

Unit 2: Legislative Branch Study Guide

1. What type of legislature does the U.S. have? Explain.

Bicameral- 2 Houses- House of Representatives (based on population) and Senate (equal representation- 2 per state)

2. What are the qualifications for election to Senate?
30, 9 years U.S. Citizen, live in state they represent

3. What are the qualifications for election to the House of Representatives?

25, 7 years U.S. Citizen, live in the state they represent

4. Who are the leaders in the House of Representatives? Explain their roles.

Speaker of the House (recognizes or ignores members wishing to speak appoints committee members schedules house bills, refers bills to proper committee) , **Majority Leader** (helps plan the party's leg. Program, steers important bills through the house, makes sure committees finish work), **Minority Leader** (helps plan party's leg. Program, makes sure committees finish work on important bills), **Whip** (Keep watch on how party members vote, persuade party members to vote the way of the party)

5. Who are the leaders in the Senate? Explain their roles.

VP (President of the Senate- recognizes members, puts questions to a vote, influences Senate through personal contacts), **Majority Leader** (Plans Senate work schedule and agenda, makes sure party members attend important sessions, organizes party support for bills) , **Minority Leader** (develops criticisms of majority party's bills, tries to make their own senators work together), **Whips** (makes sure legislators are present for key votes)

6. What are the 4 types of committees? Explain each.

Standing Committee- Permanent groups that oversee bills that deal with certain kinds of issue

Joint Committee - Committees that are made up of members from the House and the Senate; can be *temporary or permanent*

Conference Committee- A Conference Committee is a temporary committee set up when the House and Senate have passed different versions of the same bill.

Select Committee- Temporary committees that study a specific issue and report their findings to the Senate or the House

7. What are the 3 main purposes of Congressional Committees?
 1. Work is divided in smaller groups
 2. Bills are reviewed and debated then sent to House or Senate
 3. Hold public hearings to inform the public about key problems
8. What are the steps in the process of setting up new congressional districts?

Census (national population count), **Reapportionment** (determining the number of representatives based on population, **Redistrict** (setting up new district lines after reapportionment)—**Gerrymandering** (drawing distinct boundaries to benefit one party) is possible during this process.

9. What are the people in districts represented in Congress called?

Constituents

10. What are the non-legislative powers of Congress?

Executive oversight, Impeachment,

11. Define Expressed Powers and Implied Powers. Give an example of each.

Expressed- Powers of congress written and spelled out in the Constitution

Implied- Powers of congress that are suggested or interpreted from the Constitution

12. What is the process for a bill to become a law?

Bill is introduced → sent to appropriate committee → Goes to the “floor” of the appropriate house (if the bill is passed as two different versions it goes to the conference committee) → President to sign, veto, or do nothing

13. Who makes the rules for how the House and Senate do their jobs?

Both houses make their own rules

14. What are the two branches of Congress? Explain each.

Senate- upper house, equal representation (2 reps from each state)

House of Representatives- lower house, representation based on population

15. How many years does one term of congress last?
2 years- every 2 years new leadership is chosen
16. What type of vote is needed in both houses of Congress to override a presidential veto of a bill?
2/3 vote
17. What is the seniority system? How did it change it 1971?
The congressman with the longest uninterrupted service is nominated as chairperson
18. What is a filibuster? What is the purpose?
A filibuster is the act of talking a bill to death; the purpose is to prevent action on a bill
19. How are members of Congress influenced to make decisions?
Interest groups, colleagues, party, staff, political action committees, Constituents, Caucuses, Interest groups
20. What are the 3 different roles Representatives have to take when making decisions and voting in the House? Explain each.
Trustee- Representative makes a decision based on his/her personal judgment
Delegate- Representative makes a decision based on his/her constituents
Politico- Representative has to choose which role he/she will take based on certain situations
21. Define Gerrymandering. **The act of drawing district lines to benefit a particular party (HOUSE ONLY)**
22. Define Redistricting. **The process of setting up new district lines after reapportionment. (HOUSE ONLY)**
23. Define Reapportionment. **The process of determining how many representatives based on the population. (HOUSE ONLY)**
24. Define Censure. **A vote of formal disapproval in the SENATE of another senator's actions (SENATE ONLY)**
25. Define Incumbent. **Members who were already in office before an election. (BOTH HOUSES)**