Parties and Presidents

How disagreements changed early elections

5.H.16 "Explain why the first American political parties developed, and analyze the impact political parties had on early presidential elections."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two different views that helped parties form. Circle one way parties affected the 1796 election and one way they affected the 1800 election.

When Parties Entered Elections

1. When George Washington left office, Americans disagreed about how the new nation should work. Alexander Hamilton wanted a strong national government and supported a national bank. Thomas Jefferson feared that too much national power could threaten people's rights. He favored more power for states. Leaders and voters began working together with others who shared their views. These groups became the Federalist Party and the Democratic-Republican Party.

2. In 1796, party groups backed different candidates for president. Federalists supported John Adams, while Democratic-Republicans supported Thomas Jefferson. At the time, electors each cast two votes without naming a vice president. The person with the most votes became president, and the runner-up became vice president. Adams won, so Jefferson, his political rival, became vice president. Party competition gave voters competing plans, but the rule put opponents in the top two offices.

3. In 1800, the Democratic-Republicans hoped to elect Jefferson president and Aaron Burr vice president. Under the same voting rule, their electors gave both men the same number of votes. This tie sent the choice to the House of Representatives, which finally chose Jefferson as president. Party planning had created a new problem for the election system. In 1804, the Twelfth Amendment required electors to cast separate votes for president and vice president.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why did people begin joining the first political parties?

2. How did parties change the choice voters faced in the 1796 election?

3. How did the voting rule affect the result of the 1796 election?

4. How did the Democratic-Republicans' plan for the 1800 election lead to a change in voting rules?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine lawmakers in 1801 want the president and vice president to come from one winning party ticket. Propose a voting rule that would make this happen, then explain one benefit and one possible drawback.

ANSWER KEY

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GRADE 5 · 5.H.16

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two different views that helped parties form. Circle one way parties affected the 1796 election and one way they affected the 1800 election. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why did people begin joining the first political parties?	**People disagreed about national and state power, so they joined others who shared their views.**
2	How did parties change the choice voters faced in the 1796 election?	**The parties backed different candidates who offered competing plans for the country.**
3	How did the voting rule affect the result of the 1796 election?	**It made Adams president and his political rival Jefferson vice president because Jefferson was the runner-up.**
4	How did the Democratic-Republicans' plan for the 1800 election lead to a change in voting rules?	**Their electors gave Jefferson and Burr the same number of votes, causing a tie. The Twelfth Amendment later required separate votes for president and vice president.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Electors would vote for a pair of candidates from the same party, and the pair with the most votes would win both offices. This would keep rival parties from splitting the presidency and vice presidency as they did in 1796. However, a popular choice for vice president could lose if voters disliked that person's partner.

Accept explanations that connect disagreements to organized party support and party plans to election outcomes. For Your Turn, the rule must elect a same-party pair together; separate votes alone do not ensure that result.