



FLORIDA...

The Story Continues

CHAPTER 11, The Political System

PEOPLE

1988: Humorist Dave Barry (1947–) wins the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary. The Pulitzer Prize for Commentary always went to a serious journalist for a serious editorial. A humor writer had never won it. Dave Barry wrote humor columns for the *Miami Herald*. People read his columns, which were funny. They talked about his columns because he gave them new ways to think about national events. In 1988, the Pulitzer Prize jury rewarded Dave Barry for using humor to shape public opinion.

PEOPLE

The Florida Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) fights for safer toys, a cleaner environment, and honest elections. Florida PIRG works with PIRGs from other states. They educate the public about many consumer issues. One of their major focuses is the New Voters Project. Florida PIRG maintains that democracy is strongest when everyone participates. However, many young people do not vote. The political opinions of those young people are not considered. So the PIRG encourages all 18- to 24-year-olds to vote.

PLACES**2010: Citizens say “No” to a big company in Gadsden County.**

In December 2009, ADAGE, LLC said it would build a biomass incinerator in Gretna. The company told city officials that many people would be hired to work at the plant. It told city officials how much tax money the city would get. The energy produced would be “clean, green and renewable.” Many people in Gretna and Gadsden County disagreed. They read studies that showed the process would pollute the air near schools. In January 2010, they formed the Concerned Citizens of Gadsden County to fight against the plant. The group spoke to the mayor and city council. They wrote letters to newspapers. On March 15, 2010, the city council postponed the project. ADAGE decided not to build in Gretna.

EVENTS**2010: Marco Rubio proves that political polls can be wrong.**

In July 2010 a Florida poll showed that Governor Charlie Crist would win the Senate race. However, many people had not made up their minds yet about which candidate they preferred. In November Rubio, not Crist, won the Senate seat.

EVENTS**2010: Florida State Representative Mike Weinstein refuses to be negative.**

Negative campaign ads try to make people vote for one person by

attacking the other candidate. Instead of doing that, State Representative Weinstein created a campaign video with upbeat tempo, lyrics, and hip-hop dancers. In the video, he told voters how hard he worked for them. He said nothing negative about his opponents, who ended up dropping out of the race.



Unpacking the Florida Standards <...>

Read the following to learn what this standard says and what it means. See FL8-FL20 to unpack all the other standards related to this chapter.

Benchmark SS.7.C.2.9 Evaluate candidates for political office by analyzing their qualifications, experience, issue-based platforms, debates, and political ads.

What does it mean?

Demonstrate an ability to assess the appropriateness of a candidate running for political office by critically analyzing his or her qualifications, experience, issue-based platforms, performance in debates, and political advertisements. Go to Chapter 10, Electing Leaders, and Chapter 11, The Political System, for help.

CHAPTER 11

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

Essential Question In what ways do political leaders and interest groups try to influence the political process? How can Americans participate in government?



Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards

SS.7.C.2.9 Evaluate candidates for political office by analyzing their qualifications, experience, issue-based platforms, debates, and political ads. **SS.7.C.2.10** Examine the impact of media, individuals, and interest groups on monitoring and influencing government. **SS.7.C.2.11** Analyze media and political communications (bias, symbolism, propaganda). **SS.7.C.2.13** Examine multiple perspectives on public and current issues. **SS.7.C.3.12** Analyze the significance and outcomes of landmark Supreme Court cases including, but not limited to, *Marbury v. Madison*, *Plessy v. Ferguson*, *Brown v. Board of Education*, *Gideon v. Wainwright*, *Miranda v. Arizona*, *in re Gault*, *Tinker v. Des Moines*, *Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier*, *United States v. Nixon*, and *Bush v. Gore*. **LA.7.1.6.1** The student will use new vocabulary that is introduced and taught directly. **LA.7.1.7.1** The student will use background knowledge of subject and related content areas, prereading strategies, graphic representations, and knowledge of text structure to make and confirm complex predictions of content, purpose, and organization of a reading selection. **LA.7.1.7.3** The student will determine the main idea or essential message in grade-level or higher texts through inferring, paraphrasing, summarizing, and identifying relevant details. **MA.7.S.6.1** Evaluate the reasonableness of a sample to determine the appropriateness of generalizations made about the population.





**HISTORY**

**Vote Tech**

 **VIDEO**

WHY CIVICS Matters

When you vote, you are part of the long tradition of American democracy. Your vote is important. To play your part, listen to and evaluate the political messages you get. Then it's your turn. Vote and send your own message.



STUDENTS TAKE ACTION

CREATE A HOLIDAY Few state or national holidays honor women's contributions to the nation. If you were to propose a new statewide holiday to honor a woman, what would you do to get the holiday created? As you read this chapter, think of actions you might take.

FOCUS ON WRITING

OUTLINE FOR A DOCUMENTARY

FILM Several filmmakers have made documentary films about politicians and our political system. There is always room for another good film. In this chapter you will read about the political system, shaping public opinion, and your part in our democratic system. Then you will create an outline for a documentary film to be used in your civics class.

Reading Skills

In this chapter you will read about how public opinion influences political decisions. You will learn how public opinion is measured and how groups try to shape public opinion in different ways. You will also learn how to recognize

propaganda. You will discover how interest groups work to influence public opinion and what a lobbyist does. Finally, you will learn how all citizens can participate in their government and about the importance of voting.

