Name:		Blue / Silver Period:				
THE BASICS OF POLITICAL PARTIES						
Task #1: The Functions of American Political Parties Complete the chart by writing your own definition for each of the functions of the political parties listed and indicating at least one specific example of political parties performing that function currently.						
Function	Definition	Example				
Nominate candidates						
Inform the public						
Clarify political issues						
Operate the government						
Provide opposition to the government in office						

Task #2: Divided Government

Read the article at the following website. Answer the questions below. Make sure you read the article on the website.

Website:	http:/	/www.politicsc	ymru.com/	/en/cat3	/article37/

- 1. What is divided government?
- 2. Why does divided government occur?
- 3. How often has divided government occurred since 1969?
- 4. How, according to the author, do the presidencies of Nixon, Ford, and Clinton illustrate the weaknesses of divided government?

- 5. Why is divided government "even more problematic in an era of increased partisanship"?
- 6. How did the passage of Obama's healthcare reform in 2009-2010 illustrate the weakness of united government?
- 7. In contrast, what was the strength of Reagan's 1986 tax reform and Clinton's 1996 welfare reform?
- 8. How does divided government improve Congressional oversight of the executive branch?



Task #3: Minute Government: Why have political parties weakened?

He joined just by ______.

Watch the video together and complete the fill-in-the blanks questions below. Afterwards, discuss the answers with your group members. The group should work together to come up with answers, but each member is responsible for writing down his/her own answers. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIXql2644no

Reason #1: Party Voters

One of the reasons given is that typical party voters contribute to the weakness of the party for the following reasons:

 He doesn't have any 	or
 Doesn't have to do anything in 	·
 Really doesn't consider himself a " 	
sometimes tells people he's an	when asked.
	by the party. He likes it when the party is
sort of in the	
Sometimes he votes for	he likes.
	ive "" the party and votes
·	
Reason #2: Party Candidates	
A second reason given for party weakness is such as the following:	the behavior of the candidates in elections,
 He knows only the can 	nominate him and not the, so
he seeks out voter approval and not po	
He raises his own	
He hires , rational , ration	ther than ask the party for campaign help.
	oing to be a good"
Instead he says, "I'm going to go to Wo	ashington and
	so not to alienate possible
voters.	
_	when he votes in Congress
against the wishes of leadership.	
 He knows that the 	is better for communication than party.



Task #4: Analyzing Political Cartoons

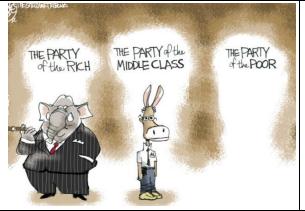
Look at the three political cartoons and answer the questions below after discussing them with your group. The group should work together to come up with answers, but each member is responsible for writing down his/her own answers.

Political Cartoon



Analysis

- 1. What point is the artist making?
- 2. Why is neither party willing to do? How do you know?
- 3. Why is neither side willing to "meet in the middle" in the cartoon? Extrapolate that to the real world?



- 1. What point is the artist making?
- 2. Who does the artist think the Republicans represent? Who does the artist think the Democrats represent?
- 3. What might be a solution to the lack of representation for the poor?



- 1. What point is the artist making?
- 2. How are the two party's approach to puppies (i.e., birth control) different?
- 3. What is the artist suggesting about the Democratic (left) point of view?
- 4. What is the artist suggesting about the Republican (right) point of view?



