

Unit17: Key issues in US politics and the 2022 midterms:



Created by Romane


Chapter 3 = Politics and citizenship (L'Anglais contemporain) + cf Units 3 + 6 + 11 voc EC1

Prononciation : liaisons/réductions + accentuation des noms composés

1) Vocabulary :

| French | English | French | English |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| un gouvernement | a government | militantisme | activism [izəm] |
| un chef d'Etat | a head of state [è] [ei] | le congrès du parti | the party conference |
| un dirigeant | a ruler , a leader [i:] | fonder un parti | (to) found a party |
| un citoyen | a citizen | un responsable du parti | a party official [ə] [ə] |
| un pays | a country [eN] | la base (les militants) | the rank-and-file [ai] |
| un état | a state [ei] | adhérer (à un parti) | (to) join [dj] (a party) |
| diriger un pays | (to) rule/lead [i:]/ run a country [eN] | distribuer ds tracts | (to) hand out tracts |
| Fédéral | Federal [əl] | une tendance politique | a political [əl] leaning [i:] [ə] |
| en place, au pouvoir | in power [pa] | un soutien | a support [ə] |
| démocratie | ⊖ democracy [kræci] | l'accord/le désaccord | [ə] agreement/disagreement |
| Légitimité | Legitimacy [mæci] | soutenir | (to) support |
| séparation des pouvoirs | Separation [chən] of powers [pa] | prendre parti pour / prendre position | (to) take sides with [ai][z] / to take a stand |
| la Constitution | the Constitution [chən] | s'opposer à qqch | (to) oppose sth (something) [ə] |
| un Démocrate | a Democrat | remettre en q° | (to) challenge/ call sth into q° [tch] |
| un Républicain | a Republican [i] [ən] | un système électoral | a voting system |
| démocratique | democratic | un vote à bulletin secret | a secret ballot |
| républicain | Republican [i] [ən] | le droit de vote | the right to vote |
| succéder à qqn | (to) succeed sb [e] [i:] | les élections primaires (us) | The Primaries [ai][è] |
| une dictature | ⊖ dictatorship [ei] | les élections présidentielles | the presidential election [əl] [chən] |
| Censure | ⊖ mentorship ə | les élections municipales | local elections [chənz] |
| les pleins pouvoirs | full powers [pa] | appeler aux urnes | (to) call an election [chən] |
| le conservatisme | ⊖ conservatism [izəm] | une circonscription | a constituency |
| conservateur | conservative [e] | un candidat | a candidate [ei] |
| de gauche | left-wing | un concurrent | a contestant/a contender |
| de droite | right-wing | un sondage d'opinion | an opinion poll /pəʊl/ |
| le parti au pouvoir | the ruling party | se présenter à ds élec°/ à la président | (to) run for office (same 'o' as in 'cop')/ run for president |
| un parti d'opposition | an opposition [chən] [p] [ə] party | faire campagne | (to) campaign |

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|---|---|--|---|
| un programme (politique) | a platform | faire du porte à porte électoral | (to) canvas a district |
| le financement | Financing/ funding [ai] | prendre un bain de foule | (to) press the flesh |
| les membres du party | (the) party members | faire un discours | (to) deliver a speech [i:tʃ] |
| un chef de file | a party leader | flatter/courtiser les électeurs | (to) woo voters |
| un militant | an activist | sortant (candidat qui était en poste) | sitting |
| une victoire écrasante | a landslide victory [ai] | la participation | the turnout |
| remporter les élections | (to) win the election [chən] | arriver au pouvoir | (to) come into office/power [pa] |
| une polémique | a controversy (uk : 2 nd syll) | faire des donations à | (to) make donations to [ei] |
| Polémique/controversé | controversial [əl] | préconiser | (to) advocate [ei] |
| Lancer une campagne | (to) launch a campaign | critiquer | (to) criticize [ei] |
| Un débat télévisé | a tv debate [ei] | Une candidature | a candidacy [əci] |
| Un défenseur de... | an advocate of... | La cote de popularity | Popularity rating [ei] |
| Un slogan | a slogan | Un logo | a logo |
| American political system | | | |
| un membre du Congrès | a congressman/woman | un ministre (us) | a secretary (uk : a minister) |
| la Chambre des Représentants | the House of Representatives | un projet de loi (ou une facture !) | a bill |
| le Sénat | the Senate | faire pression | (to) lobby (o as in 'cop') |
| le Ministre des affaires étrangères us | the State Secretary (uk : secretary) | le ministre de la Justice us | the Attorney General [əl] [ə] |
| Les élections législatives/de mi-mandat | The midterms/ the midterm elections | le ministre des finances us | the Treasury Secretary [è] [j] |
| élections pour être gouverneur | gubernatorial elections | les pouvoirs et contre-pouvoirs | the Checks and Balances [n] |
| Avoir son mot à dire/donner son opinion | (to) have one's say (my/your/his say etc) | Faire basculer une élection | (to) sway an election [chn] [ei] |
| Le parti pris des média | ⊖ media bias | Qqch qui change la donne | a game-changer [ei] [tcheinjer] |
| Le collistier | The running mate | Exploiter/profiter du pouvoir des média | (to) take advantage of the media's power [pa] |
| Être confronté à un scandale | (to) be faced [ei] with a scandal / be confronted [id] to (with) a scandal | Tous les coups sont permis | All is fair in love and war |
| Rencontrer des difficultés | (to) Hit road blocks | Le système de santé | ⊖ healthcare  |
| Technique visant à critiquer son adversaire | ⊖ negative campaigning [ei] | Déclencher une polémique | (to) spark (off) a controversy |
| Un rêve devenu réalité | A dream come true | Le politiquement-correct | ⊖ Political correctness [ə] [ə] |
| Une course serrée | A close [s] race [ei] | Passer le relais | (to) pass the baton |

