are the Mallard Creek Mavericks!!! At Mallard Creek High School we offer a wide variety of standard, honors and Advanced Placement courses. The school climate at Mallard Creek is positive and supportive for all members of our school community. The school's mission is to prepare our students to succeed in a global society through a quality education. We set high expectations and provide support motivating students and staff to realize their greatest potential. We strive to develop respect, responsibility, and integrity that inspire service and leadership within the school and community. Our school population entering the 2012-2013 school is 2,250 (9-12). Student Demographics: African-American-61.1%, White-24.6%, Hispanic-7.6%, Asian-4.6%, Other-2.2%. We serve 42.5% disadvantaged students. Specifically, regarding my AP Government and Politics class, I have 35 students--B Day; we meet every other day in 90-minute class sessions.

Introduction/Overview

The Advanced Placement United States Government and Politics class 3rd period has a total of 35 students: 13 males, 22 females, 14 African Americans, 2 Asian Americans, and 19 Whites; they range in age from 16 to 18 years old. This class is a diverse group with a wide range of abilities and interests. They are all seniors except one and most have taken AP level classes before with success in passing courses and the AP exams. I have taught two of them in the past in African American Studies as juniors. But I have had some assistance in recruiting a number of them from former students who are the siblings and friends of my current students.

The students cooperate with each other working on assignments and prepare for assessments during review sessions. They have many different perspectives but they have shown a tremendous amount of respect for varying opinions in class discussions. From the beginning, I stressed that we were concerned about better understanding government and politics and not attempting to criticize or sway others to our own political point of view or agenda. Because they are striving for tolerance of different perspectives, some stimulating and well-balanced discussions have occurred thus far. The students are extremely bright; only three of them are struggling academically. I realize many are overachievers from the high quality of work they produce and their assessment scores and I intentionally plan my lessons with the exceptionally talented in mind in order to keep the standards high. I want to offer them challenging and stimulating activities.

There are some strong personalities in the class and they make positive contributions with their comments and questions but some of the brightest students are reserved. Together we intend to create a stimulating learning environment complete with cooperative learning, assignments building on high-level critical thinking skills, and thought-provoking discussions. Students are clearly learning and developing critical

thinking skills evident in the high quality of their assignments. They have a high level of comprehension of the political process. I encourage students to present their own individual perspectives in class discussions and in their writing in an attempt to create an environment that enables students to feel comfortable enough to express their thoughts and ideas about the subject matter but to remain objective and balanced in their outlook. I consider myself approachable and prefer to serve as a facilitator guiding and assisting students rather than relying heavily on the conventional lecture.

I constantly stress balance and objectivity in the class because I want my students to develop their own political ideas but also to be familiar with the political views of others. If they should question the political outlook of others they should do so without malice and with informed and intelligent questions or comments. Student-to-student interaction has to be cordial despite different/divergent political perspectives.

My teaching style is analogous to a coach of a team--teaching and motivating students to be their best. I introduce each unit with a discussion using transparencies and a brief introduction with informative websites; youtube, Discovery Education, 60 Minutes, CNN, ABC, NBC, and CBS are critical resources in our class because I employ multiple resources to inform and stay abreast of current political events in an attempt to make learning political concepts and ideas relevant.[ii]

I give the students assignments that require them to display mastery of the topic largely through critical thinking questions and graphic organizers (webcharts, bullet outlines, T-charts, sequence charts, etc.). I use critical thinking questions for a variety of reasons associated with building analytical skills. First, a capable critical thinker can separate facts from opinions, can examine an issue from all sides, and can make rational inferences without personal judgment or biases. Furthermore, strong critical thinking skills enables one to formulate precise questions and problems to real-life situations, communicate solutions to complex problems in an effective manner, assess relevant information though the use of abstract ideas, view alternate viewpoints in thinking open-mindedly to assess their assumptions and implications, and evaluate well-developed solutions to against relevant standards and criteria. In the end, critical thinkers are trained and equipped to make better decisions in and outside of the classroom. Students can gain autonomy in forming their own conclusions through the process of listening to various possibilities of thought. Students can build a greater sense of curiosity and humility by looking closely at other people's insights and understanding their value. Also, students will be able to develop respect for good reasoning by developing a framework to distinguish between the many influences they are exposed to.[iii]

