



From Minnesota Public Radio's Sound Learning (www.soundlearning.org)

Sound Learning Feature for May 2004

From *Marketplace* (www.marketplace.org)

This month we revisit some special *Marketplace* reports on money and politics. Articles in this feature examine the evolution of political marketing and image-making; the role of money in elections, how donors became so essential, and how they deal with critics; and the challenging job of fundraisers.

The articles in this month's feature are of particular interest to teachers and students of American history, political science, and civics.

Segment 1: "Political Polling: From Policy Gauge to Marketing Tool"

Segment 2: "A Peek into the Minds of Political Donors"

Segment 3: "A Day in the Life of Political Fundraisers"

In the following pages, find instructional ideas and study guides intended to aid in the teaching of:

- Listening comprehension.
- Critical thinking.
- Research and writing challenges.
- Key terms and topics.



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Questions are based on the feature "Whose Democracy is it?" (<http://marketplace.publicradio.org/features/prx/>), from Minnesota Public Radio's *Marketplace* Web site, <http://www.marketplace.org>. Sound Learning is a production of Minnesota Public Radio.



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Segment 1: Political Polling: From Policy Gauge to Marketing Tool

Listen: http://www.marketplace.org/play/audio.php?media=/2003/09/prx_henn

Listening Comprehension Questions

- 1) When Richard Nixon ran for president, what did he do that had never been done before? How did he "package" himself as a presidential candidate?
- 2) How did Abraham Lincoln's campaign try to make him more attractive when he ran for president in 1860?
- 3) According to the story, how has the marketing of presidential candidates changed since Nixon ran for president in 1968 and 1972?

Critical Thinking Questions

- 1) How is promoting political candidates different from promoting products?
- 2) Do you think the "packaging" of political candidates helps or hurts the process of democracy in America? Why?
- 3) Was Richard Nixon successful in his efforts to present himself as a likeable candidate? Why or why not?

Research Challenges

- 1) Find a television, print, or radio advertisement for someone who is currently running for an elected office. How has this candidate been "packaged?" What words or pictures have been used to create the candidate's image? Based on the advertisement, would you want to vote for this person? Why or why not?
- 2) Invent a fictional political candidate and brainstorm ways that you could create an appealing image for that person. Then create an advertisement for that candidate in any format you'd like (radio, print, television).



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(Segment 1, continued)

3) Read or watch Richard Nixon's "Checkers" speech. In what ways does this speech reflect an attempt on Nixon's part to package himself in a certain way?

Find Richard Nixon's "Checkers" speech at <http://www.watergate.info/nixon/checkers-speech.shtml>

Key Terms and Topics

- Pollster
- Deconstruct
- Inordinate
- Charismatic
- Pragmatic
- Disdain
- Artifice
- Candid
- Evoke
- Discredit



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Segment 2: A Peek into the Minds of Political Donors

Listen: http://www.marketplace.org/play/audio.php?media=/2003/09/prx_zebble

Listening Comprehension Questions

- 1) How much money is President Bush's campaign expected to raise this year?
- 2) Why does Mary Alice McClarty contribute to political campaigns?
- 3) What two things does Larry Noble of the Center for Responsive Politics urge citizens to do in order to make elections more democratic?

Critical Thinking Questions

- 1) Why does Bill Silvera object to those who don't donate money to political campaigns?
- 2) How does Hollywood's version of politics differ from actual politics when it comes to financial contributions?
- 3) Some people argue that fundraising hinders democracy in America, while others say that it involves more people in the democratic process. Which argument do you find more convincing and why?

Research Challenges

- 1) Find out what you can about the role of political action committees and "soft money" in American elections. What debates surround their presence?
- 2) Interview an adult you know and ask them why they do or do not contribute money to political campaigns.

Key Terms and Topics

- Fundraiser
- Idealistic
- Freshman
- Soft Money
- GOP
- Ideals
- Senator
- Egalitarian
- Gripe
- Partisan
- Disclosure
- Cement
- Conviction



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Segment 3: A Day in the Life of Political Fundraisers

Listen: http://www.marketplace.org/play/audio.php?media=/2003/09/prx_scott

Listening Comprehension Questions

- 1) What advantages can Chris Heinz draw upon during his campaign for John Kerry?
- 2) What is the maximum dollar amount that a person can contribute to a candidate before the primary elections?
- 3) What percentage of Americans give more than \$1,000 to political campaigns.
- 4) How much will the federal government give a presidential candidate after the major parties choose their nominees?

