Secondary and Syndicated Research

An important piece of information for all presidential candidates is where they are ranked in the polls. So this is the first place I would turn to. I would start with polls released by Quinnipiac, CNN, USA Today, etc. and see where Cruz ranks among his fellow candidates. Another way to look at these polls and gauge a national average is by viewing aggregations. Aggregation sites give you an average of all polls, which is more representative of public opinion than just one poll. For this information, I would turn to Real Clear Politics or Huff Post Pollster.

After looking at national polling numbers, it's important to also look into state polling numbers. I would start with the traditionally important states like Iowa and New Hampshire, using the same aggregation sites, and then look into where he stands in his home state of Texas. It's a long respected notion that if a politician can't win in his home state, it's hard to win in other places, because if Cruz isn't popular among your own constituents, that will reflect poorly on him and his campaign. I want to find that he is ranked highly in the polls both nationally and in each state. Ideally, I would like to see Cruz close to Trump's numbers, or with a firm hold at second place. By this, I mean that he has a lead that is outside statistical error and/or within statistical error of Donald Trump.

While many voters think that polling numbers are the most important part of a candidate's campaign, another important aspect when researching public opinion of Cruz is his favorability. Favorability polls indicate whether the public's overall sentiment towards a candidate is positive, negative or neutral. For these polls, I would look into his national favorability, and his favorability in Texas. At this point in the election cycle, his favorability in Texas is almost more important than his national favorability. This is because Cruz has served as a senator for the state of Texas since 2012. His constituents have seen his policies firsthand and these numbers can be predictive of what his favorability will be nationally as the country learns more about his policy platform. The University of Texas at

Austin has "The Texas Politics Project" that contains Texas polling numbers as well as favorability polls, so I think this would be a reputable source. Ideally, Cruz's favorability numbers would be at least at 50 percent. This would show that at least half of his constituents agree with the things he's doing. Anything below that and his favorability starts to get shaky because typically people aren't going to vote for someone they don't like.

Outside of the polls, I would look into historical voting trends. Cruz is following in the footsteps of other Christian Conservative candidates like Rick Santorum and Mike Huckabee. It would be beneficial to look into where these candidates were in the polls after the primary season in past election cycles. This could be predictive of where Cruz may end up. For example, if Huckabee saw a sudden increase polls late in the primary season, the Cruz campaign could look into what method the campaign was utilizing when he saw this surge in poll numbers. If Cruz were to implement these changes sooner, it could mean a larger surge in poll numbers and might even win him the nomination.

These findings would play an important role in how to run Cruz's campaign as well as what kind of information to research further using other methods. For example, if after looking into favorability, Cruz's numbers are not what we expected them to be, we can hold focus groups; conduct surveys on Cruz's policies and public conduct; as well as research on what makes a candidate favorable to the American public. Secondary research serves as a roadmap for our research plan and a good point of comparison for our primary findings.