Likewise, the graphic organizers are especially useful because the students can locate important ideas and concepts and set up the information in a concise, orderly, and easily assessable manner. Graphic organizers serve visual learners particularly well who struggle with information presented in an entirely written form and are great resource for

revisiting and study information. Organizers allow students to display a great deal of information on well-placed spaces. They offered a less cluttered approach to note-taking making studying more direct and precise. Graphic organizers are also a great tool to use with struggling writers and students who are having trouble making connections among concepts. In my classroom, graphic organizers are integrated in a wide variety of ways to assist students in comprehending, retaining, and studying critical information.

For each unit, students are also given a quiz and study guide. The quiz allows me to assess learning part way through to unit to determine comprehension. The study guide serves as a blueprint or roadmap to test. If there are 50 test questions, there will be 50 study guide questions. Students often comment, "the study guide is the test." My intention is to direct students toward the critical elements featured in the unit as well as previous units with the study guide. I give a PowerPoint presentation and we review the study guide prior to the test. This is also done with a PowerPoint presentation for audio-visual learning so students hear me reiterate previous learning while actually viewing critical information and images with each slide. Students have a familiar routine of teacher-led discussions, independent study/work, and cooperative learning with each unit. The study guides and PowerPoint presentations (except for the study guide review) are emailed to (and/or uploaded to their flash drives) students weekly and I also have a website with the chapter notes and assignments.[iv]

We have an overhead projector and a laptop computer connected to a LCD projector that allows me to enhance class activities using technology. Students have access to computers at school (3 computer labs, laptop carts, and 2 computers allocated to my classroom) and most have electronic devices (e.g. smartphones and tablets), home computers, and email accounts that allow me to communicate with them sending instructions and updates, useful websites, and relevant news and magazines articles from the internet.

My intention is to assist students to envision a political climate much more effective and responsive to the American people. With the political party project, students will have the opportunity to display master of the political parties overall but to also have the opportunity to showcase their political knowledge as they create their own political party. I am convinced that students will be able to closely understand and synthesize ideas of the two major parties along with ideologies of third parties and the notable opinions of independent voters. The final outcome should enable me to gauge their knowledge of the political process as they place emphasis on political parties. The creation of the 21st Century Political Party is a culmination of all units we have covered thus far as the creation of one's own political party shows that students mastered the goals of the lesson and previously learned related issues associated with the political process regarding party platforms and policies.

Objectives/Standards

The general goal of this particular lesson is to assist students in examining and analyzing the role and influence of political parties. We have a total of sixteen units to cover by early May, when students take the AP U.S. Government and Politics exam. The political parties unit is undoubtedly critical in understanding American government and politics.

I expect my students to be able to make connections to all relevant units as they develop an analytical perspective on the complexity of American government and politics. To do this, we study the general concepts used to interpret U.S. politics and then closely analyze specific examples. By the time of the exam, students will know important facts, concepts, and theories pertaining to government and politics. They will also examine political trends and behavior and the principles used to explain or justify various government structures and procedures, along with political effects. More specifically, the political parties unit is an integral part of getting students to develop skills that enable them to assess and analyze the American government and political system work on a sophisticated level. Students must comprehend and analyze the role and influence of political parties (referred to as *factions* by James Madison in the *Federalist Papers* published in 1787) as they scrutinize the American political process. The primary goal of the political party unit is to have students closely examine a fundamental component of the American government system. The learner will analyze the history, role, and influence of political parties in the American political process. The specific objectives involve assessing the early development of political parties and their impact on politics today, closely examining the two-party system, evaluating the creation of third parties in American politics and their effect on political outcomes, and finally students will create a new ideal political party for the 21st Century.