Using Questions to Analyze Text

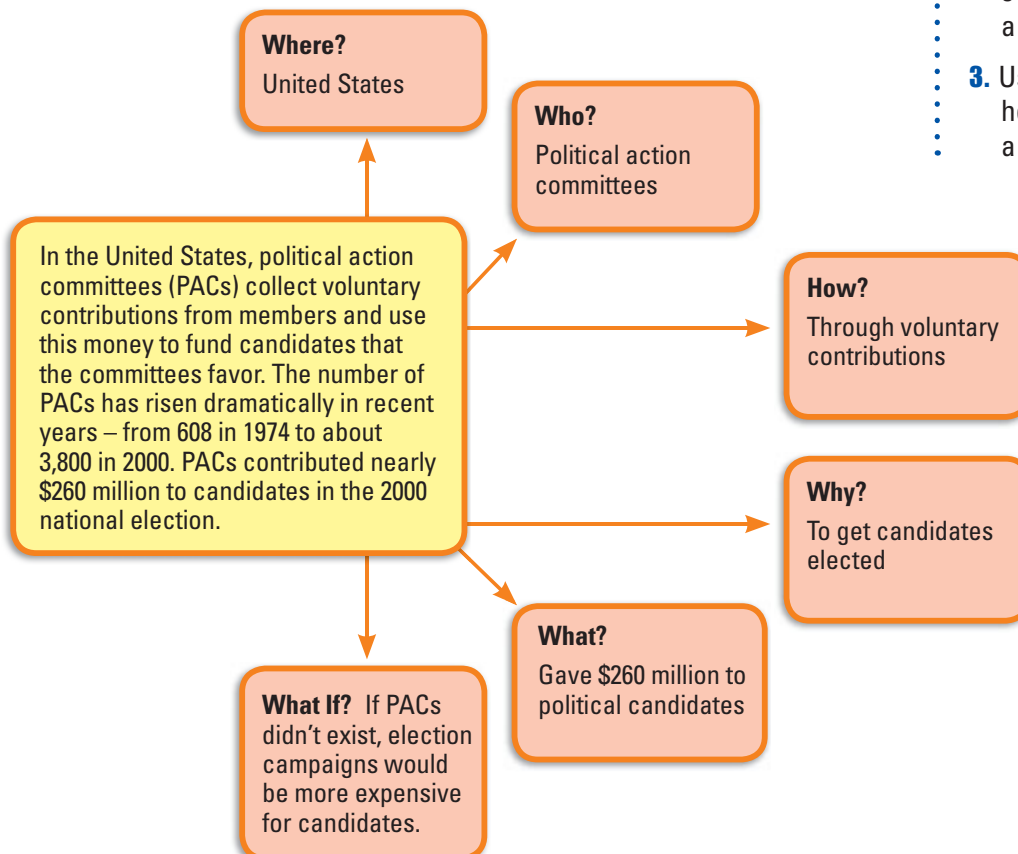
FOCUS ON READING

When newspaper reporters want to get to the heart of a story, they ask certain questions: who, what, when, where, why, and how. When you are reading a textbook, you can use the same questions to get to the heart of the information you are reading.

Hypothetical Questions You can also use questions to dig deeper than what is in the text. You can ask hypothetical, or *what if*, questions, such as, What might have happened had the situation been different? Sometimes asking such questions can make the material come alive.

Helpful Hints for Using Questions to Analyze Text

1. Remember that the 5Ws and H questions are Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How?
2. See if you can answer the 5Ws and H questions about a passage.
3. Use What If? questions to help you think more about a passage.





LA.7.1.7.3

You Try It!

The following passage is from the chapter you are about to read. Read it and then answer the questions below.

Judy Heumann was born in New York City. When she was 1 1/2 years old, she contracted polio and was confined to a wheelchair. Because public schools could not meet the needs of disabled students, she was home-schooled until the fourth grade. After graduation, Heumann studied to become a teacher. However, New York would not certify her because of her physical disability. Heumann won a lawsuit against the state and later helped found Disabled in Action, a disabled-rights organization. She also served with the Center for Independent Living, which helps integrate disabled individuals into local communities. In 2010 she was appointed special advisor for international disability rights at the U.S. Department of State.

*From Chapter 11,
p. 281*

After you have read the passage, answer the following questions.

1. Who is this passage about?
2. What did she do?
3. When did she do this?
4. How do you think she accomplished it?
5. Why did she do it?
6. How do you think she got the money to begin the organization?
7. What if she had lost her fight? How might life for people with disabilities be different?

As you read Chapter 11, ask the who, what, when, where, why, how, and what if questions to make sure you are getting to the heart of the material.

KEY TERMS

CHAPTER 11

Section 1

public opinion (p. 273)
mass media (p. 273)
propaganda (p. 273)
poll (p. 276)

Section 2

interest groups (p. 278)
lobby (p. 278)
lobbyist (p. 278)
public-interest groups (p. 279)

Section 3

volunteers (p. 285)
political action committees (PACs) (p. 286)

Academic Vocabulary

Success in school is related to knowing academic vocabulary—the words that are frequently used in school assignments and discussions. In this chapter, you will learn the following academic words:

influence (p. 273)
factor (p. 273)

SECTION 1



SS.7.C.2.9; SS.7.C.2.10; SS.7.C.2.11; LA.7.1.6.1; LA.7.1.7.1; MA.7.S.6.1

Shaping Public Opinion

BEFORE YOU READ

The Main Idea


Political leaders and interest groups find many ways to shape public opinion and influence the beliefs of American citizens.

Reading Focus

1. What is public opinion, and how is it shaped?
2. What is propaganda, and what are six common propaganda techniques?
3. How is public opinion measured?

Key Terms

public opinion, p. 273
mass media, p. 273
propaganda, p. 273
poll, p. 276

 hmhsocialstudies.com
TAKING NOTES
Use the graphic organizer online to take notes on public opinion.



When you see or hear your favorite athlete or musician advertise a product, do you want to buy that item? Many people do, judging by the money celebrities earn for product endorsements. Advertising must work, because companies spend a lot of money to sell their products. Remember that idea the next time you see a political advertisement. The same advertising methods that sell makeup, cars, and music also sell political issues and candidates. If you know how public opinion is shaped, you will be able to make informed choices.

Public Opinion and How It Is Shaped

What is your opinion? You have probably been asked this question many times. Your opinions can influence what others believe or how they act. In the United States, the opinions of the people—of the citizens—can influence the government. For example, an elected official who ignores the opinions of the people is not likely to be elected again.

We have all heard statements such as “Public opinion demands that something be

Political candidates try to shape public opinion through their words and actions.

SS.7.C.2.10 Examine the impact of media, individuals, and interest groups on monitoring and influencing government.



Public Opinion

The term *public opinion* refers to the many different opinions held on a particular subject. Oftentimes people make their opinion known through protest.

What different opinions are reflected in these protest signs?

done.” People sometimes think that public opinion is one opinion shared by all Americans. However, there are very few issues on which all Americans agree.

