

Caucus 101: Linkage Institutions: Interest Groups: Option A

Length of class: 90 minutes

Objective: A. Students will be able to explain the role of interest groups in the electoral process.

Additional objectives:

B. Students will be able to research and analyze an interest group to determine its effectiveness.

Iowa Core Standards:

SS.9–12.PSCL.1

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand the rights and responsibilities of each citizen and demonstrate the value of lifelong civic action.*

SS.9–12.PSCL.5

Essential Concept and/or Skill: *Understand strategies for effective political action that impact local, state, and national governance.*

Assessment: *Optional Differentiated assignment (group or individual) that links lesson objectives. *

Informal: Guided Notes and Interest Group Analysis

Materials Needed: PPT: Organizing and Interest Groups in the Electoral Process, Documents: Interactive Notes: Interest Groups, Assignment Menu: Interest Groups *Optional Internet Access for student research

LEARNING PLAN:

1. **Opening Scenario: Intro to Political Organization:** Students are given a hypothetical scenario in which the state legislature has raised the minimum age to have a driver’s license to 21. Students have prompts on the Powerpoint to answer themselves, with partners, and then through class discussion. The purpose of the scenario is to understand why organizing in groups is more powerful than working alone, and that those with similar interests can work together to create change and influence politics. **(10 minutes)**
2. **Direct Lecture: PPT: Organizing and Interest Groups in the Electoral Process:**
There is optional use of the interactive notes (see document). This will speed up the note-taking process, and the questions also involve higher order thinking and understanding of new knowledge and concepts. There is also an organizer to help students complete the interest group research later in the class. *Don’t forget to include the video examples of interest group advertisements on slide 3 of the PPT. Ask students to compare the ads and discuss as a class.

There is also a discussion on slide 4 regarding students’ own personal interests for discussion.
(30-35 min)
3. Break (Optional)
4. **Interest Group Research:** Pair students into groups of 2-3 and assign them an interest group from slide 9 of the PPT. If you have already paired students together based on results from the political parties lesson, you can simply have students keep those groups.

Students must research their assigned group and answer the questions. These questions are located on the PPT as well as on the interactive notes sheet. **(25 minutes)**

5. Use any time left in class to present findings from interest group research. Have students complete an exit ticket based on the results of the presented findings that asks the following:
Did any of the interest groups presented in class appeal to a cause you care about? If so, which one? If not, why? Would you be willing to join an interest group? Why or why not?

Take Home Assignment:

HW: Each student should take a photo to showcase how they are participating during the campaign season. Then upload to the website (<http://teachers.caucus101.com/2015/11/i-participate/>) or Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Caucus101/>), or post using the hashtag #Participate101.

Optional: This assignment is purely **optional**. It can also be used as an additional supplement on a day where there is additional time, or for students who want to apply themselves outside the classroom.

Hand out **assignment menu** for the interest artifact to each group and explain directions for each option. Additional time inside/outside of class, including presentations, is to teacher discretion. Keep in mind that the course has other in-class assignments and activities, so plan accordingly or at teacher discretion.

Additional Resources:

Resources available will vary:

Websites: American Civil Liberties Union: <https://www.aclu.org/>
Americans for Prosperity: <http://americansforprosperity.org/>
AFL-CIO: <http://www.aflcio.org/>
AARP: <http://www.aarp.org/>
Chamber of Commerce: <https://www.uschamber.com/>
Family Leader: <http://www.thefamilyleader.com/>
Iowa Farm Bureau: <http://www.iowafarmbureau.com/>
Generation Progress: <http://genprogress.org/>
Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement: <http://iowacci.org/>
National Rifle Association: <http://home.nra.org/>
NARAL: <http://www.naral.org/>
NextGen Climate: <https://nextgenclimate.org/>

Crash Course Government, Congressional Decisions: <https://youtu.be/ZT9ipQdYL-s>

The Role of Interest Groups in Government, Featuring Pinky the Flamingo: https://youtu.be/9Ua_rfZfRTM