

POLITIK & UNTERRICHT



Red or Blue?

The 2020 U.S. Elections

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A2 What are your stereotypes of Americans? - Reference Key

1. Actually, the number of Americans with passports has been growing steadily over the past 30 years. While only 10 % of Americans had passports in 1994, today it is closer to 40 %. This is due in part to the fact, since 9/11, Americans require passports to visit Mexico and Canada. Even without a passport however, Americans can travel quite far – to visit Hawaii, someone from New York would have to travel 5000 miles.

Source: www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-42586638 (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

2. This is true! Per the World Giving Index, Americans are more likely to give money to charity than any other nationality. In 2018, it is estimated that they collectively gave \$427.71 Billion away. **Sources:**

www.marketwatch.com/story/the-us-is-the-most-generous-country-but-americans-say-debt-is-keeping-them-from-giving-more-to-charity-2019-10-18 (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

<https://givingusa.org/giving-usa-2019-americans-gave-427-71-billion-to-charity-in-2018-amid-complex-year-for-charitable-giving> (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

3. Not quite half! According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 42.4 % of Americans were found to be obese, a 30 % increase from 2000. Obesity creates enormous medical costs for the US economy – estimated to be \$147 Billion in 2008. While it is difficult to determine the precise cause of this rise, most agree it is caused by larger portion sizes, confusing ‘Diet’ for ‘Nutrition’, and increased inactivity.

Sources: www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/adult.html (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

www.publichealth.org/public-awareness/obesity (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

www.vox.com/2016/8/31/12368246/obesity-america-2018-charts (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

4. While the United States does have the highest per capita gun ownership rate in the world, this statistic is somewhat misleading. Only about 30 % of Americans actually own guns. Why the disparity? Because 3 % of Americans own over half the guns in the country. These ‘super-owners’ own an average of 17 guns each. With almost 40,000 gun deaths in American in 2017, many Americans are in favor of stricter gun laws.

Sources: www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/10/22/facts-about-guns-in-united-states (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/nov/15/the-gun-numbers-just-3-of-american-adults-own-a-collective-133m-firearms (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

5. Fewer and fewer Americans are describing themselves as religious or attend church regularly. The number of Americans describing themselves as Christians has dropped 12 points in the past decade to 65 %, while the number of Americans describing themselves as Atheist or Agnostic has risen. All that being said, America remains much more religious than other wealthy countries. For example, 55 % of Americans say they pray daily, compared with 25 % in Canada, 18 % in Australia and 6 % in Great Britain. (The average European country stands at 22 %.)

Sources: www.pewforum.org/2019/10/17/in-u-s-decline-of-christianity-continues-at-rapid-pace (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/07/31/americans-are-far-more-religious-than-adults-in-other-wealthy-nations (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

6. On the 2018 PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) results, the United States ranked 13th in reading (between New Zealand and the United Kingdom) but 37th in Mathematics (between Hungary and Belarus). While many in education struggle to find the best global exemplar of education policy to emulate, many point to America’s high rates of child poverty as an explanation for the continuing shortfall in achievement.

Sources: www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2019-12-27/why-do-u-s-schoolchildren-underperform-academically-compared-to-students-in-other-countries (Zugriff am 2.07.2020) <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/PISA%202018%20Insights%20and%20Interpretations%20FINAL%20PDF.pdf> (Zugriff am 2.07.2020)

B1 Election Terminology**Answer Key for the Listening Comprehension.**

Listen to "Gerrymandering, explained" produced by the Washington Post online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGLRJ12uqmk.

Then answer the listening comprehension questions.

Put a check in the correct box or fill in the blank with the appropriate answer.

- 1** Each U.S. state has two representatives except for large states.
.....
 Each representative has been elected by the voters in his/her district.
.....
 Each representative has a district which is geographically the same size.
.....
- 2** In the example of a state with 50 citizens one can see that ...
 the authors of the constitution intended to have each state divided into grids for the districts.
.....
 Congressional districts can be drawn up so that the majority party is not represented.
.....
 the minority party can win the election by redrawing the congressional district lines.
.....
- 3** Gerrymandering is the process of re-drawing Congressional district lines in order to give one party the advantage over another.
- 4** Facts about Elbridge Gerry:
He lived: 1744 - 1814
His job: Governor of Massachusetts
Known for: redrew the districts in 1810 to weaken the other party
- 5** The "Mander" in "Gerrymandering" comes from a picture of a "dragon."
 True
.....
 False. It comes from the picture of a salamander that was printed in the Boston Centinel.
.....
- 6** The process of Gerrymandering is being criticized because :
 Representatives in Congress do not represent the population's political affiliation.
.....
 the President likes it and wants to divide the states up himself.
.....
 it is an old system that is unfair to the opposing party.
.....

B4 Political Parties in the United States

Key for the Comprehension Section

Put a check in the correct box or fill in the blank with the appropriate answer.
Provide a quotation from the text to support each correct statement:
The line number(s) plus the first three and the last three words of the quotation.


1 In the U.S. system of government one can say that ...

- most Americans would prefer a multiparty system of government.
- the smaller parties usually don't play a major role in the presidential race.
- there are only two parties for the voters to choose from.

line(s): 5–7  Some minor parties (...) during presidential elections


2 The founding fathers created the first two political parties in the U.S. even though they didn't like the battles political parties have.

True False

line(s): 15–17  Despite their negative (...) American political parties

3 Tick the correct statement.


- The Democratic Party was the first political party founded in the U.S.
- George Washington was the founder of the Democratic party.
- The Southern Democrats wanted to keep their slaves.

line(s): 38–39  Southern Democrats strongly supported slavery

4 What do people call the Republican Party? Correct: The Grand Old Party (GOP)

5 In the 19th century the Republicans ...

- had a lot of support from the Southern farmers.
- didn't win a presidential race for fifty years after the Civil War.
- were the ones who got rid of slavery.

line(s): 45–46  the Republicans succeeded (...) the United States territory


6 The Democratic Party started to represent the working class during the 20th century.

True False

line(s): 52–53  The Democrats started (...) workers and unions

7 Tick the correct answer.

- The Democrats are known for cutting government spending.
- The Republicans think the government should spend more money on programs for the poor.
- The Republicans usually agree that the government should not regulate society's problems.

line(s): 70–71  the Republicans tend (...) to national problems

B6 The Trump Administration and the Media**Answer Key****Task 1: Listening Comprehension: A Brief History of Fake News**

Fill in the blanks with the appropriate words.

