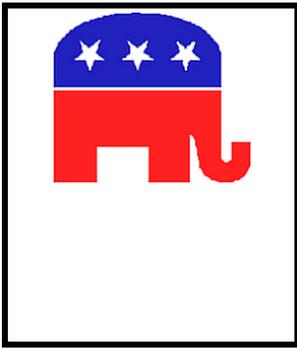


Are You Conservative or Liberal?



Directions: Below you will find a table containing many of the nation’s biggest issues. You will also find what Conservatives and Liberals **GENERALLY** believe when it comes to such issues.

Before you start, read below to find out about conservatives and liberals overall views...

LIBERALS – **Generally** believe in governmental action to achieve equal opportunity and equality for all, and that it is the duty of the government to reduce community issues and to protect civil liberties and individual and human rights. Also believe the role of the government should be to guarantee that no one is in need.

Liberal policies **generally** emphasize the need for the government to solve people's problems.

Liberals are often referred to as being on the **LEFT** when put into a political spectrum.

Democrats are often viewed as more liberal.

CONSERVATIVES – **Generally** believe in personal responsibility, limited government, free markets, individual liberty, traditional American values and a strong national defense. Also believe the role of government should be to provide people the freedom necessary to pursue their own goals.

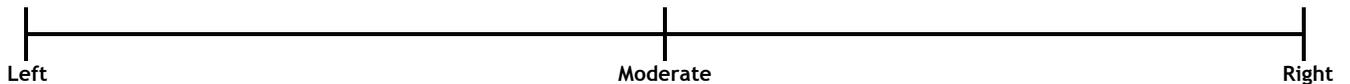
Conservative policies **generally** emphasize empowerment of the individual to solve problems.

Conservatives are often referred to as being on the **RIGHT** when put into a political spectrum.

Republicans are often viewed as more conservative.

Political Spectrum

A political spectrum is a way of modeling different political positions by placing them upon a geometric axis.



The Issues:

Directions: As you read the views for each issue, record a “L” or “C” and the Issue Title on a separate sheet of paper so you can see whether you end up with more conservative or liberal views overall.

| Issue | LIBERAL | CONSERVATIVE |
|---------------|--|---|
| Death penalty | We should abolish the death penalty. The death penalty is inhumane and is ‘cruel and unusual’ punishment. It does not prevent crime. Imprisonment is the appropriate punishment. Every execution risks killing an innocent person. | The death penalty is a punishment that fits the crime; it is neither ‘cruel’ nor ‘unusual’. Executing a murderer is the appropriate punishment for taking an innocent life. |

| | | |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Economy | Favor a market system in which government regulates the economy. We need government to protect us against big businesses. Unlike the private sector, the government is motivated by public interest. We need government regulation to level the playing field. | The free market system, competitive capitalism, and private enterprise afford the widest opportunity and the highest standard of living for all. Free markets produce more economic growth, more jobs and higher standards of living than those systems burdened by excessive government regulation. |
| The Environment | <p>Liberals sometimes believe that conservatives don't care as much about protecting the environment.</p> <p>Liberals will argue that Industrial growth can harm the environment. They argue global warming is caused by an increased production of carbon dioxide. The U.S. is a major contributor to global warming because it produces 25% of the world's carbon dioxide. The U.S. should enact laws to significantly reduce that amount and if it reduces some economic growth then so be it!</p> | <p>Conservatives want clean water, clean air and a clean planet, just like everyone else. However, extreme environmental policies destroy jobs and damage the economy.</p> <p>Changes in global temperatures are natural over long periods of time. So far, science has not shown that humans can affect permanent change to the earth's temperature.</p> |
| Gun control | The Second Amendment gives no individual the right to own a gun, but allows the state to keep a militia (National Guard/Armed Forces). Guns kill people. Guns kill children. | The Second Amendment gives the individual the right to keep and bear arms. Gun control laws do not thwart criminals. You have a right to defend yourself against criminals. More guns mean less crime. |
| Health care | Support universal government-supervised health care. There are millions of Americans who can't afford health insurance. They are being deprived of a basic right to healthcare. | Free healthcare provided by the government (socialized medicine) means that everyone will get the same poor-quality healthcare. The rich will continue to pay for superior healthcare, while all others will receive poor-quality free healthcare from the government. Health care should remain privatized. Support Healthcare Spending Accounts. |
| Immigration | <p>Support legal immigration and increasing the number of legal immigrants permitted to enter the U.S. each year. Support blanket amnesty for current illegal immigrants.</p> <p>Believe that regardless of how they came to the U.S., illegal immigrants deserve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - U.S. government financial aid for college tuition. - visas for spouse/children to come to the U.S. Families shouldn't be separated. <p>Illegal immigrants do the jobs that Americans do not want to do.</p> | <p>Support legal immigration at current numbers, but do not support illegal immigration. Government should enforce immigration laws. Oppose President Bush's amnesty plan for illegal immigrants. Those who break the law by entering the U.S. illegally should not have the same rights as those who obey the law by entering legally.</p> <p>If there were a decrease in cheap, illegal immigrant labor, employers would have to substitute higher-priced domestic employees, legal immigrants, or perhaps increase mechanization.</p> |
| Religion | <p>Support the separation of church and state. Religious expression has no place in government.</p> <p>Support the removal of all references to God in public and government spaces.</p> | <p>The phrase "separation of church and state" is not in the Constitution. The First Amendment to the Constitution states "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..." This prevents the government from establishing a national church. However, it does not prevent God from being acknowledged in schools and government buildings.</p> <p>Oppose the removal of symbols of Christian heritage from public and government spaces.</p> |

