

Chapter 10

Multiple Choice/Fill in the Blank

3. Which of these provides the least amount of coverage of state politics?

- a. minority newspapers
- b. local television news
- c. major city newspapers
- d. CalSpan cable television

5. Of these, which group of people pays closest attention to politics?

- a. Young adults aged 18-29
- b. Latinos
- c. Tea Party activists
- d. Those with a high school diploma (or fewer years of education)

15. Some people stop voting for less-recognizable, lower-level offices as they work their way towards the end of ballots. This phenomenon is called:

- a. low turnout
- b. apathy
- c. roll-off
- d. polarization

Type: F

24. One of the largest and most influential public employee associations with ties to Democrats in California is _____.

- a. Varies. The California Teachers' Association (CTA) is discussed in the book; the California Correctional Peace Officers Association (CCPOA) is also mentioned. Other public employee unions would also be appropriate but were not explicitly mentioned in the book, such as SEIUCA (Service Employees International Union).

Type: F

25. One of the largest and most influential business associations with ties to Republicans in California is _____.

- a. Varies. Two were explicitly discussed or mentioned in the book: the California Chamber of Commerce (CalChamber), and also the California Association of Realtors (CAR). Others could be permissible.

26. Businesses and employers are represented through associations that primarily:

- a. organize rallies and demonstrations to bring attention to their causes
- b. hire lobbyists to advocate for their causes, and contribute to campaigns of sympathetic candidates
- c. put people in contact with their representatives through "meet and greets"
- d. organize volunteers to support their causes

31. In what kind of activities do lobbyists or special interest "advocates" engage?

- a. mostly illegal bribes

- b. testifying about bills in committee; “educating” lawmakers about the effects of bills
- c. participating in rallies and demonstrations consumes most of their time
- d. recruiting individuals or businesses for membership in interest groups

33. The political power of special interests is largely derived from what they can provide to decision makers, principally in the form of money, electoral support (supporters who will vote for them), and _____.

- a. alcohol
- b. information
- c. campaign volunteers
- d. paid vacations

35. In November 2014, what percentage of voters in the 18- to 24-year old age group cast a ballot?

- a. fewer than 10 percent
- b. about 20 percent
- c. about 50 percent
- d. about 2/3 (66.6 percent)

37. What is true of California’s electorate—i.e. those who vote?

- a. They are an “exclusive, self-selected group” that does not broadly represent all eligible voters.
- b. They are a group that broadly represents all Californians during presidential election years, but not during off-year elections.
- c. It is a group that broadly represents all Californians in every election.
- d. Over time the electorate has been growing steadily, meaning that a greater percentage of people vote in elections today than 10, 20, or 30 years ago.

Type: F

39. To provide lawmakers with the information they may need in order to write or reshape bills, special interest groups hire professional _____ who can provide targeted information, persuasively.

- a. Lobbyists (or advocates)

40. Which business sector spends the most on lobbying in California?

- a. Technology (high-tech manufacturing)
- b. Entertainment (film, t.v.)
- c. Energy (Oil and gas, electric utilities)
- d. Realty (property sales and management)

41. Consistently, _____ tend to be overrepresented in California’s electorate, whereas _____ tend to be underrepresented.

- a. Blacks; Whites
- b. Hispanics/Latinos; Whites
- c. Asians; Whites
- d. Whites; Hispanics/Latinos

44. Lobbyists who advocate for special interest groups are known collectively as:
- the Infotainers
 - the Third House
 - the Consolidators
 - the Media Mavericks

Essay or Short Answer Questions

Type: E

2. What kinds of media sources do Californians rely on for political information?
- Large newspaper operations, both on-line and in print; minority newspapers and publications; television news coverage; Internet sites and blogs; radio programs; Facebook and social media communication; comedy shows (for national news more than California news). (CalSpan, cable coverage, is available but few people rely on it.)

Type: E

4. What are the drawbacks of social networking for political purposes?
- Varies. Tweeted or texted information tends to be shallow and lacking context; misinformation can spread like wildfire without the ability to retract it fully; public authorities tend to ‘script’ their appearances because their gaffes could be broadcast on sites such as YouTube.

Type: E

6. Generally speaking, what kinds of people pay attention to what’s going on in government?
- The strongest relationships between attention to politics and demographic characteristics are found when observing age, education, and income: each variable has a positive relationship with attentiveness to politics. The older, more highly-educated, and well-off a person is, the more likely it is that he or she will pay closer attention to politics. In addition, political interest influences attentiveness to politics, whereby those with more interest will pay closer attention, and feeling as if one can make a difference is also associated with information-seeking and following politics. Voters are more likely to pay attention to politics as well.

