

Utah's Legislative Branch: How a Bill Becomes a Law

Summary

Enduring Understanding:

Students will understand the steps by which a bill becomes a law.

Essential Questions:

1. What role does the legislative branch play in whether a bill becomes a law?
2. What role does the executive branch play in whether a bill becomes a law?
3. What role does the judicial branch play in interpreting a law or deciding whether a law is constitutional or unconstitutional?

Instructional Procedures

Utah's Legislative Branch: How a Bill Becomes a Law

Grade: 7

Subjects: Utah Studies, Government

Overview of Lesson Plan: In this lesson, students explore the steps by which a bill becomes a law in Utah.

Suggested Time Allowance: 1 hour

Objectives:

Students will:

1. Define what a "bill" is.
2. Define what a "law" is.
3. Research how a bill becomes a law within the three branches of Utah's government.
4. Synthesize their research and discussion in a classroom representation of government.

Activities/ Procedures

1. WARM-UP/DO NOW: Students respond to the following questions in their journals, written on the board prior to class: "What law would you like to see enacted? Could you be arrested if you violated this law? Could you go to jail if you violated this law? Why do you think that law is needed? What chance do you think that law has passing the Utah State Legislature? Why or why not?"
2. As a class, hold elections. Positions to be voted upon will include classroom members of a Utah State Legislature (House of Representatives and Senate), Governor of the State of Utah and the teacher should appoint members of the Judicial Branch including members to the Utah Supreme Court.
3. Once the students are divided into the three branches of Utah's classroom government, explain to the students they will need to determine their roles in allowing, or not allowing, a bill to become a law. Using all available classroom materials, each classroom branch of government should determine their role in this process and explain their role to the class.
4. The classroom House of Representatives and Senate will then prepare and introduce bills. The nature of the bills will be selected by the classroom Legislature from the ideas generated from the journal reflection at the beginning of class.
5. Once the bill has passed the classroom House of Representatives and Senate, it goes to the classroom Governor who either signs the bill into law or exercises his or her veto power. If the bill is vetoed, it returns to the classroom House and Senate for a 2/3 majority vote.
6. Discuss the ramifications of the laws which have been passed in the classroom legislature with the students who comprise the Judicial Branch of Utah's classroom government. Specifically address how those laws may come under judicial review, and what may happen to them under judicial review.

Evaluation / Assessment:

Students will be evaluated based on written journal entries, participation in class and group

discussions, and participation in class and group activities.

Authors

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