- 1** Towards the end of the 2016 U.S. Election Campaign BuzzFeed found out that young people in Macedonia were producing false stories for Facebook.
- 2** These teenagers created these fake stories because _____
they wanted the money for the advertisements.
- 3** As time went by, the term “fake news” became the heading for misinformation , conspiracy ,
theories , political spins and pranks .
- 4** Why did President Trump use the term “fake news”? _____
He wanted to discredit the media that wasn't favorable to him.
- 5** Experts on media give the viewer the advice to _____
concentrate on the differences between facts, opinion, speculation and fiction.

B9 U.S. Political Parties: Where do you stand on these US political issues?

Answer Key

ISSUE	YES	NO	Democrat	Republican
Should women have the right to have an abortion?			The majority thinks it should not be made illegal; they support Roe v. Wade.*	The majority thinks it should not be legal; they oppose Roe v. Wade.*
Do you support the legalization of same-sex marriage?			Generally support it.	On the whole oppose it.
Should the federal government allow the death penalty?			While support for the death penalty is strong among Democrats, opponents of the death penalty are also a substantial fraction of the Democratic base.	A large majority of Republicans support the death penalty.
Should the government increase environmental regulations to prevent global warming?			Democrats claim that the Republicans are ignoring climate change.	Republicans claim that the Democrats have turned a blind eye to the economy.
Should the government raise the federal minimum wage?			Support minimum wages and raising them to a certain standard	Wages should be set by the free market. The government should not interfere with the economy.
Do you support increased gun control?			An issue that splits both parties.	An issue that splits both parties.
Do you support the legalization of marijuana?			88% support legalization; 12% oppose it.	59% oppose legalization; 41% support it.
Do you support the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (Obamacare)?			Support universal healthcare; strong support of government involvement in healthcare, including Medicare and Medicaid. Generally support Obamacare.	Private companies can provide healthcare services more efficiently than government-run programs. Oppose Obamacare provisions like (1) requirement for individuals to buy health insurance or pay a fine, (2) required coverage of contraceptives.
Would you support increasing taxes on the rich in order to reduce interest rates for student loans?			Believe in progressive taxation, i.e., higher tax rates for higher income brackets.	Believe taxes shouldn't be increased for anyone including the wealthy. Wages should be set by the free market.
Do you support stronger measures to increase our border security?			50% support stronger measures; 50% oppose stronger measures.	96% support stronger measures; 4% oppose stronger measures.

*Roe vs. Wade – U.S. Supreme Court Ruling from 1973 that allows abortion; however, it also gave individual states the rights to limit it.

B3a Definition Cards – Election Terms

1 Primaries

A state-level election held before a general election to choose each party's candidate for nomination.

2 Nominee

A person selected by others to run for office is the nominee. Nominees may be selected in primary elections or caucuses.

3 National Conventions

An official meeting of the delegates of a political party where they choose their candidates and decide upon their party platform.

4 Running Mate

The chosen candidate picks a political colleague to run with him or her in the presidential election and who – if elected – will become Vice President.

5 Platform

A political party's formal written statement of its principles and goals.

6 Electoral College

A group of delegates – also called electors – who formally elect the president of the USA.

7 Caucus

A local meeting of members of a political party for the purpose of choosing candidates for an election.

8 Candidate

A person who is running for an elective office.

9 Stump Speech

A political speech on a campaign tour outlining a candidate's core messages.

10 Campaign

The period of time before an election when candidates try to persuade people to vote for them.

11 Front Runner

The political candidate who is considered most popular or most likely to win.

12 Poll

A survey of people (usually voters) that is taken to find out which candidate they might vote for.

13 Debate

A televised program during which candidates state and defend their positions on major issues.

14 Dark Horse

A candidate who is unexpectedly nominated and about whom little is known.

15 Swing State

A state of the U.S. in which the Democratic and Republican candidates both have a good chance of winning.

16 Blue State

A state where people tend to vote for the Democratic Party.

17 Red State

A state where people tend to vote for the Republican Party.

18 Super Tuesday

An important day in early March when a large number of states hold primary elections.

19 Ballot

A piece of paper listing the candidates running for office. It is used to cast a vote.

20 Spin Doctor

A political adviser employed by a campaign to ensure that a candidate receives the best possible publicity.

B4a Die politischen Parteien in den Vereinigten Staaten

Während die meisten Demokratien über ein Vielparteiensystem verfügen, in dem drei oder mehr politische Parteien mit einem breiten ideologischen Spektrum um die Macht konkurrieren, besitzen die Vereinigten Staaten ein Zweiparteiensystem, in dem zwei politische Parteien um die Regierungsmacht kämpfen. Einige kleinere Parteien, wie zum Beispiel die Grünen, existieren zwar, haben jedoch bislang keine bemerkenswerte Rolle bei den Präsidentschaftswahlen gespielt.

Die Gründerväter der Vereinigten Staaten fanden keinen Gefallen an der Idee der Parteien oder dem politischen Wettbewerb zwischen Parteien. Als sich George Washington 1796 aus der Öffentlichkeit zurückzog, warnte er die Amerikaner sogar vor den »Fraktionen« (Parteien). Obwohl James Madison nicht restlos von den Parteien überzeugt war, glaubte er, dass Parteien wahrscheinlich notwendig seien. 1789 sagte Thomas Jefferson, falls er nur durch eine Partei in den Himmel kommen könne, so würde er dies lieber bleiben lassen. Trotz ihrer negativen Haltung gegenüber den Parteien haben diese Männer die beiden ersten großen amerikanischen Parteien gegründet.

