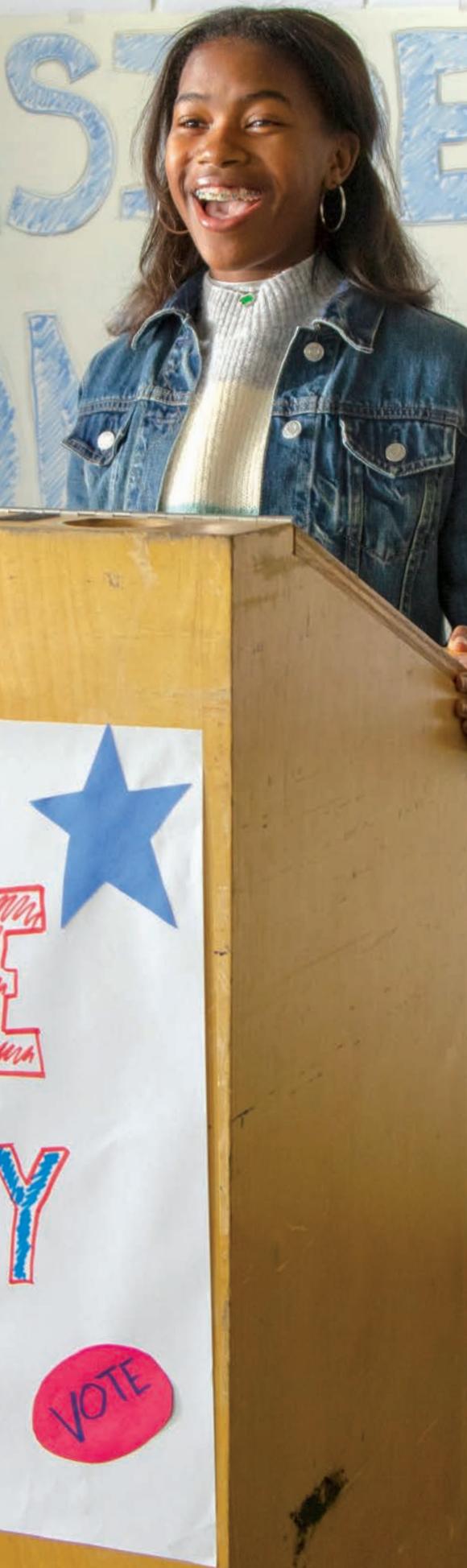


Math 6 | NS.C.6c
and position integers and
rational numbers on a
horizontal or vertical number line
and find and position pairs
of integers and other rational
numbers on a coordinate plane.

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.6.EE.A.1
Apply properties of
operations as strategies to
add, subtract, factor, and
expand linear expressions
with rational coefficients.

Describe the
dilations, tran-
sformations, and
rotations, and
two-dimension
using coordina



Democracy for Juniors

What do you think of when you hear the word “government”? Do you think of the president? The Supreme Court? Congress? All of these are part of the United States government—but your city or town has a government too. Your city, state, and country government all work together. How? You’ll see!

Steps

1. Find out about local government
2. Find out about state government
3. Find out about our country’s legislative branch
4. Find out about our country’s executive branch
5. Find out about our country’s judicial branch

Purpose

When I’ve earned this badge, I will know more about how my government works—from my town or city to the whole country.

No Person shall be a Representative who
d who shall not, when elected, be an Inhabitant of
Representatives and direct Taxes shall be ap-
tions, which shall be determined by adding to the
t taxed, three fifths of all other D



No Person shall be a Senator who shall not
, when elected, be an Inhabitant of that State for
The Vice President of the United States shall be
2 | P

STEP

1 Find out about local government

Every step has three choices. Do ONE choice to complete each step.
Inspired?
Do more!

You don't have to go all the way to Washington, D.C., to see government in action! Every town or city has its own form of local government. Find out more about yours in this step.

CHOICES—DO ONE:

- Visit your town hall, city hall, or mayor's office.** Take a field trip with your friends or family and talk to someone in one of these places about your local government. Have them explain all the jobs that are done in your local government and talk to you about local elections. Come up with some questions in advance. Ask any additional questions you think of while you're there.
OR 
- Talk to an expert.** With help from an adult, find an expert who can talk to you about your local government. This could be someone elected to local office, a teacher, a lawyer, or a judge. Have them explain all the jobs that are done in your local government and talk to you about local elections. Ask any questions you can think of.
OR 
- Go to a city or town hall meeting.** With help from an adult, make a plan to go to a meeting when a vote will be held. Before you go, talk about what will be voted on and decide how you would vote if you could. See how the vote turns out, then talk about it with your family or friends.

