

Real World Graduation: Question 51: Politics and Pay

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6 Oct 2018

Question 51

The political parties in America can be summarized as follows. The Federalists were members of the Founding generation who believed in a strong central government. The Republican-Democrat party was established in the late 1790's, and supported a weaker federal government and stronger state governments. In the 1820's, the Republican-Democrat Party split into the Democratic and Whig parties. The Whig party was the conservative party that favored and aided the western expansion, including many public works such as canals, railroads, and improvement of navigation on the rivers. It became extinct after the election of 1858 and was replaced by the Republican Party. There have been many minor parties in U. S. politics, but none of their candidates have ever become President. The two main parties today are the Democrats, who claim to favor the working people, unions, civil rights, and equality. They are especially critical of the large salaries paid to high-ranking corporate executives. Democrats claim to be altruistic in their motives. The Republicans claim to favor business interests, working people, civil rights, and equal opportunity. Republicans are not bothered by high salaries of top corporate executives, and believe generally that people should be paid what they are entitled to either under the law or by contract.

The Federalists are considered to be a unique party that was short-lived and had no successor. The modern Democratic Party is considered to be the successor to the Republican-Democratic party that split in 1828. The modern Republican Party is considered to be the successor of the Whig party that was disbanded in 1858.

The Presidents belonged to Parties as follows, and the number after their names indicates their order in the line of Presidents. Of all the Presidents, only Washington was not a member of any political party.

- a. None: Washington (1)
- b. Federalist: J. Adams (2)
- c. Republican-Democrat: Jefferson (3), Madison (4), Monroe (5), J. Q. Adams (6)
- d. Democrat: Jackson (7), Van Buren (8), Polk (11), Pierce (14), Buchanan (15), A. Johnson (17), Cleveland (22 & 24), Wilson (28), F. D. Roosevelt (32), Truman (33), Kennedy (35), L. B. Johnson (36), Carter (39), Clinton (42), Obama (44)
- e. Whig: W. H. Harrison (9), Tyler (10), Taylor (12), Fillmore (13)
- f. Republican: Lincoln (16), Grant (18), Hayes (19), Garfield (20), Arthur (21), B. Harrison (23), McKinley (25), T. Roosevelt (26), Taft (27), Harding (29), Coolidge (30), Hoover (31), Eisenhower (34), Nixon (37), Ford (38), Reagan (40), G. H. W. Bush (41), G. W. Bush (43), D. J. Trump (45)

Three Presidents served either for a symbolic salary of \$1 per year, at no salary at all, or donated his entire salary to charity. Keep in mind that the President is the nominal leader of his Party, and the most effective leaders lead by example. Based on the above information on party affiliation, and the claimed objectives of each political party, which three Presidents served essentially for free? The letter following their name indicates their political party affiliation.

- a) Van Buren (D), Buchanan (D), and F. D. Roosevelt (D)
- b) Polk (D), Pierce (D), and L. B. Johnson (D)
- c) Wilson (D), Carter (D), and Clinton (D)
- d) J. Adams (F), Nixon (R), and Reagan (R)
- e) It is either a), b), or c).

Answer to Question 51

This is a trick question. None of the choices are correct. Washington (N) served for \$1 per year, Kennedy (D) served at no salary, and Hoover (R) collected his salary but donated all of it to charity. The taxpayers certainly got their money's worth out of Kennedy. The Party platforms and who they claim to advocate for has no bearing on the personal choice of whether or not to accept the official salary. The party affiliation is a very poor indicator in this case.