

# CURRICULUM GUIDE: **CONTROL OF CONGRESS**

Volume 2, Issue 2



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## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

## Control of Congress

*Kids Post Article: "In the Balance: Control of Congress Up for Grabs"*

**Lesson:** The 2002 election provides the faces and facts from which students can examine American citizens' involvement in the democratic process, the law-making process, and the power and influence that comes with control of Congress.

**Level:** Advanced

**Subjects:** History, Government, Mathematics

**Related Activity:** Current events, Art

### Procedure

#### Do the Math

1. Before reading the KidsPost articles, determine what number constitutes a majority in the Senate (51 of 100) and the House of Representatives (218 of 435). If you wish to localize, you can ask students to find the majority for members of the legislature in Maryland and Virginia.

2. Why is D.C. a special situation when talking about representation in Congress? What number of representatives and senators do citizens in D.C. have?

3. In the House there are 223 Republicans and 208 Democrats. Who has the majority? The sum ( $223 + 208$ ) does not equal 435. Why do students think it doesn't total 435?

#### Read

Read "In the Balance."

#### Discuss

1. How many people are members of the U. S. House of Representatives?
2. Why does having 34 senatorial

seats on the ballot make this an important election?

3. What advantage does an incumbent have over his or her opponent?
4. What does the phrase "control of Congress" mean?
5. Why was May 24, 2001, an important day for both legislative and executive branches of government?
6. Why do members of Congress want to chair a committee?
7. Which committees are considered the most important because of their effect on the lives of voters? Read The Washington Post or do a Web search to find out who chairs these committees. Are any of the chairs up for re-election? Is any chair not running for office?
8. A presidential candidate runs on a party platform and has some priority issues. Why is it helpful to have the president's party in control of Congress?
9. Is Senator Daschle running for re-election this year? Why is he an influential senator? Why has President Bush campaigned in South Dakota?

#### Develop Vocabulary

Give students "Word Study ... A Look at Congress."

#### Read

Read "From Bill to Law in 5 Easy Steps."

#### Discuss

1. What is a "piece of legislation"?
2. What would you want included in a Kids Day bill? Ice cream or free health care? Your favorite

## Vocabulary

**Amendment:** A formal revision, addition or change

**Appropriate:** To set apart for a special use; decide how money will be spent

**Campaign:** A series of operations or planned events energetically pursued to accomplish a purpose; for example, speeches, public appearances, advertising to get elected to office

**Chamber:** A legislative or judicial body; the U.S. legislative branch has two chambers—the House and the Senate

**Constituent:** A resident of a district or member of a group represented by an elected official

**Elect:** To select by vote for an office

**Hearing:** A session at which testimony is taken from witnesses

**Hopper:** A place in which proposed bills are held in readiness before consideration

**Independent:** Affiliated with or loyal to no one political party

**Majority:** A number more than half of the total

**Partisan:** Fervent support of a party, cause, faction, person or idea

**Representative:** A member of the legislature chosen by popular vote; government by the ballot box

**Veto:** The vested power or constitutional right of one branch or department of government to refuse approval of measures proposed by another department, especially the power of a chief executive to reject a bill passed by the legislature and thus prevent or delay its enactment into law.

*Definitions are from the American Heritage Dictionary*



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## Control of Congress

### *Continued*

candy or a free appointment at the dentist?

3. Review "From Bill to Law in 5 Easy Steps" graphic in this guide. How difficult is it for a piece of legislation to become a law? Where are the possible dead ends?

4. What is the purpose of a Conference Committee?

5. Is a presidential veto the death of a bill?

### **Analyze**

Have students read the main Post. Use the election results to determine the percentage of Republicans, Democrats and Independents in the Senate and House of Representatives who won. Who has "control" of the next Congress?

For further study, give students "You Read It In the Post." In their Nov. 3 article, "Democratic House Is Less Likely Than GOP Senate," David S. Broder and Dan Balz do the math. They say "the GOP would have to win three of four tossup races—if all 30 other Senate contests followed form—to emerge with 50 seats and allow Vice President Cheney's tie-breaking vote to prevail." On the House side, they state, "Democrats need a net gain of six seats to capture control. ... If all favored candidates won and the contests rated too close to call split evenly, the GOP would actually add three seats to its House majority."

