

TITLE OF LESSON

American Government Unit 2 Lesson 22 – Model Congress Introduction
What is a model congress?

TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – History 12.3, 12.4, 12.6

MATERIALS

Current Events 4 – Student Page
Teacher Notes Lesson 22 – Teacher page
Model Congress Requirement 4f – Student Page
Sample Completed Bill – Student Page (attached to **Model Congress Requirement 4f**)
Political Party Platform – Student page
Model Congress Media Requirement 4f – Student page
Model Congress Lobbyist Requirement 4f – Student page
Sample Newspaper – Student Page
Official Record of Bills – Teacher page
House Bill – Student page
Senate Bill – Student page
Model Congress Binder – Teacher Created
Daily Record Poster – Teacher Created
50 \$100 bills – Teacher Created
50 500-vote sheets – Teacher Created

LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To examine the goal and purpose of the Model Congress Activity
 - To connect the Political Beliefs Matrix and creation of political parties to how a Bill becomes a law.
 - To conduct an election of party leaders and developing a party platform.
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FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial complete homework assignments. Pass back graded work and have students place in the appropriate section of their binders.
 - 2) **Agenda** – Have students copy the goal, agenda and homework onto the next clean page in a notebook
 - 3) Warm-up – Students should take out **Journal 6** and choose one advantage and disadvantage that they could share with the class.
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. **Brainstorm** – Have students contribute the advantages and disadvantages to having a two-party system in the United States, explaining their validity as they go. Write each original idea on the board and have students copy these into their notebooks. When concluded explain that for the next 10 lessons students will be participating in a two-party democratic system exactly like the one here in the US. At the end of this activity (and probably even during it) they will be able to see whether the advantages outweigh the disadvantages or vice versa.
2. **Model Congress Set-up** – Explain to students that for the next 10 Lessons they will be doing an experiential exercise where they will be pretending to be Representatives or Senators and attempting to pass their own Bills into law (see **Teacher Notes Lesson 22** for detailed set-up information). Pass out the **Model Congress Requirement 4f** to the students and go over it carefully. As you begin to discuss how to write a Bill, you

should pass out a blank Bill (either Senate or House depending on the class) so that students can see what parts they will need to complete. After you have finished discussing the entire requirement sheet, introduce the students to the Media, Lobbyists and Legislative Clerk and briefly explain their roles.

3. Group Activity – Call students’ attention to the Political Beliefs Matrix poster in the classroom. Tell them that you divided the class into two main political parties (just like the US) based on their personal beliefs and using the matrix to divide them (Teacher Note – do this prior to today’s lesson and try to make it as even as possible. If you feel particularly gamely you can also create a small third party of just a few students). Show them an overhead with the list of members for each political party (a Liberal Party, a Conservative Party and, if you choose a Third Party). Explain that students will have three main tasks today when they move into their party meetings. First, they must select party leaders (this is very important for the majority party because this leader will automatically become the Majority Leader and have the power to choose the order of Bill discussion and debates when there is a Floor Action). Second, they must choose a party symbol or image. Third, they must decide on a party platform (two issues – one social and one economic). Show them the **Political Party Platform** handout and when students understand what is expected of them have them to get together with their other party members and organize their desks into a circle. Give one copy of the Political Party Platform sheet to each group.
 4. Individual Meeting – While the parties are meeting it is important for the teacher to meet with the Lobbyists to review their required activities, answer questions, give them their materials and get them started.
 5. Homework – It will probably take another Lesson for students to adequately complete their **Political Party Platform** sheet. This is to be expected. With a couple of minutes left in class, pass out the **Current Events 4** sheet and remind students to begin writing their Bills. Also, remind the Media student that their first newspaper is due tomorrow. Pass out **Current Events 4**.
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HOMEWORK

1. Complete **Current Events 4**.
 2. Write Model Congress Bill on your GIP issue. Due Lesson 24
 3. Continue service requirement work.
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GROUP ROLES

None

DOCUMENTATION FOR PORTFOLIO

Unit 1

Action Plan

Persuasive Essay or Flash Argument: Why should government care...?

American Government Unit 1 Final Exam

Unit 2

Political Beliefs Project