- Students will be able to assess the early development of political parties and their impact on politics today but closely examining the history, platforms, and ideologies of American political parties.
- Students will be able to compare and contrast political parties while closely examining the two-party system overtime. They will examine and assess why and how the two-party system has endured. Realignment (noticeable coalition shifts in political parties or ideologies) is also a political phenomenon that students will have to assess and analyze and predict potential swings and changes among voting blocs or groups in the future.
- Students will be able to evaluate the creation of third parties in American politics and their effect on the outcome of political elections and influences on major party ideologies. They will also analyze the growing number of independent voters and dealignment (A movement among voters toward nonpartisanship, resulting in a weakening of party structure).

- Students will create a new ideal political party for the 21st Century. They will use their knowledge up to this point to craft a political party that offers a practical alternative to the current two-party system that addresses contemporary problems and offers plausible solutions to modern-day and impending concerns. [v]

During this election year, students are experiencing significant exposure to the rhetoric of American political parties and they have a general interest and bring substantial prior knowledge to this particular unit. Therefore the unit will allow students to build on their own understanding regarding political parties and enabled them to make connections to political ideology and partisan politics. I will begin the unit with an introduction with several transparencies and short video clips (e.g. Republican Majority whip Eric Cantor from *60 Minutes* and Democrat Minority leader *Nancy Pelosi* from www.cbsnews.com) to give balanced examples of political parties in action.[vi]

The students will be given an assignment that includes vocabulary terms and guided reading/critical thinking questions. The questions require students to assess and closely analyze political parties. We have a PowerPoint presentation which is a combination lecture and discussion because the students will be fairly familiar with the material since they will have been working on the assignment for three days at this point and the presentation will be emailed for them to examine prior to my lecture. The goal is for them to actively participate--answering and asking questions and making comments--as we review the PowerPoint presentation together. This unit will be accompanied by a project to further assist students in mastering the topic.

Generally, I am the only one who has the opportunity to evaluate the projects but I am convinced that some compelling information compiled by students should be shared so other learners can see and learn from the high standards of their peers (in addition to the material and resources that I offer). This also gives them the opportunity to engage each other displaying their own comprehension of politics asking questions and commenting on the remarks of their classmates blending their prior knowledge with new information revealed during this particular unit. I intend to allow class time for students to showcase and explain their work. The goal is give students a sense of ownership as they contribute to the learning process in our class with their presentations especially when they refer to current events, political issues, and historical facts referred to throughout the course.

Students will be given a Political Party Project containing four parts:
1. Explain in detail the fundamental ideas of the two major political parties—Democrats and Republicans
2. *Create their own fictional party for the 21st century-*
3. Write a critical essay about third parties-
4. Discuss the issue of realignment (the shift of a large group from one major political party to another).

Students will work on the Political Party Project while they are simultaneously working on their Political Parties Assignment. They will have two weeks (5 class periods) to complete both. The projects are due the day of the test but in the class prior to that the students will have the opportunity to share only *part two* of their project.[vii]

For the project, the students will be given limited guidelines as they *Create a Political Party for the 21st Century: Name, Platform, Target Constituency, Future Plans/Plans for a better America, Domestic and Foreign Policies*. Students have to give their political party an attention-grabbing, intriguing, and/or meaningful name.   They are to develop a platform—which are the proposals, agenda, goals, and programs for their party.   In crafting their political party, students are to locate groups of potential voting groups (selected from age, race, geographic regions, rural/urban residents, income/class, religious faction) that may support their fictional party. The students have to outline their party's plans for a better America. Finally, they have to develop domestic (the set of decisions that a government makes relating to things that directly affect the people within the country) and foreign (the set of decisions that a government makes relating to things that directly affect global challenges and influences policies that promote security and prosperity) policies.