Die Entstehung der US-Parteien

1787 schlossen sich die Föderalisten zusammen. Deren Anhänger waren nordamerikanische Geschäftsmänner, Banker und Kaufleute, die einen starken Zentralstaat als Ziel verfolgten. In der Außenpolitik tendierte diese Partei zu den Positionen Englands. 1828 verloren die Föderalisten jedoch die Wahl und fristen seither das Dasein einer Minderheitspartei.

Die Demokratische Partei wurde 1792 gegründet und ist somit die weltweit älteste noch existierende politische Partei. Die Anhänger um Thomas Jefferson nannten sich selber die »Demokratischen Republikaner« oder die »Anti-Föderalisten«. Ihre Unterstützer waren vor allem Besitzer von Farmen und kleine Bauern. Diese Menschen verlangten nach einem Staat, der ihnen größtmögliche Freiräume gewährte. Daraus resultierte ihre Unterstützung für eine starke Regierung in den Bundesstaaten und eine schwache nationale Regierung. Die Demokraten haben ihren heutigen Namen während der Präsidentschaft von Andrew Jackson in den 1830er-Jahren erhalten. Bis zum Bürgerkrieg (1861–1865) kamen die meisten Präsidenten aus den Reihen der Demokraten.

Um 1854 warf jedoch das Problem der Sklaverei einen Schatten auf die politische Debatte und spaltete die Demokratische Partei in einen Nordstaaten- und einen Südstaatenzweig. Die Demokraten der Südstaaten unterstützten energisch die Sklaverei, während die Demokraten der Nordstaaten diese abschaffen wollten.

1854 gründeten die Gegner der Sklaverei die Republikanische Partei. Sie wird auch als »GOP« – »The Grand Old

Party« – bezeichnet. Ihr erster Präsident Abraham Lincoln wurde 1860 gewählt und war einer ihrer Gründer. Im Jahr 1865 glückte den Republikanern die Abschaffung der Sklaverei innerhalb der Vereinigten Staaten. In den Folgejahren des Bürgerkriegs dominierten die Republikaner die politische Bühne für über 50 Jahre. Sie standen in dieser Zeit für wirtschaftlichen Aufschwung und bekamen ihre Unterstützung vor allem aus den nördlichen, industrialisierten Bundesstaaten.

Während des 20. Jahrhunderts eröffnete die Industrialisierung ein neues Kapitel für die Demokratische Partei. Die Demokraten begannen sich auf die Bedürfnisse der Arbeiter und Gewerkschaften zu konzentrieren. Als Folge des »Börsencrash« von 1929 und der sich abzeichnenden Weltwirtschaftskrise erreichte der Kandidat der Demokraten Franklin D. Roosevelt (Präsident von 1933–1945) einen erdrutschartigen Sieg durch seine Wahlkampagne gegen die Arbeitslosigkeit. Die Republikaner befürchteten in dieser Zeit, dass der Staat zu viel Macht erlangen würde und die Demokraten das Land in Richtung eines Wohlfahrtsstaats lenken würden.

Die US-Parteien heute

Heute stimmen die beiden Parteien im Allgemeinen in den grundlegenden Problemen wie der Sozialversicherung, der Arbeitslosenversicherung, der Außenpolitik und den Bürgerrechten überein. Die Unterschiede zeigen sich jedoch darin, wie diese Ziele erreicht werden sollen: Welche Maßnahmen benötigt man für ein anhaltendes Wachstum der Wirtschaft? Wie kann die Umwelt am besten geschützt werden? Wie können die Vereinigten Staaten eine starke nationale Verteidigung aufrechterhalten? Kurz gesagt: Die Republikaner tendieren dazu, gegen staatliche Programme einzutreten, die zur Lösung nationaler Probleme beschlossen werden, während die Demokraten daran festhalten, dass nur der Staat durch die Schaffung solcher staatlicher Programme dafür sorgen kann, dass der Wohlstand für alle Einwohner angehoben wird. Die Sicht der Parteien zur Rolle des Staates hängt folglich sehr stark vom Thema ab.

Seit ihrer Gründung im Jahre 1854 haben die Republikaner die Mehrzahl der Präsidenten gestellt. 19 der 45 Präsidenten sind bislang Republikaner gewesen; 15 waren Demokraten. Die Präsidenten Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, George W. Bush und der aktuelle Präsident Donald Trump sind einige der heute bekanntesten Präsidenten der Republikaner. Die berühmten Präsidenten der Demokraten waren John F. Kennedy und Lyndon B. Johnson, die beide die Bürgerrechtsbewegung der 1960er-Jahre unterstützten, ebenso wie Bill Clinton und der Vorgänger Trumps, Barack Obama.

Krista Ann Eichler (Autorinnentext, Übersetzung: Tobias Walldorf)

C7 Race Relations and Racism in the USA**Key for the Listening Comprehension**

1) Which line did Ariel Sky Williams use when she was stopped by the police?

- a) I am unarmed and did nothing wrong.
- b) I am unarmed and I have nothing that will hurt you.**
- c) I am innocent and won't hurt you.

2) What happened to Ariel Sky's father when a police officer stopped him?

He was put in handcuffs for something that had nothing to do with him. The cops slammed him on the ground, busted his lip and chipped his tooth.

3) One mother tells her daughter she was pulled over because the police officers claimed her rear brake light wasn't working.

4) What does the grandmother say to her grandson Sean?

- a) He has to be careful because he will probably get pulled over at least once in his life.
- b) He is at the same risk as his brother of getting stopped by the police.
- c) He has better chances of not getting pulled over because of his lighter skin color.**

5) Two mothers tell their kids _____

- a) they should always comply with the orders the police officers give them.**
- b) they shouldn't follow all orders the police officers give them.
- c) they should sign a statement after they were controlled by the police.

