



ACTIVITY

TIMES ARE A-CHANGIN': DEVELOPMENT OF THE TWO-PARTY SYSTEM IN TEXAS

Social Studies, Grade 7-8

OBJECTIVE

Through the use of student prior knowledge, archival footage of campaigns, and analysis of the events that led to the development of the two-party system, this lesson plan encourages students to contemplate the significance of these events and their long-term impact on the Texas political scene. Students will create characterizations of effective Texas leaders, the civic duties allowed to Texans, and the nature of present political parties to enable them to reach an understanding of the development of the two-party system in Texas. Students will then analyze the significance of events that led to the development of this system.

PROCESS

Prior Knowledge

Students should have a working knowledge of influential political leaders from the creation of Texas through the 20th century.

Students are assumed to have a basic knowledge of current political parties and the campaign ads they run.

Students should be aware of the rights allowed to citizens under Texas and U.S. law.

Hook

In order to effectively analyze the archival footage for party issues, bias, and signs of effective leadership, students should complete at least one or two of the following prior knowledge brainstorm and discussions.

Ask the students to brainstorm what makes someone a good leader. Suggest that they use famous Texans studied throughout the year to inform their discussion. If they have trouble defining the qualities of a good leader, suggest that they, instead, define what makes someone an ineffective or bad leader.

As they brainstorm, write their answers on the board, possibly using one side for effective/good qualities and the other for ineffective/bad qualities.

Once the brainstorm has been completed, have students discuss with a partner the three qualities they think are most important in a leader. Ask several groups to volunteer to share with the class.



ACTIVITY

Ask the students to define a civic responsibility. If they have difficulty, remind them that civic means “relating to a city, citizenship, or the duties of being a citizen.”

Once the class has agreed upon, and understood, the definition of civic responsibility, ask the students to share ways they can be civically responsible. Try to encourage them to think both in their future (voting) and in their present (attending a rally for a candidate they like, supporting the community through service, etc.).

Divide the board into two sections. Have students share their perspectives on what it means to be a Democrat or a Republican in today’s political atmosphere.

Lesson

NOTE: The answers to the questions were created with certain films in mind. However, an extensive list of TAMI’s campaign videos has been provided so that shorter clips or a different variety of films may be used in the lesson.

While you are informing students that they will be watching four archival films, have them get out a sheet of notebook paper which they will then divide in half. Have them label one section “Democrat,” the other “Republican.”

Instruct the students that they should look for three things while they watch the campaign videos:

- Statements made about the Democratic Party
- Statements made about the Republican Party
- Bias in the statements of the speakers

As they hear statements relating to each party, they should record them in the appropriate section. If a statement sounded biased, have the students circle or underline the statement so they will remember they believed it to be biased.

Watch the film, LBJ and JFK Campaign Advertisement (see Videos); before you begin the film, inform students that both candidates are Democrats.

After viewing the film, ask students to volunteer to share the statements they heard about each party. Their answers may include the following:

- Texas Democrats have always played an important part in the national Democratic Party; Texas has led the Democratic Party
- LBJ is proud to support Kennedy, “The Next Democratic President”
- Want jobs, education, security for elderly, etc – what they see as Progression; note that the Republican party “always” opposes these things



ACTIVITY

- Next Congress (House and Senate) will be a Democratic majority
- Richard Millhous Nixon “attempting to lead” a Democratic Congress when he “cannot lead a Republican Congress”
- US faces great problems: employment, standard of living, housing for the people, etc.
- Nixon (and Republicans) opposed to progress for 14 years
- “US needs united responsible leadership” – Democrats leading House, Senate, and White House

Ask two or three students to volunteer to discuss which statements they felt had the most bias and to share why.

Watch the video Paid Political Telecast for Governor Price Daniel’s Re-Election Campaign (see Videos); inform students that Price Daniel was also a Democrat.

The film may be stopped after 5 minutes if length is an issue.

After viewing the film, ask students to volunteer to share the statements they heard about each party. Their answers may include some of the following:

- Refuses to talk about his opponent, but indicates that he participates in name-calling and mud-slinging campaigns; governors should be above this
- Entitled to “clean politics” and “clean government”
- Alluded to scandals and violations before he came to office
- Priorities as governor: “Clean and honest government,” legislative reforms in state government, including: lobbying control bill, Texas Law Enforcement Commission, Texas Youth Council, increase in teacher salaries, statewide water planning program, statewide program for highway safety, paid parole system, pensions for the elderly, state hospital and prison reform
- Wishes to complete “unfinished business” of his previous term
- Wants to further improve public schools, salvation of tide lands, better law enforcement, stiffer drug penalties, highway safety measures, loan company regulation, financing of state insurance board, correction of inequities in automobile insurance programs, medical aid to the elderly, equal rights and laws for women, and balanced budget with fair tax laws (the more you make, the more you pay)



ACTIVITY

- Cut in half deficit of general fund and leave a balanced budget
- No general sales tax, blames that idea on the lobbyists and gas/ oil companies who do not want to pay their fair share

Ask two or three students to volunteer to discuss which statements they felt had the most bias and to share why.

Watch the video Will Wilson 'Family' Political Telecast, 1961 (see Videos); inform students that Will Wilson was a Democrat when this was filmed but switched to the Republican Party three years later.

