Warmup



To what extent do interest groups advance or harm democracy?

A.	An interest group is defined as any group that seeks to influence public policy. This definition includes a wide range of groups operating at all levels of our political system and society. Identify two examples of interest groups operating in your school and community and what each group hopes to achieve.					
В.	Think about what you know about interest groups and their activities. Brainstorm a list of positive and negative terms or ideas that you connect with these groups.					
	Positive Aspects of Interest Groups					
	Negative Aspects of Interest Groups					
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_						
C.	The First Amendment to the Constitution guarantees the individual right to "assemble," or to join with others to pursue a common goal. It is this principle that underlies the formation of interest groups in our society. Why do you think that this right was considered so important to the Framers?					

Name:

Exploration

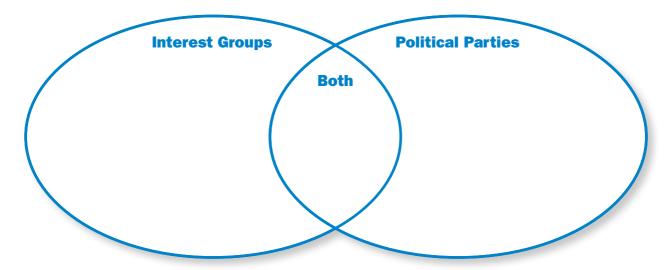
I. The Nature of Interest Groups

Find Out

A. What is an interest group? Use your print or online textbook or other sources to identify which of the following are interest groups, and which are not.

	Is It an Interest Group?	Why or Why Not?
Local police department		
"Neighborhood Watch" Anti-Crime Group		
Local association of business leaders		
Community group for the registration of voters		
Republican Caucus in the legislature		

B. In some respects, interest groups have a very similar role in our political system to political parties. Yet there are key differences between the two. Use your print or online textbook or other sources to compare and contrast interest groups and political parties in our political system.



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C. Interest groups serve valuable functions, yet they are also subject to much criticism. Use your print or online textbook to identify and describe some of the valuable functions and common criticisms of interest groups.

Interest Groups—Good or Bad?				
	Valuable Functions	Common Criticisms		
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•		•		
•		•		
•		•		
•		•		

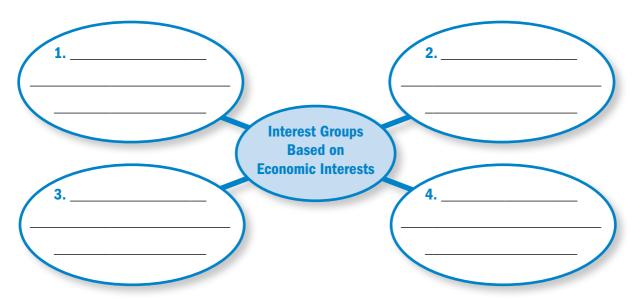
⇔ What Do You Think?

D.	Do the benefits	of having interest	groups in our system	outweigh the drawbacks?	Explain.

II. Types of Interest Groups

Find Out

A. The most common type of interest group is based on economic interests. Using your print or online textbook or other sources, identify and briefly describe the major categories of these groups in the concept web below.



В.	Interest groups can be categorized in several other ways, as well. Use your print or online textbook or other resources to identify and describe some other types of interest groups.
	1
	2

			_
4			

C.	Is there a category of interest group that you think is especially likely to have a positive
	or negative impact on the political system? Explain your answer.

III. Interest Groups at Work

Find Out

A. Interest groups are defined by their efforts to influence government policy. Use your print or online textbook or other sources to describe how interest groups attempt to influence policy directly in each branch of government.

How Interest Grou	How Interest Groups Apply Direct Pressure on Government					
Legislative Branch	Executive Branch	Judicial Branch				

CHAPTER 9	To what extent do interest groups advance
	or harm democracy?

В.	In addition to seeking to influence policy directly, interest groups apply pressure on
	the policy-making process in indirect ways. Use your print or online textbook or other
	sources to identify three ways in which interest groups seek to apply indirect pressure.
	1
	2
	3
W	hat Do You Think?
C.	In your opinion, does the indirect application of pressure on government by interest groups advance democracy? Explain your answer.

Name: _

Apply What You've Learned Activity

Interest groups are at work at all levels of our society—in our communities and in our nation's capital. Use this worksheet to answer the Apply What You've Learned questions in your print or online textbook. Use the table below to record the responses to the following questions:

What are the goals of the interest groups you are studying?	
How does each group pursue its goals?	
Do you think these groups are effective in their attempts to shape policy?	
A. What do you think are the key feat	cures in making an interest group effective?
B. Do you think a group can be effecthe the population? Explain your answ	tive if it does not have the support of the majority of ver.

Name:	_
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Essay



To what extent do interest groups advance or harm democracy?

Since the country was created, observers have worried about the influence of interest groups on the democratic process. As you consider the quotations below, think about the role of interest groups in our society and how they can both promote and interfere with the democratic process.

By a faction [interest group], I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated [made active] by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adversed to the rights of the other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate [combined] interests of the community.

- James Madison, The Federalist No. 10

In no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used, or more unsparingly applied to a multitude of different objects, than in America.

> — Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America

Mhat Do You Think?

What is your opinion? Write a response to the Essential Question, **To what extent do interest groups advance or harm democracy?** Consider your thoughts on the quotations above, the Guiding Questions in your textbook, and the activities you have done in your Journal. See page 219 for a rubric on writing an Essential Question essay.



🗫 Don't Forget

Your answer to this question will help you think about the Unit 2 Essential Question: In what ways should people participate in public affairs?