6) One mother would like police officers to take diversity training regularly.

C10 Mailing in Voting**Key for the Listening Comprehension**


1 President Trump's two concerns regarding mail-in ballots are that

- they make frauds easier and favor his party.
- they favor the opposing party and there will likely be a high number of vote frauds.
- the upcoming elections will be unfair and lots of votes will be invalid.
- there will be an exponential increase of votes and no chance for him to win the election.

Quote: line(s) 4–6  He has made (...) easier to cheat.

2 Right after the presidential election in November 2016

- Trump presented evidence that a lot of illegal workers had voted.
- Trump claimed he lost the electoral college because of invalid votes.
- Trump stated that he would have won the popular vote if the illegal votes hadn't been counted.
- Trump criticized mail-in voting and said it's dangerous.

Quote: line(s) 13–17  (...) he declared without (...) electoral college vote.

3 The Heritage Foundation is

- closer to the Republican Party.
- closer to the Democratic Party.

Quote: line(s) 24  a right-wing think tank

4 Considering the Heritage's data, the authors conclude that

- there is not enough evidence that voter fraud actually happened.
- vote-by-mail systems could be problematic for general elections.
- clocking vote-by-mail would be recommendable in some states.
- that the vote fraud results rather advocate vote-by-mail under the current circumstances.

Quote: line(s) 51–54  Our conclusion from (...) in a pandemic.

5 According to the authors, the chart M2 clearly shows that

- vote fraud is organized and arranged by certain groups.
- vote fraud could, if all 50 states allowed vote-by-mail, have a significant influence on elections.
- vote fraud attempts are rather individual and wouldn't have a significant impact on elections.
- vote-by-mail states have to improve their vote-by-mail system.

Quote: line(s) 66-70  Republicans would have (...) an organized level.

6 In the state of Washington, two women were convicted of vote fraud because ...

Name	Reason	Sentence
Janice Waters	She voted a ballot for her son who was a convicted felon.	Jail time, which was later converted to community service.
Jane Kay Balogh	She registered her dog to vote at her address and filled out an absentee ballot for him.	She got a deferred sentence, community service, and had to pay court costs.

7 A well-known large-scale vote fraud

- was committed by operatives for a congressional candidate so the election was repeated.
- happened due to a high number of fraudulent votes attempted by mail.
- happened in North Carolina's governor's election in 2018.
- happened in North Carolina, but all charges against the perpetrators were dropped.

Quote: line(s) 85-91  The most famous (...) new one held.

C8 Talkshow Race Relations in the U.S.



In order to discuss measures to prevent and eliminate racism towards African Americans in American society, you and your partner will be hosting a talk show.

At first, you have about 5 minutes to do some research on the guests from the following list. Then discuss and agree on five guests you want to invite. You can also pick and discuss other guests you come up with.

Joe Biden

Presidential Candidate for the Democratic Party

Donald J. Trump

President of the United States of America

Alicia Garza

Co-founder of the organization *Black Lives Matter* in 2013 after the acquittal of a white police officer for murdering 17-year-old black teenager Travon Martin

Tucker Carlson

TV anchor for the conservative channel *Fox News*

Dermot Shea

Chief of the New York Police Department, who is sorry for brutal and violent actions of his police officers against protestors but also demands that the protestors should stop insulting the officers

Markus Kienscherf

Junior professor of Sociology at the John F. Kennedy Institute for North American Studies in Berlin, specialized on the issues inner security, race relations and social inequality in the USA

Berkeley Lovelace Jr.

A health care reporter for CNBC with detailed knowledge concerning the disproportionate death rate of African Americans regarding COVID-19

Britta Waldschmidt-Nelson

History Professor at the University of Augsburg who is an expert on African American History

Anderson Cooper

News anchor and political commentator for the American news channel CNN who covered lots of stories concerning racial inequality and police violence

John Corny

Republican Senator of Texas who is a supporter of President Trump and focusses on the looting (Plünderungen) and the violent protesters, demanding not to forget that police officers are very often insulted and harassed as well

C9 What do Democratic voters care about?



Read the article. After that find reasons why a majority of Democratic voters' biggest concern is beating Trump instead of other pressing issues (e.g. health care).

Together with your partner, make a list of topics the Democratic party should focus on.

Compare your list with the study data at <https://thehill.com/hilltv/what-americas-thinking/444295-poll-democratic-voters-prioritize-defeating-trump-over-their>.

“Dem voters care more about beating Trump than any one policy issue”

by Matthew Sheffield

A majority of Democratic voters say they would rather back a candidate with the best chance of beating President Trump than one who agrees with them on their top policy issue, according to a new poll.

In a Hill-HarrisX survey released Friday, 65 percent of registered voters who identified as Democrats or independents who lean Democratic said it was more important to choose a primary nominee who has the best chance of defeating Trump. Thirty-five percent of the group said they preferred a candidate who agreed with their top issue.

There was wide agreement across demographic groups of Democrats and left-leaning independents, with 70 percent of women and 60 percent of men saying they prioritized winning back the presidency over any one issue.

Eighty percent of those age 65 and older said they would prioritize defeating Trump, a view shared by 71 percent of those between the ages of 50 and 64. Fifty-six percent of respondents between 35 and 49 said beating Trump was their top priority, with 58 percent of voters under the age of 35 saying the same. (...)

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online at <https://thehill.com/hilltv/what-americas-thinking/444295-poll-democratic-voters-prioritize-defeating-trump-over-their> (access 10.06.2020)

“Op-ed: Biden’s campaign is at risk of going from one mistake to another – he needs a better message”

by John Elliss

A successful Biden campaign is not that hard to imagine or execute. The key is to keep it simple and clarify the choice. Framing the choice is arguably the most important element of a successful presidential campaign. How voters understand an election determines, to a significant degree, its outcome. In 1980, Ronald Reagan did it this way: “Are you better off than you were four years ago?” In 1992, James Carville put it this way: “it’s the economy, stupid.” In 2008, Barack Obama cast the election as an affirmation of “hope and change.” In 2016, Donald Trump framed the choice with “build the wall” and “drain the swamp.” To date, Democrats have framed the 2020 presidential election as a referendum on President Trump.

