



Teaching about Congress

Best Practices

A Project of the Center on Congress at Indiana University

Mock Senate

for grades 7–12

The Center on Congress at Indiana University
Indiana University
SPEA 316
Bloomington, IN 47405
Phone: (812) 856-4706
Fax: (812) 856-4703
email: congress@indiana.edu

Teaching about Congress: Best Practices Teacher's Guide published by The Center on Congress ©2004. All rights reserved.

Teaching about Congress: Best Practices Teacher's Guide is a project of the Alliance for Representative Democracy:



Center for Civic Education
5146 Douglas Fir Road
Calabasas, CA 91302-1467
(818) 591-9321 • fax (818) 591-9330
cce@civiced.org • www.civiced.org

The Center on Congress at
Indiana University
SPEA 316
Bloomington, IN 47405
(812) 856-4706 • fax (812) 856-4703
congress@indiana.edu •
congress.indiana.edu

Trust for Representative Democracy
National Conference of State
Legislatures
7700 East First Place
Denver, CO 80230-7143
(303) 364-7700 • fax (303) 364-7800
trust@ncsl.org • www.ncsl.org/trust

Teaching about Congress: Best Practices video produced by the Agency for Instructional Technology and WTIU, Bloomington, IN. *Teaching about Congress: Best Practices* Teacher's Guide produced by the Agency for Instructional Technology, Bloomington, IN.

Authorized users of the *Teaching about Congress: Best Practices* video series also have rights to use this electronic guide and print copies, as needed, for classroom use only. No modification whatsoever, retransmission, or reproduction or any other use is permitted without the prior written permission of the publisher. For more information, contact The Center on Congress, congress@indiana.edu.

Table of Contents

Lesson Overview.....	1
Grade Level	1
Student Outcomes.....	1
Standards Correlations	2
Background Readings for Teachers.....	2
Estimated Time.....	3
Prerequisite Studies.....	3
Preparation	3
Classroom Setup.....	3
Teacher Preparation	3
Student Preparation	5
Procedure.....	8
The Mock Senate Debate Simulation	8
Wrap-up Discussion	7
Assessment.....	9
Student Participation Checklist.....	9
Written Work	9
Written Report on the Senate Legislative Process	10
Extending the Learning Experience.....	10
Web Sites and Extension Activities.....	10
Bibliography	11
Appendix A: Video Synopsis	13
Appendix B: Handouts and Optional Reading.....	15

Lesson Overview: Mock Senate

This episode of *Teaching about Congress: Best Practices* describes a lesson created by Carol Conrad, a Government and U.S. History teacher at Twin Lakes High School in Monticello, Indiana. Ms. Conrad's students follow the legislative process from the birth of an idea through the vote on the Senate floor. As she explains:

My main objective for Senior Government is to make class pertinent and interesting while meeting the state standards. Research has shown that many students learn best when actively involved in the process . . . This activity helps develop critical thinking ability by requiring students to research current issues and defend their position.

In the video, you will see how Ms. Conrad's students propose legislation on a topic of interest to them, conduct feasibility studies on the issues, role-play the work of Senate Judicial Subcommittees in selecting bills to take to the floor, and then simulate a debate and vote on each of the selected bills in open Senate. (A full synopsis of this video can be found in Appendix A of this guide, on page 13.)

Grade Level

7–12

“In order to judge of the form to be given to this institution [the Senate], it will be proper to take a view of the ends to be served by it. These were,—first, to protect the people against their rulers, secondly, to protect the people against the transient impressions into which they themselves might be led.”

James Madison, debates in the Constitutional Convention, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, June 26, 1787, from *Journal of the Federal Convention*, ed. E. H. Scott, pp. 241–42 (1893).

Student Outcomes

This lesson is designed to develop student understanding of the legislative process. Students learn about interactions within the legislature; about relationships among legislators, party

leaders, and special interests; and about the nitty-gritty of the legislative process. After completing this activity, students will be able to:

- Describe the purposes, functions, and organization of Senate standing committees.
- Identify the steps by which a bill becomes a law in the federal government.
- Think critically about the legislative process.
- Describe the importance of research in Senators' ability to discharge their duties competently.

Standards Correlations

This simulation can be used in civics, American government, or political science classes, with students at all ability levels in middle or high school. The project is correlated to the following National Standards for Civics and Government, from the Center for Civic Education (found at <http://www.civiced.org/912toc.htm>):

- III. How Does the Government Established by the Constitution Embody the Purposes, Values, and Principles of American Democracy?
 - A. How are power and responsibility distributed, shared, and limited in the government established by the United States Constitution?
 - B. How is the national government organized and what does it do?
 - D. What is the place of law in the American constitutional system?
 - E. How does the American political system provide for choice and opportunities for participation?

