

Voting & Polling (10.3/10.4)

Government and Politics

Name: _____

Hr: ____

Task 1: Complete study guide/notes

Read article “[Do children just take their parent’s beliefs?](#)” (also posted on class website)

Pick the *three sociological factors* (from notes / study guide) that you think *most influence people’s political views*. Write these in study and describe why you think these are most influential?

Task 2: Identifying influences of your Political Socialization

Directions: List the agents of political socialization that have influenced your views the most on the following issues. *Agents = family, school, peer group, mass media, religion, income, gender/race.*

1. Government aid to the poor (welfare programs) _____
2. Gun control _____
3. Censorship (of music, internet, TV, etc.) _____
4. Standards in public education _____
5. Affirmative action _____
6. Taxes _____
7. Capital punishment _____
8. Abortion _____
9. Religion in schools _____
10. Nationalized Health Care _____
11. Foreign policies (humanitarian, economic, military) _____
12. Minority rights _____

Response questions - influences on political socialization

1. How do your political beliefs compare to that of others in your family?

2. Based upon your responses to the twelve (12) issues above, what conclusions can you draw about the development of your political beliefs?

b. What might impact/change that development moving forward? Consider what “agents” you will might be influenced by in your future years?

Task 3: Complete Political Ideology Quiz

What Americans value – political ideology

- a. Political Ideology – more or less consistent set of views concerning which policies government should pursue
- b. Liberals and conservatives often disagree about the role of government.
- c. Conservatives tend to believe that there should be less government intervention in economic matters, while liberals feel there should be less governmental regulation of social and political matters.
- d. Libertarian – minimal government control of both economic and social issues
- e. Totalitarian – complete government control of economic and social issues

Directions: *What is your political ideology? Where do you fall on the political spectrum?*

Take **at least 2** the following quizzes listed (hyperlinked) and complete the following analysis questions.

[Pewcenter](#)

[Idealog Quiz](#)

[ProCon.org Quiz](#)

[USA Today Candidate Match Game](#)

Political Surveys Analysis Questions

Suryvey _____	Survey _____
Results:	Results

1. Do you think political parties could use these types of surveys to their advantage during campaigns? How so?

Task 6: Polling

In the modern era, public opinion polls are everywhere, measuring the beliefs, attitudes, or expectations of Americans not only regarding preferences for presidential and/or congressional candidates, but on countless political, social, and economic issues. The Gallup Poll is universally recognized, but polls are also devised and implemented by magazines, television networks, and newspapers. Among the more prominent polls are those sponsored by Time and Newsweek, NBC News/Wall Street Journal, ABC News/Washington Post, CBS News/New York Times, and USA Today/CNN.

So what is a public opinion poll? It is a method of systematically interrogating a smaller, representatively-selected sample of the public; a sample that is fundamentally an accurate "mirror" of the opinions held by the entire population as a whole. But even though scientific polls are far more accurate today, they still may run into problems.

What basic skills are needed to read a poll? How are scientifically sound polls conducted? How can one gauge the reliability of poll data? When looking at a poll, what factors should they look at to determine whether it is an accurate poll?

Media polls v. academic/institutional polls (who sponsored the poll)

The overall question (approval/disapproval) and the sub-set of questions
The sample and whether that's published information
Margin of error

Polling resources

<http://www.pewresearch.org/>

<http://www.rasmussenreports.com>

1. **Choose 1 political poll** from the websites above
 - a. List the name of the poll, the date, the organization running the poll and the title of the poll.
 - b. List a sampling of questions and answer choices for this poll.
 - c. What does this poll tell you that you didn't know before you read it?

2. **Choose another political poll** from the websites above
 - a. List the name of the poll, the date, the organization running the poll and the title of the poll.
 - b. List a sampling of questions and answer choices for this poll.
 - c. What does this poll tell you that you didn't know before you read it?

Discussion questions regarding polling

3. What do you think - If leaders of our nation followed the views of the public (polling) more closely, do you think the nation would be better off, or worse off than it is today?

4. What do you think – when, if ever should public policies “mirror” majority opinion?