Group Lesson
1 class period (with extension)

A People’s Guide to the Federal Budget
Chapter 3

The Political Spectrum

Objective:
Students will be able to place issues on a political spectrum and identify where they are most likely to position themselves

Description:
1. On a classroom wall post the numbers 1-10 on 8x11 sheets of paper. 1 is most conservative. 10 is most liberal.
2. On sticky notes write the following and give one set to each group (one word/phrase per card). (Note: feel free to add others.)
   - Pro choice under all circumstances
   - Pro-life except for rape or incest
   - Increase taxes on top 1% of earners
   - No bailouts for companies
   - Increase military spending
   - Increase environmental regulation
   - Pro-unions
   - Privatize education
   - Decriminalize marijuana
   - Anti gay marriage
   - Pro nuclear power
   - Anti nuclear weapons
   - No women in combat
   - Race should be a factor in college admissions
   - Public access to all public buildings
3. Have student groups decide where on the spectrum each sticky note should be placed.
4. Once all are posted, hold a full-class discussion.
5. Ask the students to write a short reflection on their individual position on three of the above statements.
6. Extension Activity: Ask the students to find an OpEd or letter to the editor in a newspaper that clearly has a liberal or conservative bias. Ask them to write a five-paragraph commentary on how and why they believe it is liberal or conservative. Ask them to also articulate their personal views in relation to the author’s opinions.