Background Readings for Teachers

Although the House of Representatives and the Senate share many legislative rights and responsibilities, students will experience with this simulation two unique rights of the Senate. As stated in "The Senate Legislative Process: Extended Debate," found at the official Senate Web site (http://www.senate.gov/legislative/common/briefing/Senate_legislative_process.htm#1):

All Senators have two traditional freedoms that, so far as is known, no other legislators worldwide possess. These two freedoms are unlimited debate and an unlimited opportunity to offer amendments, relevant or not, to legislation under consideration. The small size of the Senate permitted these traditional freedoms to emerge and flourish, subject to very few restrictions. Not until 1917 did the Senate adopt its first cloture rule (Rule XXII). Thus, from 1789 until 1917, there was no way for the Senate to terminate extended debates (called "filibusters" if employed for dilatory purposes) except by unanimous consent, compromise, or exhaustion.

Your students will get a chance to see how these two rights are exercised in this simulation. They will get a chance to research and propose a bill, amend the bill in committee, and debate the bill on the Senate floor.

More information on Senate committee organization and procedures can be obtained from the Senate Web site (found at http://www.senate.gov/legislative/common/briefing/Senate_legislative_process.htm#2). You may wish to familiarize yourself with this information as you set up the simulation for your classroom.

Estimated Time

The procedures and simulations outlined in this lesson are designed to fill three to five 90-minute class sessions with some outside research assignments (spread over a three-week period). Depending on the ability levels of your class, additional research time may be required to ensure active participation and a lively debate.

Prerequisite Studies

For this lesson to be successful, students must have already completed study of the basic workings of the government, including the three branches of government, the two-party political system, and the bicameral (two-house) legislature. Use the simulation after you've covered instruction on how a bill becomes a law.

Preparation

The key to creating a successful simulation is in the preparation. In the three sections that follow, you will find information and helpful tips on preparing your classroom, yourself, and your students to ensure that your Mock Senate simulation is successful, fun, and worth your time.

Classroom Setup

For the committee selection portion of the lesson, you will need enough room to divide your class into committees that can conduct lively discussions on the bills under their advisement without disturbing other committees. You may have room to separate the committees within your classroom, or you might choose to move some committees into the hallway or nearby vacant rooms. The remainder of the simulation can easily take place in one room.

Teacher Preparation

1. Familiarize yourself with the Senate committee system (See Background Readings for Teachers, above). In addition, a wealth of information on all aspects of the Senate legislative process can be found online at the official Senate Web site. As explained there, *

Several thousand bills and resolutions are referred to committees during each 2-year Congress. Committees select a small percentage for consideration, and those not addressed often receive no further action. The bills that committees report help to set the Senate's agenda.

When a committee or subcommittee favors a measure, it usually takes four actions. First, it asks relevant executive agencies for written comments on the measure. Second, it holds hearings to gather information and views from non-committee experts. At committee hearings, these witnesses summarize submitted statements and then respond to questions from the senators. Third, a committee meets to perfect the measure through amendments, and non-committee members sometimes attempt to influ-

ence the language. Fourth, when language is agreed upon, the committee sends the measure back to the full Senate, usually along with a written report describing its purposes and provisions.

*Source: The Committee System in the U.S. Congress, Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. August 29, 1994, revised by the Senate Historical Office, September 2002. (Found at: http://www.senate.gov/general/common/generic/about_committees.htm)

2. You should also familiarize yourself with the workings of Senate standing committees and know the various subcommittees under each, as you will need to create subcommittees within your class.
 - A. Once your students have written their proposed bills (see number 5 under Student Preparation), you will need to select committees that oversee the topics students have chosen, as well as the subcommittee charged with that topic. You can find a list of current Senate standing committees at <http://www.gpo.gov/congress/senate>.
 - a. Click on one of the standing committees, and then select “Jurisdiction.” This will provide you with a list of the subcommittees and subjects within the scope of that committee.
 - b. For example, in the video one student proposed a bill to ban gay marriages. That topic would fall under the scope of the Judiciary Committee, Subcommittee of Civil Liberties.
 - B. Four to six subcommittees should be adequate to cover most legislative topics chosen by your students; however, if the proposed bills range across too many topics, you might have each subcommittee oversee more than one topic, grouping them as logically as possible.
3. For this simulation, each student in the class will role-play a Senator. Assign each to a particular state—during the simulation they should always be addressed by courtesy title (Mr. Stephens from Alaska, Ms. Hurst from Florida, and so on). You as the teacher will take on the role of President of the Senate, and should be addressed as Madame or Mister President when students address you.
4. Depending on your school’s resources, you may wish to reserve time in a computer lab or the school library for your students’ research work. Research time will be required, first to research their own bill proposals, and again as they investigate the issues surrounding the bills of other Senators before the Mock Senate debates. The more time that is provided for background research, the better prepared your students will be to conduct a lively debate, and the experience will be more rewarding for you and your students.

