

**Introduction To The American Political System**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

In this lesson you will cover vocabulary related to the political system of the United States. You will also watch a video about how Presidential elections work. You will then interview other students about the political systems of their countries.

**Part 1**

**In pairs**, complete the map of the United States with as many of the 50 states as you can remember

1) How many states did you guess correctly?

**Part 2**

**Match** the vocabulary to its definitions

- |   |       |   |
|---|-------|---|
| 1. The President (noun)<br>/ðə 'prezɪdənt/                              | _____ | A. the lower house of the legislative branch                            |
| 2. Democrats (noun)<br>/'deməkræts/                                     | _____ | B. the head of the executive branch of the US government                |
| 3. The Electoral College (noun)<br>/ði ɪ'lektərəl 'kɒlɪdʒ/              | _____ | C. one of the two major US Political Parties (the conservative party)   |
| 4. The House of Representatives (noun)<br>/ðə haʊs ɒv ,reprɪ'zentətɪvz/ | _____ | D. the electoral system for electing the President of the United States |
| 5. The Senate (noun)<br>/ðə 'senɪt/                                     | _____ | E. someone who is serving in the house or senate (usually the house)    |
| 6. Congressman / Congresswoman (noun)<br>/'kɒŋɡresmən / 'kɒŋɡreswʊmən/  | _____ | F. relating to the national government in Washington D.C.               |
| 7. Republicans (noun)<br>/rɪ'pʌblɪkən/                                  | _____ | G. the judicial branch of the American government                       |
| 8. The Supreme Court (noun)<br>/ðə su:'prɪ:m kɔ:t/                      | _____ | H. one of the two major US Political Parties (the liberal party)        |
| 9. Primary (noun)<br>/'praɪməri/  | _____ | I. the legislative branch of the American government                    |
| 10. federal (adjective)<br>/'fedərəl/                                   | _____ | J. the election someone has to win before becoming a party's candidate  |
| 11. Congress (noun)<br>/'kɒŋɡres/                                       | _____ | K. the upper house of the legislative branch                            |

**Part 3**

**Complete** the sentences with the **correct form** of the vocabulary from **part 2**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Joe Biden "will take additional action to strengthen the ACA and save families hundreds of dollars a month on their health care" the White House said.
- Barack Obama won the White House after serving only 3 years in \_\_\_\_\_ as a \_\_\_\_\_ from the state of Illinois representing the \_\_\_\_\_ party.
- A presidential candidate needs 270 out of the 538 votes in the \_\_\_\_\_ to be elected to the presidency, after they win their party's \_\_\_\_\_.
- There are 9 judges on \_\_\_\_\_ of the United States, who can rule a law constitutional or unconstitutional.
- Donald Trump led the \_\_\_\_\_ party to a sweeping victory in the 2016 US elections, winning a majority in both houses of \_\_\_\_\_, as well at the presidency.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ bureau of investigation (FBI) is the agency responsible for investigating and preventing acts of domestic and international terrorism in the United States.

Part 4 **Watch** the video about how US Presidential elections work. Answer the questions:



1) Donald Trump won a majority of votes in the 2016 US Presidential election

True                      False

2) American voters vote directly for the President

True                      False

3) How old is the American political system?

4) What danger did the Founding Fathers see in using direct democracy?

5) Complete the quote:

In most states, the candidate \_\_\_\_\_ gets the support of all of that state's electors.

6) How many electoral college votes does California have?

7) Out of the last five US presidential elections, how many have been won by a candidate with a majority of the popular vote? Circle the answer

2

3

4

8) What is the synonym of 'battleground states' used by the speaker in the video?

9) What percent of campaign events were held in just 6 battleground states in the 2016 election?

\_\_\_\_\_ %



Part 5 **Complete** the table about the political system in your country considering the vocabulary covered in the lesson.

	Executive	Legislative	Judiciary
What is this branch of government called in your country?		Upper house: Lower house:	
How many members of this branch are there in your country?		Upper house: Lower house:	
How is this branch of government elected / appointed in your country?		Upper house: Lower house:	
Which party currently controls this branch of government in your country?		Upper house: Lower house:	
How long is one term (time before the next election) in this branch of government in your country? Are there term limits?		Upper house: Lower house:	

**Part 6** Interview other students in the class to learn about the political systems of their countries:

	Student 1	Student 2	Student 3	Student 4
Name				
What country are they from?				
<b>Executive:</b> What is it called?  How many members?  How is it elected / appointed?  Which party currently controls it?  How long is a term?				
<b>Legislative:</b> What is it called?  How many members?  How is it elected / appointed?  Which party currently controls it?  How long is a term?				
<b>Judiciary</b> What is it called?  How many members?  How is it elected / appointed?				

**Part 7** Decide which of the countries from the students you interviewed is **most similar** and **most different** to your country and why.