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| **Caucus 101: Democrat & Republican Caucuses vs. Primaries** |
| **Option 1: Length of class: 90 minutes** |
| **Objectives:** Students will be able to describe the similarities and differences between Democrat and Republican caucuses in order to prepare for mock caucus and understand the strengths and weaknesses of caucuses and primaries.  **Additional objectives:**  Students will be able to define a caucus.  Students will utilize speaking and debate skills.  Students will analyze news articles as evidence.  Students will evaluate which system works the best to nominate a candidate for president: primaries or caucuses?  **Standards:**  Iowa Core Inquiry Anchor Standards:  *Gathering and Evaluating Sources*  SS.9-12.3. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.  *Developing Claims and Using Evidence*  SS.9-12.6. Refine claims and counter claims attending to precision, significance, and knowledge conveyed through the claim while pointing out the strengths and limitation of both.  *Communicating and Critiquing Conclusions*  SS.9-12.7. Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.  SS.9-12.9. Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies and digital technologies.  SS.9-12.10. Critique the use of claims and evidence in arguments for credibility.  9-12 Civics and Government Core Standards  *Analyze Civic and Political Institutions*  SS.9-12.14. Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to the definition of who is a citizen, expansion of the that definition over time, and changes in participation over time. (21st century skills)  SS.Gov.9-12.18. Critique the influence of intermediary institutions on government and policy such as, interest groups, political parties, the mass media, campaigns, caucuses, elections, PACs, and local, state, tribal, and international organizations. (21st century skills)  *Iowa History*  SS.Gov.9-12.27. Compare and contrast the institutions and systems of Iowa government and politics that are unique to the state including but not limited to Iowa’s unique role in presidential selection and in the special status of Meskwaki lands as non-reservation lands.  SS.Gov.9-12.28. Identify local and state issues in Iowa and evaluate formal and informal course of action used to affect policy.  Reading Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies 6-12  *Key Ideas and Details*  RH.11-12.2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.  *Craft and Structure*  RH.11-12.6. Evaluate authors’ differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors’ claims, reasoning, and evidence.  *Integration of Knowledge and Ideas*  RH.11-12.8. Evaluate an author’s premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.  RH.11-12.9. Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.  Writing Standards for Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects 6-12  *Research to Build and Present Knowledge*  WHST.11-12.9. Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, relection, and research. |
| **Assessment:** Class debate and participation in Democrat and Republican mock caucuses. |
| **Materials Needed:**   1. Computer to project/student internet access for the following videos: 2. Recipe for Democrat caucus:   <http://www.iptv.org/iowapathways/artifact/recipe-democratic-caucus>.   1. Recipe for Republican caucus:   <http://www.iptv.org/iowapathways/artifact/recipe-republican-caucus>.   1. Notecard for each student. 2. One copy of one of the three articles below (this will create groups): 3. *Why Primaries Are Better Than Caucuses:*   <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/wp/2015/04/20/why-primaries-are-better-than-caucuses/>  \*Please note: This link may require an account. Either use the document version of the article included in the materials or use an alternative link such as the following: [*Compared to primaries, caucuses are less representative and more likely to select and ideologically extreme nominee*](http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/61933/1/blogs.lse.ac.uk-Compared%20to%20primaries%20caucuses%20are%20less%20representative%20and%20more%20likely%20to%20select%20an%20ideologically%20ext.pdf) *or* [*Why we should stick with primaries and leave caucuses behind.*](https://www.sbstatesman.com/2020/03/04/why-we-should-stick-with-primaries-and-leave-caucuses-behind/)   1. *Why the Caucus System is Better:*   <http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/why-the-caucus-system-is-better/>   1. *Primaries vs. Caucuses: A Handy Primer:* <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2012/mar/02/primaries-caucuses-handy-primer> 2. Written analysis form 3. Evidence form for debate. |
