

How A Bill Becomes A Law in the Classroom

Unit: Students will learn how the Legislature works, how bills become laws, complete the “How A Bill Becomes A Law” activity, and then students will create their own bills and vote them into law in the classroom. (Please refer to the How-a-Bill-Becomes-a-Law Sheet found under “Information and Glossaries.” to print for students)

Lesson 1:

In one class period, students will be given a “Bill to Law” sheet to study the process of how a bill becomes a law. They will also learn what Senators and Representatives role in state government is and how they come up with bills. Homework: Study the bill-to-law process.

Lesson 2:

Students will complete the “How A Bill Becomes A Law” activity to reinforce the process of how a bill becomes a law. The students will discuss the process. Homework: Each student creates an idea or “bill” for a new classroom rule/law and gives their “bill” a title.

Lesson 3:

Students and the teacher will create “committees.” The teacher will assign students to each committee. Then the class will take turns sharing their new classroom rules or “bills,” and together the class and teacher will assign the “bills” to each committee. Homework: Students will define what a legislative committee is and its role in the legislative process.

Lesson 4:

With the students and “bills” assigned to committees, this class period will have the committees meet and discuss the “bills.” Students will talk about the pros and cons of each bill, and by the end of the class, they should have two or three top “bills” chosen to discuss with the class. Homework: The students in each committee will copy down their top two or three “bills” to take home and will create talking points (pros and cons) about the bills to share with the class.

Lesson 5 and 6:

Each committee will share their talking points with each other and then pick a representative to present one bill each. The teacher will have each representative present each bill and then the students will ask questions about the bill being presented. May take two class periods. Once all of the bills have been discussed, the teacher will write each bill on the board and the students will vote yes or no. If the majority vote yes, then the teacher will sign the bill into law or veto. If the majority vote no, then the bill has failed. Homework: Students will write about what they learned and their takeaways from this unit.