Type: E

7. Describe three forms of political or civic participation other than voting.
- Varies. Activities mentioned in the book range from those requiring low levels of activity to those requiring great investments of personal resources. Liking or disliking political statements on a Facebook page or a political group take little energy but are legitimate forms of political participation, as is following a political candidate or figure on Twitter, or joining a social networking group dedicated to politics or a social issue. Others: discussing politics with others; displaying a campaign-related or political yard sign, sticker, or T-shirt; discussing politics with others; encouraging others or trying to influence how others vote; signing petitions; contacting a public official via phone or email; boycotting a product for a political or social reason; attending a public meeting; attending a rally, demonstration, or (public) speech; working with a group to address a local problem; working for a campaign; working with a group to address a local problem; donating to a campaign; becoming an active party member or officer in a party organization; working for a campaign; becoming a candidate for office.

Type: E

8. What factors are positively associated with civic and political participation?

a. Income, age, home ownership, length of residence, and education. (Race/ethnicity is also associated with participation in that whites participate at higher rates than Hispanics/Latinos and other minority ethnic groups, though it is not a “positive relationship” per se).

Type: E

9. What are some of the demographic (personal background) variables that have been associated with lower levels of political participation?

a. Varies. Age: older persons are more likely to participate than younger ones. Income: the higher the income, the higher the participation generally. Education: the higher the education level, the more likely one is to participate politically. Race/Ethnicity: Whites are most likely to participate, whereas Latino and Asian populations have some of the lowest rates of political participation among major racial/ethnic groups in the state. Latinos and Asian Americans are also less inclined to discuss politics, which is also associated with lower political participation. Whether a person was born in the U.S. (nativity) is a big factor; those born outside the U.S. are less to participate.

Type: E

11. Why don't people participate in politics? What variables are associated with non-participation?

a. Varies. Poverty and lack of education can produce a reduced skill set, including language deficits, a smaller knowledge base, a lower sense of efficacy, fewer chances to be contacted or mobilized, and/or less disposable time to participate in activities. These disparities also surface among ethnic/racial groupings. Those who feel as if they will never be heard will hardly waste their time trying to voice their opinions, and continuing disengagement leads to even greater disparities in skills and resources apportioned to them, and high levels of frustration and political apathy.

Type: E

12. Is there any evidence that the people who vote represent fairly those who do not vote?

a. As the studies about interest in politics and political participation generally show, those who vote tend to be somewhat different than those who do not, both in demographic terms and also in how they think about government. On the whole, regular voters tend to be older, white, native born, and more conservative; those who vote tend to be more highly educated and have higher interest in politics. According to one study cited in the text (PPIC), likely voters are less willing to pay higher taxes for more services, while those who are not registered to vote are far more willing to pay higher taxes for more services.

Type: E

13. What demographic variables or characteristics are associated with not registering to vote?

a. Renter (vs. homeowner) status; high school diploma or less education; racial or ethnic minority; having been born outside the U.S.

Type: E

14. Name some of the variables associated with turning out to vote.

a. Having disposable time; the difficulty (or ease) of registration requirements; timing of

elections; perceived importance of a given election; political interest and beliefs about government; living in a pro-voting culture; age; nativity; educational attainment (education); race/ethnicity; homeowner status; income.

Type: E

16. What persons over the age of 18 are not allowed to vote in California?

a. Noncitizens cannot vote, including permanent residents and undocumented immigrants. Also, those in prison or on parole cannot vote.

Type: E

21. Briefly explain how age, education level, home ownership, nativity, and income are related to voter turnout rates.

a. Age: younger residents are less likely to vote. Education: higher education levels translate into higher turnout. Home ownership and longer lengths of residency translate into higher turnout. Nativity: native-born persons are likelier to turn out than foreign-born citizens. Income: higher-income voters are more likely to vote. In all of these ways, the “haves” tend to out-shout and out-vote the “have-nots” in elections.

23. What is a special interest group?

a. An organized group that makes its case to government about its “special” or specific issue. Can also be a vague reference to any group whose members are affected by public policy, share the same concerns, want something from government, and are willing to fight for it.

Type: E

27. How do large membership organizations such as the CTA (California Teachers Association) try to influence politics?

a. Large organizations have the power of many potential voters on their side. They mobilize members of the organization and the (sympathetic) public to contact their representatives through mail, phone, or email, and hold demonstrations or rallies to mobilize public opinion and bring attention to their causes. Their members donate to campaigns and sponsor/endorse/contribute to initiative campaigns, and sometimes provide help with campaigns. Through their lobbyists they help write bills, testify before legislative committees, and try to influence pending or existing legislation through amendments (changes).

Type: E

28. What kinds of special interests are “privileged” in politics, and who loses?

a. Organizations, individuals, and businesses with resources have distinct advantages over those that are resource-poor and/or are unorganized. Resources would include: size, because groups with large numbers of potential voters matter greatly; the ability to mobilize or influence public opinion; money to get out one’s message or donate to campaigns; status as an important community member or economic force in a community (large employers).

