



CIVIL DISCOURSE

An American Legacy Toolkit

■ **Module:** The Evolution of Political Parties in America

Overview

Timeframe: 3-4 days / 50-minute sessions

Podcast and Video Alignment

60-Second Civics Podcast:

- [Functions of Political Parties](#)
- [Origins of Political Parties](#)
- [Political Parties in Jacksonian Democracy](#)
- [Political Parties in the Civil War Era](#)
- [Political Parties in the 1960s](#)

Beyond the Legacy Video:

- [The Evolution of Political Parties in America](#)

Scholar:

Dr. Lester Brooks
American History Professor Emeritus
Anne Arundel Community College

American Legacy Text & Additional Texts

Primary Sources:

- [James Madison's Federalist 10 \(1787\)](#)
- [George Washington's Farewell Address \(1796\)](#)

Instructional Materials:

- [Beyond the Legacy Video Guide: Political Parties](#)
- [Paideia Seminar Plan – Federalist 10](#)
- [Structured Academic Controversy Plan – Political Parties](#)
- [SAC Note-Taking Graphic Organizer](#)

Inquiry Question

Should we be worried about political parties and factions today?

Objective

Participants will learn about the constitutional underpinnings of political parties and factions in America by viewing and discussing videos, podcasts, and other media, as well as closely reading [Federalist 10](#), to engage in a civil discourse model to expand their perspectives on the value, purpose, and impact of political parties today.

Vocabulary

- checks and balances
- common good
- compromise
- declamations
- democracy
- factions
- individual rights
- liberty
- ratification
- republic

Facilitator Background

[Federalist 10](#), written by James Madison, is an important document that talks about the dangers of factions in a democratic society. It was written after the Constitution was created in an effort to persuade states to ratify the new Constitution in their state ratifying conventions. In the essay, Madison, writing as Publius, acknowledges that factions will be a part of the new government and country, but that the structure of the new government itself, a republic versus a democracy will provide solutions for controlling them.

A faction is a group of people who have similar interests and come together to promote their own interests, sometimes at the expense of the common good. Madison argued that factions are inevitable in a free society because people have different opinions and beliefs.

Madison explains that there are two ways to deal with factions. The first way is to get rid of liberty, which means taking away people's freedom to express their opinions. However, this would go against the principles of democracy and individual rights. The second way is to control the effects of factions. Madison suggests that in a large and diverse country like the United States, factions can be controlled by having a system where many different factions exist. This way, no single faction can become too powerful and dominate others.

According to Madison, a well-constructed government can help prevent the harmful effects of factions. He argues that a strong government with a system of checks and balances can protect the rights of individuals and promote the common good. By having a system where different factions have to work together and compromise, the government can prevent one faction from taking over and oppressing others. Madison believed that this system of government would help ensure the stability and success of the United States.

Assess & Authentically Engage

Students demonstrate their understanding of political parties and factions by making real-world connections between the context surrounding [Federalist 10](#) and that of the present-day United States and the role of political parties today.