

2025 MCAS Sample Student Work and Scoring Guide

Grade 8 Civics

Question 7: Constructed-Response

Reporting Category: Rights & Responsibilities

Practice Category: Explanations and Reasoning

Standard: [8.T4.5](#) - Describe how a democracy provides opportunities for citizens to participate in the political process through elections, political parties, and interest groups.

Item Description: Evaluate data related to a political campaign to explain a characteristic of presidential campaigns.

This item can be found in the released item sets on the [MCAS Resource Center](#).

Question

Using the information in Source 3, explain one reason it was important for the candidates to visit different states during the presidential campaign.

Continue to the following page to see Source 3. Continue to page 3 to see the sample student responses for this question.

Source 3

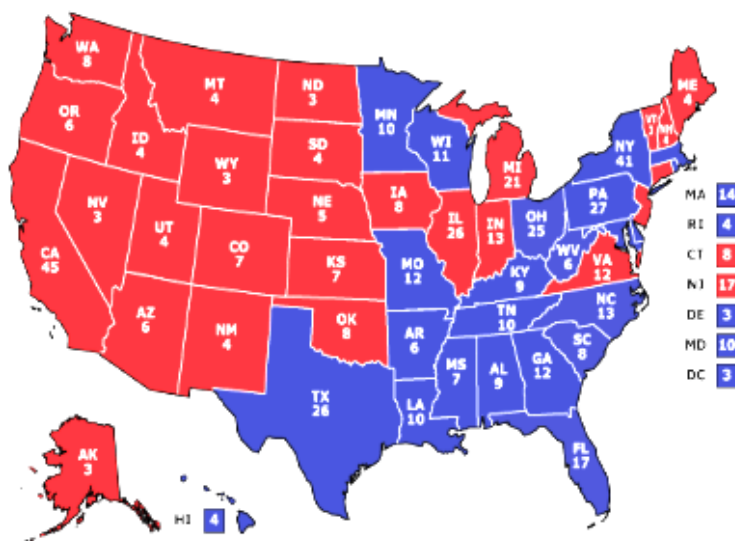
The following tables and map show the results of the 1976 congressional and presidential elections.

**Members of U.S. Congress by Political Party
Based on the 1976 Election Results**

Political Party	House of Representatives	Senate
Democratic	292	61
Republican	143	38
Independent	0	1

1976 Presidential Election Results

Candidate	Political Party	Electoral Votes	Popular Votes
■ Jimmy Carter	Democratic	297	40,825,839
■ Gerald Ford	Republican	240	39,147,770



Score Point 1A*

It was important during the 1976 presidential campaigns to visit different states because you needed to win a states popular vote to earn its electoral college votes. Larger populated states were needed the most because the more populated states had more electoral college votes. Although New York is a smaller state compared to Texas, it still had 15 more electoral votes than Texas. Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford had a similar amount of states won, but Jimmy Carter had campaigned in the more populated areas and won more electoral votes from it. Overall it is extremely important to visit states and campaign so that you can win a states electoral college votes to be elected president. Without visiting states and campaigning your ideas and improvements for the country, than people in that state will not vote for you because they do not have much knowledge on what you believe in or stand for. It is extremely important and needed to interact with the people and visit states to campaign.

Score Point 1B*

It's important for caandidates to vist different states because, in the table above it shows that Jimmy Carter visited Florida and Texas more than his opponant Gerald Ford. This makes a huge impact because when we then look, at source 3 Texas and Florida is in blue. This means when a candidate vists different states more, they will more likely get more votes by the people, for gaining their love, and trust.

Score Point 0

It is important on going to different states because you need many opinions. You should want to have different perspectives on what citizens think, their overview.

*Letters are used to distinguish between sample student responses that earned the same score (e.g., 1A and 1B).