That’s a questionable proposition on at least two levels. It cedes the power of argument to the presi-

dent and it leaves Democrats at the mercy of events. Perhaps sensing this, the Biden campaign is now in the midst of what political consultants call a “repositioning.” Biden is now, according to the Washington Post, mapping out a “revolutionary agenda.” What that means is this: The Biden campaign is going from one big mistake (the Trump referendum) to another (the revolutionary agenda). The voters who matter are not really interested in either. Those voters are “at risk” and what Covid-19 and the consequent collapse of the American (and global) economy have urgently revealed is *the importance of social safety net(s)*.

Tens of millions of Americans hang by a thread. There are any number of harrowing statistics to back up that assertion, but let’s make it quick and take two sentences from the most recent GoBankingRates annual survey: “Almost half of respondents – 45% – said they have \$0 in a savings account. Another 24% said they have less than \$1,000 in savings.” (Apart from that), due to the health consequences of COVID-19, Medicare Part A might face insolvency in 6 years and Social Security’s trust funds will

run out in 15 years. At the moment, **the actual outlook is likely to be far worse.** (...)

Making the election a referendum on President Trump doesn't help Democrats advance their cause. They already have every anti-Trump vote there is to be had in the United States of America. All those voters need is a mail-in ballot or a ride to the polls on Election Day.

What Democrats don't (yet) have are the votes of enough "persuadables" in the 6–8 states that will decide the election's outcome in the Electoral College (supposedly Minnesota, Florida, North Carolina, Georgia, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Arizona). That subset of the electorate doesn't share the Democrat's frantic disdain for President Trump. They are deeply skeptical (to put it mildly) of "revolutionary agendas." But they do trust Democrats more than Republicans on the two biggest social safety net issues; Social Security and Medicare, and on most of

the others (food stamps, unemployment insurance, Obamacare, etc.) as well.

A good campaign defines its adversary. Democrats should not make Trump their adversary. They should make the modern Republican Party their adversary and force Trump to defend it. Another reason not to make the election a referendum on President Trump is that it can turn around and become a referendum on Joe Biden. That would be fine if Biden was in the prime of his life and political career, but he is not. He's "lost a step or two," as his friends say. Trump surrogates and more than a few Democrats (later in the evening) say he's senile. Moreover, he embodies the politics of the past. No one really wants to go back to the way it was. It didn't end well. The only convincing role left for Biden now is that of the aging political warrior. One last battle, one last stand, one higher purpose: to make sure the safety net(s) don't fray beyond repair. (...)

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online at www.cnbc.com/2020/06/04/the-biden-campaign-needs-a-better-message.html

"Trump's 2020 election strategy"

by Kashish Parpiani (May 25 2020)

Trump's re-election narrative is taking shape (...). As the presumptive Democratic nominee and former Vice President Joe Biden remains confined to his basement, President Donald Trump has taken advantage of his role as the incumbent president to organise "thinly veiled campaign events" amidst the coronavirus pandemic. Trump recently visited a Ford manufacturing plant in Michigan, with the purpose of surveying its altered operations to produce ventilators. But Trump's visit also came from the standpoint of his re-election bid.

Much-like his 2016 campaign, Trump's focus once again seems to be on courting blue-collar workers. (...)

Targeting Democrat governors

In his contest against Hillary Clinton, Trump pulled off a win in the swing-state of Michigan by a narrow margin. He mobilized white working-class voters by tapping into their anxieties on immigration and playing-up job losses in the mid-west due to America's industry-base shifting to countries like China. This

time, Trump is construing Democrats as the ones impeding his post-COVID-19 economic revival.

Biden has stepped up attacks on Trump's unfulfilled promises, by alleging him to have "turned his back on Michigan's working families." In response, Trump has singled out swing-states ruled by Democrats in his support for protestors "who are sick of social distancing as an infringement on freedoms." Thus, at the Ford plant, Trump presented himself as the standard-bearer for those longing for an American economic reawakening: "Americans who want and need to return to work should be supported."

Furthermore (...), Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer emerged as a vocal critic of a weak federal response. (...) But on the local level, she has faced armed demonstrators in multiple rounds of protests at the Michigan State Capitol and reportedly has also been the subject of "credible threats" of assassination. Given her role as a Democrat overseeing an electorally-crucial state, Trump's strategy of supporting local protests has emerged as the ideal approach by which he can avoid the elections from becoming a referendum on his handling of the pandemic.

Thus, Trump has similarly focused on swing-states ruled by Democrats. Trump has alleged Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf to have continued lockdowns without a credible rationale: “You have areas of Pennsylvania that are barely affected and [Wolf wants] to keep them closed.” And in Wisconsin, Trump’s anti-lockdown rhetoric has spurred local Republicans to call for “liberating” residents from stay-at-home orders by Gov. Tony Evers.

Repurposing the anti-swamp narrative

(...) Trump is now repurposing the narrative off a so-called *rigged elite system only he can fix* assuming there is a deep-rooted conspiracy against his presidency. Calling it “the biggest political crime in American history,” Trump has accused his predecessor Barack Obama’s administration for a *deep state campaign* to undermine Trump’s presidency before it even began. (...)

Although the ‘Obamagate’ conspiracy now seems to be getting debunked with reports emerging on Flynn’s name never having been redacted in the first place, one can expect Trump to nevertheless double down on the conspiracy to taint Biden. (...)

Touting unfinished business with China

In 2016, Trump alleged the US political establishment’s bipartisan support for free trade with China to have

resulted in “unacceptable outcomes” for America’s industrial mid-west. In office, Trump engaged in a trade war of tariffs and retaliatory tariffs with China for over 18 months, before announcing the limited Phase One trade deal. Wherein, Trump exacted Chinese assurances to increase imports by at least \$200 billion over the next two years. (...)