In the end, with the combination of both the political parties assignment and project students should understand the mechanisms that allow citizens to organize and communicate their interests and concerns; among these are political parties, elections, political action committees (PACs), interest groups, and the mass media. Students should examine the significance of the historical evolution of the U.S. party system, the functions and structures of political parties, and the effects they have on the political process. Examination of issues of party reform and of campaign strategies and financing in the electronic age provides students with important perspectives. A study of elections, election laws, and election systems on the national and state levels will help students understand the nature of both party and individual voting behavior. Treatment of the development and the role of PACs in elections and the ideological and demographic differences between the two major parties, as well as third parties, forms an important segment of this material. Students must also consider the political roles played by a variety of lobbying and interest groups as they related to political parties. Important features of this section of the course include an explanation for why some interests are represented by organized groups while others are not, and the consequences of this difference in representation. Students study what political parties do, how they do it, and how this affects both the political process and public policy. Why are certain segments of the population able to exert pressure on political institutions and actors in order to obtain favorable policies—as they attempt to run the political process?

Teaching Strategies

I. <u>Audio-Visual learning Video Clips and PowerPoint Presentations</u>—I rely heavily on Audio-Visual learning because many students learn from hearing from experts and key figures and actual seeing images. These sources assist audio-visual learning to better retain information. [viii]

II. <u>Guided Reading/Critical Thinking Questions</u>—I employed critical thinking questions with the goal of improving the analytical skills of students. I want to challenge all student with high-level learning activities.

III. <u>Cooperative Learning</u>—Students often benefit from collaboration and teamwork; practice with such activities are valuable in and out of the classroom.

IV. <u>Homework/Project</u>—Homework provides opportunities to reinforce classroom learning and projects afford students the occasion to do outside research and connect with the latest findings and data regarding pertinent modern-day issues/dynamics related to politics and government.

V. <u>Lecture/Class Discussion</u>—Lectures and class discussions allow me to introduce subject matter and information, reinforce learning, and allow students to ask questions and make comments based on the topic at hand.

The students will be given an assignment that includes vocabulary terms and guided reading/critical thinking questions. The questions require students to assess and closely analyze political parties. We have a PowerPoint presentation which is a combination lecture and discussion because the students will be fairly familiar with the material since they will have worked on the assignment for three days at this point and the presentation will be emailed for them to examine prior to my lecture. The goal is for them to actively participate--answering and asking questions and making comments--as we review the PowerPoint presentation together. This unit will be accompanied by a project to further assist students in mastering the topic.

The creation of one's own political party shows that students mastered the goals of the lesson because they must first comprehend the fundamental issues associated with political parties before they could create their *own* fictional parties. I expect students to address the major issues (economy, taxation, and various other domestic and foreign affairs) often considered in creating platforms and policies for actual political parties. Presenters will be encouraged to use the PowerPoint presentation/LCD Projector, the overhead projector, and visual resources such as posters or pamphlets. During the presentation, I want the students to drive the majority of the lesson as I serve as the facilitator giving them broad instructions and enabling them to work at their comfort level. There is never pressure to present or ask questions but all students will participate in this lesson. The activity will allow them show mastery in a variety of ways (through presenting, asking questions, completing questions and graphic organizers, and voting for the party of their choice) enabling me to assess them in ways other than through quizzes

and tests. More importantly, this activity is designed to enable me to hear students discuss the issues associated with our class that matter to them.

Classroom Activities

In addition, students will be given a Political Party Project containing four parts: 1. Explain in detail the fundamental ideas of the two major political parties—Democrats and Republicans; *2. Create their own fictional party for the 21st century;* 3. Write a critical essay about third parties; 4. Discuss the issue of realignment (the shift of a large group from one major political party to another). Students will work on the Political Party Project while they are simultaneously working on their Political Parties Assignment. They will have two weeks (5 class periods) to complete both. The projects are due the day of the test but in the class prior to that the students will have the opportunity to share *part two* of their project: *Create a Political Party for the 21st Century: Name, Platform, Target Constituency, Future Plans/Plans for a better America, Domestic and Foreign Policies.*

Day 1: I introduce each unit with a discussion using transparencies and a brief introduction with informative websites; youtube, Discovery Education, 60 Minutes, CNN, ABC, NBC, and CBS are mainstays in our class. I give the students assignments that require them to display mastery of the topic largely through critical thinking questions and graphic organizers (webcharts, bullet outlines, T-charts, sequence charts, etc.).

