



GRADE 6+

The Legislative Branch | Lesson Plan

What is the role of the Legislative Branch and how is it structured?

Students learn about the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the Legislative Branch of the United States. They'll join Uncle Sam as he quizzes kid contestants about the topic and complete a fun follow-along worksheet.

Learning Objectives:

- Define the roles/responsibilities of the Legislative Branch, including passing bills into laws, declaring war, and approving presidential nominations.
- Recognize that Congress consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives.
- Explain the differences between the Senate and the House of Representatives.
- Identify key leaders of each house in Congress.
- Know the process for how a bill becomes law.
- Understand the importance of balancing power between multiple groups of people and how representative government protects the interests of all Americans.

Key Vocabulary:

- **The Legislative Branch:** A branch of the U.S. government which consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives, collectively known as Congress. Its main responsibility is to propose and pass bills into laws.
- **Bill:** A proposed law. A bill becomes a law with majority support of both houses of Congress and the signature of the President.
- **The House of Representatives:** A chamber of Congress consisting of 435 members that represent a state's individual districts. How many members a state has in the House of Representatives is determined by its population.
- **The Senate:** A chamber of Congress consisting of 100 senators, two from each state, regardless of population size.

Educational Standards: Civics, American Values, U.S. History

What You'll Need

- Video: [Street Smarts: The Legislative Branch](#)



Scan to watch video.

- Worksheet: *Street Smarts: The Legislative Branch* ([Download PDF](#))

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm Up: What do you know about the Legislative Branch? (10 mins.)

1. Ask: *If you had the power to pass a law that everyone in the country had to follow, what would you pass? Raise your hand and share it with the class.* (Jot down on the board the student answers).
2. Vote: Pick one law that the students suggested and have them vote on whether or not they would pass this law. Determine based on the majority if this law passes or not.
3. Discuss: *Do you think this is a fair way to decide a law? Would you change your vote if you knew you were representing more people than yourself when you voted? Who has the power to decide laws in our own country?*
4. Display a copy of *Street Smarts: The Legislative Branch* Worksheet (side with blanks) on a screen in the classroom.
5. Call on students to read each statement aloud/preview the statements before watching the video.

Watch and Complete: (25 mins.)

1. State: *Let's play a fun game to learn more about the Legislative Branch.*
2. Watch the video.
3. Pause after each question and allow students to try to answer.
4. Play the video to reveal if they were correct or incorrect.
5. Continue this process throughout the whole video.

Wrap-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Allow students 5 minutes to complete the worksheet independently.
2. Collect as formative assessment or discuss in class.

Don't have time for the full lesson? Quick Activity (15 mins.)

Distribute the worksheet and allow students to complete it while they follow along with the video.