Type: E

29. In what kind of activities do professional lobbyists engage?

a. A lobbyist’s main job is to “educate” legislators and their staff about the negative or positive effects of pending legislation (or existing law) on their clients; they research and write (draft)

client-friendly legislation; they appear as witnesses to testify about bills in committee; they buy expensive tickets to legislators' fundraisers.

Type: E

30. Why are lobbyists in Sacramento collectively known as “the third house”?

a. Varies. Lobbyists are crucial players in the lawmaking process, providing critical information to legislators and their staff about bills, or proposed changes to state laws that will affect their clients. These so-called “educators” or “information peddlers” help legislators and their staff understand the potential impacts of laws, though they will always try to frame information in ways that help their clients. They provide assistance with drafting bills and amending legislation; they testify in committee; they help legislators by building coalitions of groups in support or in opposition to proposed legislation.

Type: E

32. Name some of the ways in which special interests try to influence politics.

a. Varies. Hire lobbyists. Mobilize members to vote or contact their representatives. Influence or change public opinion. Donate to campaigns. Run an independent campaign. Support legislators by attending their fundraisers. Testify before legislative committees about bills.

Type: E

34. Suppose you are a successful homebuilder with many employees, and like other builders, your company will soon face a burdensome new regulation: in order to help keep the air and water clean, construction companies will now be required to capture or minimize the airborne dust and also contaminated run-off from construction projects (such as that created by rains). Like your peers (who are also represented through a strong and well-funded builder's association), you would like to avoid this costly new requirement. You believe it will cause you to lay off employees to cover these new costs. How might you try to go about trying to undo what has already become law?

a. Although the policy making process is complicated and involves many factors that would influence the final shape of a law and its chances for passage, this question is asking students to consider how they can have an impact on the political system, and specifically, how they can use group resources to change an existing law. Here, several factors would be important to consider: the “special interest” is represented by a professional association that is well-funded, and the builder has “many employees.” One approach might be to sponsor an initiative that would change the requirements for builders, and this would involve the association's involvement in sponsoring a petition drive as well as a massive public campaign to influence public opinion and the final vote on a ballot initiative. The builder's professional association might also consider a referendum on the law, which would also involve a petition drive and a subsequent campaign.

The builder might also try to convince legislators to change the law or do away with it. The builder might try to use his or her status as an important employer to get a meeting with legislators and staff members to convince them that this law should be overturned or amended. With others, namely by working with the association, the builder would have a better chance of having an impact on the legislature. Thus, the association's lobbyists might write a new law that either overturns the previous one, or work with a legislator to write an amendment to the law that will soften the impacts on the builder. They would engage in direct lobbying with members of the legislature and their staff, and testify before legislative committees. (Note that the question

prompts students to consider HOW they would approach this task, but some students might become distracted with working out a solution to the issue mentioned; this would be off-topic.) To create the appearance of widespread support for changing or overturning the law, the lobbyist might work to create an “Astroturf campaign” which prompts members of the business community to call, write, and threaten to withhold campaign contributions to those who do not support the builders’ cause.

In this case, rallying or demonstrating would probably not be an effective strategy, because the general public would be unlikely to respond to this tactic, and builders themselves are not likely to participate. Public opinion may not be on the builders’ side, so they might try to shape public opinion with a “public education campaign” about the negative effects on employment or housing prices, for example, but this would require significant resources that might not be successful ultimately. (An insightful student might also consider that the builder’s professional association was initially trumped by stronger forces (because the law passed, and presumably they must have objected to the law and worked against its passage); this might be worked into an answer that considers the most effective legislative strategy).

True or False Questions

1. When asked in public opinion polls, most Californians claim that they are well-informed about state politics.
 - a. True
 - b. False

10. People who are highly educated, have higher income, and are older, tend to be heavy political news consumers, and also tend to be politically active.
 - a. True
 - b. False

10. People who disengage from politics tend to be high-income wage earners who have better things to do with their time than try to influence politicians and policy decisions.
 - a. True
 - b. False

17. If a person lives and works in an environment where politics and political affairs are rarely discussed, chances are, that person will not be a regular voter.
 - a. True
 - b. False

18. Many variables associated with non-voting are also associated with immigrant status.
 - a. True
 - b. False

19. Whites are approximately 40 percent of California residents, but close to two-thirds of all voters.
 - a. True
 - b. False

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20. Voters, residents, and citizens are essentially the same groups of people.

- a. True
- b. False

22. Those who vote in an Assembly district election are a different group of people than those who vote in initiative elections.

- a. True
- b. False

36. In off-year elections (non-presidential election years), fewer than half of those eligible to vote typically turn out to vote.

- a. True
- b. False

38. Living and interacting often with others who talk about politics and who value the act of voting is a strong predictor of whether a person will vote or not.

- a. True
- b. False

42. Almost no Californians aged 18 to 34 get their news from a printed newspaper.

- a. True
- b. False

43. In California, those in prison or on parole are not eligible to vote.

- a. True
- b. False