

CHAPTER 16 SUMMARY CONTINUED

PARTY ORGANIZATION *(continued)*

- The party out of power criticizes government policy and offers its own solutions. Fear that the opposition may gain popular support makes the party in power more sensitive to the will of the people.
- Political parties encourage groups with competing interests to work together. Parties contribute to a stable political environment and the peaceful transfer of power. This peaceful transfer of power from one party to another, as opposed to revolution, is a hallmark of stable societies.

★ NOMINATING CANDIDATES ★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Historically parties have used three methods of choosing candidates: caucuses, nominating conventions, and primary elections.

Candidate Selection Method	Description
Caucus	A private meeting of party leaders. In the 1830s complaints that caucuses were undemocratic led to the adoption of nominating conventions.
Nominating Convention	An official public meeting of a party to choose candidates for office.
Direct Primary	An election in which voters select candidates to run in the general election.

Most states hold a closed primary, in which only registered members of a political party can vote for that party's candidates. A few states hold open primaries in which all voters may participate, but each can select members from only one party's list of candidates.

Thirty-eight states hold direct primary elections for president. Through the primary elections, voters can express preferences before the nominating conventions take place. Critics contend that the primary system is flawed because:

- The primaries lasts too long.
- Media coverage emphasizes personalities at the expense of issues.
- Losses in early primaries force some candidates to drop out before most voters can express a preference.

After the primaries comes the national convention. Four committees lay the groundwork for the convention.

- The rules committee proposes convention procedures and sets the order of business.
- The credentials committee officially approves the membership of each state delegation.
- The committee on permanent organization selects the officials who will oversee the convention.
- The platform committee writes the party's platform—a statement of its principles, its positions on vital issues, and its approach to those issues. When disputes arise over planks, or individual parts of the platform, party leaders must work out a compromise or risk entering the election with a divided party.

The highlight of the convention comes when supporters of each candidate make nominating speeches and the delegates vote. On the final day, the nominees deliver their acceptance speeches. The convention then adjourns for another four years.

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CHAPTER SUMMARY *Activity* ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

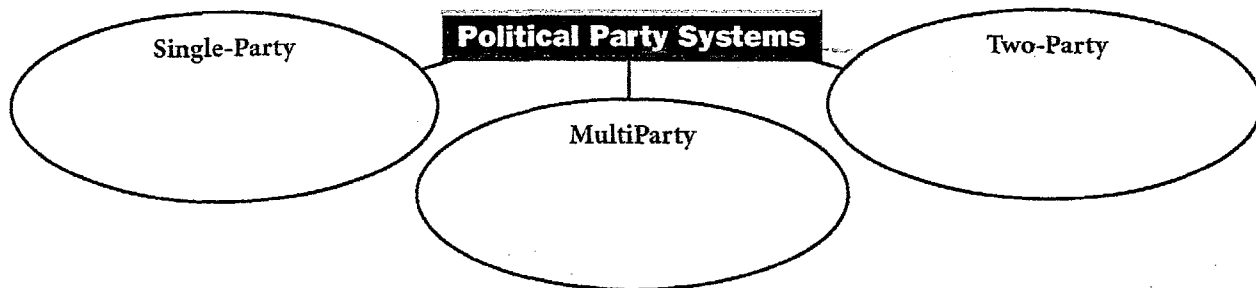


Political Parties

★ DIRECTIONS In the space provided, write the word or phrase that best completes each sentence.

1. A political party is a group of people with broad common interests who organize to win _____, control _____, and influence public policy.
2. In a multiparty system, several parties often combine to form a _____ government.
3. A _____ party forms when a group splits off from a major party to support an alternative candidate for president.
4. The basic local unit of a party is the _____, a district ranging in size from a few to more than 1,000 voters; several adjoining precincts make up a _____.
5. The national party organization has two components: the national _____ and the national _____.
6. A direct _____ is an election in which voters select candidates to run in the general election.
7. In a _____, only registered members of a political party can vote for that party's candidates.
8. A _____ is a written statement of the party's principles, its position on vital issues, and its approach to those issues.
9. When disputes arise over _____, individual parts of the party's written statement, party leaders must work out a compromise position for the party to adopt.

Organizing Information Examine the following diagram and study the list of characteristics associated with different political party systems. Write each item under the appropriate heading.



- coalition governments
- authoritarian governments
- politically unstable
- theocracy
- many differing ideologies
- single-issue party
- splinter party

Critical Thinking Answer the following question on a separate sheet of paper.

10. When disputes arise over parts of the party platform, why must party leaders work out a compromise before the convention ends?

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