Public Opinion Is Many Opinions

On any particular issue, there may be many diverse opinions, each one held by a different group. Each group, therefore, makes up a “public.” Because an issue may have many interested publics, **public opinion** is the total of the opinions held concerning a particular issue. Thus, the term *public opinion* really refers to many opinions.

Opinions are **influenced** or shaped by many factors. The first **factor** is usually the family. Because we share many of the same experiences with our family, we often have similar responses to issues. As we grow older, other people and experiences begin to influence what we believe. Friends, new ideas, teachers, and clubs can all play a major role in shaping our opinions.

Information and Public Opinion

Much of the information we need to make good decisions about public issues comes from the mass media. The **mass media** are forms of communication that transmit information to large numbers of people. Mass media include printed media such as books, magazines, and

newspapers. Mass media also includes types of electronic media such as film, radio, television, and the Internet.

Today a lot of information is available on many issues. Simply having access to information, however, does not always mean you are well informed. Sometimes the information that you receive is inaccurate, misleading, or one-sided. A newspaper, for example, might give more favorable coverage to a political candidate it supports and less favorable coverage to a candidate it opposes. Web sites often present just one point of view.

Effective citizenship requires you to think critically about what you see, hear, and read. To participate fully in the democratic process, you must be well informed. You must learn to recognize the difference between fact and opinion. You should learn how to gather information from reliable sources.

Propaganda Shapes Public Opinion

Many of the ideas in the mass media are directed at us for a purpose. Someone or some group is urging us to do something—to buy something, to believe something, or to act in a certain way. Ideas that are spread to influence people are called **propaganda**. Communications satellites, computer networks, and television broadcasts all help spread propaganda farther and faster than ever before.

SS.7.C.2.11

Analyze media and political communications (bias, symbolism, propaganda).

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

influence:
to change, or have an effect on
factor:
a cause

Concealed Propaganda

Citizens must be alert to propaganda. They must be able to recognize it and be aware of the various methods used by propagandists. Sometimes propaganda is presented as fact and its sources are kept secret. This is called concealed propaganda. Concealed propaganda is used to fool people without letting them know that its purpose is to influence their views. Many political advertisements contain concealed propaganda.

Revealed Propaganda

Revealed propaganda is more common in the United States and in other democracies. Revealed propaganda makes readers or listeners aware that someone is trying to influence them. Television and radio commercials are direct appeals to the public to buy products. The commercials that political parties run to convince voters to support their candidates may contain concealed propaganda, but they also use revealed propaganda. For example,

these commercials must be clearly labeled as paid advertisements. They also identify the organization that paid for the ad.

READING CHECK

Drawing Conclusions How do concealed and revealed propaganda affect public opinion?

Propaganda Techniques

Whether you realize it or not, you are exposed to propaganda in many different ways. The Institute for Propaganda Analysis has identified several techniques that advertisers commonly use to influence people. Many of these techniques may seem familiar to you.

Testimonials

Political candidates and advertisers often seek endorsements from famous people. For example, advertisers know that people admire sports heroes. Therefore, advertisers pay famous athletes to say they use and like their products.

6 Propaganda Techniques

Propaganda is speech that is meant to persuade. A variety of techniques are used to persuade people and to shape public opinion.

QUICK
FACTS



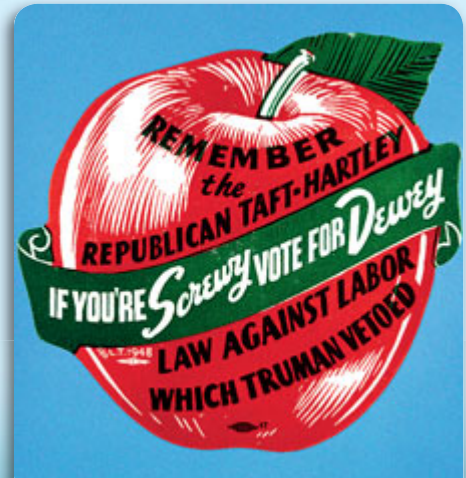
1 Testimonial

Bono of the rock band U2 tells about his work in Africa while lobbying the U.S. government to send aid to the continent.



2 Bandwagon

Organizations persuade young people to vote by showing celebrities, like Natalie Portman, who support their causes.



3 Name Calling

The Harry S. Truman campaign for president criticizes opponents.

The law requires that any endorsement by a celebrity must reflect the celebrity's honest experience or opinion. That is, if the celebrity says that he or she uses a product, the celebrity actually must use that product. An athlete in a commercial who says, "XYZ Shampoo makes my hair clean and shiny" must actually use XYZ Shampoo and must have the opinion that the shampoo makes his or her hair clean and shiny.

Bandwagon

People who write propaganda know that if you say something often enough and loud enough, people will believe it. If you can win some people over to your ideas, eventually more and more people will come over to your side. This is known as the bandwagon technique. "Everybody's doing it! Jump on the bandwagon!" This method appeals to people's desire to do what their friends and neighbors are doing. It takes advantage of the "peer pressure" factor.

Name Calling

A very common propaganda technique is name calling. Name calling is using an unpleasant label or description to harm a person, group, or product. For example, during an election campaign, both sides often use name-calling. You may hear that one candidate favors "reckless spending," or that another is "opposed to progress." You must ask yourself what proof is given of these charges and whether they are supported by any facts.

Glittering Generalities

Another technique used to influence people's thinking is the glittering generality. This technique uses words or vague statements that sound good but have little real meaning.

Political candidates often use glittering generalities because these statements tell voters nothing about what a candidate really believes. This type of propaganda often uses words such as *freedom* and *patriotism*.

SS.7.C.2.11
Analyze media and political communications (bias, symbolism, propaganda).

 hmhsocialstudies.com
INTERACTIVE ART



4 Glittering Generalities

Former Attorney General John Ashcroft gives a speech on the PATRIOT Act that includes an emotional appeal to the ideal of liberty.



5 Plain-Folks Appeal

Former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger appeals for transportation funding by picking up a rake and helping workers fill potholes.



6 Card Stacking

One newspaper uses card stacking to show only one version of the disputed 2000 presidential election, which was undecided for weeks.

These words are chosen because they spark positive images with which most people in the country identify.

Plain-Folks Appeal

During election campaigns, many candidates describe themselves as being just plain, hardworking citizens. They stress that they understand the problems of average Americans. This plain-folks appeal is designed to show people that, as one of them, the candidate can best represent their interests.

