

# Viking Quest: Government Assignments

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February 2015

Week: Feb. 17<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup>

- *Read and complete Chapter 16 Study Guide handout pages 177-186*
- *Read and complete chapter 16 section assessments pages 452-470, Government textbook*
- *Complete Chapter 16 Assessment and Activities pages 472-473, Government textbook*

# STUDY GUIDE Chapter 16, Section 1

For use with textbook pages 453–457.

## **D** DEVELOPMENT OF PARTIES

### KEY TERMS

**political party** A group of individuals with broad common interests who organize to nominate candidates for office, win elections, conduct government, and determine public policy (page 453)

**theocracy** A government dominated by religion (page 453)

**ideologies** Sets of basic beliefs about life, culture, government, and society (page 454)

**coalition government** One formed by several parties who combine forces to obtain a majority (page 454)

**third party** Any political party other than one of the two major parties (page 455)

**single-member district** Electoral district in which only one candidate is elected to each office (page 457)

**proportional representation** A system in which several officials are elected to represent the same area in proportion to the votes each party's candidate receives (page 457)

### DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Suppose you wanted to change the cafeteria menu. Would you go alone to make suggestions to the principal? Or would you go with a group of students who agree with you? If you think like members of a political party, you know there is strength in numbers.

This section focuses on how political parties came about.

### ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the graphic organizer below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the different kinds of third parties and identify the kind in each column.

<p><b>Liberty Party</b> <b>Free Soil Party</b></p>	<p><b>Socialist Labor Party</b> <b>Libertarian Party</b></p>	<p><b>Bull Moose Party</b></p>
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**STUDY GUIDE** (continued) **Chapter 16, Section 1**

**READ TO LEARN**

**Introduction** (page 453)

The voice of an individual citizen can easily be lost in a nation as large as the United States.

**Parties and Party Systems** (page 453)

A political party is a group of people with broad common interests. They organize to win elections, control government, and shape government policies. The roles parties play differ in the following systems:

**One-Party Systems** The party is the government in a one-party system. One-party systems are usually found in nations with authoritarian governments. Such parties often come to power through force. For example, a revolution in 1917 brought the Communist Party to power in Russia. One-party systems also exist in non-Communist countries. In Iran, for example, religious leaders run the government. A government dominated by religion is called a *theocracy*.

**Multiparty Systems** This is the most common system in nations that allow more than one political party. The parties often represent widely different *ideologies*. These are basic beliefs about government. One party rarely gets enough support to control the government. Several parties often combine to obtain a majority and form a *coalition government*. Coalitions often break down when disputes arise. As a result, multiparty systems are politically unstable.

**Two-Party Systems** Only about a dozen nations have a system in which only two parties compete for power. Two major parties dominate the government even though minor parties also exist. The major parties in the United States are the Republican Party and the Democratic Party.

1. Why are governments unstable in nations with multiparty systems?

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**Growth of American Parties** (page 454)

President George Washington warned against the harmful effects of parties. However, by the end of his second term, the United States had two major parties—the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans. The Federalists' power quickly declined after 1796. The Democratic-Republicans dominated politics into the 1820s. However, by 1828 the Democratic-Republicans began splitting into two parties—the Democrats and the Whigs, or National Republicans. By the 1850s the debate over slavery created divisions within both of the two parties. The Democrats split into northern and southern factions, or parts. Many Whigs joined the new Republican Party, which opposed the spread of slavery. The Republican Party remained the majority party from the Civil War until the 1930s.

In 1932 the Democratic Party won the White House and took control of Congress. The Democratic Party was the majority party for most of the next 60 years, controlling both houses of Congress in all but 6 years. Republicans took control of the White House in 1968 with the election of Richard Nixon. Republicans controlled the White House for 6 of the next 9 presidencies. In 1995 under President Clinton, a Democratic president worked with a Republican Congress for the first time since the 1940s.