Now, ahead of the 2020 election, the coronavirus pandemic has presented Trump an opportunity to once again tap into anti-China sentiment. According to a recent poll, largely owing to the pandemic, Americans hold an unfavourable view of China by a margin of 66 to 26.

In addition, China has reportedly been lagging on its Phase One commitments. This has presented Trump an opportunity to once again demonstrate the efficacy of the ‘America First’ world view, in face of the Biden campaign construing his approach as being “tough talk, weak action.” (...)

Thus, Trump’s re-election strategy currently encompasses his effort to construe Democratic governors as the ones impeding resumption of economic activity, target Biden’s favourability by propagating Obamagate, and capitalise on anti-China sentiment to validate his ‘America First’ approach.

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Source: www.orfonline.org/expert-speak/trump-2020-election-strategy-66695/

C9 Tasks

Get together in groups and work on one of the following tasks:

- ▶ Imagine you are Joe Biden’s campaign manager: With the help of the articles above (and your list from task 2), create a campaign video or campaign speech which outlines the main issues of your campaign to persuade undecided voters. Find a catchy campaign slogan as well. You can also use informations of Joe Biden’s 2020 campaign website (<https://joebiden.com>).
- ▶ Imagine you are Donald Trump’s campaign manager: With the help of the articles above, create a campaign video or campaign speech which outlines the main

issues of your campaign to persuade your supporters and undecided voters, especially in swing states. Find a catchy campaign slogan as well (you can also hold on to “Keep America Great”).

You can also use information of Donald Trump’s 2020 campaign website (www.donaldjtrump.com).

Make sure you stay in character and also refer to your rival to point out why your presidential candidate should be elected in November!

- ▶ Find examples for President Trump’s tweets against Democratic Governors and appealing protests against social distancing.

C10 Mailing in Voting

Worksheet: Low rates of fraud in vote-by-mail states show the benefits outweigh the risks



Instructions:

- ▶ Tick the correct statement. Only one answer is correct.
- ▶ Provide a quotation from the text to support each correct statement: the line number(s) plus the first three and the last three words of the quotation.
- ▶ If the quotation is less than six words, write down the full quotation.

1 President Trump's two concerns regarding mail-in ballots are that

- they make frauds easier and favor his party.
- they favor the opposing party and there will likely be a high number of vote frauds.
- the upcoming elections will be unfair and lots of votes will be invalid.
- there will be an exponential increase of votes and no chance for him to win the election.

Quote: line(s) _____ _____

2 Right after the presidential election in November 2016

- Trump presented evidence that a lot of illegal workers had voted.
- Trump claimed he lost the electoral college because of invalid votes.
- Trump stated that he would have won the popular vote if the illegal votes hadn't been counted.
- Trump criticized mail-in voting and said it's dangerous.

Quote: line(s) _____ _____

3 The Heritage Foundation is

- closer to the Republican Party.
- closer to the Democratic Party.

Quote: line(s) _____ _____

4 Considering the Heritage's data, the authors conclude that

- there is not enough evidence that voter fraud actually happened.
- vote-by-mail systems could be problematic for general elections.
- clocking vote-by-mail would be recommendable in some states.
- the vote fraud results rather advocate vote-by-mail under the current circumstances.

Quote: line(s) _____ _____

5 According to the authors, the chart M2 clearly shows that

- vote fraud is organized and arranged by certain groups.
- vote fraud could, if all 50 states allowed vote-by-mail, have a significant influence on elections.
- vote fraud attempts are rather individual and wouldn't have a significant impact on elections.
- vote-by-mail states have to improve their vote-by-mail system.

Quote: line(s) _____  _____

6 In the state of Washington, two women were convicted of vote fraud because ...

Name	Reason	Sentence

7 A well-known large-scale vote fraud

- was committed by operatives for a congressional candidate so the election was repeated.
- happened due to a high number of fraudulent votes attempted by mail.
- happened in North Carolina's governor's election in 2018.
- happened in North Carolina, but all charges against the perpetrators were dropped.

Quote: line(s) _____  _____

C11 Where do you stand on these U.S. Political Issues?