Perhaps, a lesson in probability might be added here.

### **Research**

Give students "Strange But True." After reading through the

basic facts from a selection of 2002 races, students should select one to research.

If time will not permit research, discuss the races. Use the two questions in "Does Majority Always Win?" Answers are provided for you.

### **Debate**

Divide the class into teams or pairs to research then debate some of the issues and potential impact of the midterm elections. Here are some possible topics:

- Campaign ads have become too negative.
- Negative campaign ads get more people to vote.
- Political debates should be broadcast free for more citizens to meet the candidates.
- Terrorism is more scary than a weak economy.
- Health care should be given more attention than education on the national level.
- Gerrymandering or partisan redistricting should be stopped.
- Incumbants have too much name recognition and fundraising advantage. Campaign spending should be limited.

### **Write**

Ask students to write a letter to their representative in Congress. What would they like the person who represents them to know? What are their concerns?

### **Enrichment**

1. "Make Your Choice" provides three activities that students might do. Select one that is appropriate for your students or let them select

## On the Hill

➤ <http://www.house.gov/>

### **U. S. House of Representatives**

Everything you want to know about the current legislative process. From this site, provided by the Library of Congress, you can search bills, read the text of the Congressional Record and find committee reports.

➤ <http://www.senate.gov/index.htm>

### **United States Senate**

In addition to information about legislation and committees, this site provides links to senators, Senate art and history, and visitors center information. Select a state and find its senators.

➤ <http://thomas.loc.gov/>

### **Thomas: Legislative Information on the Internet**

Status of current bills, texts of law and schedules of congressional committees. Check out "How Congress Makes Laws" for more in-depth information on how a bill becomes a law, including contrasting procedures of the Senate and the House.

➤ <http://www.house.gov/writerep/>

### **U.S. House of Representatives: Write Your Representative Service**

A quick way to send a letter to your member of Congress. This includes the District of Columbia's At Large Delegate, The Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton, and those from U.S. territories (American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands).

➤ <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/nie/A38185-2002Oct29.html>

### **"In the Statehouses, Changing Times: Redistricting, Term Limits Could Help Produce Unusually High Turnover"**

Post reporter Christopher Lee Washington examines the fight in 2002 for control in state legislatures and the



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## Control of Congress

*Continued*

one to do.

2. Is today's technology being used to communicate with constituents? Check out the Web sites of members of Congress. Make a list of information that you think members of Congress should provide. How many have a kid's page?

3. Hold a Mock Congress. Have students play roles and propose legislation. Write it in the correct language and format of a bill. Whose idea will become law?

4. Have students select one of the senior members of Congress. Follow him or her through the next months: voting, legislative initiatives, speeches, assistance to new members of Congress.

*"In the Balance: Control of Congress Is Up for Grabs" can be found at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/nie/A5389-2002Nov4.html>*

*"From Bill to Law in 5 Easy Steps" can be found at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/nie/A5388-2002Nov4.html>*

## Does Majority Always Win?

1. What percentage of the Vermont Popular vote does Democratic gubernatorial candidate Doug Racine receive? If it is less than 50 percent but a higher percentage than his opponent, Republican Jim Douglas receives, why could Jim Douglas end up becoming the new Governor of Vermont?

2. What percentage of the popular vote does Democratic incumbent Senator Mary Landrieu of Louisiana receive? Who is running against her?

If Landrieu receives a greater percentage of the popular vote than her opponents but it is less than 50 percent of the popular vote, what must happen according to Louisiana state law? Why might this be significant for the 108th term of Congress (in the Senate)?

### Answers with the exception of the actual percentages follow.

1. Vermont State Law requires that a gubernatorial candidate gets a minimum 50 percent of the popular vote to win the gubernatorial seat. If the candidate receives less than that, the newly elected Vermont state legislature votes in January and elects the new governor. Right now, based on predictions, the newly elected Vermont legislature will be overwhelmingly Republican. Thus, those Republicans would predictably elect the Republican candidate Jim Douglas instead of Racine. Racine has stated that he will withdraw from the race if he does not receive 50% of the vote. Is that to insure that more voters go to the polls?