**STUDY GUIDE** (continued) **Chapter 16, Section 1**

2. What did George Washington think about political parties?

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**☐ The Role of Minor Parties** (page 455)

A third party is any party other than one of the two major parties. Third parties are also called minor parties because they rarely win major elections. Third parties believe that neither major party is meeting certain needs. Minor parties generally fall into the following categories:

- A. The single-issue party focuses on one major social, economic, or moral issue. For example, in the 1840s the Liberty Party and the Free Soil Party formed to take stronger stands than the major parties took against slavery.
- B. The ideological party focuses on overall change in society. Ideological parties such as the Socialist Labor Party and the Communist Party USA demand government ownership of factories, transportation, resources, farmland, and other means of production and distribution. The Libertarian Party calls for reduced government and increased personal freedom.
- C. The splinter party splits away from one of the major parties because of some disagreement. For example, in 1912 former president Theodore Roosevelt led a group out of the Republican Party to form the Progressive, or Bull Moose, Party.

Minor parties have influenced the outcome of national elections. The Bull Moose Party drew so many Republicans away from President William Howard Taft in 1912 that Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson was elected. Some believe Ross Perot's independent candidacy may have helped Bill Clinton win in 1992.

The names of Republicans and Democrats are automatically on the ballot in many states. But third-party candidates must get a large number of voter signatures in a short time in order to get on the ballot. Nearly all elected officials in the United States are elected by *single-member districts*. Only one candidate will win no matter how many candidates compete in a district. So the winner will almost always be a Republican or a Democrat. On the other hand, many nations use *proportional representation*. In this system, several officials are elected to represent voters in an area. Offices are filled in proportion to the votes that each party's candidates receive. Such a system encourages minor-party candidates.

3. Why are third parties called "minor" parties?

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# STUDY GUIDE Chapter 16, Section 2

For use with textbook pages 458–462.

## **P**ARTY ORGANIZATION

### KEY TERMS

**independent** A voter who does not support any particular party (page 458)

**precinct** A voting district (page 459)

**precinct captain** A volunteer who organizes party workers to distribute information about the party and its candidates and to get the voters to the polls (page 459)

**ward** A large district comprised of several adjoining precincts (page 459)

**state central committee** A group usually composed of representatives from the party's county organizations (page 460)

**national convention** A gathering of local and state party members chosen to nominate presidential and vice-presidential candidates (page 460)

**national committee** Representatives from 50 state party organizations who run a political party (page 460)

**patronage** The practice of granting favors to reward party loyalty (page 462)

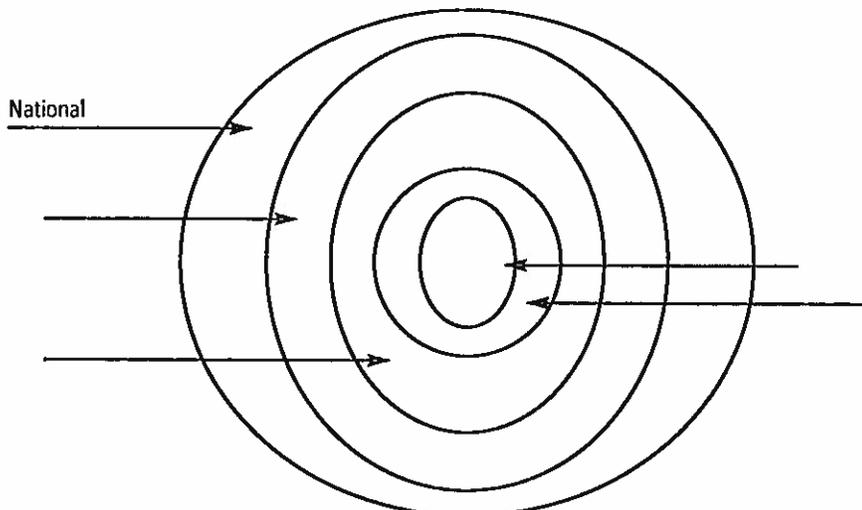
### DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

Have you ever belonged to the Boy Scouts? Scouts are organized on the local, state, national, and international levels. America's political parties are organized on several levels as well.

