



Idaho Standards and Applications for 12th Grade Civics and Government

Conducting a Mock Legislature

In preparation for this activity, the teacher should go on-line to the [Idaho Legislature website](#) and select from actual bills printed for the legislative term.

The following committees can be created for each of the House of Representatives and Senates: (Each committee should have at least seven bills.)

1. State Affairs
2. Judiciary and Rules
3. Education
4. Miscellaneous (this is a committee which will receive bills of interest that don't fit the other three committees.)

Divide classes so that an even number are the House of Representatives and the Senate. (Working with at least one other teacher is the easiest method for implementing the mock legislature.)

Process:

- Students caucus on a party basis and choose a candidate for Governor and Lt. Governor.
- If combining with another teacher, a primary election can be held for each party.
- A general election should be held to elect a Governor and Lt. Governor of the class. The class electing the Lt. Governor (President of the Senate) then becomes the Senate.
- After the general election, the Governor should be given a copy of all bills in order to prepare a "State of the Classroom" address. Once the legislature has convened, the Governor can deliver the address before a joint session at the discretion of the President ProTempore and the Speaker.
- Students should caucus in the House and Senate on the basis of political party, and choose leadership. The majority party in the House will choose the Speaker, Majority Leader, and Assistant Majority Leader; the minority party will choose the Minority Leader and Assistant Minority Leader. The majority party in the Senate will choose the Pro Tempore, Majority Leader and Assistant Majority Leader; the minority party will choose the Assistant Minority and Minority leaders.
- Committees will be formed and the majority party will have the most members, as well as choose a committee chair. (Use of age, instead of seniority, is a means of selecting the chair.)
- The President of the Senate and House Speaker should be provided a guide for conducting a daily meeting (See [Civic Participation Specific Resources](#)).



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After all bills have been given their first reading on the first day of the session, a recess to committee can be called. Leadership can determine the order of business. Once all bills have been taken care of in committee, sponsors selected, and bills sent to the second reading, committee members should have an opportunity to write their own bills.

- This activity requires at least six school days to operate in order to give students a sense of ownership. After each legislature has adjourned, the Governor is expected to make a report to the legislature regarding each bill that reached the Governor's desk.