Student Preparation

Writing a Bill
(5–10 school days)

1. Explain the workings of the Senate standing committees and their subcommittees. You might take them through the Senate Web site descriptions of these discussed earlier (see 2A under Teacher Preparation).
2. Students also need to have an understanding of the origins of legislative proposals and the procedures for getting bills enacted into law. As stated in “The Legislative Process,” Chapter 4: Origins of Legislation, located at the Senate Web site (found at http://www.senate.gov/legislative/common/briefing/Enactment_law.htm#4):

The ideas for legislative proposals may come from an individual Representative or Senator, from any of the executive departments of the Government, from private organized groups or associations, or from any individual citizen. However, they can be introduced in their respective Houses only by Senators and Representatives. When introduced, they are referred to the standing committees, which have jurisdiction over the subject matter.

Members frequently introduce bills that are similar in purpose, in which case the committee considering them may add to one of the bills the best features of the others for reporting to the parent body, or draft an entirely new bill (known as an original bill) and report it in lieu of the others.

3. Divide the class into groups, and allow about 20 minutes to brainstorm ideas for potential bills or public policy that they would like to make or change. Each student should then select an idea that he or she would like to write into a bill.
4. Have students prepare a 100- to 200-word feasibility statement that explains the topic for their proposed bill. The statement should include:
 - a. A brief description of the proposed legislation,
 - b. The student’s opinion of the issues surrounding the legislation,
 - c. The current legislative status of this issue (e.g., Are there laws in effect now that need to be changed, or is this an issue that hasn’t been addressed before?), and
 - d. A list of potential sources for research on the issue.
5. Students should be given a week to ten days and access to a library or the Internet to research their proposed legislation.
 - a. They must research the history, facts, and controversy behind the issue they have chosen, as well as the population that will be most affected by the law (e.g., children, the elderly, taxpayers, criminals, etc.). Students should fill out note cards on the research they complete.

- b. Encourage students to be very thorough in their research. Remind them that others will be trying to challenge their bills during the Mock Senate debate, so they need to be ready to respond to any questions that might arise.
 - c. You may want to give examples of Senate bills currently on the calendar to help your students understand the format and language of bills. Information about active legislation (updated weekly) can be found at the official Senate Web site. Have students select a piece of Senate legislation (designated by the prefix “S.”), and click on the “Text of Legislation.” Found at: http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/legislative/b_three_sections_with_teasers/active_leg_page.htm.
6. When research is completed, students will write a bill, in correct bill format, with four or five sections, no longer than two pages. For a blank bill worksheet, see Appendix B of this guide.
- a. Designate a deadline for completion of the research and bill writing.
 - b. Students should turn in their research notes along with their bill proposal. As Ms. Conrad states in the video, you can either require the research notes to be written in the form of a report or simply collect note cards made during the research process.
 - c. After you have graded or checked the submitted bills and research materials, return them to the students so that they will have them when they take their proposed bills to committee.

Subcommittee Work

(1 or 2 class periods)

- 7. Based on the bills handed in, assign students to a subcommittee that will discuss their legislation (See Teacher Preparation, number 2). Spread the groups out around the room so that subcommittee discussions are relatively private.
- 8. Each subcommittee should elect a chair—one student who will guide the proceedings of the committee and keep the discussions focused on the agenda.
 - a. Each bill is discussed separately. Members can voice their opinions on the policy, ask for clarification, suggest revisions, and so on, before an informal vote is taken on what to do with the bill. The subcommittee can “pigeonhole” (or table) the bill, amend it, or select it to go to the Senate floor for debate.

The committee members might also choose to combine two or more bills under their review, if the bills appear to compliment each other or if the committee feels that combining the two will strengthen the bills’ chances of passing the Senate. In that case, the two or more students become “Co-sponsors” of the bill and will defend it together in the Mock Senate debate.

