

Caucus 101: Linkage Institutions: Political Parties: Option B

Length of class: 60 minutes

Objective: A. Students will be able to explain the role of political parties in selecting candidates for office, engaging voters, and organizing their respective caucus.

Additional objectives:

B. Students will be able to identify and explain the differences between liberal and conservative ideology.

C. Students will be able to evaluate their own political ideology and apply it towards matching their beliefs with a political party and presidential candidate.

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: Letter to political party that links lesson objectives with promoting youth involvement in the Iowa caucus. (See Step 6 of Learning Plan)

Materials Needed: PPT: Party in the Electorate, Documents: Interactive Notes: Political Parties, Iowa Democratic Party Platform Excerpt, Iowa Republican Party Platform Excerpt, Political Ideology Quiz, Political Party Letter Organizer

LEARNING PLAN:

1. **Opener: Intro to Political Organization:** Create a hypothetical scenario for the students. A pizza place is offering a free pizza party for the class. They will make as many pizzas as the class would like, **BUT** they will only do **ONE** topping (not including cheese), and that one topping will be on **ALL** of the pizzas; no exceptions.

Take topping suggestions from students and write them on the board. After the toppings options are displayed, take a class vote (round 1). Students are responsible for voting to see which topping the class gets. After the first vote, highlight the three toppings that got the highest vote. Next, take the top three toppings, and allow for a second round of voting. The option with the most votes out of the final three is the winner. **(3 minutes)**

2. After the winning choice is announced, ask students to take a moment and discuss the following questions with someone nearby. *What things influenced your decision? If your first choice won, how do you feel? If you lost, how do you feel? What could be done differently to get your way next time?* Share responses with class. Explain that sometimes in order to get what you want, you need to organize with others who have the same interest or goal. **(5 mins)**
3. **Direct Lecture: PPT: The Political Parties 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. **(20 min + 5 mins reflection/closing)**

4. **Handout Student Political Ideology Survey:** Students follow the directions in taking the political ideology

survey and answering the questions at the end. You will likely need to briefly explain concepts or new words in the survey (ex: amnesty). **(15 minutes)**

5. **Collect the surveys** as they are completed, and then partner students based upon their survey results: Liberal/Democrat, or Conservative/Republican. Be sure to hand back ideology surveys to students to guide them through understanding of ideological differences between the two parties.
6. **Assignment:** Hand out “Political Party Letter Organizer” to students

Compose a letter to your state’s political party organization informing them of things they need to do to appeal to young voters and encourage higher youth turnout to the Iowa caucus.

Your letter should include the following:

A statement of why you and your partner identify with their party

What major beliefs or ideas you think would appeal to/matter the most to high school students

What changes (if any) would help your party increase its appeal to high school and college students

A brief plan for how the party can reach out to high school students and get them to commit to the caucus

(What things would encourage high school students to be interested and involved?)

6 a.) Class time to complete product. 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.

(20 mins + teacher discretion)

Optional Take Home Assignment:

Each student must:

Research the candidates and answer the following questions:

If the Iowa Caucus were to be held tomorrow, which candidate would you be most likely to support and why? Use evidence about your candidate’s personality, beliefs, and accomplishments to provide at least three reasons for your decision.

If you have a tie, still provide evidence and at least three reasons for why you would support each of the two candidates.

HW: Visit the Caucus 101 website (<http://teachers.caucus101.com/2015/11/my-candidate/>) or Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Caucus101/>) and vote for the candidate you would choose today.

This assignment will not be due until the day of the in-class mock caucus, or at teacher discretion.

Additional Resources:

Resources available will vary:

Campaign/Political Party Mail pieces, political ads

Websites: Iowa Republican Party: www.iowagop.org

Iowa Democratic Party: www.iowademocrats.org

On the Issues: <http://www.ontheissues.org/default.htm>

Isidewith: <http://www.isidewith.com/>