This section focuses on how political parties are organized and on what they do.

### ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the graphic organizer below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the different levels of party organization. Then label each circle. The outer circle has been labeled.



**STUDY GUIDE** (continued)**Chapter 16, Section 2****READ TO LEARN****Introduction** (page 458)

Both major parties have small paid staffs in permanent party offices at the local, state, and federal levels. Parties also use volunteers to carry out a wide range of tasks. Volunteers collect campaign contributions, promote the candidates, send out campaign literature, call on voters, and watch at the polls on election day. Parties also seek the help of various professionals. Examples are media experts to prepare campaign materials and pollsters to research public opinion.

**Membership and Organization** (page 458)

Democrats and Republicans are organized into 50 state parties and thousands of local parties that operate independently of the national party. Local, state, and national parties choose their own leaders and raise their own funds. In many states, citizens declare their party preference when they register to vote or when they vote in certain kinds of elections. A voter may declare that he or she is *independent*. In other words, the voter does not support any particular party. People who belong to a party generally support most of its ideas and candidates. Party membership involves no duties or obligations beyond voting. Some citizens, however, may contribute money to a party or do volunteer work for the party or its candidates on the following levels:

**Local Party Organization** The basic local unit is a *precinct*. This is a voting district ranging in size from just a few voters to more than 1,000. All voters cast their ballots at the same polling place. The *precinct captain* volunteers to organize party workers. They distribute information about the party and its candidates and get voters to the polls.

Several neighboring precincts make up a *ward*. Party members in each ward select a person to represent the ward at the next level of party organization—the party’s county committee. The county committee chooses a chairperson to handle the county party’s daily affairs. The party county chairperson is often the key figure in determining which candidate receives the party’s support. If the state’s governor or senator is from the same party, they may ask the party county chairperson for advice when appointing judges or other officials.

**State Party Organization** In each state the most important part of a party is the *state central committee*. This usually is composed of representatives from the party’s county organization. The state central committee chooses the party state chairperson. A main job of the state central committee is to help elect the party’s candidates for state government offices.

**National Party Organization** The national party organization is made up of the national convention and the national committee. The *national convention* is a gathering of party members and local and state party officials. It meets every four years to nominate the party’s presidential and vice-presidential candidates. Between conventions the party’s *national committee* runs the party. The committee is a large group made up mostly of representatives from the 50 state party organizations. The national committee elects a party national chairperson. He or she manages the daily operations of the national party. Both the Democrats and Republicans also have independent campaign committees for Congress. These committees help senators and representatives with their reelections.

**STUDY GUIDE** (continued) **Chapter 16, Section 2**

1. Why is the party county chairperson a powerful figure in county politics?

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**Political Party Functions** (page 460)

Political parties are the only American institutions that do the following important tasks:

**Recruiting Candidates** This is the main job of political parties. Political parties are often election, rather than issue, oriented. This helps the Republicans and Democrats maintain their status as major parties.

**Educating the Public** Each party publishes its position on important issues, such as inflation and pollution. Some people do not know much about the issues or a candidate's background. Political parties simplify elections by helping such people decide how to vote. Voters know generally how a candidate stands on an issue just because he or she is a Democrat or a Republican.

**Operating the Government** Members of Congress and the state legislatures support their party's positions when considering legislation. The party also links a president or governor and the legislature. He or she works through party leaders in the legislature to promote programs.

**Dispensing Patronage** Political parties also give out *patronage* to their members. This is doing favors to reward party loyalty. The favors often include jobs, contracts, and appointments to government jobs.

**The Loyal Opposition** The party out of power in the legislative or executive branch assumes the role of "watchdog" over government. It observes the party in power, criticizes it, and offers solutions to political problems. This makes the party in power more aware of the will of the people.

**Reduction of Conflict** A party encourages groups to compromise and work together. An outcome of this process is that parties encourage government to use policies with mass appeal. Also, thanks to parties, the transfer of power takes place peacefully when one party loses control of the government. The losing party knows that someday it will return to power.