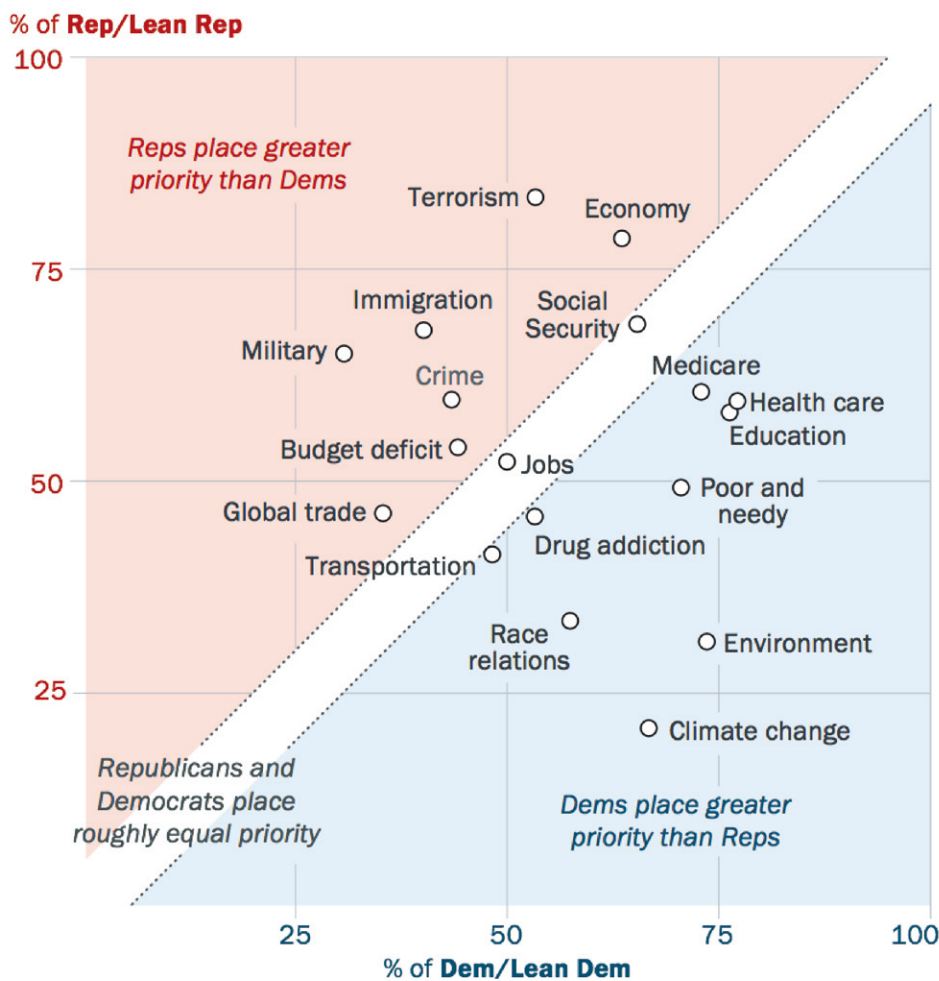


Take a look at the following list of U.S. election issues. Then rank them according to where you would invest your energy if you were in Congress. Some of the issues may be at the same level. 10 should be top priority. Compare your answers with a partner's. Speculate together where the Republican and Democratic parties stand on these issues.

- | | | |
|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Health care | Budget Deficit | Immigration |
| Military | Terrorism | Social Security |
| Jobs | Transportation | Crime |
| Climate | Global Trade | Drug Addiction |
| Change/Environment | Education | |
| Gun Control | Economy | |

Republicans and Democrats differ over key priorities for the president and Congress in 2019

% who say ____ should be a top priority for Trump and Congress this year



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Jan. 9-14, 2019.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: "Republicans and Democrats have grown further apart on what the nation's top priorities should be" Pew Research Center, Washington, D.C. (5.02.2019) www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/02/05/republicans-and-democrats-have-grown-further-apart-on-what-the-nations-top-priorities-should-be/

Tasks

C11

- ▶ Evaluate how the Republicans and Democrats differ over key priorities.
 - a) Can you note any political tendencies?
 - b) What have the parties got in common?
- ▶ Then compare the results of this survey to your ranking.
- ▶ How far apart are the U.S. political parties?
 - a) Prepare a 5-minute talk on “the major differences in the U.S. political parties.”
 - b) Collect your information by examining the following statistics:

www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2020/02/28/more-americans-see-climate-change-as-a-priority-but-democrats-are-much-more-concerned-than-republicans

www.people-press.org/2019/12/17/views-of-the-major-problems-facing-the-country

www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/10/16/share-of-americans-who-favor-stricter-gun-laws-has-increased-since-2017/

<https://assets.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/06/06-22-16-Partisanship-and-animosity-release.pdf> (especially page 45)

D1 Introduction - Vocabulary List

real-estates businessman (n.)	planning, developing and selling buildings
outspoken (adj.)	open, frank
conscious (adj.)	fully aware of someth.
crippled (adj.)	weakened, handicapped, disabled
welfare state (n.)	a state with social policy programs for its citizens
propagate (v.)	make public, advertise
heal (v.)	make sb. healthy again
common sense (n.)	normal logic
acumen (n.)	cleverness
passionate (adj.)	feeling very strongly
despair (n.)	lack of hope
draw (v.)	attract
convention center (n.)	place where many people meet
inherent (adj.)	existing within
endemic (adj.)	embedded
empathy (n.)	ability to feel with sb.
carnage (n.)	bloodbath
inaugural speech (n.)	first speech of a president in office
unspecific (adj.)	unclear

The Trump Puzzle – Vocabulary List

puzzle	riddle, mystery, puzzle game
apprentice (n.)	trainee
brand (n.)	name of a company or a product range
mercurial (adj.)	always changing
charismatic (adj.)	with an attractive personality
erratic (adj.)	unstable
singular (adj.)	being the only one, incomparable
conform (v.)	respect the norms
prescription (n.)	plan
disruptor (n.)	sb. who creates chaos
contemptuous (adj.)	thinking that others are worth less
asset (n.)	sth. of value
scrutinize (v.)	look closely at sth.
genius (n.)	very intelligent person
counselor (n.)	adviser
limelight (n.)	center of attention
legislative branch (n.)	parliament
nurture (v.)	develop
persecution (n.)	action of coming after sb.
cast (v.)	make appear
warped (adj.)	twisted, not in normal shape
allege (v.)	say sth. without proving it
defraud (v.)	trick
rally (n.)	mass meeting of people
unmediated (adj.)	direct
revelatory (adj.)	showing sth. new/hidden
encompass (v.)	include
wonk (n.)	sb. always working hard, swot
gut (n.)	type of internal organs
antagonist (n.)	enemy
flaw (n.)	defect
litany (n.)	long list
consensus (n.)	agreement
entity (n.)	here: unit, body
at odds (idiom)	unfitting
merely (adv.)	only
scramble (v.)	move fast
red tape (n.)	regulations
cut a corner (idiom)	find a shortcut
purge (v.)	remove
crusade (n.)	here: ideological campaign
charge (n.)	accusation
plead (v.)	declare before a court
virtue (n.)	good quality
wacky (adj.)	stupid
breakdown (n.)	statistics
culminate (v.)	meeting point
virtually (adv.)	almost
fraud (n.)	act of cheating
assert (v.)	state strongly
imply (v.)	give the idea of sth.
recast (v.)	recreate