The transparencies have information about the following: Political Party Organization from the National-level down to the local-level (e.g. precinct committees), Types of Minor Parties (Ideological, One-issue, Economic-protest, and factional parties), Chronology of the Two-Party System going back to 1787, Republican Party Purity Test (RINO), Illustration of Significant Minor Parties 1880-1984, Political Cartoons, Political Party Identification Chart (Registered Democrats, Republicans, and Independents), the Rise of the Republican party in the South, and the assignment and Political Parties Project instructions. I have dozens of magazines with that deal with political parties (Time, Newsweek, etc.) and students will explore the internet as they complete the Political Parties assignment and project (2 week duration/5 class periods)

Day 2: I will show the students two *short video clips* (e.g. Interviews with Republican Majority whip Eric Cantor from *60 Minutes* and Democrat Minority leader *Nancy Pelosi* from www.cbsnews.com) to give balanced examples of political parties in action. Following the video clips, I will take clarifying questions from the students and then give them an opportunity to work on the assignment in class. The assignments require them to display mastery of the topic largely through critical thinking questions and graphic organizers (webcharts, bullet outlines, T-charts, sequence charts, etc.).

Day 3: John Boehner interviews 60 Minutes (http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504803_162-20025417-10391709.html), Tea Party (http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7420136n), Colbert Nation on Political parties--http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/399021/october-10-2011/on-topic---political-parties---the-democratic-party, Jesse Ventura (former governor of Minnesota discusses his recent book on political parties with CNN's Piers Morgan) http://piersmorgan.blogs.cnn.com/2012/06/11/jesse-ventura-on-political-parties-the-best-thing-we-could-do-is-on-every-ballot-remove-all-gang-names-and-gang-symbols/. Today I'll show the video clips in intervals allowing students to watch then work on their assignments, and then watch more in our 90 minute class session.   They will also receive information that will assist them in understanding the American Political System (Transparency Notes). There will be a quiz at the end of the class period.[ix]

Day 4: PowerPoint Presentation featuring historical and contemporary illustrations, maps, charts, polling samples, comparison charts, key terms associated with political parties (such as dealignment, realignment, straight-ticket voting, swing voters, all included to assist students to better understand political parties. Students are emailed the presentations on day one.   Following the presentations, students will be quizzed on the political parties unit.   The quiz includes key terms, matching generalizations of the Democratic and Republican Parties, list party affiliation of each president for FDR to the present, advantages and disadvantages of third parties, and an essay featuring a quote from Thomas Jefferson on political parties.   The students will also complete the third party activity sheets (Third Party Graphic Organizer) and Tea Party T-Chart-- Pros/Cons.

Day 5: **Presentation Day**: Students will be given a Political Party Project containing four parts: 1. Explain in detail the fundamental ideas of the two major political parties— Democrats and Republicans; *2. Create their own fictional party for the 21st century;* 3. Write a critical essay about third parties; 4. Discuss the issue of realignment (the shift of a large group from one major political party to another). Students will work on the Political Party Project while they are simultaneously completing their Political Parties Assignment.

   The creation of one's own political party shows that students mastered the goals of the lesson because they must first comprehend the fundamental issues associated with political parties before they could create their *own* fictional parties. I expect students to address the major issues (economy, taxation, and various other domestic and foreign affairs) often considered in creating platforms and policies for actual political parties. Presenters will be encouraged to use the PowerPoint presentation/LCD Projector, the overhead projector, and visual resources such as posters or pamphlets. During the presentation, I want the students to drive the majority of the lesson as I serve as the facilitator giving them broad instructions and enabling them to work at their comfort level. There is never pressure to present or ask questions but all students will participate in this lesson. The activity will allow them show mastery in a variety of ways (through

presenting, asking questions, completing questions and graphic organizers, and voting for the party of their choice) enabling me to assess them in ways other than through quizzes and tests. More importantly, this activity is designed to enable me to hear students discuss the issues associated with our class that matter to them. Afterwards, students will have an opportunity to pull together all of their assignment with my assistance and prepare for their assessment.

