

Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

STORY

Democrats Fight on for Nomination, McCain Seals GOP Spot, 03/05/08

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/jan-june08/mccain_3-05.html

Estimated Time: One 45-minute class period with possible extension

[Student Worksheet](#) (reading comprehension and discussion questions without answers)

PROCEDURE

1. WARM UP

Use initiating questions to introduce the topic and find out how much your students know.

2. MAIN ACTIVITY

Have students read NewsHour Extra's feature story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions on the student handout.

3. DISCUSSION

Use discussion questions to encourage students to think about how the issues outlined in the story affect their lives and express and debate different opinions.

INITIATING QUESTIONS

1. What are the most recent developments in the 2008 presidential election?

2. What are the differences between the Democratic and Republican nominating processes?

3. Are you interested in the presidential race? Why or why not?

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS – [Student Worksheet](#)

1. What happened Tuesday, March 4 in Ohio and Texas?

ANSWER

John McCain has clinched the Republican presidential nomination Tuesday and can now focus on the whole nation, while Democrats must continue state-by-state, spending more money and running ads that criticize each other as attention shifts to the Pennsylvania primary on April 22.

Hillary Clinton, facing a do-or-die test, scored a critical victory in Ohio Tuesday night and fought a close battle in Texas that cut into Barack Obama's lead in the race for delegates to the Democratic convention.

2. Who supported Hillary Clinton in Ohio?

ANSWER

Clinton, who had seen her core voters slipping away in a recent spate of contests, garnered widespread support from lower wage earners, union members, white women and voters who were concerned about the economy.

3. Who is Mike Huckabee? What did he do Tuesday night after the results in Ohio and Texas?

ANSWER

McCain's last remaining major rival, former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, made good on his promise to drop out of the race when another candidate reached the nomination-clinching 1,191-delegate mark.

McCain managed to stave off the more conservative Huckabee, the better-funded Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, the television star and former Senator Fred Thompson and former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani -- known internationally from his leadership after Sept. 11.

4. How did Obama react to Clinton's win in Ohio and Rhode Island?

ANSWER

Obama, who won 11 straight victories in February, was surely disappointed that the contest was not over, but said he was confident he would be the Democratic nominee.

"No matter what happens tonight, we have nearly the same delegate lead as we did this morning, and we are on our way to winning this nomination," Obama told supporters in Texas.

5. What are super delegates and how might they figure into the Democratic primary?

ANSWER

Even before the first results began to trickle in, the Obama team was outlining the basic math problem underlying the Clinton candidacy.

According to forecasts in the remaining 10 states still to vote, the Obama campaign and most analysts expect that unless Clinton is able to decisively win in all of those contests, she would remain behind Obama in pledged delegates through the remainder of the race.

If those projections hold up, the Democratic nomination would come down to super delegates — around 800 high ranking party officials who can vote as they please -- and a legal battle over whether to count the Florida and Michigan contests, which were officially disqualified after the states moved up their primary dates against national party orders.

Ronald Reagan in his bid for the White House and helped him win his first presidential election.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. How will the fact that John McCain can now run as the Republican candidate affect the overall race?

2. If you were a super delegate, how would you vote? How would you make your decision? [Consider how your state voted, how your district voted, your personal opinion, public opinion]

3. Research what Senators Clinton and Obama are doing to woo super delegates. Do you think this is good for our democracy? Research why the Democrats created the super delegate system—do you think it serves the goals for which it was intended?

4. What is the difference between a winner take all contest and a proportional contest? Which do you think is fairer? Which is more effective?

5. Make a prediction about the next few months: the primaries, the conventions and Election Day on November 4. What do you think will happen? Your class can make a time capsule with the predictions and open it November 5th – there could even be a prize for the person who best predicted the result!

Extension Activity

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra (extra@newshour.org). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.