2. How do political parties help operate the government?

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# STUDY GUIDE Chapter 16, Section 3

For use with textbook pages 464–470.

## NOMINATING CANDIDATES

### KEY TERMS

- caucus** A private meeting of party leaders to choose candidates for office (page 464)
- nominating convention** An official public meeting of a party to choose candidates for office (page 464)
- boss** A powerful party leader (page 465)
- direct primary** An election in which party members select people to run in the general election (page 465)
- closed primary** An election in which only the members of a political party can vote (page 465)
- open primary** An election in which all voters may participate (page 465)
- plurality** The largest number of votes in an election (page 465)
- runoff primary** A second primary election between the two candidates who received the most votes in the first primary (page 465)
- ticket** The candidates for president and vice president (page 466)
- platform** A statement of a political party's principles, beliefs, and positions on vital issues (page 469)
- planks** Sections of a political party platform (page 469)

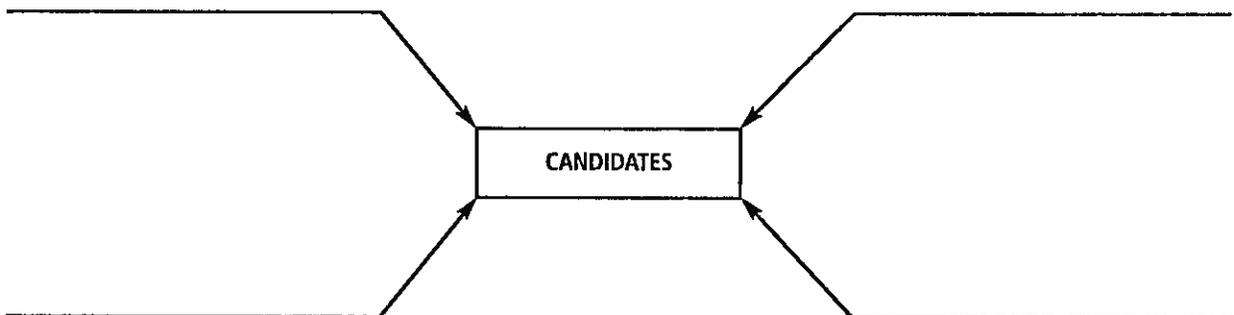
### DRAWING FROM EXPERIENCE

How do students at your school choose candidates for student government? They probably use a petition method. This is only one way political parties use to choose candidates.

This section focuses on how parties choose political candidates.

### ORGANIZING YOUR THOUGHTS

Use the graphic organizer below to help you take notes as you read the summaries that follow. Think about the ways candidates are selected to run for office.



**STUDY GUIDE** (continued)**Chapter 16, Section 3****READ TO LEARN****Introduction** (page 464)

Choosing candidates is often a difficult task for parties. The parties need to find appealing candidates and spend money to win elections.

**How Candidates Are Selected** (page 464)

Individuals are nominated for public office in the following ways:

**Caucuses** Early in our nation's history, nearly all candidates were chosen in *caucuses*. These are private meetings of party leaders. Party rules require openness in the modern caucus process. Only 19 states now use caucuses.

**Nominating Conventions** The *nominating convention* is an official public meeting of a party to choose candidates for office. The convention system was supposed to be more democratic than caucuses. But powerful party leaders called bosses often chose delegates and controlled conventions. Public reaction to bosses in the 1900s led to primary elections as the preferred method of selection at state and local levels.

**Primary Elections** The *direct primary* is the method most often used today to select candidates. A direct primary is an election in which party members select people to run in a general election. Most states hold a *closed primary*. This means only members of a political party can vote. So only Democrats pick Democratic candidates, and only Republicans pick Republican candidates. In an *open primary*, all voters may participate. In most states a primary candidate needs only a *plurality*, or more votes than the other candidate, to win. In a few states, however, if no candidate receives a majority—more than half the votes cast—a *runoff primary* is held. The runoff is a second primary election between the two candidates who received the most votes in the first primary. In many states, party caucuses and nominating conventions take place alongside primaries.