Town Hall Meetings

The purpose of town hall meetings is for government officials to hear the community's views on public issues. People attending the meeting have the chance to present ideas, voice their opinions, and ask questions. Despite the name, meetings don't necessarily take place in a town hall—they may be held at the local library or a school building.

Three Branches of Government

The United States government—and the government for all of the states—is broken into three parts, or branches. Each branch has its own role in how the law is made and used.

The Constitution of the United States divided the government in this way

to make sure that no one person or group has too much power.

Legislative—makes laws

Executive—enforces laws

Judicial—interprets laws

A system of “checks and balances” helps to keep power evenly distributed between the three

branches. Each branch “checks” the power of the other. For example, the legislative branch makes laws, but the president (or executive branch) can veto (say no to) laws, and the judicial branch can declare that a law doesn’t support the original laws written in the constitution.



The Constitution

The Constitution of the United States is one of the most important documents in United States history. It was signed by the country's Founding Fathers—including James Madison, Ben Franklin, and George Washington—in 1787. (There were no women in this group; the Founding Fathers were all men.) The Constitution established the three

branches of government and mapped out the rights granted to citizens of the country. It is called a “living” document because it can be amended.

There have been 27 amendments to the Constitution since it was written more than 200 years ago. The first ten amendments are called The Bill of Rights.



STEP
2

Find out about state government

State governments and the United States government are all made up of three parts. These parts are called the branches of government. You can imagine the government like a tree with three branches on it: legislative, executive, and judicial. Before doing the rest of the steps in this badge, read about the three parts in the box on page four.

CHOICES—DO ONE:

- Visit your state capitol building.** Take a field trip with your friends or family and talk to someone there about how your state government works. How do the three branches of government work together? Come up with some questions to ask in advance; ask any other questions you think of while you're there.
OR 
- Campaign for governor.** With help from an adult, find out who your governor is and some of the things they're responsible for. Now, imagine you're running for governor. Make a campaign speech to your friends and family about the changes you'd make in your state and the issues you're most passionate about.
OR 
- Explore an issue.** Almost every political issue has people who feel strongly on both sides. Can you think of an example that's making news in your state right now? With a group of friends or family members, find out everything you can about both sides of an issue. Divide into pairs and debate—then switch sides! After you've made the case for each side, talk about whether you think this process can help people see issues in a different way.

STEP

3 Find out about our country's legislative branch

The legislative branch, or Congress, is the branch of the United States government that makes laws. There are two groups of people that make up Congress: The House of Representatives and the Senate. Find out more about the legislative branch in this step.

CHOICES—DO ONE:

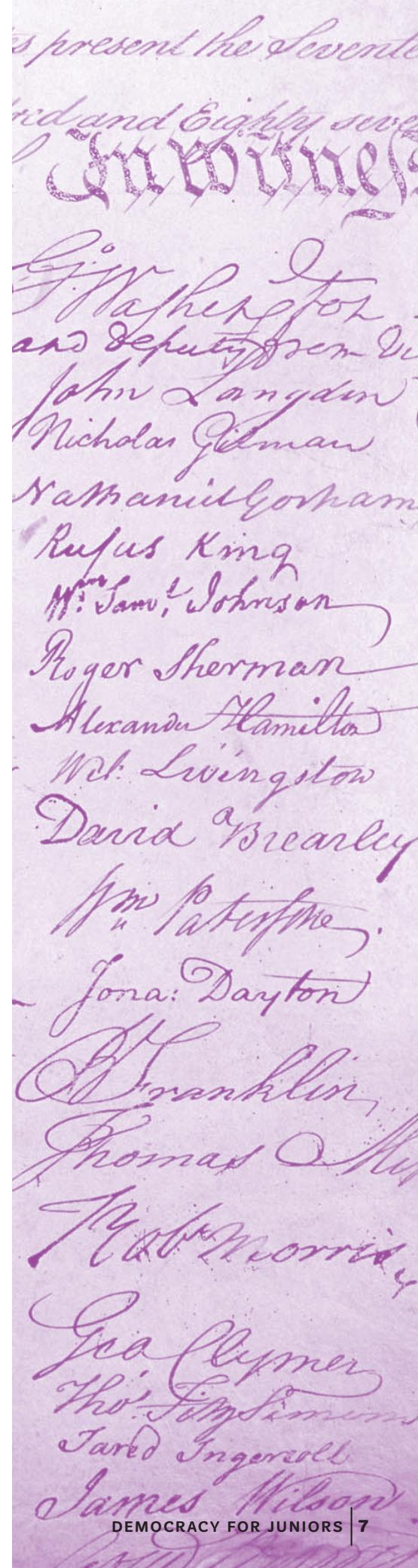
Draft a bill. Read “How a Bill Becomes a Law” on the next page. Then, on your own or in a small group, draft your own bill on a topic or issue that’s important to you. Share your bill with a larger group. Be prepared to defend it and answer questions.

