

Using NewsHour Extra Feature Stories

STORY

Obama Solidifies Delegate Lead after N.C., Indiana Primaries, 05/07/08

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/jan-june08/obama_5-07.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. Why is the Democratic presidential nominee still not known?

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

3. Has your opinion of either Senator Hillary Clinton or Senator Barack Obama changed because of anything you've heard in the news? If so, why?

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS – [Student Worksheet](#)

1. Who won the Indiana and North Carolina primaries?

ANSWER

Obama won North Carolina by a margin of 56 percent to 42 percent. Clinton won Indiana with 51 percent of the vote to Obama's 49 percent.

2. How many delegates does Obama need now to win the nomination?

ANSWER

Obama secured the support of at least another 94 delegates to the convention in Denver this summer, moving him within 200 delegates of the nomination, according to the Associated Press.

3. What controversy has the Obama campaign been dealing with?

ANSWER

The win in North Carolina was Obama's first since remarks made by his former pastor that were seen as unpatriotic and inflammatory made the rounds on YouTube and the nightly news.

4. What is the Clinton campaign trying to do to boost her delegate count?

ANSWER

The campaign is intensifying pressure on party leaders to include results from the disqualified primaries of Michigan and Florida

5. Why is there controversy over counting delegates from Michigan and Florida?

ANSWER

Both states violated Democratic Party rules by holding their primaries too early in the year. The states had hoped to increase their influence on the nomination but were punished by the party, which said before the vote that it would not count their delegates at the convention.

Clinton "won" both states, but neither candidate campaigned in the states. The Obama campaign has said the results are not an accurate reflection of what a real vote in the states would be, as he did not even appear on the Michigan ballot.

6. What issue are the most voters concerned about and why?

ANSWER

The one trend that has continued to build is growing concern about the struggling American economy. Some two-thirds of voters in Indiana and North Carolina cited the economy as their primary issue— twice as many as in earlier contests.

One voter, Republican Mark Dexter, told the Indianapolis Star that Clinton's proposal to lift the 18-cent federal gas tax was a major reason for voting for her.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. Do you think the results of the Indiana and North Carolina primaries are significant? Why or why not?

2. What are the pros and cons of counting delegates from Michigan and Florida?

3. In his speech Obama said he disagrees with the idea that the Democratic party "is inalterably divided - that Senator Clinton's supporters will not support me, and that my supporters will not support her." Do you agree? How has the long primary affected your opinion of the candidates and how do you think it will affect the Democrats chances in November? Ask parents or other people you know who plan to vote what they think about the long primary.

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.