- b. When a bill makes it out of committee, it is placed on the calendar to be debated on the floor of the senate. Subcommittee chairs provide the teacher with a list of bills their committee has approved, and the teacher adds them to the calendar in order of their

submission. Assign each bill a number at this time, in the following format: “S.1” (for “Senate Bill Number One”), “S.2,” “S.3,” and so on.

Preparing for the Debate (3–5 class periods)

9. At this point, you might find it helpful to provide each student with a list of the bills that have been placed on the calendar, and allow the class additional time to research and consider their stand on all of the proposed legislation.
 - a. Use the graphic organizer provided for you in Appendix B, entitled Mock Senate Debate Notes. Fill in the bill numbers and titles on the form before duplicating it for your students. Have them use this graphic organizer as they research the issues surrounding the proposed legislation.
 - b. Another session in the school library or computer lab should give students the chance to investigate the consequences and repercussions of enacting law from each of the bills. Again, encourage students to research the issues surrounding each bill carefully, looking for weaknesses or questions that can be asked.
 - c. You might also want to encourage student Senators to consider how the legislation might affect “their” states. For example, a Senator representing a state with a large agricultural constituency may have issues with bills that would increase property taxes or appropriate land for a national wildlife refuge.
10. During this research and review time, you may find it helpful for your students to investigate the various influences that affect how a Member of Congress decides to vote on a bill. In one e-Learning Module at the Center on Congress Web site, students become a Member of Congress and will be asked to vote on a proposed Constitutional amendment to ban flag desecration. The simulation has them hearing from party leaders, special interest groups, and members of their constituency who are interested in swaying their vote. Found at http://congress.indiana.edu/learn_about/Feature/e-learning_modules.php#decides.
11. You might also tape one or two Senate committee meetings or floor debates from C-SPAN to view with the class. These will act as models for students as they role-play the Mock Senate simulation. You can find a schedule of hearings at the C-SPAN Web site, found at <http://www.c-span.org>
12. Instruct students on the rules of conduct governing Senate debates, specifically obtaining permission to speak, using courtesy titles, and other parliamentary debate protocols (see Web sites and Extension Activities, number 3, in this document). The following document is part of Riddick’s Senate Procedure—101st Congress, 2d Session, found at <http://www.gpo.gov/congress/senate/riddick/1091-1105.pdf>

Procedure

The Mock Senate Debate Simulation

(2–4 class periods)

1. As teacher, you will serve as President of the Senate. Students should refer to you as Mister or Madame President, and each other as Mister or Ms.
2. Call the Senate to order, and announce the first bill, by numerical order, that will be brought forward for debate — and name the “Senator” who sponsored the bill — like this: “The first order of business is Senate bill number S.__, sponsored by Senator _____ from _____.”
3. The sponsor of the first bill comes to the front of the room and reads the entire bill aloud.
4. Any student wishing to ask a question pertaining to the bill (see number 10 above) should raise his or her hand and wait to be recognized by the President. (“The chair recognizes Senator _____ from _____.”) Speakers should stand and address the sponsoring Senator by title before asking their questions.
5. The sponsoring Senator responds to each question, and the debate continues until there are no more questions.
6. When the debate has ended, the President of the Senate calls for a vote. In the video, Ms. Conrad had students vote by standing. (“Those in favor of Bill S.__ please signify by standing.”) The bill is marked as passed or failed, and the next bill is brought to debate. Continue with steps 3 through 5 until all proposed legislation has been debated and voted on.

Depending on the length of debates and the length of your class period, the Mock Senate debate may take two to four days.

Wrap-up Discussion

Conduct an open discussion with the class on what they learned from this simulation. Possible topics for discussion may include:

1. How well prepared were the bill sponsors for the debate? Were they able to hold their own against the questions asked by the Senate?
2. How well prepared were you to challenge or question other sponsors?
3. Had you already decided on your vote for most of the bills before the debate began?
4. Did any of your votes change after the debate? Which ones?
5. What affected your opinion or your vote?
 - a. Which arguments, in your opinion, affected the success or failure of any of the bills?
 - b. Did any arguments during the debate make you think about an aspect of the legislation that you hadn’t considered before?

6. Did peer pressure affect your vote in any way? How is this similar to the pressures put on real Senators?
7. This simulation of the Mock Senate follows what is called the “textbook” legislative process. In reality, how does the legislative process work differently?
8. Do you feel the American legislative process is a good one? What are some pros and cons?

