

HOW A BILL BECOMES A LAW

Denise Glascott
Larsen Middle School
District U-46
8th Grade History

This learning activity was developed as part of the requirements for the Aurora University / District U-46 graduate credit course *Online Resources to Enhance Learning: OEDP-5029*, Spring 2006, under the guidance of instructor Richard Levine

LEARNING ACTIVITY

- Students will learn the steps it takes for a bill to become a law
- Students will apply their knowledge to a create a product of their choice
- Students will use www.unitedstreaming.com and www.bensguide.gpo.gov/index2.html to complete this activity

GOALS AND CURRICULUM FIT

ILLINOIS LEARNING STANDARDS:

- **14.A.2** Explain the importance of fundamental concepts expressed and implied in major documents including the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution and the Illinois Constitution.
- **14.B.2** Explain what government does at local, state and national levels.

DISTRICT U-46 CURRICULUM:

- **14.B** Describe the impact of the federal government's system of checks and balances (e.g. the results of a presidential veto)
- **14.B** Describe the characteristics of a two-house legislature

PROJECT LEVEL

- **Knowledge:** Identify the steps for a bill to become a law
- **Comprehension:** Summarizes the steps of the process
- **Synthesize:** Adapts the steps of the process into a creative writing piece
- **Evaluate:** Critique their final product

ENGAGED LEARNING INDICATORS

- Students will be learning in a variety of ways such as reading, writing and creating a product.
- Students will work in heterogeneous groups.
- Students are allowed to choose the type of final product they would like to create.
- The final product will be assessed using a rubric.
- The teacher is facilitator and there to help the students.

LEARNING ACTIVITY

1. Students will watch a *united streaming video* on the Legislative Branch. It will explain how a bill becomes a law while giving the kids a visual. Students will be asked to complete an anticipation guide prior to the video and check their answers during the video.
2. Students will read the steps of how a bill becomes a law by looking at Ben's Guide to U.S. Government on the Internet. Those students with lower reading levels can click on the 3rd -5th grade link to get the information. Students will need to summarize the steps on paper to be used as notes by the students to create their final product.

LEARNING ACTIVITY

3. In a group students will creatively write about the information by using the Project CRISS strategy known as RAFT.
4. Their final product will need to be typed.
5. Students will evaluate themselves and their product by using a rubric that we create together as a class.

ONLINE RESOURCES

- United Streaming Video – The Legislative Branch
- Ben's Guide to U.S. Government - <http://bensguide.gpo.gov/>

STUDENT PRODUCT: RAFT

Students will write about the content in a creative manner. In a RAFT students need to assume a role, write for a particular audience, decide on the form of their project and the topic. They need to make these decisions about each category before they start to write. Examples the students may choose from follow each category.

STUDENT PRODUCT: RAFT

- **ROLE:** Bill, President, Bill's Friend, Teens
- **AUDIENCE:** President, Teens, people attending a funeral, U.S. Citizens
- **FORM:** Diary, Eulogy, Obituary, Letter
- **TOPIC:** Groups decide what law they want to pass

ASSESSMENT

The rubric will be created with the students. Some categories that I hope they come up with would be:

- Accurate – all steps for a bill to become a law
- RAFT –Role, Audience, Form and Topic are clear
- Creativity - unique ideas
- Group Behavior – focus, participation