D3 Trump in Popular Culture – Vocabulary List

preface (v.)	write a preface (= a text introducing another text)
medley (n.)	mixture of songs
a-changing	changing
brave (adj.)	courageous
spin (v.)	turn
Dr. Martin Luther King	US-American civil rights activist (1929–1968)
demagogue (n.)	populist leader
rise (n.)	action of rising; here: career
fatal (adj.)	killing, deadly
choke (v.)	make sb. stop breathing
the night will fall	it will get dark
ticker (n.)	comment running across a screen
palm (n.)	the inner side of a hand
loan (n.)	money that you lend to sb.
'less (= unless) (conj.)	if ... not
health (n.)	state of being healthy
witness (n.)	sb. who has seen a crime and tells the police
heed (v.)	pay attention to sth.
blunt (adj.)	not sharp
blunt (n.)	slang word for 'cannabis joint'
peel (v.)	go off
per mil / per mill (n.)	per thousand / ‰
cancel (v.)	remove parts of a text that you do not want people to read

D4 Trump and populism – Vocabulary List

agenda (n.)	to-do list
holistic (adj.)	including everything
homogeneous (adj.)	without any differences, being all the same
antagonistic (adj.)	set against each other
pure (adj.)	clean
legitimate (adj.)	rightful
neglect (v.)	overlook
shorthand (n.)	abbreviation, short version
frequent (adj.)	often
invocation (n.)	here: claim
account for sth. (v.)	explain
boorish (adj.)	impolite, uneducated
transgressive (adj.)	going beyond
thoroughly (adj.)	fully
vehicle (n.)	here: tool
commoner (n.)	normal person
unique (adj.)	special
incremental (adj.)	regularly increasing

Trump's appointment of judges – Vocabulary List**D5**

historic (adj.)	historically important
overhaul (n.)	checking and repairing of a system
judiciary (n.)	judges
appeal court (n.)	higher court (that can overrule decisions by lower courts)
invoke (v.)	here: call
enduring (adj.)	lasting
accomplishment (n.)	achievement
appellate judge (n.)	judge in an appeal court
flourish (n.)	elegance
circuit (n.)	area a judge is responsible for
reliable (adj.)	that you can trust
significant (adj.)	in an important way

The world in the time of Trump – Vocabulary List**D8**

withdraw from sth. (v.)	leave sth.
accord (n.)	agreement
carbon emission (n.)	CO ₂ set free into the atmosphere
constrict (v.)	restrict, limit
emphasize (v.)	stress
seek (v.)	try
impose (v.)	force sth. onto sb.
meddle (v.)	get involved with sth.
concession (n.)	what you grant to sb.
infuriate (v.)	make sb. very angry

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Internetseite zu den Wahlen des Trump kritischen US-Nachrichtensenders CNN

<https://edition.cnn.com/election/2020>

Democracy 2020

Internetseite zu den Wahlen des konservativen US-Nachrichtensenders Fox News

www.foxnews.com/category/politics/2020-presidential-election

Democratic Party

Offizielle Homepage der demokratischen Partei

<https://democrats.org>

Deutsch-Amerikanisches Zentrum/James-F.-Byrnes-Institut e.V.

Homepage des DAZ in Stuttgart mit Informationen zu eigenen Angeboten, wie Vorträgen, einem Kulturprogramm, Bibliothek oder besonderen Veranstaltungen für Schulklassen

<https://daz.org>

Donald J. Trump

Kampagnen-Homepage des aktuellen US-Präsidenten Donald Trump und seinen Vizepräsidenten Mike Pence

www.donaldjtrump.com

Grand Old Party

Offizielle Homepage der republikanischen Partei mit dem offiziellen Namen „Grand Old Party“.

www.gop.com

Heidelberg Center for American Studies

Homepage eines interdisziplinären Instituts an der Universität Heidelberg; u. a. mit Podcasts und Vortragsdokumenten zu Themen zu den USA

www.hca.uni-heidelberg.de

Joe Biden

Kampagnen-Homepage des demokratischen Präsidentschaftskandidaten Joe Biden und der Vizepräsidentenkandidatin Kamala Harris

<https://joebiden.com/>

Kids Voting USA

Überparteiliche Organisation, die die Wahlen für Kinder und Jugendliche altersgerecht erklärt und Informationen bereitstellt

www.kidsvotingusa.org

National Public Radio

Homepage des Zusammenschlusses eigenständiger nicht kommerzieller Hörfunksender in den USA

www.npr.org

New York Times

Webseite der überregional und international bedeutenden Tageszeitung New York Times mit einem speziellen Portal zu den US-Wahlen und einem Wahlkalender

www.nytimes.com

PEW Research Center

Homepage des überparteilichen Forschungsinstituts mit zahlreichen Studien zu sozio-ökonomischen und politischen Themen

www.pewresearch.org

Quartz

US-amerikanisches Internetportal für Nachrichten mit einem Schwerpunkt auf Wirtschaftsnachrichten

<https://qz.com>

Rock the Vote

Internetseite einer unabhängigen Organisation, um junge Menschen für Politik und Wahlen zu interessieren

www.rockthevote.org

The Atlantic

Homepage der US-amerikanischen Zeitschrift mit Artikeln und Kommentaren zu politischen, gesellschaftlichen und kulturellen Themen

www.theatlantic.com

USA

Online-Portal der Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung zur US-amerikanischen Geschichte sowie zahlreichen Aspekten von Gesellschaft und Politik in den USA

www.bpb.de/internationales/amerika/usa

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Online-Dossier der Landeszentrale für politische Bildung Baden-Württemberg zu den US-Wahlen am 3. November 2020. Das Dossier enthält auch umfassende Informationen zum politischen System

<https://uswahl.lpb-bw.de>

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Wahlportal der britischen Zeitung Financial Times mit einer Übersicht zu aktuellen Umfragen

<https://ig.ft.com/us-election-2020>

Washington Post

Webseite der liberalen Tageszeitung Washington Post mit einem speziellen Portal zu den US-Wahlen

www.washingtonpost.com

The White House

Homepage des Weißen Hauses als Amtssitz des US-Präsidenten

www.whitehouse.gov