

**United States Government and
Politics
Political ideology Inventory**

React to each of the following statements on a separate sheet of paper. Use the following scale to record your reactions:

SA = strongly agree
A = agree
N = no opinion/do not understand
D = disagree
SD = strongly disagree

1. The USA should pass a Constitutional amendment that would make it illegal to discriminate against anyone in any situation on the basis of sexual orientation.
2. The national government should establish a federally funded medical program so that all persons regardless of means have access to medical care.
3. It should be legal and constitutional to say a prayer at the beginning of assemblies in public schools.
4. Persons should be allowed to join and serve in the military regardless of their sexual preference as long as their behavior meets strict military standards.
5. A person should be able to use and grow small quantities of marijuana in the privacy of his or her own home with no legal consequences
6. Persons receiving the death penalty should be limited in their number of appeals, and the death sentence should be carried out in a shorter time period than it is now.
7. The Supreme Court should reverse its decision on abortion and make it more difficult to have an abortion except in special cases such as rape and incest.
8. The USA should require one year of military service for all able-bodied people.
9. Parents should be able to send their children to any school they choose, and tax money should be used to support the schools that parents choose.
10. Police should be able to confiscate any materials that are deemed to be obscene or pornographic.
11. The federal government should be required to have a balanced budget that does not spend more than the money that comes in from taxes.

12. Laws should be passed that limit the sale of guns that are not intended for hunting or other legitimate sporting purposes.
13. Sex education should be in taught all public schools and all students should be required to take the class unless exempted by parents.
14. Student lockers should be searched on a random basis for illegal materials by police and/or school officials.
15. The President without permission from Congress should be able to use the armed forces in possible combat areas for as long as he/she deems necessary.
16. Laws should be passed to make it legal for public employees such as police, firemen, teachers, and garbage collectors to go on strike.
17. Public schools should be required to teach biblical creationism or intelligent design theory in all classes that teach evolution theory.
18. The USA should require reversible sterilization of all unmarried women on welfare if they have had more than two children while unmarried.
19. Birth control information, non-prescription contraceptive devices, and the morning after pill should be made available on high school campuses.
20. Evidence gathered by the police, even if an honest mistake was made in getting a warrant, should be used to help prosecute suspected criminals.
21. There should be occasional and random drug testing of all federal government employees.
22. Requirements for any military duty, including combat, should be based on physical, emotional, and intellectual abilities, not gender or sexual orientation.
23. The law should make private employers hire minorities if they are qualified because they have been victims of discrimination in the past.
24. Certain literature should be banned from city libraries if the librarian feels it is improper or too controversial.
25. It should be a person's right of free speech under the First Amendment to burn an American flag in protest if it does not endanger anyone.
26. The government should spend less on the military and more on education and the environment.

27. The United States should not trade with or help any nation that violates human rights or has a history of racial problems.
28. All persons planning to be married should have a mandatory test for STDs such as AIDS and gonorrhea before a marriage certificate can be issued.
29. There are too many lawsuits in the courts and the courts do not have the time to deal with more serious issues.
30. Nuclear power and nuclear generating stations should be banned.
31. The death penalty is clearly a form of cruel and unusual punishment and should be banned.
32. Sexual harassment of women in the workplace is a serious problem and should be prosecuted under the law.
33. The main function of prisons should be to rehabilitate criminals, not to punish them.
34. The states should abolish criminal penalties for victimless crimes such as gambling and prostitution.
35. The FBI and CIA should be able to wiretap the phones and read the mail of suspected terrorists.
36. The federal government must take strong steps to reverse global warming even if it means the loss of some jobs.
37. Most adults on welfare today are lazy and do not want to work.
38. Profanity and sexually oriented material on television should be stopped or penalized by the government.
39. The United States must stop the flow of immigrants, both legal and illegal, from Mexico and other Latin American countries.
40. High school students should have the right to hear speakers from the Gay and Lesbian Alliance without interference from school administrators.

