

**NOTE:** When students enter the class today and in Lesson 29 they should be sitting in their committees. Have desks/tables arranged accordingly.

TITLE OF LESSON

American Government Unit 2 Lesson 28 – Party and Committee Meetings  
*How does democracy work?*

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TIME ESTIMATE FOR THIS LESSON

One class period

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ALIGNMENT WITH STANDARDS

California – History 12.3, 12.4, 12.8, 12.10

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MATERIALS

Committee Folders (including the Committee Reports and all Bills that have not been voted on) – Teacher Created  
**Current Events Presentation** – Student page  
**Model Congress Study Guide Requirement 6b** – Student page

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LESSON OBJECTIVES

- To experience the process of democracy by attempting to pass Bills into law
  - To develop and pursue strategies toward getting a Bill passed into law
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FOCUS AND MOTIVATE STUDENTS – WARM-UP ACTIVITY

- 1) Homework Check – Stamp/initial complete homework assignments. Collect any newly completed Bills, quickly assign them a committee, and pass them off to the Legislative Clerk to record and distribute them to the appropriate committee. Newspapers should be distributed by the Media. 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) **Current Events** – Collect the overhead transparencies from the Current Events presenters for today. Below the goal/agenda, copy the titles for three current events stories that they have chosen. Have students copy these and prepare to take notes
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ACTIVITIES – INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP

1. **Current Events Presentations** – Have students come to the front of the class one at a time to present their articles. At the end of each presentation, the students should turn in their **Current Events Presentation**, stapled to a copy of the news article. Grades and comments should be written on the back of the **Current Events Presentation** sheet and returned to the students the next lesson. Choose the presenters for the next day that current events are due and give them a copy of the **Current Events Presentation** sheet to complete.
2. **Study Guide** – Tell students that they are going to have a test on political parties and the Model Congress in Lesson 32. To study for the test they should use the **Model Congress Study Guide Requirement 6b** sheet. Pass this out to them now. Briefly review it (it should be self-explanatory) and explain that their committee groups will be their study groups for the test (be sure to assign the Lobbyists, Media and Legislative Clerk to groups, or have them make a separate group together). Have students divide up the study guide into equal parts and explain that their study notes for each part will be checked and due on Lesson 30. When each group has completed this task have them put away the sheets.

3. Extra Credit Information – Explain to students that today they will be working the remainder of the class in their committee groups to discuss, debate, and vote on newly arrived Bills. Many students, though, may be feeling frustrated as they realize that the chances for the Bills getting passed into law may be slim (there are limited options available to them other than pleading with their party leaders to pass their bills or going to the media to write articles to put pressure on the leadership). Explain that there are opportunities for extra credit in this activity. The first is to participate in debates and discussions when there are floor votes. The second is to form a *caucus* and use it to pass Bills into law. Tell them that a *caucus* (like the Black Caucus, the Women’s Caucus, or the California Caucus) is a group of representatives that have a common concern that transcends the political party structure. This common concern could be based on ethnic, gender, region, or religious issues (or more) and it can be used effectively to create a powerful group to pass Bills through Congress. To form a caucus, the students need to inform the Media of their membership, their common concern and any legislation (Bills) that the caucus is sponsoring. A caucus is solely extra credit and must be done on students’ own time or in the limited times available in class.
4. Committee Meetings – After discussing extra credit opportunities, focus the students on the task at hand – to discuss and vote on remaining Bills in committee. When students understand what they need to get accomplished, have them get started. While committees are completing their work, it is important to check with the Media to make sure that the Lobbyists are correctly notifying them of where the money is going. If not, this is illegal and the newspaper should have articles “outing” these individuals.
5. Homework – With a few minutes left in class, collect the Committee Folders and remind students of their homework.

Teacher Note – Be sure to go through the folders and update the Official Record of Bills sheet as well as the Daily Record poster.

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#### HOMEWORK

1. Complete study guide notes for test.
  2. Write a new Senate Bill for the Model Congress
  3. Continue service requirement work.
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#### GROUP ROLES

None

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#### 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  
Ideological Plan  
GIP Question Sheet  
Service Requirement Check-Ins