

12th Grade Campaign Finance Inquiry

Does Money Matter In Political Campaigns?

Staging the Question: Analyze correspondence between political parties and corporations/CEOs to determine if funding is tied to political favors.

Social Studies Practices	🗳️ Gathering, Using, and Interpreting Evidence 🗳️ Civic Participation
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Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	Supporting Question 4
How much does it cost to become a member of Congress?	Where do politicians get their campaign contributions?	How do super PACs play a role in political campaigns?	Should the government limit contributions to political campaigns?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
List how much money members of Congress spent on their last campaigns.	Write 1-2 paragraphs explaining the ways that individuals and companies can donate to political candidates.	Create a graphic organizer that defines super PACs and explains their role in political campaigns.	Write a claim with evidence that answers the supporting question.

Integration of Inquiry Process and Skills

Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3	Supporting Question 4
Connect: Reads background information to discover the complexities of the question and brainstorms ideas for further inquiry by examining correspondence between political parties and corporations/CEOs and considering the cost of becoming a Congress member.	Connect:	Connect:	Connect: Explores problems or questions for which there are multiple answers or no “best” answer about whether or not the government should limit contributions to political campaigns. Graphic Organizer: Connect#27
Wonder: Determines the kind of information needed to investigate the complexities of the topic and whether different points of view will be important when researching how much it costs to become a member of Congress.	Wonder: Analyzes and evaluates what is known, observed, or experienced to form tentative thesis or hypothesis about where politicians get their campaign contributions. Graphic Organizer: Wonder#12	Wonder: Refines questions to provide a framework for the inquiry about the role super PACs play in political campaigns. Graphic Organizer: Wonder#19 and Wonder#20	Wonder: Plans inquiry to systematically to gather evidence to validate thesis about whether or not the government should limit contributions to political campaigns. Graphic Organizer: Wonder#21 and Wonder#22
Investigate: Extends search beyond readily available sources to ensure accuracy and comprehensiveness to answer the questions about the cost of becoming a Congress member after examining Congress’s online database and an interactive campaign-finance map.	Investigate: Uses both facts and opinions responsibly by identifying and verifying them while examining an interactive guide from the <i>New York Times</i> , an interactive website on congressional campaigns, and a video from the <i>Colbert Report</i> . Graphic Organizer: Investigate#71	Investigate: Recognizes the effect of different perspectives and points of view on information about the role super PACs play in political campaigns while examining videos and articles about campaign finance, Citizens United, and super PACs. Graphic Organizer: Investigate#76	Investigate: Challenges ideas in text and makes notes of questions to pursue in additional sources while watching videos about campaign finance and reading a set of essays from <i>Freakonomics</i> . Graphic Organizer: Investigate#111 and Investigate#112 C3 Resources
Construct: Lists how much money members of Congress spent on their last campaigns.	Construct: Interprets information by defining, classifying, and inferring. Graphic Organizer: Construct#29	Construct: Draws clear and appropriate conclusions supported by evidence and examples. Graphic Organizer: Construct#40 and Construct#41	Construct: Develops own point of view and supports with evidence. Graphic Organizer: Construct#49
Express:	Express: Writes 1-2 paragraphs explaining the ways that individuals and companies can donate to political candidates.	Express: Creates a graphic organizer that defines super PACs and explains their role in political campaigns.	Express: Writes a claim with evidence that answers the question of whether or not the government should limit contributions to political campaigns.
Reflect:	Reflect:	Reflect:	Reflect: Records individual experience of the inquiry process with suggestions for future improvements. Graphic Organizer: Reflect#23

Summative Performance Task: Argument: Does money matter in political campaigns? Construct an argument (e.g., detailed outline, poster, essay) that addresses the compelling question using specific claims and relevant evidence from contemporary sources while acknowledging competing perspectives. **Extension:** Create a public service announcement that addresses students’ stances on campaign-finance reform.