

FREE RESPONSE RUBRICS

Important Difference in What Democratic and Republican Parties Stand For 1952-2000							
	1952	1960	1968	1976	1984	1992	2000
No Difference	41	43	44	42	30	35	33
Yes, a Difference	50	50	52	47	63	60	64
Don't Know; Depends	9	6	4	10	8	5	2

Question Text: "Do you think there are any important differences in what the Republicans and Democrats stand for?"

1. The two-party system in the United States generally is characterized by broad-based parties with overlapping appeal to voters.
 - a) Identify one trend in public opinion between 1952 and 2000 about differences in what the Democratic and Republican Parties stand for.
 - b) Give two specific explanations for the trend identified in part a).

General Comments

Question 1 asks students to interpret a chart that provides information about trends in public opinion regarding differences in the two major political parties between 1952 and 200. Students must further demonstrate their knowledge of recent political events by providing possible explanations for the patterns reflected in the chart. In the first part, they are asked to identify one trend. In the second part, students must give two specific explanations for the trend. Explanations must be directly tied to the trend identified in part a). No credit is given for explaining any other trends.

Question Scoring Guidelines**5 Points Total**

- a) one trend = **1 point**
(must include a range of time periods)

Some possible trends:

- Smaller percentages of people from 1980 – 2000 believed that no differences existed than in the earlier era (1952-1980).
- Smaller percentages of people believed that no differences existed in 2000 than in 1952.
- Higher percentages of people from 1980-2000 believed that there are significant differences than in the earlier era (1952-1980)
- Higher percentages of people believed that differences existed in 2000 than in 1952.
- Lower percentages of people in the later years responded “I Don’t Know; Depends” than in the earlier years.

b) Total = **4 points**

One explanation of the trend identified in part (a) = **2 point** (maximum)

- Award **1 point** for a statement showing general understanding of a trend
- Award **2 points** for a specific explanation that links the trend to political events/changes

Some possible explanations:

- Widening differences created during the Reagan era (increasing conservatism within Republican Party)
- Increasing percentages of people living in more conservative western states
- Distrust of the Democrats’ handling of the Vietnam War
- Distrust of Republican leadership caused by Watergate crisis
- Conservative movement led by Newt Gingrich in the early 1990s
- “Grassroots” movement within Democratic Party (increasing liberalism of the Democratic Party during the 1970s)
- increasing importance of the media in pointing out differences between Democrats and Republicans

A second explanation of the trend identified in part a) = **2 point** (maximum)

- Award **1 point** for a statement showing general understanding of a trend
- Award **2 points** for a specific explanation that links the trend to political events/changes

Use the guidelines above for the first explanation in awarding 1 or 2 points.

Point Matrix (5 points maximum)

Identify one trend	1st Explanation	2nd Explanation
1 point	1 or 2 points	1 or 2 points
1 point maximum	2 points maximum	2 points maximum

2. The three obstacles listed below have made it difficult to enact significant reforms of the legislative process in Congress.

- Incumbency
- Pork-barrel legislation
- Logrolling

Select TWO of the obstacles listed above. For EACH obstacle, provide both of the following:

- a) a brief description of the obstacle
- b) an explanation of how the obstacle has made it difficult to enact significant reforms of the legislative process in Congress.

General Comments

This question asks students to demonstrate their knowledge of controversial issues in regard to the work of Congress and the difficulties in enacting reform. In the first part, students must choose two of the three listed obstacles and give a brief description of each. In the second part, students must explain how the obstacle has made it difficult to enact significant reforms of the legislative process. Explanations must address each chosen obstacle specifically. The question does not require students to compare the obstacles, and they do not receive credit if they do.

Question Scoring Guidelines**6 Points Total**

- a) Descriptions of obstacles = **2 points**

Description of obstacle one = **1 point**

Possible descriptions:

- **Incumbency** – The longtime service of members of Congress through numerous reelections

- **Pork-barrel politics** – Constructing/voting for bills based on specific benefits for members’ districts/states
- **Logrolling** – agreements among members to support others’ legislation in return for support of his/her legislation (“You scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours”)

Description of obstacle two = **1 point**

- b) Explanations of obstacles = **4 points**

Possible explanations of obstacle one identified in part a) = **1 or 2 points**

- Award **1 point** for a statement showing general understanding of how the obstacle affects the legislative process
- Award **2 points** for a specific explanation for why and how the obstacle makes reform difficult

Some possible explanations:

Incumbency

- Longtime members may resist change that goes against long established practices.
- Incumbents often have large stakes in keeping the status quo.
- New members with reform ideas have little chance of influencing the process.

Pork-barrel politics

- Pork-barrel politics assure members of reelection.
- Pork-barrel politics assure benefits to people that members of Congress know directly.
- Pork-barrel politics reflect the personal influence of the representative or senator.

Logrolling

- Cooperation among members insures that pork-barrel politics will continue.
- The arrangement is a practical way to get the business of Congress done.
- Incumbency makes logrolling politics inevitable.

