

Early Political Parties and the Election of 1800

Name: _____ Date: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

The student will compare the Federalist and Democratic-Republican parties and simulate the election of 1800.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- poster board or paper
- markers or colored pencils
- index cards
- a container for a mock ballot box (small box or bowl)
- small slips of paper

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

1. Create 2 campaign posters (half-sheet size each) — one for the Federalist Party (led by figures like Hamilton and Adams, favoring strong central government) and one for the Democratic-Republican Party (led by Jefferson, favoring states' rights and limited federal power), each with a slogan and 2 key positions.
2. On index cards, write 3 differences between the two parties' beliefs about government power, the economy, and foreign relations.
3. Hold a mock election: write 'Federalist' and 'Democratic-Republican' on 2 slips of paper each, then create 6-10 additional blank ballot slips for family members (or yourself, voting multiple times as different 'citizens') to mark a choice and place in your ballot box.
4. Count the ballots and declare a winner, recording the final vote tally.
5. Write 2-3 sentences explaining why the election of 1800 was historically significant (the first peaceful transfer of power between opposing political parties in the U.S.).

QUESTIONS

1. Name one key belief of the Federalist Party and one key belief of the Democratic-Republican Party.

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2. What were the results of your mock election, and which party won?
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3. Why is the election of 1800 considered historically significant?

4. Why do you think having more than one political party can be both helpful and challenging for a democracy?
