

POLITICAL PARTY PLATFORM

Purpose

In this activity, you are going to analyze a political party platform. This will help you learn how to deconstruct and closely examine the messages that politicians, advertisers, and other influencers use.

Process

You are going to look at a political party platform and try to interpret what its statements really mean. First, take out the Political Party Platform worksheet and look at all the statements. You'll probably notice that they are difficult to interpret; therefore, your first task is to rewrite the statements to in your own words. Don't worry—you don't have to do them all; you'll work in groups and split up the task. Your teacher will tell you which statements your group should rewrite to make them easier to understand.

Once all groups have finished their rewrites, you'll discuss them as a class. Then, your teacher will mix up your groups, and you'll be assigned different statements. For each of those, you'll write a justification for how and why each one might be seen as desirable for a country. Be prepared to share your ideas with the class.

Now, your teacher will tell you more about the political party that put forth this platform, and you'll dig into how and why seemingly positive statements can morph into something less positive.

Your teacher will end this activity in one of two ways. Either you'll think about how this political party might be seen as similar to some of those that exist in the world today, or, as a class, you'll construct a large causal map, starting with the Treaty of Versailles. This will help you see how sometimes historical events unfold over a long period of time, and how hard it can be to predict the consequences of something that might not seem like such a big deal in the moment.

POLITICAL PARTY PLATFORM

 Name: Date:

Directions: Read the political party platform statements below. Then, follow each of the steps.

Step 1

Review the political party statements written below.

| Statement Number | Political Party Platform Statements |
|------------------|---|
| 1 | We demand the uniting of all our citizens within one Greater Country, on the basis of the right to self-determination of nations. |
| 2 | We demand equal rights for all our citizens, with respect to other nations, and the annulment of all peace treaties. |
| 3 | We demand land and soil to feed our People and settle our excess population. |
| 4 | In view of the tremendous sacrifices in property and blood demanded of the nation by every war, personal gain from the war must be termed a crime against the nation. We therefore demand the total confiscation of all war profits. |
| 5 | Any person who is not a Citizen will be able to live here, but only as a guest and must be subject to legislation for Aliens. |
| 6 | Only a Citizen is entitled to decide the leadership and laws of the State. We therefore demand that only Citizens may hold public office, regardless of whether it is a national, state, or local office. |
| 7 | We demand that the State make it its duty to provide opportunities of employment first of all for its own Citizens. If it is not possible to maintain the entire population of the State, then foreign nationals (non-Citizens) are to be expelled from the State. |
| 8 | Any further immigration of non-Citizens is to be prevented. We demand that all non-Citizens who entered the State after a certain date, be forced to leave the State without delay. |
| 9 | All Citizens must have equal rights and duties. |
| 10 | It must be the first duty of every Citizen to carry out intellectual or physical work. Individual activity must not be harmful to the public interest and must be pursued within the framework of the community and for the general good. |
| 11 | We demand the large-scale development of old-age pension schemes. |
| 12 | In order to make higher education—and thereby entry into leading positions—available to every able and industrious citizen, the State must provide a thorough restructuring of our entire public educational system. The courses of study at all educational institutions are to be adjusted to meet the requirements of practical life. Understanding of the concept of the State must be achieved through the schools (teaching of civics) at the earliest age at which it can be grasped. We demand the education at the public expense of specially gifted children of poor parents, without regard to the latter's position or occupation. |
| 13 | The State must raise the level of national health by means of mother-and-child care, the banning of juvenile labor, achievements of physical fitness through legislation for compulsory gymnastics and sports, and maximum support for all organizations providing physical training for young people. |
| 14 | We demand freedom for all religious denominations, provided that they do not endanger the existence of the State or offend the concepts of decency and morality. |

Name: Date:

Step 2

Rewrite your group’s assigned statements below.

| Statement Number | Political Party Platform Statements |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|
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Name: Date:

Step 3

Provide justifications for why your new group’s assigned statements might be seen as positive.

| Statement Number | Statement rewritten in your own words |
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