SCORING THE SURVEY

Scoring is done on the following scale: **+4 +2 0 2 -4**

For questions: 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 24, 28, 29, 35, 37, 38, 39:

SA = +4, A=+2. N = 0, D = -2, .SD = -4

For questions: 1, 2, 4, 5, 12, 13, 16, 19, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 40

SA = -4, A = -2, N = 0, D =+2, SD = +4

A score of +160 would indicate extreme conservatism and a score of -160 would be extreme liberalism. Scores can thus be grouped on a bell curve around a midline of 0.

Questions can also be broken down into topic categories:

Civil Liberties: 1, 3, 5, 10, 14, 20, 21, 24, 25, 29, 35, 38, .40

Domestic Programs: 2, 8, 13, 17, 18, 23, 39

Social Issues: 4, 7, 9, 12, 16, 19, 22, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 37

Capital Punishment: 6, 31

Budget/taxes: 11, 26

Separation of Powers: 15

Environment: 30, 36

While this survey is done correctly in regards to: (1) the balance of leaning liberal vs. leaning conservative questions, 20 of each, (2) the inclusion of five possible responses allowing for the expression of intensity of reactions, and (3) the mechanics and mathematics of scoring, it has **two flaws**. First, the survey is weighted with a number of statements that are of high interest to teens and younger people. This is not a fatal flaw but it does not represent the broader issues of America. Second, there are disproportionate numbers of civil liberties statements and social issues statements. This does skew the responses because younger people tend to be more liberal on these issues.

20-Point Extra Credit Opportunity!

There is a wide range of political ideology quizzes available on the web. Not all are reliable. Some are poorly written. Others have an agenda. Beware of this while you have fun!

Step 1.

Use the links below to access at least two of the following ideological surveys.

The Pew Research Center - See where you fit on their typology scale.

<http://typology.people-press.org/typology/>

The Political Compass - Find out where you belong on the liberal/conservative, authoritarian/libertarian spectrum.

<http://www.politicalcompass.org/test>

Idealog - Find out where you belong on the liberal/conservative, authoritarian/libertarian spectrum. Take the self-test.

<http://66.241.213.91/idealog.asp?ClassID=>

Party Matchmaking Quiz - Register what you would do if you were in charge and see which party you match with. This site is run by supporters of having a third party.

<http://www.3pc.net/matchmaker/quiz.html>

Moral Politics Quiz - Find out where you stand on the axes of moral rules and moral order.

<http://www.moral-politics.com/xpolitics.aspx?menu=Home>

Libertarian Purity Test - Find out how libertarian you are.

<http://www.bcaplan.com/cgi-bin/purity.cgi>

The Political Quiz Show - Find out if your views are more in line with politicians ranging from Jesse Jackson to Ronald Reagan

<http://www.madrabbit.net/webrabbit/quizshow.html>

Political Ideology Selector

<http://www.selectsmart.com/plus/select.php?url=ideology>

The World's Smallest Political Quiz - 10 questions and you are done.

<http://www.theadvocates.org/quiz.html>

Political Affiliation Survey - sponsored by the Progressive Rockers.com

<http://www.progressiverockers.com/survey.shtml>

Step 2.

Take any two of the surveys. Record your results by writing them down or printing them out.

Step 3.

If possible, encourage your family members to take the online surveys. Record their results.

Step 4.

Write a two-to-three page paper covering some of the following questions. You don't have to address all the questions; choose the ones that are interesting for your particular results. This paper should be typed (double-spaced, Times 12-font, one-inch margins.)

- Do the results of the three surveys correlate with each other?
 - How are they different?
 - How can you explain the differences?
 - Were you surprised by the results? Did the results match where you thought you were? Did they match whom you supported in the 2004 election?
 - What issues were the most important ones to you? If the surveys had only been composed of those questions, would the results have been different for you?
 - How can you apply the results of these tests to what you feel the purpose of government should be?
 - What do you think the terms liberal and conservative really mean in today's political climate?
 - How do your results correlate with your family's results? Does this surprise you?
 - Does the material in Edwards, Chapter Six, correspond to your personal results?
- Now that you have read about the factors that influence public opinion do those factors apply to you? What does and what doesn't?
- Which survey do you think was the most valid and why?