Card Stacking

Another propaganda technique is card stacking. Card stacking uses facts that support only one side of a particular product, idea, or candidate. In other words, this technique stacks the cards against the truth. For example, newspapers may give front-page attention to the activities of the candidates they favor. The activities of the opposing party's candidates may be given less coverage or no coverage at all.

READING CHECK Comparing and Contrasting

Explain how testimonials are similar to and different from plain-folks appeals.

Measuring Public Opinion

Government officials are responsible for carrying out the wishes of the people. How do government officials find out what the public wants? One important way of measuring public opinion is to conduct a public opinion **poll**, or survey.

Polls are used to find out what people think about specific issues and about politicians and their policies. A poll attempts to measure public opinion by asking the opinions of a sample, or portion, of the public.

Great care must be taken to choose a sample that is representative of the public. Unrepresentative samples can cause serious errors in a poll's results. Suppose your school conducted a poll to find out whether people wanted the cafeteria to remain open during the entire school day. A poll of teachers would have different results than a poll that included students. People who design opinion polls must be very careful to survey people who represent the general public.

READING CHECK Summarizing

What do polls measure?

SECTION 1 ASSESSMENT

 hmhsocialstudies.com
ONLINE QUIZ

Reviewing Ideas and Terms

- Define** Write a brief definition of the following terms: **public opinion**, **mass media**, and **propaganda**.
 - Recall** How is public opinion shaped?
 - Evaluate** Which influence on public opinion is strongest? Explain your answer.
- Recall** What are six common propaganda techniques?
 - Draw Conclusions** Why might the plain-folks appeal persuade many voters?
 - Elaborate** With the spread of the Internet, will the use of propaganda become less common or more common? Give reasons for your answer.
- Define** Write a brief definition for the term **poll**.
 - Explain** How does a poll measure public opinion?

Critical Thinking

- Evaluating** Use your notes and a diagram like the one here to evaluate the effectiveness of the six common propaganda techniques.

Technique	Effectiveness

FOCUS ON WRITING

- Identifying Bias** Find an advertisement that uses some or all of the propaganda techniques covered in this section. Write a paragraph analyzing the message the advertisement promotes and explaining the techniques it uses.

Analyzing Public Opinion Polls



SS.7.C.2.10;
SS.7.C.2.11;
MA.7.S.6.1

Learn

In the United States elected officials are supposed to represent and act on the views of the people who elected them. They frequently rely on polls—lists of questions or surveys—to help them understand what citizens think about different issues. People who do polling usually ask about 1,500 people to answer questions they have developed. By selecting the people carefully, pollsters can get an idea of how the American public as a whole feels about the issues.

Polls measure public opinion. However, polls often emphasize one finding over another. They present their findings in such a way as to mislead readers. For example, a poll might say that 98 percent of people polled plan to vote for a certain candidate. However, the poll might not mention that only a very small number of people were polled.

Analyzing polls is an important part of understanding the media. Follow the steps below to learn how to analyze a public opinion poll.

Practice

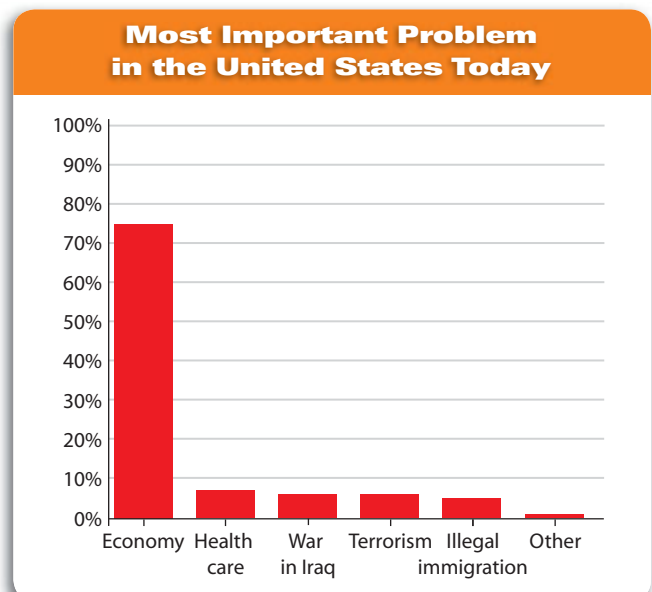
- 1 Identify the topic of the poll. Understanding what the subject of the poll is can help you think critically about its findings.
- 2 Identify the people who were polled. It is important to understand who was asked the poll questions. Was it a large, diverse group, or a small, select group? Consider how the people who answered the poll might affect its results.
- 3 Analyze the format of the poll. Were people asked to answer yes or no, or were they given a variety of answers? The questions and answer choices might have a certain point of view.

- 4 Understand who sponsored or paid for the poll. What kind of an organization sponsored the poll or developed the questions?

Apply

The graph below represents the results of a public opinion poll from 2008. The poll, sponsored by CNN, asked about 1,010 adults to identify the problem they believed to be the most important one facing the United States today. Use this graph and the steps for analyzing a poll to answer the questions below.

1. Who was polled? What are some points of view the pollsters brought to the poll? How do you know?
2. Who sponsored or paid for the poll? Do you think they influenced the outcome of the poll? Why or why not?
3. List the elements of this poll that make it neutral. Explain.



SECTION 2



SS.7.C.2.10; SS.7.C.2.13; LA.7.1.6.1; LA.7.1.7.1

Interest Groups

BEFORE YOU READ

The Main Idea

Interest groups work to persuade the government to adopt particular policies and address specific issues.

Reading Focus

1. What are interest groups, and what are the different types of interest groups?
2. How do lobbyists try to influence government and public opinion?
3. Do interest groups have too much power?

Key Terms

interest groups, p. 278
lobby, p. 278
lobbyist, p. 278
public-interest groups, p. 279



Use the graphic organizer online to take notes on interest groups.



Supporters of the rights of people with disabilities protest in front of the White House.

SS.7.C.2.10 Examine the impact of media, individuals, and interest groups on monitoring and influencing government.