After viewing the film, ask students to volunteer to share the statements they heard about each party. Their answers may include some of the following:

- Significance of family and protecting them
- Fought against gambling and racketeering in Texas
- Not allowing loan sharks or medical "quacks" to practice
- Fought for Texas education and school children
- Affects all ages of those "nearest and dearest to him" and those "to you"
- Importance of National and Civil defense
- Supports "Home Shelter" program in Texas
- Strength against international pressure, bolster to international economy

Ask two or three students to volunteer to discuss which statements they felt had the most bias and why. Also, have students comment on the role of family and the importance Wilson places on the role of family in his politics.

Once all three films have been used, brainstorm with students the recurring themes they heard throughout these videos about the nature of the political parties. Have them add to their notes if topics are discussed that they did not record.

Ask students the following wrap-up questions:

- What are the major topics referred to by the Democratic candidates in their political campaigns?
- How do the candidates reference their political opponents?
- What types of bias did you see throughout the films?
- Why are politicians allowed to say things that are biased in their advertisements?



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- How do these films compare to campaign advertisements today? Why are they usually longer?
- Why do you think there are more Democratic videos in TAMI's collection?

Independent Practice

Using their knowledge of the Democratic party in Texas during the mid 20th Century, their textbooks, and a list of teacher-provided events, students will choose and evaluate the most significant events which led to the development of the two-party system in Texas.

Students may work with partners or individually.

Provide students with a list of events included in the movement of Texas from a predominantly Democratic state to one that included an active two-party system. These events could include any of the following:

- Conservative Texas Democrats split from the party and form the "Texas Regulars"
- Opposition to New Deal legislation
- Desegregation in the United States
- Texans fighting in WWII and the Korean War
- Tideland Controversy
- Social changes under John Connally as Governor of Texas
- The Sharpstown Scandal
- The Dirty Thirty and their work on passage of the Open Records Act
- Impact of the oil boom in the 1980s and 1990s
- Representatives, such as Phil Gramm, changing political parties
- Impact of Reagan's Republican presidency
- Impact of the Oil Crash on Governor White's campaign and reelection
- Legislation to provide more rights to women, minorities, and the elderly
- LBJ, a Texan, becoming President
- The advent of the sales tax
- Election of leaders such as John Tower and William Clements
- Vote on the new state Constitution



ACTIVITY

Have students use their books, class notes, library books, TAMI video footage, and the activities and discussions above to create a significance step chart on their paper. They will choose the 5 events that they feel are most significant. The events should be listed on top of the steps.

Underneath each step, or event, students should write 3 sentences demonstrating the significance of the event in the development of the two-party system in Texas.

For example:

			Event #4
		Event #3	Significance
	Event #2	Significance	
Event #1	Significance		
Significance			

After the students have finished their step chart, have them write a paragraph on the back of the paper summarizing the evolution of the two-party system in Texas and why it is important to present politics in Texas.

Closing

Perform a quick-vote by having the students indicate which of the events they chose by raising their hands. This will allow the students to see if they tended to agree on the most significant events or if there was disparity in their opinions.

If there is disparity, ask them why they think this occurred.

Ask three to four students to volunteer to share their summary paragraph with the rest of the class.



ACTIVITY

Videos



Democrat: LBJ and JFK Campaign Advertisement

(4:34)

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00023



Democrat: Paid Political Telecast for Governor Price Daniel's Re-Election Campaign

(13:05)

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00027



Democrat (changed to Republican in 1968): Will Wilson 'Family' Political Telecast, 1961

(4:47)

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00357



Democrat: Ben Barnes Campaign Trail

(7:39, silent)

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00011



Democrat: Carr Campaigns for Attorney General

(14:41)

https://texasarchive.org/2006_00024



Democrat: Speaker Turman Campaigns for Lieutenant Governor

(0:55)

https://texasarchive.org/2006_00033



Democrat: The Man from Gober

(4:21)

https://texasarchive.org/2006_00035



ACTIVITY



Democrat: Women's Group Supports Waggoner Carr

(2:52, silent)

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00361



Democrat: Youth for Waggoner Carr

(1:07, silent)

https://texasarchive.org/2006_00120



Republican: 1964 Republican Campaign Rally for Barry Goldwater

(5:58, silent)

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00393

RESOURCES

Legislative Reference Library of Texas

<https://lrl.texas.gov/>

Briscoe Center for American History, Texas House Speakers Oral History Project

<https://www.cah.utexas.edu/projects/speakers.php>

Stanford's Political Communication Lab

Contains information and video of select modern campaigns, which allows for a contrast point with TAMI's largely Democratic Texas collection

<http://pcl.stanford.edu/campaigns/>

TEKS

Social Studies, Grade 7

7F - Analyze the political, economic, and social impact of major events in the latter half of the 20th and early 21st centuries such as major conflicts, the emergence of a two-party system, political and economic controversies, immigration, and migration

16B - Explain and analyze civic responsibilities of Texas citizens and the importance of civic participation

17A - Identify different points of view of political parties and interest groups on important Texas issues, past and present

17B - Describe the importance of free speech and press in a democratic society.



ACTIVITY

18A - Identify the leadership qualities of elected and appointed leaders of Texas, past and present, including Texans who have been president of the United States

21F - Identify bias in written, oral, and visual material

21G - Evaluate the validity of a source based on language, corroboration with other sources, and information about the author

STAAR

Social Studies, Grade 8

21A - Identify different points of view of political parties and interest groups on important historical and contemporary issues

29B - Analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions

29D - Identify points of view from the historical context surrounding an event and the frame of reference which influenced the participants