| **LEARNING PLAN:**   1. Begin with a brief discussion of the history of the Iowa caucuses (see day 1-history of caucuses). State the Democrat and Republican parties have different methods of caucusing. Show video for Democrat and Republican caucuses-found in “materials.” Discuss similarities and differences and strengths and weaknesses of each. Creating a T-chart on the board might be helpful for students. 2. **Focus: Prep for Debate** Much like the debate lesson on *Day 1: History of Iowa Caucuses*, have students complete a think-pair-share by passing out a notecard to each student and on ONE side have the student answer this question: Which do you prefer-primaries or caucuses? Why/why not? They might not have much background on primaries, but the teacher can state primaries are secret ballots completed by individuals to vote for nominees-much like the voting process in an election. Give 5 minutes for students to write answers. Once finished, have students pair up with a partner and share their responses. If time allows, invite individual students to share answers and discuss as a whole class-try to find students who disagreed with each other and why to generate further discussion. 3. **Focus: Analysis of Evidence.** The next few steps were generated applying ideas from Choices by Brown University and Structured Academic Controversy by Carleton College. 4. There are three different articles for students to analyze; *randomly* pass out ONE article to each student. Students will *individually* read and analyze article given. Use either NARA’s written analysis form or the one provided with this lesson. Do NOT tell the student which article/side/point of view they are given ahead of time. Let them figure this out on own. 5. *Why Primaries Are Better Than Caucuses* <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/the-fix/wp/2015/04/20/why-primaries-are-better-than-caucuses/> 6. *Why the Caucus System is Better* <http://www.seattletimes.com/opinion/why-the-caucus-system-is-better/> 7. *Primaries vs. Caucuses: A Handy Primer* <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2012/mar/02/primaries-caucuses-handy-primer> 8. **Focus: Gathering evidence for debate.** Once students have *individually* completed the document analysis form, have students find other students gather into groups according to which article they read (two groups). If students were assigned the article, *Primaries vs. Caucuses,* divide and assign each student to the pro-caucus or the pro-primary side. Students should bring their analysis paper with them. Students will discuss the evidence/reasons why the author supported caucuses or primaries. A recorder will be selected to record on a separate sheet of paper the author’s reasons. Each group should have a list of 5-6 reasons. They can add other additional reasons they created too, but they must have evidence from the articles included. 9. These two larger groups will also select a different person to record an opening statement for the debate. You can now explain to students they will be debating the merits of Iowa’s caucuses. The large groups will need to prioritize their evidence and reasons and assign each person a speaking part. 10. Once the groups have opening statements and have assigned speaking parts and prioritized their evidence, have the students sit across from one another. Pass to each student an “evidence form” to complete while the other side is speaking. This might also be a good time to discuss rules/expectations of debate such as being respectful of each other, disagreeing with the other position’s position/ideas and NOT being critical of the person, listening to everyone’s ideas etc. 11. **Debate.** Allow each group to present the opening statements. You can choose for one side to present all of its evidence at once or go back and forth between the two groups. It is up to you. I find it easier for students to follow along if one side gives all of its evidence first. Remember, the key for the students is to argue the side *they have been assigned.* The students might not agree with their assigned side, but it is essential they argue that side. Once the evidence has been presented, give 7-10 minutes for each side to gather and discuss the opposing side’s evidence so they can refute it. 12. Gather back together in 2 groups and do a coin toss to see which side goes first. The first side will debate a point from the opposing side. The opposing side will have time to answer. Continue to conduct as a formal debate. The teacher should play a minimal role in this debate-only as an observer. Allow the debate to continue as necessary. Students may also choose to give closing statements as well. 13. **Application.** Once the debate has run its course, have students go back to their individual seats and look at their note cards again. Ask students to flip over the notecard and on the back side, write a new, critical answer to the question from the beginning: Which do you prefer-primaries or caucuses? Why/why not? Remind student it is OKAY for them to change their minds. Remind them to apply the NEW evidence and information they learned from the articles and the class debate to determine a more thorough, comprehensive answer. Now they should back their responses with concrete evidence. This may take longer than the original 5 minutes given; it could be assigned as homework or as a fuller, one-page paper response. To show to other students across the state, take a photo of their new reasoning from the notecard an upload it to www.facebook.com/Caucus101 (You can also give a prize or extra point in awarding the best debate group or individual). |
| **Homework:** Who do you support? form |
| **Additional Resources:**  <http://www.iowagop.org/>  <http://iowademocrats.org/>  <http://www.iptv.org/iowapathways> |