2. Louisiana State Law requires that the candidate running for office receive a majority of the popular vote. If the candidate does not receive over 50% of the vote, an automatic run-off is scheduled. Since Landrieu is running against three Republicans, political analysts agree that the vote will be split among these four candidates with no candidate being able to get 50 percent of the vote. Both parties are already planning their campaigns for the run-off election Dec. 7. This could be a critical factor in determining party control in the Senate. Would the Republican party ask two of the Republican candidates to bow out of the race in order to gain a solid bloc of votes for the Republican?

You could also ask students to determine just how many of the Vermont and Louisiana electorate voted and then compare percent voting with percent not voting. Did majority vote or not? Typical midterm apathy?

## On the Hill

*Continued*

impact of term limits and redistricting after the most recent census.

► <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/nie/A32586-2002Oct28.html>

### "Maryland's 2nd District Key Partisan Battleground: Outcome Could Affect Control of Congress"

Control of Congress is brought closer to home in Spencer S. Hsu's examination of the Maryland race for representative.

► <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/education/kidspost/nie/A59426-2002Nov2.html>

### ELECTION 2002: Across the Nation

A summary of the status of political races by region in the 50 states and D.C. two days before the elections.





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## Make Your Choice

### Issues & Positions

#### The Assignment

Select one of the issues listed below.

Research to find out more than one point of view. Do any members of Congress take a strong stand on the issue? Does President Bush have a position on the issue?

Decide what stand you take on the issue. Write a position paper. Be sure to include a concession to the other point of view. Then tell why your position is better. Include a quotation from one of your sources. End with your strongest argument.

#### The Issues

A weak economy

Large deficits on the state level

Corporate accounting scandals

Tax cut

Income tax reform

Limit on medical malpractice awards for damages

Cost of prescription medicine

National health care system

National education standards

Family values

Homeland security

Gun control

War on terrorism

War against Iraq

Development of nuclear weapons

Environment protection in Alaska

Future Supreme Court appointments

### A Campaign Collage

Tell a campaign story through a collage. From the pages of The Washington Post, cut headlines, paragraphs, phrases, charts, graphs, comics and photographs. Select ones to communicate a message about the election. Maybe you will see a theme—a close race, determination, negative campaigns contrasted to positive messages, new faces.

Arrange and paste into a collage. You may combine with other media to add color and texture. Red, white and blue or the campaign colors of a favorite candidate may work for you. Give your collage a title.

When you are finished, think about what you have communicated in visual form. Now write one to three paragraphs in which you tell the message you wanted to express and why you think it is true for this 2002 election.



COURTESY KENILWORTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Students at Kenilworth Elementary used newspaper clippings to create a campaign collage for a social studies class.

### If I Were ...

Work in research teams using common, or the same, reference texts to mine them for information about senators, representatives, governors and lobbyists. Then prepare a word contrast chart (a set of four) as the product of the research.

If we were SENATORS, we would \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. But we would not \_\_\_\_\_. We would have to be members of the House of Representatives to do that.

If we were REPRESENTATIVES, we would \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. But we would not \_\_\_\_\_. We would have to be senators to do that.

Continue the pattern with:

If we were LOBBYISTS ... would have to be constituents to do that.

If we were CONSTITUENTS ... would have to be lobbyists to do that.

Students at Kenilworth Elementary School in Bowie, Md., did this activity. Here is one of their contrasts:

*If we were SENATORS, we would represent all of our state, be in office for a good six years, and there would be two of us from each state. But we would not be elected based on the population of our state. We would have to be members of the House of Representatives to do that.*

# You Read It In the Post

**CAMPAIGN 2002** “At stake in this year’s mid-term elections is control of the Congress. Morella is at the top of the Democrats’ target list as the party struggles to wrest the GOP’s slim majority in the House. The Democratic-led General Assembly used reapportionment to drastically change her district’s boundaries, lopping off her strongholds in northern Montgomery County, adding reliable Democrats in parts of Silver Spring and Takoma Park and appending heavily black precincts in western Prince George’s.”