CIVICS IN PRACTICE

Americans can express their opinions to government officials in many ways. One of the most effective ways to express an opinion is to join an interest group. Your legislator represents a district of about 640,000 people. One lone voice has only a small chance of being heard. By joining a group that shares your point of view, you can make your voice heard.

What Is an Interest Group?

Many Americans are members of one or more **interest groups**. These groups are organizations of people with a common interest. They try to influence government policies and decisions. An interest group is also known as a pressure group, or **lobby**. A person who is paid by a lobby or interest group to represent that group's interests is called a **lobbyist**.

Interest groups are not the same as political parties. Both seek to influence government. However, interest groups are more concerned with influencing public policies than in electing candidates.

The Motor Voter Act

Recent legislation now allows people in most states to register to vote while they apply for or renew their driver's license.

Why it Matters

Voting is your opportunity to participate in our democratic system.

Most states require you to register before you vote. The Motor Voter Act makes it easier for all citizens—especially young people—to register to vote. The law also allows you to register in other public offices. Or you can mail in a form that is available on the Internet.

The Motor Voter Act has had a significant impact on voter registration. In 2001 and 2002, almost 20 million new voters registered. More than 70 percent of those were the result of provisions of the Motor Voter Act.



ANALYSIS SKILL

EVALUATING THE LAW

Do you think linking voter registration to driver's license applications is a good idea? Why or why not?

hmhsocialstudies.com **ACTIVITY**

Types of Interest Groups

The different kinds of interest groups include business associations, labor unions, farm organizations, veterans' organizations, teachers' associations, and consumer groups. Some interest groups represent the economic interests of their members. These groups include the National Association of Manufacturers, the United Mine Workers of America, and the American Farm Bureau Federation. Members of economic-interest groups seek to influence government policies that affect their industry or profession. For example, the American Farm Bureau Federation works to have bills passed that help farmers recover losses from natural disasters and falling crop prices.

Some interest groups are issue-oriented. That is, they focus on a specific issue or cause. For example, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

works to promote racial equality. The National Organization for Women (NOW) is a special interest group that seeks to protect the rights of women.

Other groups, referred to as **public-interest groups**, promote the interests of the general public rather than just one part of it. These groups work to protect consumers, wildlife, and the environment.

Many interest groups hire lobbyists to represent them. Lobbyists work at all levels of government, although most are located in Washington, D.C. Some lobbyists are former members of the state legislatures or public agencies they now seek to influence. Other lobbyists are lawyers, public-relations experts, journalists, or specialists in particular fields.

READING CHECK

Finding Main Ideas What are interest groups?

Lobbyists Influence Government

Many national, state, and local laws are the result of a struggle among various interest groups. One example is the minimum wage law. This law states that workers may not be paid less than a certain amount of money per hour. Labor groups often seek an increase in the minimum wage. Business groups generally oppose such an increase. Lobbyists for both interest groups present their arguments to Congress. After listening to both sides and considering all the facts, Congress makes its decision. The result is usually a compromise.

Lobbyists Work with Congress

Lobbyists use a variety of methods to promote the actions they seek. They argue in support of bills they favor. They argue against bills they oppose. Sometimes lobbyists ask members of Congress to sponsor bills favored by members of the interest group. Lobbyists supply information for the bill. They may even help write the bill. Government officials often contact lobbyists to learn what interest groups think about certain issues affecting those groups.

Lobbyists Influence Public Opinion

Interest groups attempt to influence not only the government but public opinion as well. For example, interest groups place advertisements in the mass media in support of their positions. The groups often promise to help government officials in their next election campaigns by supplying workers and contributions. Sometimes lobbyists urge local groups and individuals to send letters and emails to public officials. They hope that public support will influence the lawmakers' decisions.

READING CHECK

Summarizing How do lobbyists try to influence government and public opinion?

Interest Groups and Power

Interest groups may use any legal means to influence public officials and the public itself. To keep a record of groups, federal and state governments require lobbyists to register. They must indicate whom they are working for and how much money they spend on their lobbying efforts. The Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 tightened regulations by closing many loopholes, or ways of evading the law.

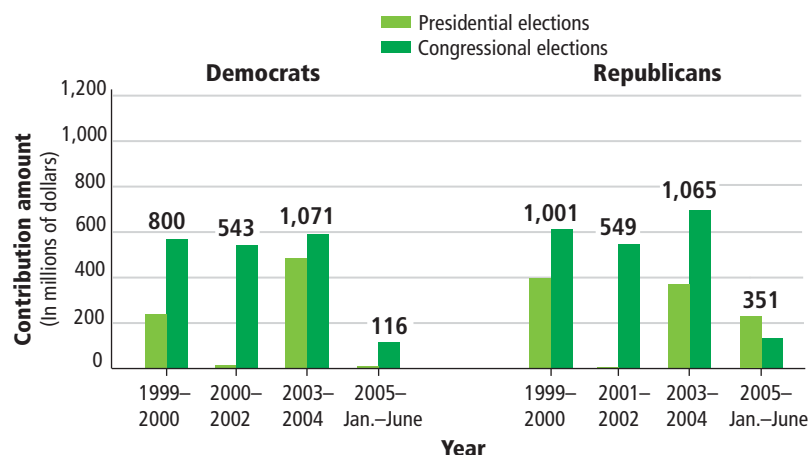
Special-Interest Groups

QUICK FACTS

Special-interest groups sometimes support candidates who share their views by donating money. Political action committees, a type of special-interest group, collect and distribute funds to candidates in local, state, and national elections. Contributions from special-interest groups are carefully monitored.

In what year did Republicans receive the most contributions from political action committees?

Political Action Committee Contributions



Source: Federal Election Commission

Some people are critical of interest groups and their lobbyists. They believe these groups play too great a role in the lawmaking process. Critics charge that too much attention is paid to the interest group that is the most organized and best funded. As a result, some important interests—such as those of disadvantaged citizens—do not always receive equal attention from government officials.

Despite this criticism, interest groups do play an important role in the political process. Although you may not be aware of it, you probably belong to one or more interest groups. We the people—in our roles as students, consumers, workers, and veterans—make up interest groups. In a free society, citizens have the right to make their opinions known to government leaders. Interest groups are evidence of this political freedom.

READING CHECK

Identifying Points of View

Why do some critics feel that lobbyists are too powerful in American politics?



