

THE CONSTITUTION AND OUR REPUBLIC

POLITICAL PARTIES AND THE ELECTION PROCESS

LESSON OBJECTIVE(S)

The student will be able to:

- Discuss the role of political parties in the election process
- Examine the major functions of political parties

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Activity 1 Handout 1-1 “Political Parties and Elections”
 Handout 1-2 “Politics and Parties”

Activity 2 Handout 2-1 “What is a Political Party”
 Handout 2-2 “The Election Process”

ACTIVITIES

Activity 1 – “**What are the Major Functions of Political Parties in the United States?**”

Distribute Handouts 1-1 and 1-2 and instruct students to get in groups of two or three to read the handout and list the major functions of political parties. Then, have each group compare its list with the following:

1. Recruit leaders and nominate candidates
2. Identify issues and propose courses of action through the political party platform
3. Keep the public informed
4. Conduct election activities to involve and motivate voters
5. Organize the government once their candidate is elected
6. When out of power, serve as the watchdog of the party in power and keep the public informed
7. Keep watch over its own members in office, because the job they do affects the party’s reputation

Activity 2 – “**What is the Election Process in Alabama**”

Distribute Handout 2-1 “What is a Political Party” and ask students to describe the following events and place them in the correct chronological order: runoff, general election, primary, constitutional date for assuming office, petition nomination.