—Spencer Hsu and Jo Becker,  
Washington Post Staff Writers  
October 31, 2002; Page T8

*Local political decisions influence elections for Congressional seats.*

- The Maryland General Assembly is composed of 47 senators and 141 delegates, elected from 47 districts. What constitutes a majority of senators? \_\_\_\_\_ How many votes are required for a majority in the House of Delegates? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many Maryland senators are Democrat? \_\_\_\_\_ How many are Republican? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many Maryland delegates are Democrat? \_\_\_\_\_ How many are Republican? \_\_\_\_\_ Not sure? Go to the Maryland State Archives (<http://www.mdarchives.state.md.us/>).
- How did the Democratic-led General Assembly use the recent census results to help their candidate against Connie Morella?

*In a representative democracy, the ballot has impact.*

- How many votes did each of Maryland’s 8th District candidates receive?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Stephen Bassett (I) \_\_\_\_\_ Rep. Connie Morella (R)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Christopher Van Hollen Jr. (D)
- What percent of the total votes cast in Maryland’s 8th District race did each candidate receive?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Stephen Bassett (I) \_\_\_\_\_ Rep. Connie Morella (R)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Christopher Van Hollen Jr. (D)
- Who won Maryland’s 8th District race? \_\_\_\_\_

**CAMPAIGN 2002** “Republicans face stiff odds in their bid to reclaim a Senate majority, but Democrats have even a tougher climb to take back the House, a final state-by-state rundown of Tuesday’s midterm election prospects shows.”

—David S. Broder and Dan Balz,  
Washington Post Staff Writers  
November 3, 2002, Page A1

On election day, Nov. 5, 2002, the Congress is divided. The House of Representatives is composed of 222 Republicans, 208 Democrats, two Independents, and three vacancies. The Senate is composed of an almost even 50 Democrats and 49 Republicans, with one Independent.

- How many seats in the House must Democrats win to gain control? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many seats must Republican senators win to regain control? \_\_\_\_\_
- Select a candidate. Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Party \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_
- Was he or she the incumbent? \_\_\_\_\_
- What percent of the vote did he or she win? \_\_\_\_\_
- What was the impact of the win or loss on control of Congress?
- Were Broder and Balz correct in their analysis of the election?

**CAMPAIGN 2002** “Control of Congress hangs on a handful of seats this year, so you might expect the dozen or so cliffhanger races in the House to involve tense debates over which party should be writing the nation’s laws. But no.

With two weeks remaining to Election Day, the key races apparently are still largely uninfluenced by broad national issues. Instead, the decisive contests are being waged district by district, with no visible trend toward either party. Local issues dominate, from health care on Indian reservations in South Dakota to channel dredging at Baltimore Harbor to that hardy perennial of New Hampshire politics, the specter of a state income tax.

This trend complicates Democrats’ efforts to win back the House majority they lost in 1994.”

—Juliet Eilperin and David Von Drehle,  
Washington Post Staff Writers  
October 22, 2002; Page A4

- Do you agree with these reporters’ analysis of voter concerns? Why or why not?
- In the days before the election, did the issues turn to more national concerns?
- Based upon political advertisements you saw on television, what issues were presented?
- Select a candidate who won election on Nov. 5. What advice would you give to this winning candidate?



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## Strange But True

During the 2002 election there are some states with very little change and others with nail-biting drama. One with a regrettable open-mike expletive accident, many with negative campaigns and a few with backlashes to the negative approach. Some of the matches might be considered unusual or unique. Here is a sampling.

Select one of the following. Read more about it.

### Delaware

Foreign Relations Committee chair Joseph R. Biden Jr. (D) has held the Senate seat for half his life. His opponent ran against him in 1966.

### Hawaii

Although Rep. Patsy Mink (D) died of pneumonia Sept. 28, her name remains on the ballot. A special election will also be held on Nov. 30; among the 38 candidates on that ballot is her husband.

### Louisiana

The election may not be over on Nov. 5. The state's all-party primary has three Republicans and one Democrat running against Sen. Mary Landrieu (D) for her seat. She needs 50 percent of the votes to avoid a runoff on Dec. 7.

### Minnesota

Sen. Paul Wellstone (D) died in a plane crash less than two weeks before the election. Former vice president and senator Walter F. Mondale was selected by Democrats to take his place. The close race took on another edge when

the memorial service ended as more of a Democratic-Farmer-Labor rally. Retiring Gov. Jesse Ventura (I) added his sentiments.

