Nebraska State Geoinquiries

Nebraskans at the polls

Summary: News agencies often like to classify states as "red states" or "blue states," but often understanding the political learnings of a state are much more complicated. Nebraska has been no different, especially during the 2020 General Election for the U.S. Presidency. By completing *Nebraska At the Polls* students will investigate voting patterns across the state, and hopefully understand a need for civic participation through acts like voting.

Nebraska State Social Studies Standards

This activity has been designed to meet the following Nebraska State Standards...

Primary:	Secondary:
SS HS.1.2.a Investigate how individuals and groups can effectively use the structure and functions of various levels of government to shape policy.	SS HS.3.5.a Apply geographic knowledge and skills to interpret the past and present in order to plan for the future.

Lesson Objectives:

By completing this activity students will have the ability to...

- *evaluate voting patterns for different portions of Nebraska by interpreting data from the 2020 Presidential General Election.*
- *identify areas where Democrats and Republicans have support bases and determine how that information could be used to plan for future elections.*

URL:https://arcg.is/LGarf

Activity:

Follow these steps to complete the Geoinquiry

🌎= A Mapping function students will need to complete

📘= A piece of information or background students will need to know

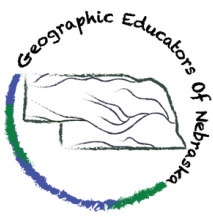❓ = A question, or set of questions, for students to answer

Ask a Question: *How can we track Nebraska's voting patterns geographically?*

❓In your mind is Nebraska a "red state" or a "blue state" when it comes to politics? _____
❓What makes a state a red state or a blue state?

_____

📘A geographic inquiry question is rooted in the questions of "where?", "Why there?", "Why care?", or "what can be done to fix it?"
❓ What type of geographic question could you ask as a starting point to help determine whether Nebraska is a "red" state or a "blue" state?

_____

_____

Collect New Information: *What can we learn about Nebraska politics from examining geographic data from the 2020 Presidential Election?*

🌎Click the link above to open the web map

🌎Take a moment to navigate around the web map by zooming and scrolling through the map, and by clicking on some of the different circles to see what information is included in the popups

❓ How does this map present information about the 2020 Presidential election?

_____

❓ Based on this map does it appear that Nebraska is more of a red state or a blue state

_____

Analyze for Trends and Patterns: *What voting patterns are evident in the state of Nebraska?*

🌎In the Details sidebar on the left side of the map open up the contents menu to view all the layers that are included in the map

🌎Hover your cursor over the *2020 General Election by County (Nebraska)* layer and select the Cluster Points Icon (4th icon) to open the Cluster Menu. Try moving the slider around to see how that changes the map.

❓ What pattern is revealed when there is more clustering?_____

When there is less clustering? _____

🌎Make sure the clustering slider is all the way towards less and select ok to close the menu.

🌎In the content menu deselect the check box *2020 General Election by County (Nebraska)* to turn the layer off, and turn on the *Nebraska Electoral Voting Districts* and the *Nebraska General Election Results (by Country)* layers.

📰Nebraska is not a "winner take all" state, in that the state's 5 electoral votes can be divided. Two of the five electoral votes go to the overall winner in the state, then the remaining three votes are given to the winner in each of the congressional districts

❓ Based on this map, how does it appear Nebraska's Electoral votes were divided?

_____

Share what You Have Found: *Does Nebraska lean politically one way or the other?*

❓ Where did Trump seem to have the strongest support?

_____

❓ Where did Biden have the most support?

_____

🌎Sort through the different layers provided in the webmap to analyze for trends and patterns from the 2020 Presidential General Election.

❓ Based on the data included in the different maps layers is Nebraska a "Republican" state, a "Democrat" state, or a mixture of both? Explain your answer using data from the map layers

_____

_____

Develop an Action Plan: *What are the potential "battleground" areas where either party could pick up votes?*

❓ Which county/counties do Democrats appear to have the best chance of flipping them from supporting Republicans in 2020? _____

❓ Which county do Republicans appear to have the best chance of flipping their support from the Democrats? _____

❓ In Which Electoral District should both parties focus their attention?

_____

❓ Why is this good knowledge for political parties to have when it comes to campaigning?

_____

_____

Necessary Skill(s):

Use these directions to help you complete the skill in the **Analyze for Trends and Patterns** *section*

Performing a Cluster Analysis
- In the Contents menu in the Details pain hover your mouse over the layer you want to perform the cluster on
- New options should appear; move your cursor over each of the symbols to see what each of them do
- Select the Cluster Points symbol to open the cluster menu
- Move the slide back and forth to cluster the points more or less
- When finished, select the ok button to close the cluster menu

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Sources and Additional Readings:

Be sure to check out these resources to learn more
- 270 to Win (2020), *Split Electoral Votes in Maine and Nebraska*, https://www.270towin.com/content/split-electoral-votes-maine-and-nebraska/
- Nebraska Secretary of State (2020), *Official Results: General Election - November 3rd, 2020*,https://electionresults.nebraska.gov/resultsCTY.aspx?type=PRS&rid=11232&osn=90&map=CTY

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