

Name _____

Period _____

AP American Government

BRIEF ESSAY



DIRECTIONS: You have 10 minutes to completely answer the following question. It is suggested that you take time to plan and outline your answer to each of the issues raised in the question. Remember to use the correct vocabulary, specific examples, and factual evidence to support your position. You must use complete sentences, and have a thesis and conclusion!



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1. Minor political parties have been a common feature of United States politics.
 - a. Describe the point of view expressed about minor parties in the cartoon above.
 - b. Identify and explain how one aspect of the US electoral system acts as an obstacle to minor-party candidates winning elections.
 - c. Minor parties make important contributions to the US political system in spite of the institutional obstacles to their candidates' success. Describe two of these contributions.

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AP[®] UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS 2004 SCORING GUIDELINES

Question 3

7 points

Part a: (1 point) 1 point for description

Accurate description of cartoon's point of view (e.g., voting for a third party is throwing away a vote)

Part b: (4 points) 1 point for each of two identifications, 1 point for each of two explanations

Accepted answers may include:

- Winner-take-all aspect of electoral college
- Ballot access
- Campaign financing (rules/limits, not effects)
- Federal funding of presidential elections
- Exclusion from presidential debates
- Single-member plurality districts

Part c: (3 points) 1 point for each of two descriptions

Acceptable answers may include:

- New or different ideas or issues
- Voice for fringe
- Safety valve for discontent
- Enhanced participation
- Room for critical voices
- Pushes major parties to include otherwise underrepresented concerns/groups
- Clarify major-party candidates' positions

Score of zero (0) for attempted answer that earns no points.

Score of dash (—) for blank or off-task answer.