

Political Parties in Utah

7th Grade and 8th Grade History

Objective: Students will understand the political party system in Utah during territorial times and will understand how that system merged with that of the U.S. as Utah became a state. Students will also be able to identify and explain the different political parties and their general beliefs and ideals. Students will also know who their legislative representative is and contact them.

Outline:

1. Definitions of Political Parties
 - a. [People's Party \(Utah\)](#)
 - b. [Liberal Party \(Utah\)](#)
2. Core beliefs of different political parties.
 - a. [Democrat & Republican Comparison](#)
 - b. [Major Political Party Comparison](#)
3. Project: Create a Flier for a Political Party.
4. Class Project: Map of Utah and Political Boundaries.
 - a. [Interactive Political Map](#)
5. Letter to Representative.
 - a. [Find My Legislator](#)

Day 1.

- Examine the different political parties in Utah before it became a state. Look at the role that each party played in Utah politics.
- As a class create a list of current political parties and what students see as key beliefs of each party.
- Have students write a response to the question, "Why are there multiple political parties and is that a good thing or a bad thing and why?"
- Have students share the response with a few classmates.
- As a class go to the listed websites (or others) and review some of the core beliefs of each of the political parties. Make sure to check the websites for ads. You may need to copy and paste information into a word document. And
- Have students write about 1 thing they like about each party and why they like it.

Day 2.

- Take students to a computer lab (or hand out material about each political party) and have the students create a flier for one political party. The flier should include the name of the party, essential information about the party on a given subject, and at least a couple illustrations.
- Have students present their flier to their classmates and explain why they chose the party and topic they did.

Day 3 & 4

- Provide students with a copy of a county map of Utah. Have the students identify the county seats and then draw and label the political boundaries for some of the House of Representatives and the Senate Districts.
- Maps available at the links in the overview.

Day 5

- Have students turn in their maps.
- Talk with students about the need to have many representatives. Facilitate class discussion as to why more representatives might be better than less and the difficulties that come with both ideas.
- Help students identify their Representative.
- Help students to create a list of the most important topics that are facing Utah today.
- Have students write a letter to their Representative telling him/her about what they feel is the most important topic facing Utah and have the students ask the Representative their opinion on the matter and what they feel is the most important topic for Utah and what is being done to address that topic.
- As a closing exercise have a class discussion about what has been taught in this unit, including any impressions or new understandings of the political process in Utah.