Day 6: Review study guide with the unit's second PowerPoint presentation, Q&A, and assessment 50 multiple choice and 1 essay. Due: Assignment, Vocabulary, Study Guide, Test (m/c and essay) and project.

Resources:

General Materials: Critical Thinking Questions/Graphic Organizer Assignment, Vocabulary, Study Guide, Test (m/c and essay) and project guidelines.

Audio-Visual Resources: I have several *transparencies, video clips, and two powerpoint presentations* that help me to convey information in varied forms for differentiated learning.

Study Guide –Each unit is accompanied by a study guide. The study guide is made after the test to direct and focus students during their test preparation. There are 50 questions on both the study guide and the test. The day of the test we will review the study guide in as much detail as the students require. They understand that the more time we spend on the study guide the less time students have to take the test. The actual AP exam we are preparing for is timed and I use this opportunity to expose them to time constraints.

Internet --I have a wiki page internet site that has chapter outlines, learning objectives, notes, and additional websites posted for students to use has they complete their assignments. I also require students to use the AP Government link on the apcentral.collegeboard.com website. Students are to locate released free-response questions then they must categorize the essays by the units we cover in class. When students organize the essay correctly they are better able to prepare for the essay portion of the exam. The websites have previous questions along with scoring guidelines that enable students to study all of the potential questions of which one will be selected for them to complete on the assessment.

Day	TOPIC	MATERIALS
1	Introduction using Transparencies Political Parties Assignment: Critical Thinking Questions (cooperative learning) Instructions: 21st Century Political Party Project	Transparencies Political Parties Assignment 21st Century Political Party Project
2	Critical Thinking Questions (cooperative learning) *Study Guide	Critical Thinking Questions Study Guide
3	History of American Political Parties Magazine Article/Timeline (American Party System Framework)	Internet/Textbook/Magazines Transparences
4	Third Party Graphic Organizer Tea Party T-Chart Pros/Cons	Internet/Textbook/Magazines (i.e. Americans Elect)
5	21st Century Political Party Project Presentation	Internet/Textbook/Magazines
6	Assessment Multiple Choice Essay	

Teacher Resources
Bibliography

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The book explores the idea that while African Americans have attached themselves to one of the two major political parties but have long been part of independent political movements and have used third parties to advance some of the most important changes in the United States, notably the abolition of slavery, the extension of voting rights, and the enforcement of civil rights.

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"Conventional Facts," Smithsonian Magazine. Accessed November 16, 2012. http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/conventional-facts.html.
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C-SPAN offers an Electoral College Map poster for classrooms. It's a large 40" x 40" wall poster updated based on the 2010 census and includes information about the Electoral College, historical election results, and key dates leading up to the 2012 presidential election that can jumpstart a variety of lessons and fit a wide range of subject matters and grade levels.

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 Levendusky attempts to explain realignment in the contemporary politics

Mack, Charles S. *When Political Parties Die: A Cross-national Analysis of Disalignment and Realignment*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2010.
Major parties perpetuate themselves by maintaining a consistent ideology on major national issues, even at the cost of periodic defeats at the polls.

Maisel, Louis Sandy. *American Political Parties and Elections: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007.
 A brief but useful resources for understanding the fundamentals associated with American political parties and elections.

Maisel, Louis Sandy, and Jeffrey M. Berry. *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Parties and Interest Groups*. Oxford: University Press, 2010.
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Maisel, Louis Sandy., and Kara Z. Buckley. *Parties and Elections in America: The Electoral Process*.   Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 6th Edition, 2012).
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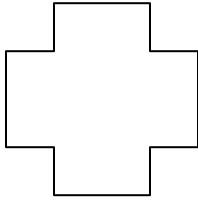"Three's a Crowd -- A History of Third-party Campaigns."
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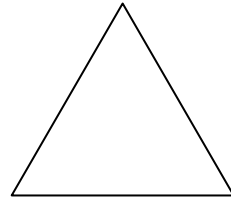This link assists students in closely examining third parties.