Assessment

Ms. Conrad provides many opportunities for students to earn grades during the course of this simulation. Any or all of them can be used to assess students’ understanding of the Senate legislative process. Choose the assessment type that works best for you.

Student Participation Checklist

The simplest and least formal of the assessments, this checklist is a tool that allows you to rate each student’s degree of participation on a set scale (e.g., from 1 to 5), or by assigning weighted points to each activity. Some questions to include on such a checklist might be:

1. Did the student complete all introductory assignments/readings before the simulation?
2. Did he or she turn in a 100- or 200-word feasibility study on a bill proposal?
3. Did he or she turn in a research report or note cards on the proposed bill?
4. Did he or she turn in a bill with four or five sections, no more than two pages long?
5. Did he or she participate in the subcommittee and Mock Senate activities in a manner that demonstrates deep understanding of the mock legislation?
 - a. Were comments and questions during debate and discussion clear and valid to the issues?
 - b. Did the student inject insightful or thought-provoking comments or questions into the discussion?
 - c. Did he or she remain within the role assigned to him or her?
6. Did the student participate in the wrap-up discussion, exhibiting understanding of the factors that affect a Senator’s vote on legislation?

Written Work

Assign grades for the written work that is turned in during the simulation:

- Feasibility Statement
- Note cards or research report
- Written Bill

You might also wish to include a vocabulary quiz for another assessment, using some of the terminology that was covered in students' studies of the Senate legislative process (e.g., filibuster, cloture, standing committee, amendment, judiciary, hopper, parliamentary rules, etc.).

Written Report on the Senate Legislative Process

The most complex of the evaluations, a written report allows your students to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate what they learned about the committee procedure. Have students prepare a two-to-five page written report on the Mock Senate experience. (Students may find the Web sites located below and Bibliography located on page 11 useful in preparing their papers.) In their reports, students may address any or all of the following points, using examples to support their answers:

1. In this simulation of the Senate legislative procedure, we didn't explore the influences political parties have on the passing of law. How does party affiliation influence the process in reality?
2. What influence do special interest groups and lobbyists have on the legislative process? How do they sway Members' votes?
3. Investigate joint committee work. How do Members from the House of Representatives and Senators work together to propose legislation? How is the procedure different than the one in the Mock Senate simulation?
4. How do Members of Congress interact with the President of the United States in getting legislation that has passed Congress signed into law? How often does a bill make it through both Houses only to be stopped at the President's desk? What recourse does Congress have when this is the case?

Extending the Learning Experience

Web Sites and Extension Activities

Teachers, please note that some Web sites may contain material or links to material that is inappropriate for your students. Please preview the following sites before sharing them with your students. At the time of publication, all URLs were valid. We apologize for any inconvenience, should this no longer be the case.

1. The Center on Congress at Indiana University
This Mock Senate simulation works well in conjunction with the e-learning module from The Center on Congress: *How a Member Decides to Vote*, located at http://congress.indiana.edu/learn_about/Feature/e-learning_modules.php#decides
2. The Senate's Virtual Reference Desk
"If you are seeking general information on the Senate, the legislative branch and process, or on the federal government, this is a good place to begin. Links are arranged broadly by subject and may take you to PDF documents, useful sources on the Web, or other Senate Web pages." Found at http://www.senate.gov/pagelayout/reference/b_three_sections_with_teasers/virtual.htm

3. National Council of State Legislatures
The National Council of State Legislatures provides teachers with various resources on the legislative process, including this worksheet of Parliamentary rules, located at <http://www.ncsl.org/public/trust/pprules.htm>
4. Capital Hearings
This new public service from C-SPAN lets you to listen to gavel-to-gavel audio coverage of U.S. Senate Committee hearings, live. The Senate produces the audio feeds, and C-SPAN encodes and streams these hearings via *CapitolHearings.org*, located at www.capitolhearings.org
5. GPO Access
The mission of the Government Printing Office (GPO) is to inform the Nation by producing, procuring, and disseminating printed and electronic publications of the Congress as well as the executive departments and establishments of the Federal Government. Visit this Web site for transcripts of congressional hearings: <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/chearings/index.html>
6. U.S. Congressional Bibliographies
The U.S. Congressional Bibliographies enumerate and describe meetings held by Congressional committees since 1985, those for which printed transcripts are issued, and those that remain unprinted. Its primary goal is to be an authoritative, exhaustive reference source of meetings held and documents released by House and Senate committees. Found at <http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/stacks/senatebibs>

Bibliography

You may find the following books of interest for your own or your students' background reading, or for use in research projects and written reports.

