

Do the midterm elections matter? – Worksheet

1. Look at the graphic at: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/data/mid-term-elections.php>
 - a. Looking at 1974, 1994, and 2010, what happened in the House and the Senate?

 - b. How did the results connect to presidential job approval ratings?

 - c. Are there any other elections that are striking in terms of gains/losses for the president's party? Why might these have happened?

2. See the **1994 Midterm Elections information sheet**
 - a. What political, economic, and social developments led to the Republican victory in the House and Senate in 1994?

- b. What actions did the Republican Congress take? Do you think that these actions had a lasting impact on the U.S. government?
3. Look at <http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/graphics/2014-who-votes-in-midterms/>
 - a. What does this graphic show about the number of races that will determine the composition of the U.S. Senate?
 - b. How does this graphic connect to the idea that many Americans are not interested in the midterm elections?
4. Look at "The Maroon 6": <http://fivethirtyeight.com/datalab/the-maroon-6-a-better-way-to-look-at-the-2014-senate-races/>
 - a. How many of the six races do the Republicans need to win? Do the Democrats still have a chance to keep control of the Senate?
 - b. What does this article imply about the importance of voter turnout?

5. Read the PBS Online NewsHour article about the recent uncertainties in the midterm elections: <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/rundown/midterms-near-political-shake-ups-kansas-south-dakota-possible/>
 - a. Why is the Republican Party putting so much money into South Dakota? Why is this state so critical?

 - b. What issues have replaced “Obamacare” as the main concerns of the American public?

 - c. Why does the article discuss the success of the Jodi Ernst ad?

 - d. According to this article, do the Republicans have a definite lock on a victory in the Senate?