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Third Party (Time Period)	Platform Ideas	Key Figures

TEA PARTY

Pros/Positives/Strengths	Cons/Negatives/Shortcomings

POLITICAL PARTIES ASSIGNMENT

I. What Is a Political Party?

II. What are the Functions of Political Parties in the United States?

III. A Short History of Political Parties in the United States
   (Magazine article or outline)

IV. The Three Faces of a Party (Diagram/Graphic Organizer)

V. Party Organization (Diagram/Graphic Organizer)

VI. The Party in Government (Examine the Party in action)

VII. The Two Major U.S. Parties and Their Members (Profile the two major
   parties)

VIII. Why Has the Two Party System Endured?

IX. The Third Party: what is the Role of Minor Parties in U.S. Political
   History?

Political Party Project

1. **Identify the major ideas of the two major parties**
Criticism: Explore the criticism supporters of the parties have of each other

Identify positive legislation/directives/agencies/policies & so on for each party

2. **Create a Political Party for the 21st Century:**
-Name
-Platform
-Target Constituency
-Future Plans/Plans for a better America
-Domestic Policy
-Foreign Policy

3. **Third Parties**
   CRITICAL ESSAY: Why do Third Parties experience limited success in America? (Consider history, political strength, access, and what would it take to gain a major victory?).

4. **Realignment**
   MAGAZINE ARTICLE: (a) Discuss the issue of realignment involving African Americans' shift from the Republican Party to the Democratic Party;

   (b) and the dominance of the Democratic Party in the South to the emergence of the Republican Party's influence in the region.

[i] http://www.cms.k12.nc.us/mediaroom/aboutus/Pages/default.aspx

[ii] www.youtube.com; www.discoveryed.com ; www.cbsnews.com/**60-minutes**; www.cnn.com; www.abcnews.com; www.nbcnews.com

[iii] What Are the Benefits of Critical Thinking Skills? | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/about_5079553_benefits-critical-thinking-skills.html#ixzz2DeN0Eaz8; http://learning.tamu.edu/resource/critical-thinking

[iv] Graphic Organizers Ideas-- www.enchantedlearning.com/graphicorganizers; The Advantages of Graphic Organizers | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/list_5829411_advantages-graphic-organizers.html#ixzz2DeKswMjo

[v] www.constitution.org/fed/federa10.htm

[vi] Eric Cantor—Majority Whip/Republican Congressman from Virginia www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7393500n; Nancy Pelosi—former Speaker of the House Minority Leader Congresswoman from California.

[vii] Useful Political Parties Website: www.politics1.com/parties.htm; Discussions about Democrats and Republicans are featured in the following issues on Time during the 2012 campaign-- Time Magazine November 12, 2012; Time Magazine October 15, 2012; Time Magazine September 10, 2012; Time Magazine September 3, 2012; Third Parties—Tung Yin (Law Professor Lewis and Clark University) "The Joys of Third Party Voting, or How I Learned to Love the Electoral College" 11/2/12 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tung-yin/third-party-candidates_b_2046992.html; Realignment articles: "Will We Ever See Another Major Political Realignment Like the One That Flipped the South From Being Dominated by Democrats To Being Solidly Republican?" www.huffingtonpost.com 10/17/12; Black Americans in Congress has two links that deal with the history of black realignment -- baic.house.gov/historical-essays/essay.html?intID=5&intSectionID=32 & baic.house.gov/historical-essays/essay.html?intID=6&intSectionID=35; Southern realignment-www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2010/09/09/misunderstanding_the_southern_realignment_107084.html

[viii] This article points out the advantages of audiovisual learning: **"What are the main advantages of audio-visual aids?"** http://www.preservearticles.com/2012032829111/what-are-the-main-advantages-of-audio-visual-aids.html

[ix] Short video clips serve as warm-up activities: John Boehner interviews on 60 Minutes (http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-504803_162-20025417-10391709.html), Tea Party (http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7420136n), Colbert Nation on Political parties-- http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/399021/october-10-2011/on-topic---political-parties---the-democratic-party, Jesse Ventura (former governor of Minnesota discusses his recent book on

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