Critical Thinking Questions

- 1) How can people continue raise money for a political campaign after they have donated as much as they are allowed to donate?
- 2) What criticisms might people have about the process of political fundraising in America?

Research Challenges

Visit the Web site of a political campaign that is currently underway. What are the different ways that officials in the campaign are asking volunteers to support the candidate?

Key Terms and Topics

- Makeshift
- Pro bono
- Evangelical
- Associates
- Gubernatorial
- Achilles' Heel
- Nominee



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Answer Key **(page 1 of 4)**

Segment 1: Political Polling: From Policy Gauge to Marketing Tool **Listening Comprehension Questions**

- 1) *He worked with experts who helped him develop a "personality" that they thought would help him win the election. They tried to make him seem popular and likeable.*
- 2) *Photographs of him were airbrushed to make him look more attractive.*
- 3) *Much of the process has remained the same. However, attention has turned to making the candidates' opponents look as unattractive as possible.*

Critical Thinking Questions

1) *Since candidates are people, they change over time in ways that many products do not. The goal of marketing candidates is to increase their chances of winning an election; the goal of marketing products is to increase sales and profits. It is easier to discredit people than products.*

2) *Helps: Enables voters to relate more easily to a candidate in order to determine whether their views are compatible with the candidate's views.*

Hurts: Distorts the true natures of candidates running for office, encourages "flip flopping" on issues, decreases the substance of political messages while increasing their flashiness.

3) *Yes and no. He used print and television in new ways, responding to the research provided to him by pollsters about what the public wanted in a president. On the other hand, he wasn't comfortable in the "casual" outfits he was asked to wear, and his obvious discomfort made voters realize that he was pretending to be something he wasn't.*

Key Terms and Topics

Pollster — Someone who collects data on public opinion, often to advise candidates

Deconstruct — To take apart

Inordinate — Unnecessarily excessive; unreasonable



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Charismatic — Charming; having a leadership style that encourages loyalty

Pragmatic — Practical, useful

Disdain — To look upon something with scorn or intense dislike

Artifice — Something clever but artificial

Candid — Frank and open; honest

Evoke — To bring out

Discredit — To cause disbelief in the accuracy or authority of something

Segment 2: A Peek into the Minds of Political Donors

Listening Comprehension Questions

1) \$200 Million.

2) She wants to counteract the large donations given by organizations, wealthy individuals, and corporations.

3) He wants citizens to vote and to watch elected officials.

Critical Thinking Questions

1) They often have the ability to do so and they complain about public policy without having attempted to use their money to influence it.

2) Hollywood portrays money as a source of corruption in politics, suggesting that our elected officials have often sold their votes to those who can pay for them. In reality, however, there is no alternative to political fundraising; elections cannot happen without money.

3) Hinders democracy: Only those with wealth have a say in our government

Involves more people: Limits on donations from individuals ensure that nobody's "say" is outrageously more significant; even small donations can make a difference when money is pooled.



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Key Terms and Topics

Fundraiser — Someone who raises money for a candidate or a cause

GOP — Stands for "Grand Old Party," another name for the Republican party

Gripe — (as a noun) A complaint

Cement — (as a verb) To make something united or solid

Idealistic — Tending to see things as they should be, not necessarily as they are

Ideals — Standards or models of excellence

Partisan — Loyal to one party (political or otherwise)

Conviction — A strong belief

Freshman Senator — A senator who is serving his or her first term in office

Disclosure — The act of exposing something to view, putting something in the open

Soft Money — Money contributed to political parties and not individual campaigns

Egalitarian — Committed to social, political, or economic equality for all people

Segment 3: A Day in the Life of Political Fundraisers

Listening Comprehension Questions

- 1) *He is well-connected, rich, and is the son and stepson of U.S. Senators.*
- 2) *\$2000*
- 3) *Less than .1%*
- 4) *\$74 million*

Critical Thinking Questions

- 1) *They can urge their friends, relatives, and other people they know to donate money.*
- 2) *Several choices: Only a small percentage of people donate money, but the politicians who they help elect govern everyone. Less wealthy people don't have as many opportunities to participate in politics.*



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Whose Democracy is it?

Examining the role
money plays in the
political process



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Key Terms and Topics

Makeshift — *Thrown together for the sake of convenience*

Pro bono — *(Latin for "for the good") Describes a service performed at no charge*

Evangelical — *In a general sense, describes someone with crusading zeal*

Associates — *(as a noun) Coworkers, acquaintances, or companions*

Gubernatorial — *Of or relating to a governor of a state*

Achilles' Heel — *A weak spot or vulnerable point*

Nominee — *Someone who has been nominated for an office, duty, or position*



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