OR

Map the country. Each state in the country is represented by two people in the United States Senate. The House of Representatives is more complicated. There are currently 435 House members, and the number for each state is decided by the size of its population. With help from an adult, print out a map of the United States and find the current number of representatives in each state. Write each number on the map and color in the states with the most representatives. Do you agree with how the numbers are broken out? How do you feel about each state having the same number of senators?

OR

Talk about representation. With help from an adult, find out how many women are currently serving in the United States Senate and House of Representatives. Then, find the number of women serving when you were born and when some of the older women in your life were your age. Talk to some of these women about the political shifts they’ve seen over time. Do they believe women are adequately represented in government today?



How a Bill Becomes a Law

The House of Representatives' most important job is creating laws. A bill becomes a law through these steps. Do you see any examples of checks and balances (where the powers of one branch can be challenged by another branch) in this process?



1. Someone has an idea.

This idea can start with anyone, even kids like you! If an elected official likes the idea and wants to make a law, they write a bill.



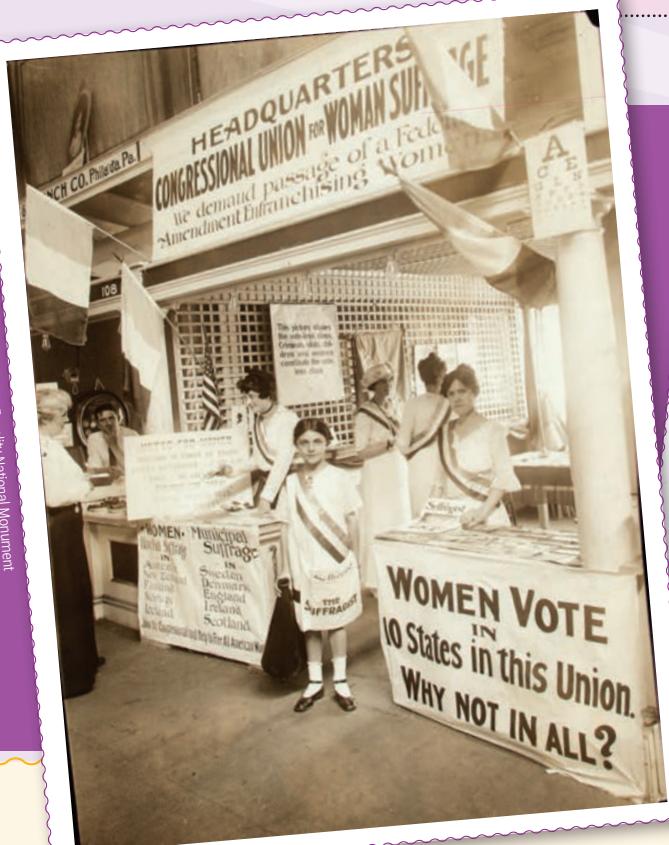
2. The bill is introduced.

Bills are officially introduced in the House of Representatives when they are placed in a special box called "the hopper."



3. The bill goes to committee.

A group of committee members (senators and representatives) meets to work on the bill and revise it, if necessary. Then they take a vote to reject or accept the bill. Depending on the outcome, the bill goes to a subcommittee for additional work or to the House or Senate floor for debate.