**Petition** Under the petition method, a person announces his or her candidacy and files petitions that a certain number of voters have signed in order to be placed on the ballot. Some states require that all candidates submit petitions.

1. Why did primary elections become popular in the 1900s?

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**Presidential Nominations** (page 466)

Every four years, each major party holds a national convention in July or August. Delegates from 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and the District of Columbia attend the convention. Their job is to select a ticket. This means the candidates for president and vice president.

From 1800 to 1824, congressional leaders from each party met in secret to choose their party's ticket. In 1824, Andrew Jackson attacked the caucus system as undemocratic. His attack on the caucus method led to the general use of the nominating convention. By 1916 almost half the states were choosing delegates for a national convention in presidential primary elections.

**STUDY GUIDE** (continued) **Chapter 16, Section 3**

Today presidential primaries operate under a wide variety of state laws. However, the following descriptions are generally true:

- A. Primaries may be a delegate selection process or a presidential preference poll, or both.
- B. Either the candidate who wins the primary gets all the state’s convention delegates, or each candidate gets delegates based on how many popular votes he or she receives in the primary.
- C. Delegates selected on the basis of the popular vote may be required to support a certain candidate at the national convention, or they may be uncommitted.

Today only a few of the states with presidential primaries hold “beauty contests.” These are preference polls in which voters indicate which candidate they prefer. Caucuses later choose the actual delegates.

Critics say that primaries are spread over too long a time in the election year. They also say that primaries seem to make the image of the candidates more important than the issues. Also, relatively few people vote in primaries. So the winner may not be as popular as the victory would indicate. Some states have joined forces to create regional primaries. For example, 6 Southern states held their 2000 Democratic presidential primaries on March 14. Candidates who failed to do well in this “Super Tuesday” election lost almost all chance of becoming the party’s nominee.

2. What is a “beauty contest”?

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**▣ The National Convention** (page 468)

While candidates compete in primaries, the national committee staff is preparing for the convention. It chooses the city and dates. Then the committee tells each state party organization how many votes it will have at the convention.

When delegates arrive at the convention, many are already pledged to candidates. Others are not. Candidates try to get uncommitted delegates to support them. The party chairperson calls the opening session to order. An important party member gives the keynote speech, intended to unite the party for the coming campaign. The delegates then approve the convention’s four standing committees:

**The rules committee** proposes rules for running the convention and sets the convention’s order of business.

**The credentials committee** must approve the delegations from each state. Candidates who trail in delegates sometimes challenge the credentials of their opponents’ delegates. Two rival groups of delegates may even appear at a convention, each claiming to be a state’s official delegation. It is up to the credentials committee to decide which delegates should be seated.

**The committee on permanent organization** selects the permanent chairperson and other officials for the convention.

**The platform committee** writes the party’s **platform**. This is a statement of the party’s principles, beliefs, and positions on important issues. It spells out how the party intends to deal with these issues. Individual parts of the platform, or **planks**, often divide the delegates. All the candidates try to get their viewpoints into the platform.

**STUDY GUIDE** (continued) **Chapter 16, Section 3**

After each committee's reports are approved, it is time to select the party's candidate. The nominating speech for each candidate sets off a parade around the convention hall. After all the nominating speeches and seconding speeches, the balloting starts. The chairperson of each state delegation calls out the delegates' votes. The candidate who receives a majority of the votes becomes the party's nominee. If no candidate receives a majority, then further votes are taken until one candidate wins a majority.

The vice-presidential nomination usually takes place on the last day of the convention. A vice-presidential candidate is usually chosen to balance the ticket. This means he or she has a personal, political, and geographical background different from the presidential nominees. This balance is supposed to make the ticket appeal to as many voters as possible.

The presidential and vice-presidential nominees appear before the delegates and make acceptance speeches. The speeches are supposed to bring the party together, to attack the opposition party, to sound a theme for the upcoming campaign, and to appeal to a national television audience. The convention then adjourns.

3. Name a national convention's four standing committees.

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