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[**https://tinyurl.com/3rdpartyspan**](https://tinyurl.com/3rdpartyspan)

Username: students Password: C-SPANCLASSROOM



***Third Party Debate***

1. First, define these terms and phrases before reading the background article or using the videos from C-SPAN Classroom Deliberations. Try searching Google or a dictionary for a definition.
2. Finally, use these words in your deliberations and writing activities after you understand all sides of the issue.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Term | Definition  |
| Third Party |  |
| Presidential Debates |  |
| Commission on Presidential Debates |  |
| Electoral College |  |
| Two-Party System |  |
| Independent candidates |  |
| Party conventions |  |



**Background Article Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you read the article, “[**No, a Debate Stage Isn’t a Magical Springboard for Minor Parties**](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/06/04/upshot/no-a-debate-stage-isnt-a-magical-springboard-for-minor-parties.html?_r=1)**”**

1. What are some of the obstacles the article identifies to third party viability?

2. According to the article, why are the debates overrated?

3. Which event during the campaign is deemed as having greater consequence to the outcome of the race? Why?



**Background Article Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the questions as you read the article, “[**TV Networks Should Open Up the Presidential Debates**](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeff-cohen/tv-networks-should-open-u_b_11526578.html?utm_hp_ref=presidential-debates)**.”**

1. According to Jeff Cohen, how did the Commission on Presidential Debates (CPD) end up managing presidential debates, rather than the League of Women Voters? Who governs the CPD and what is its stated purpose?

2. Describe the only instance since 1980 that the CPD has allowed a third party candidate into a presidential debate.

3. What arguments does the author make for the networks taking back control of the presidential debate process from the CPD and allowing independent candidates to debate?

4. What standard does the author advocate for permitting candidates into televised presidential debates, and why?



**Background Video Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you watch the video, “[**The Significance of Presidential Debates**](https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?4158)**.”**

1. According to Mr. McCurry, why is the number of undecided voters so small by the time of the presidential debates?

2. Describe the ways in which presidential debates are significant and how they affect the election process.

3. Do you think the presidential debates play an important role during the election process? What changes would you implement to make them more significant?



**Background Video Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you watch the video, “[**Role & History of Third Parties in the U.S.**](https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?5757)**”**

1. What are some of the obstacles the article identifies to third party viability?

2. According to the article, why are the debates overrated?

3. Which event during the campaign is deemed as having greater consequence to the outcome of the race? Why?



***For Current Criteria* Video Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you watch the videos, “[**Purpose of** **Criteria for Presidential Debates**](https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?5843)**,”** and “[**Justification of Criteria for Presidential Debates**](https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?5846).”

1. Describe the purpose of the third party criteria for presidential debates according to CPD Co-Chair Frank Fahrenkopf.

2. What justification does the CPD give for these criteria?



***For Current Criteria* Video Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you watch the video, “[**Third Party Excluded From Presidential Debate**](https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?5842)**”**

1. Describe the justification for excluding third party candidates from the 1996 presidential debates.

2. What are the criteria for participation in presidential debates set forth by the CPD?

3. According to the CPD, what are invalid reasons for inclusion in the debates?



***For Current Criteria* Video Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you watch the video, “[**Janet Brown on Candidate Qualification Criteria.**](https://www.c-span.org/video/?c4619544/third-parties-presidential-debates)**”**

1. What does the Commission on Presidential Debates base the 15% threshold for candidate participation in Presidential Debates on?
2. Janet Brown mentions the fact that the debates take place only a few weeks prior to the general election. What role do you think timing plays in the criteria regarding participation in the Presidential Debates?



***For Greater Participation* Video Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you watch the video, “[**Third Party and Independent Candidates and Presidential Debates**](https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?4162)**.”**

1. What evidence is there that the American public is ready for a third party/independent candidate?

2. What are the rules for participation in a general election presidential debate?

3. Explain how these rules present challenges for independent candidates.



***For Greater Participation* Video Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you watch the video, “[**Polling Practices for Debate Qualification.**](https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?5839)**”**

1. What is Gov. Johnson’s criticism of polling practices?

2. Explain his lawsuit against the CPD.



***For Greater Participation* Video Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you watch the video, “[**Former Gov. of MN Jesse Ventura on Presidential Debate Rules**](https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?5840)**.”**

1. Why does Gov. Ventura criticize the rules regarding participation in presidential debates by third parties?

2. What is his criticism regarding the reliance on polls to determine whether a nominee can participate?

3. What is Gov. Ventura’s opinion of the Commission on Presidential Debates?



***For Greater Participation* Video Questions**

***Should Third Party Candidates Be Allowed Greater Participation in Presidential Debates?***

Answer the following questions as you watch the video, “[**Impact of Debates for Ross Perot**](https://www.c-span.org/classroom/document/?5841)**.”**

1. What was George H.W. Bush’s view of presidential debates when he ran for President? How was that reflected in his debate performance against Bill Clinton and Ross Perot in 1992?

2. Describe the impact for Ross Perot in participating in the 1992 presidential debates.

3. Compare Ross Perot’s performance as a candidate in the 1992 and 1996 elections. Do you believe there was a causal link between Perot’s success and his participation (or lack thereof) in the presidential debates?