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|---|--|---|---|
| Des donateurs | <u>donors</u> | Les gros sous/de grosses sommes d'argent | ⊖ Big Money |
| Des dons | <u>donations</u> | Tomber dans les sondages | (to) <u>drop in the polls</u> |
| Nuire à la réputation de qqn | (to) <u>damage sb's reputation</u> [chən] | Une baisse de la popularité | A <u>drop IN popularity</u> |
| Etre en avance / bas dans les sondages | (to) <u>be ahead/ low in</u> [ə] <u>the polls</u> | The NRA | <u>The National Rifle Association</u> [ai] [chən] |
| Battre un record d'impopularité (atteindre un rec.) | (to) <u>reach a low point in popularity</u> | The ACLU | <u>The American Civil Liberties Union</u> [you] |
| Un groupe de pression | a <u>pressure group</u> [ə] | Prêter serment | (to) <u>take an oath</u> |
| Un conseiller | <u>an advisor</u> [ai] | Attaché de presse | a <u>press attaché</u> |
| Un mandat (en politiq) | a <u>term</u> | Le bilan d'Obama | <u>Obama's record</u> |
| Les élections de mi-mandat | <u>The midterms/ the midterm election</u> | Soutenir officiellement un candidat/donner son soutien | (to) <u>endorse a candidate</u> |
| Nommer qqn | (to) [ə] <u>appoint sb</u> | Un juge de la cour suprême | a <u>Supreme Court Justice</u> |
| Donner l'ex | (to) <u>set an example/ lead</u> [i:] <u>the way</u> | Un spot politique | a <u>political ad</u> [ə] |
| Avoir le dessus sur | (to) <u>have the</u> [i:] <u>upper hand (over)</u> | Cf units 4/6/11  | |

2) Fiches civi en lien avec la séquence, résumées :

Fiche 1, 2, 3 sur la Constitution :

"life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" = words present in the Declaration of Independence (1776)

The US has kept the same founding document – the Constitution – since 1787, altering it 17 times only with amendments

The Constitution was written by the Founding Fathers (les Pères Fondateurs, qui ont créé le pays, à ne pas mélanger avec les Pilgrim Fathers ou Pères Pèlerins qui ont émigré d'Angleterre en 1620)

From independence to the making of a nation:

in 1781: articles of Confederation

1787 : the Constitution

The guiding lines:

creating a two-level system of government, carefully sharing out the rights and the duties of each to avoid tyranny. = checks and balances system

key words in the American Constitution:

"we the people" (premiers mots)

"all men are created equal"

The Constitution defines the federal government with its three branches (the legislative, the executive and the judiciary)

The Separation of power:

The checks and balances system ensures that no single branch of power gains too much power or dominates the other two.

The possibility of change :

If the American people (peuple) wants to amend the Constitution, they can use the amendment process. ex 2nd amendment right to bear arms/ 13th amendment (emancipation of slaves)/19th voting rights for women

The Supreme Court:

The Constitution is made flexible through another means: the Supreme Court. The nine judges (or Justices) are the interpreters of the Constitution: they can decide whether (if) acts or laws are in keeping with the Constitution.

Fiche 21 : le lobbying aux Etats-Unis :

The practice of influencing legislators into voting in favor or against a bill is performed by lobbyists, which represent a particularly interested group known as a **'lobby'** or **'pressure group'**. The name is derived from the way in which these people originally met with Congressmen in lobbies situated outside Congress.

lobbying = persuading a legislator to do what some people want

cf **first amendment**: guarantees the "right of the people to petition the Government for a redress of grievances"

Inside the Capitol, lobbyists monitor the activities of the committees or subcommittees which help legislation.

In the US **thousands of lobbying groups exist**, be it at a local, state or federal level. Among the various categories represented are business, banking, labor, education, farm, health, energy, environment, consumer, senior citizens, women, the poor, and religious groups...

ex **the American Petroleum Institute** represents oil producers

There are also foreign governments and citizens' association such as **the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union), Common Cause and the NRA (National Rifle Association)**.



The number of lobbyists exceeds that of Congressmen and they have almost unlimited funding. -> **a huge influence on bills (projets de loi)**

Many state or federal laws **regulate** such activities. ex 1946 Regulation of Lobbying Act = required the registration of all professional lobbyists

Since the late 80s, when Congress was **tightened the rules** to avoid influence peddling

As lobbying is frequently performed *on behalf of* (au nom de) organizations which also make campaign donations, **opponents often complain that Congressmen act in the interests of those who fund them.** -> **political corruption?**

Campaign-financing reforms enacted in the mid 1970s limited direct contributions to candidates and made **PACs** (political-action committees) an effective way to channel contributions. But legislators have become increasingly vulnerable to interest groups or lobbies.

Lobbying should not, however, be seen in an exclusively negative light. Ralph Nader, a well-known lobbyist, founded **Public Citizen**, a consumer lobbying group to push for health safety.