National Women's Party at Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument



Image from collection of the Girl Scouts of the USA national archive



4. Congress debates and votes.

During the debate, members of the House or Senate can suggest changes to the bill. Then they take a vote. If it passes, the bill is sent to the other house of Congress to go through this process again. If both houses receive a majority vote on the same version of the bill, it goes to the president.

5. The president takes action.

Now it's the president's turn.

They can:



- ★ **Approve and pass.** The bill is law!
- ★ **Veto.** The president rejects the bill and sends it back to Congress. Congress can then take a vote. If the bill receives a two-thirds majority vote from the House and Senate, they can override the veto. The bill becomes law.
- ★ **Choose no action.** The president does nothing. After ten days with no action, if Congress is in session, the bill becomes law.
- ★ **Pocket veto.** If Congress adjourns—or goes out of session—within ten days after the president receives the bill, the president can choose not to sign it. The bill does not become law.

National Women's Party at Belmont-Paul Women's Equality National Monument



The 19th Amendment

When the government of the United States was first developed, women had no role. They took care of the home, the children, and the men in their families. Most men did not feel that women should vote—in fact, there were actually laws saying that women could not vote. Lots of people came to believe this was wrong; many women and some men fought against it. Finally, in 1920, the 19th Amendment was passed. It says that women can vote in all elections. Despite this victory, many women of color faced obstacles to casting their votes. These challenges continued until the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which aimed to prevent racial discrimination in voting.

Photos 1-r: Women and girls campaign for the right to vote, 1914; A Girl Scout holds a baby outside a polling place while the mother votes, 1921.

STEP

4 Find out about our country's executive branch

The head of the United States' executive branch is the president. Starting at age 18, citizens of the United States can vote for a new president every four years. Find out more about the executive branch in this step.

CHOICES—DO ONE:



Leaves on the Branches of Government

- **President**
- **Judges**
- **Supreme Court**
- **Senate**
- **House of Representatives**
- **Vice President**
- **Secretary of State**
- **Secretary of Agriculture**

Compare presidents and prime ministers. Find a place led by a prime minister—such as the United Kingdom—and compare that role with president of the United States. (You might have an adult show you a video for kids online.) How are they different and alike? Talk about what you read or see with friends or family. **For More FUN:** Look into a country that has both a president and a prime minister. How do their roles differ?

OR

Create a presidential trivia contest. Which president had a cat named Socks? How many presidents have stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame? Come up with fun questions and quiz your friends or family. Make sure to have prizes for the winners! **For More FUN:** Host a trivia night—you might serve themed snacks or have guests come dressed as their favorite president or presidential candidate.

OR

Craft branches. Start by drawing a picture of a tree with three branches, then label the branches with each branch of government. Take the list of people or groups of people in the box on this page and make them into “leaves” for the corresponding branch. You can write them near the branches or cut out leaves from green construction paper and glue or tape them on. **For More FUN:** Find out more about the responsibilities these people and groups have, then add more “leaves” on your own!

STEP

5 Find out about our country's judicial branch

The judicial branch of the government is made up of courts and judges. It's the branch of the government that evaluates laws. In this step, you'll learn more about how the judicial branch works.

CHOICES—DO ONE:

- Talk to a lawyer.** Have an adult help you contact one to talk about what they do. Why did they choose their profession? How does the judicial branch work with the other two branches of government? What do they think are the most important cases in national history? Ask any other questions you may have.

OR 
- Talk to a judge.** Find out about what they do. How does the judicial branch work with the other two branches of government? What's the difference between the Supreme Court and local courts? How does a case make it to the Supreme Court? Ask any other questions you may have.

OR 
- Talk to a social studies, history, or civics teacher.** Find out how they teach their students about the judicial branch. How does the judicial branch work with the other two branches of government? Ask any other questions you may have.

The Supreme Court

The Supreme Court, which is sometimes called "The Highest Court in the Land," is made up of nine people called justices. These justices were all men until 1981, when the first woman, Sandra Day O'Connor, joined the court. (She was a Girl Scout too!) Today the court is a mixture of men and women.

Justices are appointed, not elected, and they serve lifelong terms. That means they usually stay on the court until they pass away or retire, but the Constitution gives Congress the power to impeach (vote to remove) justices for "Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors." There go those checks and balances again!

Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Helping Brownies make their own “branches of government” tree
 - Encouraging my family to attend a town hall meeting together
 - Hosting a presidential trivia night for the girls in my class
-

I'm inspired to:

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