FOCUS ON Judy Heumann (1948–)

Judy Heumann was born in New York City. When she was 11½ years old, she contracted polio and was confined to a wheelchair. Because public schools could not meet the needs of disabled students, she was home-schooled until the fourth grade. After graduation, Heumann studied to become a teacher. However, New York would not certify her because of her physical disability. Heumann won a lawsuit against the state and later helped found Disabled in Action, a disabled-rights organization. She also served with the Center for Independent Living, which helps integrate disabled individuals into local communities. In 2010 she was appointed special advisor for international disability rights at the U.S. Department of State.

Summarizing How has Heumann helped focus attention on the rights of the disabled?

SECTION 2 ASSESSMENT

hmhsocialstudies.com
ONLINE QUIZ

Reviewing Ideas and Terms

- a. Define** Write a brief definition for each of the following terms: **interest groups**, **lobby**, **lobbyist**, and **public-interest groups**.

b. Summarize Why are there so many kinds of interest groups?

c. Describe How does a public interest group differ from other kinds of interest groups? Use examples to support your answer.
- a. Explain** How do lobbyists play an important role in government?

b. Evaluate Lobbyists sometimes write legislation for Congress members to sponsor. In your opinion, is this practice good or bad for the country? Explain your answer.
- a. Explain** Do interest groups have too much influence on the government? Why or why not?

b. Evaluate How important do you think it is that interest groups be required to disclose all their sources of support? Explain your answer.

Critical Thinking

- 4. Categorizing** Copy the graphic organizer. Use it and your notes to describe and give an example of each type of interest group.



FOCUS ON WRITING

- 5. Supporting a Point of View** Do you agree or disagree with the statement that “interest groups are evidence of political freedom”? Write a paragraph explaining your point of view. Be sure to include a suggestion for what might be done to better serve the interests of groups that lack money and representation.

SECTION 3



SS.7.C.2.9; SS.7.C.2.10; SS.7.C.3.12; LA.7.1.6.1; LA.7.1.7.1

Taking Part in Government

BEFORE YOU READ

The Main Idea

Americans can participate in government by voting and speaking out on the issues that matter to them.

Reading Focus

1. What are the four ways that all citizens can participate in government?
2. Why is voting important, and why do so few U.S. citizens vote?
3. How do volunteers and interest groups help political campaigns?

Key Terms

volunteers, p. 285
political action committees (PACs), p. 286



hmhsocialstudies.com

TAKING NOTES

Use the graphic organizer online to take notes on how citizens can participate in government, why voting is important, and how people can take part in political campaigns.



Maybe you do not want to run for public office. Not everyone dreams of being president. However, you can still take part in government.

Voting is a start. In fact, our government depends on the participation of citizens. If you do not pitch in, others will, and you might not be happy with the results. Remember, you have a voice in our political system. Being a good citizen means taking part and letting your voice be heard.

Four Ways Citizens Can Participate in Government

As a good citizen, it is your responsibility to participate in political activities. These activities are vital to the preservation of a democratic government. Any American can participate in government in at least four ways: speaking out on public issues, participating in a community action group, working on a political campaign, and—most importantly—voting.

Suppose the street corner near your home needs a traffic light. Or suppose you are opposed to a proposed 15-cent increase

Voting is the right of every American citizen over the age of 18.

in your city's bus fare. Or perhaps the House of Representatives will vote soon on an issue that is important to you. How can you make your opinion on these issues known quickly?

Write letters to local officials or to your representative in Congress. Members of Congress receive a lot of mail. They welcome these letters as a way of learning what the people they represent think about the issues. Contact public officials by telephone, e-mail, or fax. Visit an official's office to express your

opinions. Many officials have regular office hours for meetings with their constituents.

The quality of life in towns and cities depends largely on how well local governments serve their citizens. That is why it is important for all Americans to be active in their communities.

Community involvement is an important part of participating in government. In many cities, people work to improve their neighborhoods by forming block associations.

Every Vote Counts

**QUICK
FACTS**

One person's vote can make or break the results of an election, as the examples below indicate. There is no way to know if that make-or-break vote will be your vote. This is why it is important to always vote. Fortunately, voting is easy to do. Just follow the simple steps to the right:

1. Pick up a voter registration form from a library, license bureau, grocery, etc.
2. Fill out the form and mail it in.
3. Educate yourself about the candidates and issues.
4. Use the Internet or newspaper to find your local polling place.
5. Cast your ballot on voting day.



City Commissioner Michele A. McFall-Conte

In 2001 Michele A. McFall-Conte was elected to the city commission of Deltona, Florida, after a coin toss settled a 565–565 tie.



Governor Christine Gregoire

In 2004 Christine Gregoire was elected governor of Washington by only 129 votes out of the 2.9 million cast.



President John F. Kennedy

In 1960 Kennedy won the popular vote against Richard M. Nixon by just under 120,000 votes out of 68,836,385 votes cast.

**ANALYSIS
SKILL**

ANALYZING INFORMATION

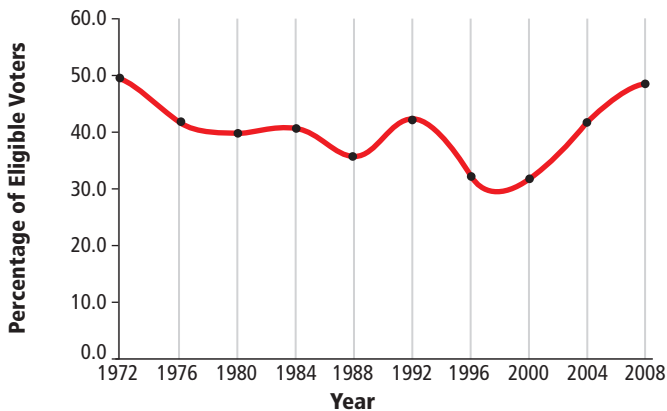
Why can even just one vote make a difference in an election?

Less Than Half

The percentage of eligible voters aged 18 to 24 who voted in presidential elections dropped more than 10 percent between 1968 and 1980. However, voter participation among this age group has been increasing since 2000. In 2008, 49 percent of eligible 18- to 24-year-olds voted.

Why might fewer young voters take part in presidential elections?

