*QUESTIONS*

1. Discuss those tasks which political parties perform or should perform.
2. Explain the rational-choice theory of Anthony Downs.
3. Evaluate the relationship between party image and identification.
4. What is the importance of Figure 8.2 on page 229 in our discussion of political identification?
5. After reading the subsection “The Parties Face an Independent Youth,” answer the questions posed:
	1. Do you think that as the current generation of young people ages they will become more likely to identify with the major political parties?
	2. Because younger people are so likely to be independent, does this mean many young voters are particularly open to persuasion during campaigns? If so, why don't the Democrats and Republicans pay special attention to getting them on their side?
	3. In some states, such as New York and Florida, only voters who are registered with a party can participate in that party's primary. Given that younger people are less likely to identify with a party, does this mean that their influence in primary elections is diminished in such states?
6. What does the process of ticket splitting tell us about independent voters?
7. Although some claim political machines are a part of American history, others claim they have simply become more covert; what would you say and why?
8. Discuss the different types of primaries found in the American political system.
9. Was the blanket primary a good idea?
10. How do national parties work and organize themselves?
11. After reading through both the official [Democratic](http://www.democrats.org/) and [Republican](http://gop.org/) party platforms and the “cheat sheet” in Table 8.1 on pages 235 and 236, with which party do you side; why?
12. Discuss the five main political eras; i.e. The First Party System (1796-1824), Jacksonian Era (1828-1856), The Two Republican Eras (1860-1928), The New Deal Coalition (1932-1964), and Southern Realignment and The Era of Divided Party Government (1968-present).
13. What conclusions can you draw from the “Partisan Control of State Governments, 2011” subsection on page 242? What are the broader implications of those conclusions?
14. After reading the section “Third Parties: Their Impact on American Politics,” consider a famous Richard Hofstadter quote: “Third parties are like bees, once they've stung they die.” Evaluate the usefulness of third parties on the American political system.
15. Using the responsibility party model, how is the American government doing?
16. What does Table 8.2 on page 246 tell you about partisan divisions on key House of Representatives roll call votes?
17. Are political parties over?