Frontline: Big Sky, Big Money

(October 2012)

Name_____

Date_____ Period____

To watch this program, go to this link:
https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/film/big-sky-big-money/

As you watch the program, answer the following questions.

1. In 2010, the US Supreme Court ruled on the *Citizens United* Case. What did this decision do?

2. According to Professor David Parker (Montana State University), how much money is being spent on Montana elections by "outside groups"?

3. What is "American Bridge"? What is "opposition research"? What is a "tracker"?

4. According to Professor Erika Franklin Fowler, what is the difference between a 501(c) 4 group and a Super-PAC? What are the "magic words" that she refers to?

5. What do we know about the group "Citizens for Strength and Security"? When tracking down the address for this group, what do we find out?

6. According to lawyer Jim Bopp, why is "secrecy" okay for those giving campaign contributions?

7. Who was William Clark? (What did he do?)

(Continued on the Back)

8. In 1912, the Corrupt Practices Act was passed in Montana. What did it do?

9. Describe what happened to former Montana State Representative John Ward.

10. What is the job of the Commissioner of Political Practices in Montana? According to Commissioner Dennis Unsworth, why was he suspicious of the last-minute flyers sent out attacking John Ward?

11. In the end, what was WTP's goal?

12. What arguments did Montana Attorney General Steve Bullock use to defend Montana's Corrupt Practices Law? How did the Montana State Supreme Court rule?

13. Who appealed the Montana State Supreme Court ruling to the US Supreme Court? How did the US Supreme Court rule?

14. According to the Citizens United court ruling, are independent groups running issue ads allowed to **coordinate** with candidate campaigns?

15. (A) Do you think independent spending by outside groups corrupts the political system? (B) Do you think groups/individuals who contribute to various political groups should be able to do so anonymously? Why or why not?