

## **GERRYMANDERING - Notes/Teacher Answer Key**

<b><u>PROS</u></b>	<b><u>CONS</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Maximize supporters - Gerrymandering has the effect of increasing the number of supporters. The process involves maximizing the political boundaries; this, in turn, increases the number of supporters in that given region or district.</li><li>● Minimize opponents - When the boundary of one political district increases, it results in a decrease in the geographical area of another political district. This has the effect of reducing the number of opponents in that given district, with a smaller geographical area. Few opponents are a great advantage to the winning political party.</li><li>● Strengthens the majority - through the practice of gerrymandering, the political party with the majority can strongly dominate the region while the minority is weakened.</li><li>● Better representation - this system may lead to better representation, as it helps in reducing divisiveness and can lead to better tackling of problems. This is so because most supporters and opponents are packed into separate districts, and therefore there is less incentive to listen to each other or compromise.</li><li>● The practice involves voters - Although the practice is meant to favor a specific political party, it indirectly involves voters. Voters are the ones who choose their elected representatives. Through this, the citizens of a given region or district are indirectly involved in the process of gerrymandering.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Unfair leadership - this act is likely to result in poor leadership, as the more powerful political party wins the representative of a given region. Therefore, the interest of people may not be fully represented (ex. If it is a "swing district").</li><li>● Weakening of the minority – gerrymandering is an act that favors the majority side. This weakens the minority leader or party in the region or district.</li><li>● Erosion of democracy – this act upsets the balance of democracy because it usually favors the majority party and gives undue weight and voting power to the minority in a given political area. This leads to the erosion of fair democracy, since each person's vote doesn't carry the same weight as every other person.</li><li>● Leads to discrimination and hatred - as political parties strive to redraw new political boundaries, one party often discriminates against another political party to gain the majority votes and conquer the region. This leads to hatred, distrust and unwillingness to compromise or find ways to be bipartisan.</li><li>● Devalues votes- political manipulation of district boundaries lines can devalue the power of votes. This undermines the democratic process.</li></ul>