

How a Bill Becomes a Law

Summary

After completing several activities students will be able to explain how a bill becomes a law.

Enduring Understanding:

The constitution established principles that guides the government decision making ability providing the framework through which we can evaluate our nation's progress and suggest means for improvement.

Essential Question:

Why are bills and laws important?

Main Core Tie

Social Studies - 5th Grade

[Standard 3 Objective 1](#)

Time Frame

5 class periods of 30 minutes each

Group Size

Large Groups

Life Skills

Social & Civic Responsibility

Materials

Materials

Schoolhouse Rock Video - "I'm Just a Bill"

Chart Paper for each group

Markers

Worksheet from "Kids in the House" website

Background for Teachers

The teacher needs to understand the Constitution and the process of passing laws in the United States Congress .

Student Prior Knowledge

The students will need to understand that the Constitution serves as an umbrella for all of the laws that are passed in the United States.

Intended Learning Outcomes

The students will be able to describe the process of passing a law.

Instructional Procedures

Day One:

Brainstorm with students a list of issues that concern them about the environment, public health, civic rights, economic disparities, etc. List these on the chalkboard. Hold a discussion regarding the topics listed on the board.

Ask the students "Suppose that you wanted to have congress pass a law related to your concern. What are the steps that would be taken to pass a law?"

Pre-assessment - Have the students take out a sheet of paper and write a paragraph outlining how laws are made. Collect student responses and evaluate for understanding.

Day Two

Show Schoolhouse Rock - "I'm Just a Bill" Watch the video once. This video is available on TeacherTube, from most district media libraries and may be available in your own school's media library. Divide the students into groups and assign them to create a flow chart that outlines how a bill becomes a law. Show the video a second time.

Allow the students to complete the flow chart on chart paper. Provide additional resources as necessary.

Groups share flow charts with the class.

Day Three - Five

(Modify as necessary)

The web site Kids in the House (listed below) provides a worksheet and outline that allows students to follow the passing of a bill in the United State Congress. It links to the Library of Congress - Thomas site. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the Library of Congress - Thomas site before giving the assignment to students.

Assessment Plan

Pre/Post Lesson Assessment - The students will write a paragraph that describes the process of passing a law.

Bibliography

Schoolhouse Rocks - "I'm Just a Bill"

Authors

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