



# Government

## 2021 Sample Evidence-Based Argument Set (EBAS)

---

**cognia™**

Developed and published under contract with the Maryland State Department of Education by Cognia.  
Copyright © 2021 by the Maryland State Department of Education. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a database or retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the Maryland State Department of Education.

---

Students are asked by their teacher to research closed and open primaries. Based on their research, they must decide which system is best. The students' compelling question is this:

**Should Maryland become an open primary state?**

The students have found the following sources. Use the sources to answer the questions that follow.

**Background Information**

During a primary election, registered voters select who they believe should be their political party's candidate in the general election. The state of Maryland currently allows political parties to choose which type of primary system to use. They almost always choose a closed primary so that voters registered with a party can only vote in that party's primary. Critics argue this limits participation of those who want to vote for someone in the opposing party or independents who have no political party. Some are calling for Maryland state law to adopt an open primary system.

**Key Terms:**

- closed primary—requires voters to be registered with a given party to vote in that party's primary election
- open primary—does not require voters to be registered with a given party to vote in that party's primary election
- partisan—a strong supporter of a particular political party, cause, or person

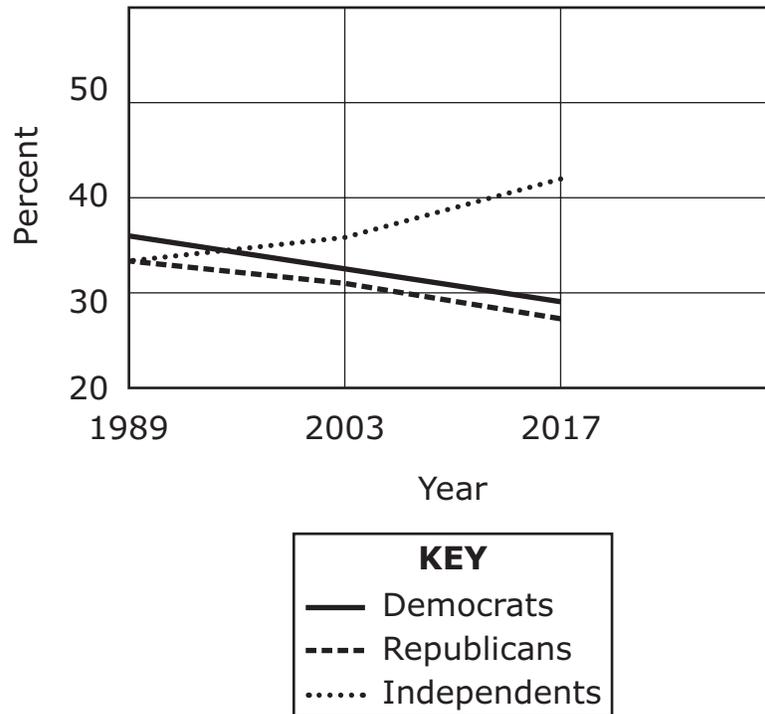


---

**Source A**

Gallup, Inc. is an analytics and advisory company based in Washington, D.C. Gallup is best known for conducting opinion polls.

**U.S. Party Identification,  
Yearly Averages,  
1989–2017**



Source: Gallup



---

**Source B**

OpenPrimaries.org is a group that advocates for nonpartisan open primaries in the United States.

“Closed primaries are the most rampant<sup>1</sup> form of voter suppression of the 21st century. Now, more than ever, we need our democracy to be open and fair—representative of all Americans, not just party extremists. Here are five reasons why we need open primaries . . .

1. “Independents are the largest and fastest-growing voting bloc in the country.
2. “Due to the effects of partisan gerrymandering, 90 percent of elections are determined in the primary. That means that a huge population of voters have no say in who represents them . . .
3. “Independent voters are paying for elections with their tax dollars . . . .
4. “Open primaries require elected officials to reach out beyond their party to all the voters in order to get elected and stay in office.
5. “Open primaries allow legislators to be more effective representatives by creating a healthier environment to work together, form innovative coalitions, engage a range of policy issues on the merits and govern productively.”

—Five Reasons We Need Open Primaries, [www.openprimaries.org](http://www.openprimaries.org)

<sup>1</sup>rampant—spreading quickly



---

### Source C

Seth Masket is an author and political scientist at the University of Denver who specializes in political parties, state legislatures, campaigns and elections, and social networks.

“Many reformers look to open primaries as a tool for reducing the partisanship of elected officials, but such reforms have proven pretty ineffective. Changing who may participate in a state’s primary elections seems unrelated to the partisanship of the elected officials it produces.

“Why is this? In part, it’s because the activists, major donors, officeholders, and other party [leaders] who tend to influence the outcomes of primary elections don’t just disappear when those elections are opened up to moderate voters. They remain influential, and they know how to allocate<sup>1</sup> the endorsements,<sup>2</sup> funding, expertise, and other resources important to winning elections to make sure that the candidates they like—pretty loyal partisans, usually—prevail in the primaries. But another reason is that people with weak party attachments (self-described moderates, independents, and so forth) who do not follow politics closely tend not to participate in primaries even if they’re allowed to. Opening up a primary does little to change what the electorate actually looks like.”

—Seth Masket, “How Can We Fix the Broken Primary Election System?”  
*The Pacific Standard*, July 7, 2014

<sup>1</sup>allocate—distribute for a particular purpose

<sup>2</sup>endorsements—an act of giving one’s public approval or support to someone or something



---

**Source D**

Third Way is a national think tank that supports American values of opportunity, freedom, and security. Their agenda promotes liberal ideas and new ways of political thinking to solve societal problems.