Elving, Ronald D. *Conflict and Compromise: How Congress Makes the Law*. (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995). Description from Amazon.com:

The political editor of *The Congressional Quarterly* looks at how a bill becomes law — both on the open floors of Congress and behind closed doors. Using the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 as his focus, Ronald D. Elving shows how the bill was gradually expanded to draw support from both parties. (Adult)

Greenberg, Ellen. *The House and Senate Explained: The People's Guide to Congress*. (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1996). From *School Library Journal*:

The perfect book for teens agonizing through Civics or American Government classes and finding the workings of Congress completely incomprehensible. Greenberg simplifies, explains, and presents the legislative branch in ways that bring clarity to confusion. She begins with the basics—how both the House and Senate are physically organized. Two diagrams for each explain and show the positions of the “mace,” the “hopper,” and other accoutrements of government. Seventeen “players,” or named positions, in the House and 13 in the Senate are described as well. A chapter entitled “The Script” gives alphabetically listed terms used in legislation. A typical congressional day is outlined and a pithy explanation of the steps from a bill to law is offered.

An excellent reference source, the book includes a full index and sections on written and Internet accesses to the government. (Young Adult)

Mikulski, Barbara, et al. *Nine and Counting: The Women of the Senate*. (New York: William Morrow & Co., 2000). Description from Amazon.com:

It's hard to imagine nine United States Senators whose politics span the spectrum sitting down to dinner together on a regular basis—unless they're the nine women who currently call the Senate home. Barbara Mikulski, Kay Bailey Hutchison, Dianne Feinstein, Barbara Boxer, Patty Murray, Olympia Snowe, Susan Collins, Mary Landrieu, and Blanche L. Lincoln share something deeper than their political proclivities: gender has been the strongest characteristic of their personal and professional lives, and each one has overcome enormous obstacles to reach the old boys' club that is the Senate. As evidence of their remarkable camaraderie, they've now collaborated to share their stories in the hopes of encouraging other women to follow suit. The women write with candor about dealing with sexual stereotypes, facing tragedies, and proving themselves in a world that presents them with an ever-shifting teeterboard of proper feminine behavior. (High School–Adult)

Appendix A: Video Synopsis

Overview

The program opens by introducing Carol Conrad, a Government and U.S. History teacher at Twin Lakes High School in Monticello, Indiana. She describes her goals and reasons for holding a mock Senate debate with her government students. Ms. Conrad then describes how she alters the assignments for the simulation depending on the ability levels of each group of students. She shares the rewards she gets from trying something innovative in the classroom.

The Procedure

Ms. Conrad describes the procedure she uses to get student groups working together to propose a bill for the Senate to debate. The video includes interviews with students and shows students at work in their committees.

Once each student has written a bill and had it approved by the teacher, the bills are sent to committees. Ms. Conrad's students work together to role-play this committee work, deciding which bills will actually go to the floor of the "Senate" to be debated.

The Debate

Ms. Conrad explains some of the etiquette involved in Senate debates, and the students begin reading their bills. During this time, Ms. Conrad describes how she constantly reiterates the notion of federalism throughout the process of the Senate debates. All bills must be written at a national level.

One proposed bill from Ms. Conrad's class—to ban gay marriages—is debated on the floor and a vote is called. The bill is not passed.

Conclusion

The video ends with a series of student comments and teacher observations. Ms. Conrad points out that this is a forum for students to express their views—the chance to be heard. An important rule is that no one in the class can cut down another person's opinion.

Appendix B

Student Handouts

Blank Bill Worksheet (two pages)

Mock Senate Debate Notes

SECTION __. PENALTY CLAUSE (Use only if your bill makes something illegal).

SECTION __. APPROPRIATIONS CLAUSE (Use only if your bill requires expenditure of money).

SECTION __. EFFECTIVE DATE or DATE OF TERMINATION (select one only).

This Act and any amendments made by this Act shall take effect on _____ (date or President's signature).

-OR-

The authority provided by this Act and the amendments made by this Act terminates __ years after the date of enactment of this Act.

Mock Senate Debate Notes

Senator _____ From _____

Bill Number	Bill Title and Sponsor	Details of Bill	Questions/Issues/Challenges	My Vote
S.				
S.				
S.				
S.				
S.				
S.				
S.				