

Party Power, Local Choices

Analyze how national and state party systems shape political participation.

12.G4d "The United States and New York have political party systems, and the political parties represent specific political, economic, and social philosophies. Debate over the role and influence of political parties continues..."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline party roles. Circle state-level differences. Mark one benefit and one criticism of party influence.

Parties Across Levels of Government

- ① Political parties organize people around broad political, economic, and social goals. Democrats and Republicans dominate national elections, while smaller parties also promote ideas and candidates. Party organizations raise funds, recruit candidates, communicate messages, and support campaigns. A platform states priorities; it does not bind every officeholder to every position. Voters may support candidates from different parties or remain unaffiliated. A party label offers information, but it does not fully describe each voter or candidate.
- ② New York permits fusion voting: multiple parties may nominate the same candidate. Votes cast for that candidate on different ballot lines are combined in the candidate's total. Each line's tally shows how many votes were cast on that line; it does not reveal every voter's beliefs. A voter does not get extra votes because a candidate appears on several lines. New York also uses closed party primaries: voters generally must be enrolled in the party under applicable rules. These features affect the importance of enrollment and minor-party endorsements.
- ③ State parties can emphasize local needs while sharing labels, networks, and principles with national organizations. For example, a hypothetical New York platform might emphasize housing near transit within a broader national housing priority. Different state economies, voters, and laws can produce different emphases. Critics say parties can oversimplify views or deepen polarization. Supporters say they help voters compare candidates, organize coalitions, and hold officials accountable. These competing assessments make party influence a continuing subject of debate.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What does a party platform do, and what does the passage say it does not do?

2 How can fusion voting and closed primaries affect participation in New York?

3 How can a state party organization differ from its national party organization while still being connected to it?

4 What concern do critics raise about political parties, and what benefit do supporters identify?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Using a hypothetical housing, transportation, or education issue, write three sentences: name a broad national party priority, a possible state-specific emphasis, and one benefit or concern about party influence.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline party roles. Circle state-level differences. Mark one benefit and one criticism of party influence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What does a party platform do, and what does the passage say it does not do?	A platform states a party's positions and priorities. It does not bind every officeholder to every plank.
2	How can fusion voting and closed primaries affect participation in New York?	Fusion voting gives minor-party endorsements and ballot lines a role in a candidate's total. Closed primaries generally require party enrollment under applicable rules.
3	How can a state party organization differ from its national party organization while still being connected to it?	A state organization can emphasize issues important to its state's voters, economy, and laws, even when the national party emphasizes other priorities. The organizations can still share labels, networks, and many principles.
4	What concern do critics raise about political parties, and what benefit do supporters identify?	Critics say parties can oversimplify complex views or strengthen polarization. Supporters say parties help voters compare candidates, organize coalitions, and hold officials accountable.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

A national party might support expanding affordable housing as part of its economic agenda. A New York party organization could emphasize the high cost of housing near transit and in large cities. Party influence may help voters compare plans, but it could also make compromise harder.

Accept reasonable issue-based examples that clearly distinguish a broad national priority from a state-specific emphasis. The final sentence should identify a plausible benefit or concern about party influence.