

How a Bill Becomes a Law

SOCIAL STUDIES / CIVICS



Overview

Students dramatize the legislative process, showing how an idea becomes a law while learning about government structure and civic participation.

Steps for Teachers

1. Review the legislative process appropriate to grade level
2. Students choose an issue they care about (school rules, local laws, etc.)
3. Students write a script showing each step of the process
4. Students create characters for citizens, legislators, and other officials
5. Students record the journey of their bill through the system
6. Students include challenges and debates the bill faces
7. Discuss how citizens can participate in government

Example

A student shows a bill about school lunch. Citizen character: 'I think we need healthier lunches!' Goes to legislator: 'Can you write a bill?' Shows committee meetings with debate: 'But healthy food costs more!' 'But kids learn better when they eat well!' The bill gets amended, passes both houses, goes to the governor who signs it. Final scene shows new healthy lunch options. 'This is how YOUR voice can change things!'

Grading Rubric

Criteria	Excellent	Proficient	Developing
Process Accuracy	Correctly shows all major steps in legislative process	Shows main steps with minor omissions	Significant errors in the process
Civic Understanding	Shows how citizens can participate and influence laws	Mentions citizen involvement	Citizens are passive or absent from process
Realistic Debate	Shows multiple perspectives and compromise	Includes some debate or discussion	No opposition or debate shown
Engaging Narrative	Makes the process interesting and accessible	Reasonably engaging presentation	Dry or confusing presentation