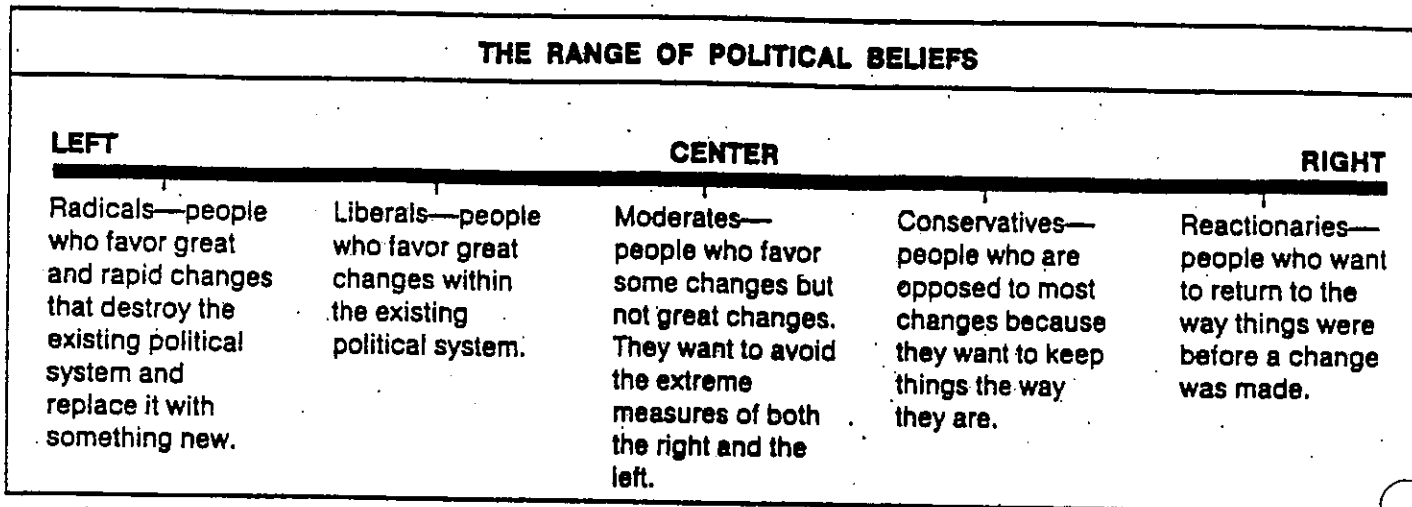


POLITICAL SPECTRUM

Introduction. The range of political beliefs extends from people who want great changes to people who want to return to the way things were. In between these two groups are several other political

beliefs. The first exercise will improve your ability to read and to interpret diagrams. In the second exercise, you will apply the ideas from the diagram to hypothetical statements.

Skills: Interpreting a Diagram. Study the diagram below, and then in each blank at the left, write the word or phrase that best completes the statement.



- 1. The people at the far right on the range of political beliefs would be
- 2. The people who are the exact opposite of reactionaries would be
- 3. The people who do not like great changes although they understand the need for some changes would be
- 4. The people who want to work within the existing political system in order to make changes would be
- 5. The people who oppose most changes would be
- 6. People who would want to return to the way things were in the past would be considered
- 7. People in the of the range of political beliefs like to stay in the middle of the road—not support the extreme measures of either side.
- 8. People who want life to be as it was when they were young would be considered
- 9. People who would like to overthrow the government and set up an entirely new government would be considered
- 10. People who want to keep things the way they are would be

Skills: Applying Interpretations. Each of the following statements is imaginary; however, each represents a political belief. Read each statement carefully, and then from the clues in the statement and from what you have already learned, decide which of the five political beliefs is represented in the statement. In the blank provided, write the name of the political belief—radical, liberal, moderate, conservative, or reactionary—that is expressed by the statement.

1. "Because of the fuel shortage, I believe that in order to save energy we must return to some practices that we used in the past. Gasoline could be saved if everyone walked to work and to school. This is what people did before there were cars and buses. We could also save heating oil and gas if we returned to using wood-burning stoves and to chopping our own firewood."

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2. "As a member of this state's house of representatives, I propose that we approve the Equal Rights Amendment. By this action, we are saying that 'equality of rights under the law should not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.' If we do not take this action, we would be admitting that this state does not believe in making changes within our political system."

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3. "Although the country's railroads are no longer able to provide cheap and fast transportation for the public, I do not think that the Federal Government should take control of the railroads. Instead, I would suggest that the Federal Government allow the railroads to borrow the money they need to make the needed improvements. In this way the public will be served better, but the government would not have made a great change in its policy."

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4. "The group that I represent believes that this nation has become too involved in war with another nation. Our soldiers as well as many innocent people in this foreign nation have been killed or injured in this war. We want the government to immediately remove our soldiers from this foreign country and stop drafting more soldiers. Once these things are done, we could begin to solve many of the government's problems. I would suggest that the office of President be immediately abolished. Then an executive board with representatives from all the minority groups should be immediately set up."

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5. "Because of daylight saving time in the winter months, children must go to school in the dark. Someone has proposed that the schools open an hour later so that the children could go to school in safety. I do not think that the hours of school should be changed. School has always started at 8:30 A.M., and I do not think that we should now change to a 9:30 A.M., starting time for school."

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a quiz on the political spectrum

Place the letter of the best choice from among the five terms used to describe positions on the political spectrum-- given below in alphabetical order:

- A. conservative C. moderate E. reactionary
B. liberal D. radical

Part I - to describe people

- _____ 1. people at the far right on the range of political beliefs
_____ 2. people who are the exact opposite of reactionaries
_____ 3. people who do not like great changes although they understand the need for some changes
_____ 4. people who want to work within the existing political system in order to make changes
_____ 5. people who oppose most changes
_____ 6. people who want to return to the way things were in the past
_____ 7. people who want life to be as it was when they were young
_____ 8. people who want to overthrow the government and set up an entirely new government
_____ 9. people who want to keep things the way they are
_____ 10. people who do not support extreme measures on either side of center but like to stay in the middle of the road

Part II - to describe statements of political belief

- _____ 11. "Because of the fuel shortage, I believe that in order to save energy we must return to some practices that we used in the past. Gasoline could be saved if everyone walked to work and to school. This is what people did before there were cars and buses. We could also save heating oil and gas if we returned to using wood-burning stoves and to chopping our own firewood."
- _____ 12. "As a member of this state's house of representatives, I propose that we approve the Equal Rights Amendment. By this action, we are saying that 'equality of rights under the law should not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex.' If we do not take this action, we would be admitting that this state does not believe in making changes within our political system."
- _____ 13. "Although the country's railroads are no longer able to provide cheap and fast transportation for the public, I do not think that the Federal Government should take control of the railroads. Instead, I would suggest that the Federal Government allow the railroads to borrow the money they need to make the needed improvements. In this way the public will be served better, but the government would not have made a great change in its policy."
- _____ 14. "The group that I represent believes that this nation has become too involved in war with another nation. Our soldiers as well as many innocent people in this foreign nation have been killed or injured in this war. We want the government to immediately remove our soldiers from this foreign country and stop drafting more soldiers. Once these things are done, we could begin to solve many of the government's problems. I would suggest that the office of President be immediately abolished. Then an executive board with representatives from all the minority groups should be immediately set up."
- _____ 15. "Because of daylight saving time in the winter months, children must go to school in the dark. Someone has proposed that the schools open an hour later so that the children could go to school in safety. I do not think that the hours of school should be changed. School has always started at 8:30 A.M., and I do not think that we should now change to a 9:30 A.M., starting time for school."