### Missouri

The contest between Sen. Jean Carnahan (D-Mo.) and former representative James M. Talent (R) is considered a special election. She was appointed to office for two years after her late husband, Mel Carnahan, was elected.

### Ohio

In one Ohio representative race, Rep. Tony Hall (D) gave up his seat when he accepted an appointment from President Bush to be ambassador to the United Nations food and agriculture organization.

Former representative James Traficant (D), though convicted of bribery and in prison, remains on the ballot as an Independent. He is appealing to former constituents to vindicate him with their votes.

What is the special circumstance?

If there were similar circumstances in previous elections, compare how each was handled in the states.

Was the judicial branch involved?

How did the opponents run their campaigns? What can hurt an incumbent's advantage?

How will the outcome influence the control of Congress?

### South Carolina

To have an open Senate seat—created by retiring Sen. Strom Thurmond (R)— is a once-in-a-lifetime political opportunity.

### South Dakota

Rep. John Thune (R) is challenging Sen. Tim Johnson (D) for his Senate seat. Round-the-clock commercials began airing early in the year. The two parties and outside interest groups have funded mostly negative ads. Why the interest in South Dakota? The race is seen as a proxy battle between President Bush and the state's senior senator, Majority Leader Thomas A. Daschle.

After serving 16 years as governor, William Janklow (R) is running for the congressional seat vacated by Thune. Sixty-three-year-old Janklow's opponent is 31-year-old Stephanie Herseth, granddaughter of a former governor. The race is tight. Herseth will need female and young voters to give her the edge over a sometimes irascible and always outspoken veteran.



MICHAEL WILLIAMSON—TWP

Sen. Jean Carnahan



FILE PHOTO—THE WASHINGTON POST

Stephanie Herseth



ROBERT A. REEDER—TWP

Sen. Mary Landrieu



FILE PHOTO—THE WASHINGTON POST

Walter Mondale



RAY LUSTIG—TWP

Sen. Strom Thurmond



FILE PHOTO—THE WASHINGTON POST

Rep. James Traficant





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## From Bill to Law in 5 Easy Steps

*Congratulations! You've been elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. During your campaign, you promised the voters to get Nov. 10 named National Kids Day (because why should there be a Mother's Day and a Father's Day, but no Kids Day?). How are you going to do it? Just follow KidsPost's E-Z Insta-Law Program.*

### Step 1: Write It



First, you must write down what you want the new law to do. This description of the proposed law is called a piece of legislation, or a bill. Any member of Congress or the Senate can create a bill and submit it to the Congress, but most laws start in the House of Representatives. (The process is slightly different in the Senate, but we're telling the House side. The president also sends legislation to Congress, but that's yet another story.)

Your bill would establish National Kids Day and require Congress to appropriate' (that means spend) enough money to pay for ice cream parties in every school on Nov. 10 and send a Happy Kids Day card to every person in the country under age 18.

As you work out what you want to include in your bill, people from your congressional district and others will have ideas about what your bill should say. They'll lobby' you ... try to persuade you to include their ideas in the bill. Kids might push for free candy on Kids Day, while dentists might argue that the candy should be sugar-free.

To show how many people like your bill, you can get other members of the House to sign on as co-sponsors of the bill.

When the bill is ready, you give it to an official called the Clerk of the House or put it in the "hopper," a wooden box on the floor of the House.

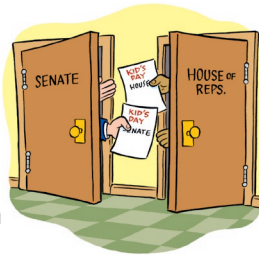
### Step 2: Discuss It

The bill is sent to the correct House committee. (Representatives and senators are all assigned to committees that cover specific problems the government works on. areas such as the military, the legal system and how

the government spends its money.)

The committee members may hold meetings called hearings' to learn what people think of the bill. (For example, your mom might testify that the country doesn't need a Kids Day because every day is kids day.' but your grandmother might tell the committee she supports the bill because you're so great.)

