

Caucus 101: Effects of Caucuses

Option 1: Length of class: 30-90 minutes, depending on how teacher decides to complete "track the candidates."

Objectives: Students will determine the effects of the Iowa caucuses historically and currently.

Additional objectives:

Students will be able to define a caucus.
Students will analyze graphic information and write conclusions.
Students will analyze news articles as evidence.
Students will research historical effects from Iowa's caucuses.
Students will make predictions of nominations.
Students will track primary and caucus winners.

Standards:

Iowa Core: SS 9-12. PSCL.1 Understand the rights and responsibilities of each citizen and demonstrate the values of lifelong civic action.
Iowa Core: SS.9-12.PSCL.4 Understand the differences among the complex levels of local, state and national government and their inherent, expressed, and implied powers.
Iowa Core: SS 9-12. PSCL.5 Understand strategies for effective political action that impact local, state, and national governance.
Iowa Core: SS 9-12. PSCL.6 Understand how law and public policy are established at the local, state, and national levels of government.
Iowa Core: SS.6-8.H.2 Understand how and why people create, maintain or change systems of power, authority, and governance.
Iowa Core: SS.9-12.H.4 Understand the role of individuals and groups within a society as promoters of change or the status quo.
Iowa Core SS.9-12.H.8 Understand cause and effect relationships and other historical thinking skills in order to interpret events and issues.

Assessment:

Materials Needed:

1. Iowa Caucus results from 1972-2012 worksheet with questions. Students may need internet connection to complete some of the questions on the analysis worksheet. Please preview questions before giving to students to determine.
2. Teacher background information on caucusing.
3. Track the candidates form.

LEARNING PLAN:

1. Now that students have completed the caucus unit, students should analyze the effects the Iowa caucuses have had on presidential nominations and those who eventually became president. Students can go to <http://2016iowacaucus.com/> and complete the Iowa caucus poll to start. The teacher can have a class discussion on whom the students predict will win Iowa's nominations.
2. **Focus: Analysis of Caucuses in the Past.** Pass out the result of the Iowa caucuses from 1972-2012. Have students complete the worksheet or break them into groups to complete the questions.
3. **Focus: Track the Candidates Now.** Read the teacher background information. Pass out "track the candidates" chart. Or, create a class chart to track the candidates.
4. **Application:** Have students select who they think will win the nominations for Iowa and for the national nominations.

Homework: Ongoing-"track the candidates" form.

Students can find news articles about historic caucuses in Iowa and the influence they had on the presidencies.

Additional Resources:

<http://www.iowagop.org/>
<http://iowademocrats.org/>
<http://www.catchdesmoines.com/iowacaucus/>
<http://iowapoliticalcaucus.blogspot.com/>
<http://www.iptv.org/iowapathways>