A explanation of obstacle two as identified in part a) = 2 point (maximum)

- Award 1 point for a statement showing general understanding of a trend
- Award 2 points for a specific explanation that links the trend to political events/changes

Use the guidelines above for the first explanation in awarding 1 or 2 points.

Point Matrix (6 Points Maximum)

Description of Obstacle One	Description of Obstacle Two	Explanation of Obstacle One	Explanation of Obstacle Two
1 point	1 point	1 or 2 points	1 or 2 points
1 point maximum	1 point maximum	2 points maximum	2 points maximum

3. Although the Constitution created some checks on their powers, judges still exercise considerable independence in making their decisions.
- a) Describe two checks on the power of federal judges provided by the Constitution.
 - b) For each of the two checks identified in part a), explain how each has had an impact on controlling judicial powers.

General Comments

This question asks students to demonstrate their knowledge of Constitutional powers of federal judges, as well as limitations to those powers. In the first part, they are asked to describe two checks on the power of federal judges provided by the Constitution. In the second part, students must explain how each of the checks identified in part (a) have had a limited impact on the power of judges. Explanations must directly apply to the checks identified in part (a). The question does not require students to compare the checks, and they do not receive extra credit if they do so.

Question Scoring Guidelines

6 Points Total

- a) Descriptions of checks = **2 points**

Description of 1st check = 1 point

Possible descriptions:

- Judges are appointed by the president.
- Judges are confirmed by the Senate.
- Judges may be impeached.
- Courts may be created/disbanded/rearranged by Congress (except the Supreme Court)
- Jurisdictions of federal courts are defined by the Constitution.

Description of 2nd check = **1 point**

- b) Explanations of how the checks identified in part (a) have had limited impact on judicial power = **4 points**

Explanation of 1st check = **2 points** (maximum)

- Award **1 point** for a statement showing general understanding of the limited impact of the check
- Award **2 points** for a specific explanation of why and how the check had had limited impact

Possible explanations:

- Federal judges have no term limits, long years of service.
- Appointments may be delayed/obstructed by opposing political party.
- Some senators believe that the president has the right to choose appointments.
- Jurisdictions are broadly defined, open to interpretation.
- Congress cannot disband the Supreme Court without a constitutional amendment.
- Public opinion/competition between legislature and executive branch constrains drastic changes to courts (example: Roosevelt’s attempt to “pack” the Supreme Court)
- The impeachment process is long and cumbersome, seldom used.

Point Matrix (6 Points Maximum)

Description of 1st Check	Description of 2nd Check	Explanation of 1st Check	Explanation of 2nd Check
1 point	1 point	1 or 2 points	1 or 2 points
1 point maximum	1 point maximum	2 points maximum	2 points maximum

4. Incorporation of the Bill of Rights into the due process clause of the 14th Amendment has occurred gradually over the course of the last century.
- a) Define incorporation and explain its impact on the courts' interpretation of the Bill of Rights.
 - b) Describe two specific court cases that have promoted the movement toward incorporation, and match each case with the specific constitutional right that it addressed.

7 Points Total

- a) Definition/explanation = **3 points maximum**

Definition = **1 point**

Incorporation – the gradual application of the rights protected in the Bill of Rights to the states through interpretation of the due process clause of the 14th Amendment.

Explanation of Impact = **2 points**

- Award 1 point for a statement showing general understanding of the impact of incorporation of the interpretation of the Bill of Rights
- Award 2 points for a specific explanation of why and how incorporation has impacted the interpretation of the Bill of Rights

Possible explanations of impact:

- Significant expansion of the influence of the Bill of Rights
- Significant expansion of protection of citizens' rights
- More restraints on state actions/relationship to citizens
- Expanded meaning of “due process”
- Tilted balance of power between federal/state rights toward federal
- Expanded opportunities for judicial activism

- b) Description of two cases/match with right = **4 points maximum**

1st Description of specific case = **1 point**

Match 1st case with right = **1 point**

Some possible cases/rights (others may be cited):

- *Gitlow v. New York* – freedom of speech
- *Near v. Minnesota* – freedom of the press
- *DeJonge v. Oregon* – freedom of assembly
- *Cantwell v. Connecticut* – free expression of religion
- *Everson v. Board of Education* – establishment of religion
- *Wolf v. Colorado* – no unreasonable searches and seizures
- *Mapp v. Ohio* – exclusionary rule
- *Gideon v. Wainwright* – right to counsel (felony cases)
- *Griswold v. Connecticut* – right to privacy

Note: Student may receive one point for correctly describing a case but mismatching it with a right.

2nd description of specific case = **1 point**

Match 2nd case with right = **1 point**

Point Matrix (7 points maximum)

Definition of incorporaton	Explanation of impact	Description of 1st case	Match 1st case with right	Description of 2nd case	Match 2nd case with right
1 point	1 or 2 points	1 point	1 point	1 point	1 point
1 point maximum	2 points maximum	1 point maximum	1 point maximum	1 point maximum	1 point maximum