**U.S. Voter Registration Changes, 2008–2013**

	Democrats	Republicans	Independents
all states	-428,687	-12,714	+2,484,104
Maryland	+108,324	+23,133	+157,099

Source: Thirdway.org



---

**Source E**

Adam Brandon is Executive Vice President at FreedomWorks, a conservative advocacy group in Washington, D.C.

“Primaries are an opportunity for a party to nominate the candidate who will best carry forward its set of ideological principles. The general election will then allow voters to decide which party has made a better case. . . .

“Allowing the opposition party a vote undermines the purpose of primaries, effectively resulting in two general elections . . . with no clear distinction between the parties. . . .

“People who vote in the opposing party’s primary do not do so to support the candidate who best represents their views, but merely to be disruptive . . . .

“When there is a perception among the public that elections are not honest . . . the democratic process suffers. This country depends on an engaged, active electorate making informed choices about the candidates.

“Closed primaries protect the integrity of elections and make voters feel that their representation is in their own hands, not the tool of political manipulation.”

—Adam Brandon. “Closed Primaries Prevent Mischief.” *USA Today*, 2014



- 
- 1** Source B was created **most likely** to
- A** explain the definitions of various types of primary elections.
  - B** describe the causes and effects of primary elections.
  - C** persuade citizens to demand open primary elections.
  - D** identify the pros and cons of open primary elections.
- 2** Which claim is **best** supported by Source D?
- A** Democrats and Republicans have more power in Maryland than in other states.
  - B** There has been national dissatisfaction with both Democrat and Republican platforms.
  - C** Independent political candidates have better funding than other parties.
  - D** There have been fewer successful independent political candidates in recent years.
- 3** Which statement from Source B or C **best** corroborates the overall argument in Source E?
- A** "Closed primaries are the most rampant form of voter suppression of the 21st century." (Source B)
  - B** "Independent voters are paying for elections with their tax dollars." (Source B)
  - C** "Many reformers look to open primaries as a tool for reducing the partisanship of elected officials, but such reforms have proven pretty ineffective." (Source C)
  - D** "People with weak party attachments . . . tend not to participate in primaries even if they're allowed to." (Source C)



---

**4** What source contains the **most** recent information?

- A** Source A
- B** Source C
- C** Source D
- D** Source E

**5** Assume that the information provided in the sources is credible. Complete the following extended-response question:

**Should Maryland become an open primary state?**

- Develop a claim in response to the question.
- Cite evidence from the provided sources to support your claim.
- Use your knowledge of government in your response.



# 2020 Released Items ANSWER KEY

## Government

Item Number	Key	Expectation	Indicator
1	C	The student will demonstrate the ability to evaluate sources and use evidence.	The student will evaluate the credibility of the sources by considering the authority, origin, type, context, and corroborative value of each source.
2	B	The student will demonstrate the ability to evaluate sources and use evidence.	The student will identify credible, relevant information contained in sources.
3	C	The student will demonstrate the ability to evaluate sources and use evidence.	The student will evaluate the credibility of the sources by considering the authority, origin, type, context, and corroborative value of each source.
4	A	The student will demonstrate the ability to evaluate sources and use evidence.	The student will evaluate the credibility of the sources by considering the authority, origin, type, context, and corroborative value of each source.
5	CR	The student will demonstrate the ability to communicate and critique conclusions.	The student will construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources.

= Written response.

# 5 Point Rubric for EBAS CR

## Rubric

Score	Description
<b>Level 5</b>	<p>The response demonstrates substantial understanding of the content, question, and/or problem. The response is insightful and completely integrates knowledge to thoroughly answer the question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops a clear claim addressing the compelling question.</li> <li>• Supports claim with full synthesis, citing evidence from all appropriate sources and connection to claim is substantial.</li> <li>• Demonstrates comprehensive government knowledge. Minor misconceptions do not interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 4</b>	<p>The response shows significant understanding of the content, question, and/or problem. The response is thoughtful and integrates knowledge to fully answer the question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops an adequate claim addressing the compelling question.</li> <li>• Reflects thoughtful synthesis in supporting claim with evidence from several appropriate sources, but connection to claim may be unevenly developed.</li> <li>• Demonstrates appropriate government knowledge. Minor misconceptions do not interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 3</b>	<p>The response shows general understanding of the content, question, and/or problem. The response is adequate and integrates knowledge to fully answer the question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops a general claim addressing some of the compelling question.</li> <li>• Supports claim with some synthesis behind at least one source.</li> <li>• Demonstrates adequate government knowledge. May contain minor misconceptions interfering with understanding.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 2</b>	<p>The response shows partial understanding of the content, question, and/or problem. The response presents incomplete knowledge and partially answers the question.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops a partial claim that may or may not address the compelling question.</li> <li>• Claim reflects support from at least one source, but there is little to no synthesis behind any source.</li> <li>• Demonstrates partial government knowledge. May contain misconceptions that interfere with understanding.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 1</b>	<p>The response shows minimal understanding of the content, question, and/or problem. The response is related to the question, but is inadequate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May develop a claim not related to the compelling question or lacks a claim.</li> <li>• References information from sources.</li> <li>• Demonstrates inadequate government knowledge that interferes with understanding.</li> </ul>
<b>Level 0</b>	The response is completely incorrect or irrelevant to the question.