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| | Religion should not interfere with government. | Government should not interfere with religion and religious freedom. |
| Same-Sex Marriage | <p>Marriage should be legal for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender couples to ensure equal rights for all.</p> <p>All individuals, regardless of their sex, have the right to marry.</p> <p>Believe that prohibiting same-sex citizens from marrying denies them of their civil rights. Opinions differ on whether this issue is equal to civil rights for African Americans.</p> | <p>Marriage is between one man and one woman.</p> <p>Opinions differ on support for the creation of a constitutional amendment establishing marriage as the union of one man and one woman.</p> <p>Believe that requiring citizens to sanction same-sex relationships violates moral and religious beliefs of millions of Christians, Jews, Muslims and others who believe marriage is the union of a man and a woman.</p> |
| Taxes | Support higher taxes and a larger government. High taxes allow the government to do good and create jobs. We need high taxes for social welfare programs, to provide for the poor. We can't afford to cut taxes. | Support lower taxes and a smaller government. Lower taxes create more incentive for people to work, save, invest, and engage in entrepreneurial endeavors. Money is best spent by those who earn it. |
| Welfare | Support welfare. We need welfare to provide for the poor. Conservatives oppose welfare because they are not compassionate toward the poor. We have welfare to bring fairness to American economic life. Without welfare, life below the poverty line would be intolerable. | Oppose long-term welfare. We need to provide opportunities to make it possible for poor and low-income workers to become self-reliant. It is far more compassionate and effective to encourage a person to become self-reliant, rather than keeping them dependent on the government for money. |
| War on Terror/Terrorism | 9/11 was caused by America's arrogant foreign policy. America needs to stop angering other countries. The threat posed by terrorism has been exaggerated by our government for their own political advantage. | The world toward which the Militant Islamists strive cannot peacefully co-exist with the Western world. In the last decade, Militant Islamists have repeatedly attacked Americans and American interests here and abroad. The terrorists must be stopped and destroyed. |

Information found at <http://www.studentnewsdaily.com/>

Politics are daily part of every American's life. It is valuable for any U.S. citizen to know where they stand on the nation's most dividing issues. When the time comes to vote and be heard, you want to make an informed decision.

Reflection and Response: ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER.

1. Overall, did you find yourself to be more conservative or liberal?
2. How do YOU THINK your life has influenced YOUR values, morals and beliefs?
3. What topics, if any, did you have trouble deciding whether you were more liberal or conservative? Explain your answer.
4. Which issue do you see as being the most controversial? Explain why.
5. In your opinion, what 3 issues are the most important?
6. When voting for someone to become the President of the United States, which 2 issues would you definitely want to agree with them on? What issues are you willing to disagree with the president on?

Label each statement as Conservative vs. Liberal. **RECORD THE STATEMENTS and YOUR ANSWERS on a separate sheet of paper.**

_____ Supports more government involvement to solve problems.

_____ Supports more individual involvement when working to solve problems.

_____ Democrats generally match with this type of political view.

_____ Republicans generally match with this type of political view.