



Create Your Own Political Party - Class Activity

Goal: Your group will create a new political party to represent your stance on issues important to you and others who share similar opinions.

Directions:

1. Decide on an issue important to your class. Create a party for each side of the issue.
2. Have the class members choose a party to join based on their stance on the issue.
3. Choose a name for each political party. It must be appropriate and politically correct.
4. Most political parties have a symbol that represents them. Decide on a symbol that you want to represent your party.
5. Make a poster, displaying your name, your symbol, and some of the stands you take as a political party on three or four less important issues. Some suggestions are listed below.
6. Choose a leader to represent each party.
7. Present your party's opinion on all the issues and try to influence the other party's members to change their opinion. Encourage members of the opposing party to switch and join your party instead.
8. Have your class vote by secret ballot on each of the issues.

Sample Issues:

- Should school operate year-round? What should be the hours of the school day? How many days a week should school be held?
- Should one teacher teach all subjects for a particular grade level or should there be a different teacher for each subject?
- Would it be better to increase the lunch period, giving students a longer break in the middle of the day and stay at school a little later in the afternoon? Or, keep the same lunch period and get out of school at the same time as you do now?
- Which is more important in the school budget - the arts or athletics? Which should be cut first?
- Should homework be discontinued? Should grades be eliminated and instead give a pass/fail for each class at the end of the semester?

Discussion:

- What if you joined one political party over the other because you agreed with its stance on the major issue, but you disagreed with the party's stance on the less important issues?
- What if you changed your mind after listening to the other party's opinion on the major issue? How would you feel about leaving your original party and its members to switch to the opposition party?
- Did the results of the election reflect party membership or did voters cross party lines on certain issues? Which issue(s) produced greatest/least party loyalty?