The committee eventually votes on whether to send the bill on to the whole House. If most of the a committee majority votes against it, the bill is dead ... it's going nowhere. If the majority votes for it, the committee holds a "mark-up session," a meeting to make any changes or additions (also called amendments) that other members want in the bill. This is the time your friend on the committee can add that the night before Kids Day will be called Kiddies' Eve, and fabulous presents gifts will be given.



### Step 3: Debate It



The leaders of the party in charge of the House (called the Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader) decide when...and if...your colleagues in the House will get to consider your bill. Then the debate begins, with debate time divided equally between the people who support your bill and those who oppose it.

When the debate is over, everyone votes. If it fails, sorry, no Kids Day this year. But we're going to assume your totally cool idea has

passed the House and now goes to the Senate for consideration.

### Step 4: Vote on It

The Senate works toward its own version of the bill, and that usually ends up being slightly different from the House version. (Perhaps the Senate wants Kids Day to fall on April 2, not Nov. 10, and says on Kids Day all chores should be canceled.) A group of senators and representatives called the conference committee' meet to bargain over what the law will say.

All of the members of the committee want to include things in the bill that will satisfy the people who voted for them. So the senator from Wisconsin might want the law to say that pizza will be the Official Lunch of Kids Day (making all the cheesemakers in Wisconsin happy).

When the bargaining is done, the final version of the bill is voted on one more time by each chamber. If both pass it, it's on to the White House.

### Step 5: Sign It

If the president likes the bill, he signs it, and the bill becomes law. If he doesn't, he slaps it down, which is called a veto.

But the bill still has one final chance. The House and Senate can vote one more time:

If two-thirds of both chambers vote for the bill, the veto is overturned.

But why would the president veto something so utterly perfect as Kids Day?

Tada! Your bill has become a law, and Kids Day is born.



—Elizabeth Kastor





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AP PHOTO/PHOTO ILLUSTRATION—THE WASHINGTON POST

## Word Study ... A Look at Congress

“Republicans Planning for Full Control of Congress.” Is this October Washington Post headline conjecture or informed fact? On television and radio, we hear of concern over control of Congress. Republican and Democratic leaders are not complacent about control of Congress. The president concurs that control of Congress is very important.

“Conjecture,” “concern,” “complacent,” “concur” and “Congress” all have one thing in common—the prefix *con*.



This prefix changes form: *con-*, *com-* and *cor-*, for three. The prefix comes from Latin and means with, together, joint or jointly. The root word determines what form is used.

The root word in “Congress” comes from Latin, *gradi*, meaning to go. In Latin, *congrēdi*, means to meet and *congressus* was a meeting. We have the same idea of people going from their homes to come together to meet.

The Constitution of the United States

provides the basic requirements for someone to be considered as a candidate for representative or senator. This is no surprise. “Constitution” is made up of *con* + *statuere*, to set up. In our Constitution we find out how to set up or establish our government.

Since 1959, our Senate has been composed of 100 members, two senators from each state. A senator must be at least 30 years old, a citizen of the United States for at least nine years and a resident of the state in which he or she is elected. Senators have been elected by popular vote since 1913, when the 17th Amendment went into effect. Their term of office is six years, with approximately one third being elected every two years.

A member of the House of Representatives may be younger than a senator. He or she must be at least 25 years of age, a U.S. citizen for at least seven years, and resident of the state in which he or she is elected, but not necessarily a resident of the congressional district that he or she represents. Every representative is elected by popular vote every second year.

Every 10 years a census must take place in each state. Every state works

to corroborate that the census count is accurate. After a census, some states will lose representatives and others will gain representatives. The Constitution guarantees that every state will have at least one representative.

Today, the size of the House of Representatives is 435 members. Each member represents about 500,000 inhabitants. Look at Hawaii, Montana, Nebraska, Rhode Island, Utah and Vermont on a map, and guess how many representatives each state has. Vermont and Montana have one representative. Imagine what it would be like to campaign in Montana, hoping to meet each constituent. Hawaii and Rhode Island have two and Utah and Nebraska have three.