Percentage of Eligible Voters Aged 18-24 Who Voted in Presidential Elections



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Residents of an apartment building might form a tenants' group to improve the condition of their building. Citizens in a town might organize to raise money for new library books or to repair the school's baseball field. Citizen involvement helps make democracy work.

READING CHECK

Identifying Cause and Effect

Why do people form community groups, and how do these groups make a difference?

Voting Is Important

When you are old enough, you can vote in local, state, and national elections. Voting is democracy in action. In fact, voting is probably the single most important opportunity for citizens to participate in government. It is also an important responsibility.

Because society relies on people performing a variety of duties, only a small percentage of citizens can serve in the government. Therefore, we elect officials to represent

us. Every citizen can take part in selecting the various leaders who will represent and serve them.

Elections offer every citizen the chance to help determine what actions the government will take. You make your opinions on public issues known when you vote. When you choose candidates, you are expressing your opinions about their leadership abilities as well as their programs.

Voting is not only a right, it is an important responsibility. Yet millions of U.S. citizens do not vote. In fact, the United States has one of the lowest voter turnouts of any democratic country in the world. In recent presidential elections about 60 percent of eligible voters cast a ballot. This low voter turnout leaves the selection of government officials to slightly more than half of the country's people.

Why Do So Few People Vote?

According to a November 2008 survey by the United States Census Bureau, 64 percent of American citizens age 18 and over voted in the 2008 presidential election. This survey showed that of 206 million United States citizens 18 and older, 146 million, or 71 percent, reported they were registered to vote. And among those registered, 131 million, or 90 percent, said they voted. But that means that some 60 million people who could register to vote did not register. Even among those who were registered to vote, there were millions of people who did not vote. Why do people not register? Why do people not vote?

Apathy, or a lack of interest or concern about the issues, discourages many people from voting. Some people do not register and thus are not eligible to vote. Others may not like any of the candidates running for office. Some people are ill and cannot reach the polling places on election day. Still others may be unexpectedly away from home and cannot reach the polling places where they are registered to vote. Others move and do not meet residency requirements for voting.

Another reason for not voting is a person's belief that his or her vote does not count. Many people who do not vote think that their votes will not make a difference in the election's outcome. Of course, this is not true. The vote of every individual helps determine who wins or loses an election. By voting we influence the laws and policies that greatly affect our lives. The importance of every vote is demonstrated by the results of the 2000 presidential election.

The Florida results were so close that Florida state law required recounts. Each campaign also challenged how votes in various parts of the state had been counted.

the Court ruled that using different standards for counting a vote in different counties violated the Constitution. Therefore, the hand recounts in several Florida counties were not valid. Florida's electoral votes went to George W. Bush. He was the winner with 271 electoral votes to Al Gore's 266. Nationwide, Gore won 50,999,897 popular votes, and Bush won 50,456,002 popular votes. Bush became the first president in more than 100 years who did not win the popular vote.

Conclusions How do the results of the 2000 presidential election show the importance of voting?

Another way that you can influence political decisions is by participating in election campaigns. You must be 18 years old to vote. However, people of any age can work as volunteers in political campaigns. **Volunteers** are individuals who work without pay to help others.

THE POLITICAL SYSTEM 285

Special-Interest Spending

In 2002, to make campaigns fairer, Congress passed a law to limit how much money groups and individuals can donate to candidates and parties. However, interest groups called 527s can still accept contributions of any amount, as long as they support *issues*, rather than candidates.

Many American voters who used to contribute directly to political parties now give money to 527s, which represent a variety of groups, including unions, human rights advocates, and the entertainment industry. From 2003–2004, 527s received almost \$600 million. Much of this money went toward expensive “issue ads.” None of these ads was endorsed by a candidate. However, their messages of support were usually very clear. In the 2004 presidential election, interest groups in favor of one of the candidates spent more money on television ads than the candidate and his own party did!

The next time you see a political ad, listen to or read it carefully. Learn if it was made by a candidate’s party or by an interest group. Then evaluate its message.

ANALYSIS SKILL

ANALYZING ECONOMICS

How might the spending power of 527 groups affect political campaigns? Give an example to support your answer.

Working as a campaign volunteer is an effective way to have a say in who represents you. You can also learn firsthand how the American political system works.

Interest groups often take part in political campaigns. They sometimes provide volunteers to help candidates who are sympathetic to their causes. They can also make financial contributions to election campaigns.

Federal law prohibits interest groups from contributing money directly to candidates. However, they may contribute through **political action committees (PACs)**. PACs collect voluntary contributions from members. They use this money to fund candidates that their committees favor. The number of PACs has risen dramatically in recent years—from 608 in 1974 to about 3,800 in 2000. PACs contributed nearly \$260 million to candidates running in the 2000 national election. This is a figure that demonstrates their significance to the political process.

READING CHECK

Finding the Main Idea How do interest groups take part in political campaigns?

SECTION 3 ASSESSMENT



hmhsocialstudies.com

ONLINE QUIZ

Reviewing Ideas and Terms

1. **a. Recall** What are four ways that a citizen can participate in government?
b. Elaborate What is meant by the statement that “citizen involvement helps make democracy work”? Give an example to support your answer.
2. **a. Explain** Why is voting considered such a fundamental right and responsibility?
b. Evaluate In your opinion, what could be done by political candidates to increase voter turnout and voter participation? Explain your answer.
3. **a. Define** Write a brief definition for each of the following terms: **volunteers** and **political action committees**.
b. Explain How can volunteers and interest groups participate in political campaigns?

Critical Thinking

4. **Comparing and Contrasting** Copy the graphic organizer. Use it to compare and contrast the ways that volunteers and interest groups help political campaigns.



FOCUS ON WRITING

5. **Problem Solving** Imagine that the president of the United States has invited you to the White House to deliver a speech titled “How to Encourage Citizen Participation in Politics.” Write a draft of the speech.

STUDENTS TAKE ACTION

Honoring a Hero

PROJECT Citizen



The United States has many holidays to honor people and events. We have holidays honoring George Washington, our country's independence, and Martin Luther King Jr. Did you know that none of these state or national holidays honors a woman? Project Citizen students in Dongola, Illinois, are hoping to change that.