No matter how much power and influence a Congressman may exercise, he or she should remember the origin of “control.” Its prefix is *contra-*, not *con*. Control comes from *contra*, Latin meaning against + *rotulus*, roll, diminutive of *rota*, wheel. The *contrarotulus* was a duplicate register. Through it honesty was more likely and control, in modern meaning, was kept.

Ultimate control of Congress is in the hands of the voters at the ballot box.



## An Integrated Curriculum For The Washington Post Newspaper In Education Program

**Academic Content Standards** (The main lesson addresses these academic content standards.)

*This lesson addresses academic content standards of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. Among those that apply are:*

**Maryland***Social Studies*

Political Systems (6.0): Students will understand the historical development and current status of the fundamental concepts and processes of authority, power, and influence, with particular emphasis on the founding documents of the United States and the democratic skills and attitudes necessary to become responsible citizens. By the end of grade 5, students know and are able to explain why consent of the governed and representative government are basic principles of democracy (6.1.5.3); describe ways people can participate in the political process, including voting, petitioning elected officials, and volunteering (6.7.5.2); explain the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen of the United States (6.8.5.1),

6.3 Students demonstrate understanding of how the United States Constitution allocates power and responsibility in the government. By the end of grade 8, students know and are able to describe how the United States Constitution provides for separation of powers and checks and balances. By the end of grade 12, students know and are able to analyze the powers, responsibilities, and limitations of elected and appointed officials in the national legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

*Mathematics*

Process of Problem Solving (7.0): In order to solve problems, students will be able to choose the appropriate operation(s) for a given problem situation (MLO 5.3); create or select and then apply appropriate problem-solving strategies to solve a problem from visual (draw a picture, create a graph), numerical and symbolic perspectives (MLO 5.4, SFS 2.4).

A complete list of State Content Standards of Maryland can be found at <http://www.mdk12.org/mspp/standards/>.

**Virginia***History*

United States History to 1877, Grade 5: 5.4 The student will analyze the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights in terms of the powers granted to the Congress, the President, the Supreme Court, and those reserved to the states.

United States History 1877 to the Present, Grade 6: 6.10 The student will develop skills for historical analysis, including the ability to identify, analyze and interpret primary sources and contemporary media and to make generalizations about events and life in the United States history since 1877.

Civics and Economics, Grade 7: 7.2 The student will compare the national, state and local governments, with emphasis on their structures, functions and powers; the election and appointment of officials; the division and sharing of powers among the levels of government. 7.3 The students will compare the election process at the local, state and national levels of government, with emphasis on voter turnout, evaluating accuracy of campaign advertising, and distinguishing between reporting, analysis and editorializing in the media, and recognition of bias. 7.4 The student will compare the policy-making process at the local, state and national levels of government with an emphasis on the basic law-making process within the respective legislative bodies.

*Mathematics*

Probability and Statistics, Grade 5: 17 The student will collect, organize and display a set of numerical data in a variety of forms, given a problem situation, using bar graphs, stem-and-leaf plots, and line graphs.

A complete list of Standards of Learning of Virginia can be found on the Web at <http://www.pen.k12.va.us/>.

**Washington, D.C.***Social Studies*

Political Ideas, Turning Points and Institutions, Content Standard 7: Students understand the historical evolution of political ideas, ideologies and institutions. They see how different political institutions have affected human life and how technological, economic, social, cultural, religious and philosophical forces in history have shaped politics. By the end of Grade 5, the student will

- identify and describe the basic features of the political system in the United States and explain how power, role, status, justice and influence apply to persistent issues and social problems;
- recognize how rules and laws are made;
- describe features of the American political and legal system at local, state and federal level.

By the end of Grade 8, the student will

- describe the purpose of government and how its powers are acquired, used and justified through the Constitution of the United States.

Historical Inquiry, Analysis and Judgement, Content Standard 2: Students use varied methods and sources in research and writing. By the end of Grade 5, the student will explain differences in the points of view in historical accounts of the same event and/or controversial events.

*Mathematics*

Number and Operation, Content Standard 1: The student interprets and understands multiple uses and forms of numbers and how they relate to each other; fluently uses computational tools and strategies; estimates when appropriate; and solves real-life and career-related problems.

A complete list of Standards for Teaching and Learning of the District of Columbia Public Schools can be found at <http://www.k12.dc.us>.