Community Connection Students in Ms. Cindy Vines's social studies class had been learning about Jane Addams. She spent her life helping people. In 1889 Addams founded Hull House in Chicago. It was a place where women, children, immigrants, and others in need could come for aid. Addams's work led to changes all over the country in areas such as education and child labor. Students at Dongola want to create an Illinois holiday on the first Monday in March—Women's History Month—honoring this important woman.

Taking Action The teens have made dozens of phone calls to local officials. They gave information to state legislators during Youth Democracy Day in Springfield, the state capital. One member of the Illinois General Assembly, Representative Brandon Phelps, promised the Dongola teens that he would introduce a bill. It requested a statewide holiday to honor Jane Addams. Meanwhile, the students continued to work together in their community to raise awareness and support for Jane Addams Day became an Illinois state holiday in 2007.



Students in Dongola, Illinois, speak out in favor of a state holiday honoring Jane Addams.

SERVICE LEARNING



1. Why did the Dongola students believe that establishing a Jane Addams holiday was worth their efforts?
2. If you were to propose a new statewide holiday, who would you choose to honor? Why?

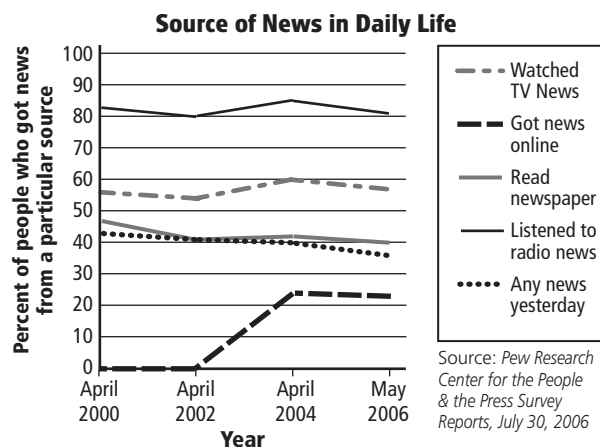
hmhsocialstudies.com **ACTIVITY**

CHAPTER 11 REVIEW



FLORIDA CIVICS EOC PRACTICE

1. The graph below describes developments in how Americans access the daily news.



According to the chart, what has happened to other news sources as the percentage of people who get their news online has grown?

- The percentage of people getting their news from other sources has decreased.
 - The percentage of people getting news from other sources has remained about the same.
 - The percentage of people getting news from other sources has also increased.
 - The percentage of people relying on yesterday's news has increased.
2. Of the following, which is the most reliable method for evaluating a candidate for political office?
- testimonials by celebrities
 - public opinion polls that show the candidate in the lead
 - extent of the candidate's plain-folks appeal
 - examining the candidate's record and qualifications

Reviewing Key Terms

For each term or name below, write a sentence explaining its significance to the political system.

- public opinion
- mass media
- propaganda
- poll
- interest groups
- lobby
- lobbyist
- public-interest groups
- volunteers
- political action committees (PACs)

Comprehension and Critical Thinking

SECTION 1 (Pages 272–276)

- Recall** What is the relationship between public opinion and mass media?
- Evaluate** Which of the six propaganda techniques do you think is most effective? Give reasons to support your answer.

SECTION 2 (Pages 278–281)

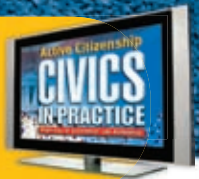
- Describe** How do interest groups differ from political parties?
- Elaborate** How do lobbyists and interest groups try to influence public policy and public opinion?

SECTION 3 (Pages 282–286)

- Identify** What are four ways that a citizen can take part in the political system?
- Analyze** Why is voting such an important right and duty in a democratic society?

Active Citizenship video program

Review the video to answer the closing question:
Why are both new voters and young voters important to the election process?



Using the Internet



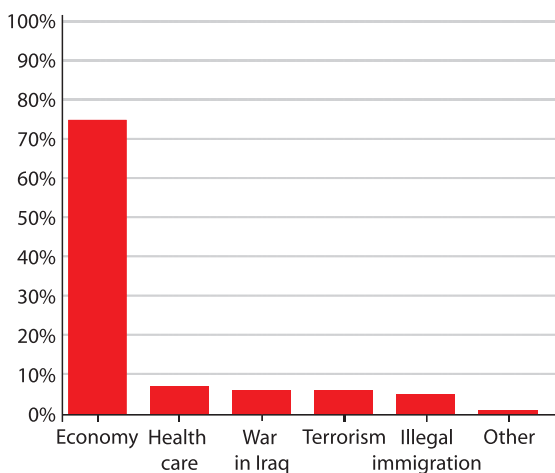
- 14. Lobbying for Understanding** Interest groups play an important role in influencing government decisions and in shaping public opinion. They often hire lobbyists to promote the policies they favor. Enter the activity keyword to learn about selected interest groups and lobbyists. Then determine how and why these groups try to influence legislation and elections. Include both positive and negative viewpoints on their work. Then present a skit portraying a lobbyist activity.

hmhsocialstudies.com

Civics Skills



Most Important Problem in the United States Today



Analyzing Public Opinion Polls Use the graph above to help you answer the questions below.

- 15.** What is the subject of this public opinion poll?
- 16.** What did the majority of the group polled believe was the top problem in the United States at the time this poll was taken?
- 17.** Suppose this poll had been sponsored by the Burgess High School Young Democrats Club. How might that affect the poll results?

Reading Skills



Using Questions to Analyze Text Use the Reading Skills taught in this chapter to answer the question about the reading selection below.

According to a November 2008 survey by the United States Census Bureau, 64 percent of American citizens age 18 and over voted in the 2008 presidential election. This survey showed that of 206 million United States citizens 18 and older, 146 million, or 71 percent, reported they were registered to vote. And among those registered, 131 million, or 90 percent, said they voted. (p. 284)

- 18.** Write three questions you have about the information in the passage above. Remember to use How? and the five Ws—Who? What? When? Where? and Why?

FOCUS ON WRITING

19. Writing an Outline for a Documentary Film

Look back through your notes for the chapter. Choose one topic that you think would make a good 10-minute documentary film. Your outline should be organized by scene (no more than three scenes), in chronological order. For each scene, give the following information: main idea of scene, costumes and images to be used, audio to be used, and length of scene. As you plan, remember that your audience will be students your own age.