

Guided Reading Activity

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The Structure of Congress

Lesson 1 *Congressional Membership*

Review Questions

Directions: Read the lesson and complete the outline below. Refer to your text to fill in the blanks.

I. Organization of Congress

- A. Congress is a bicameral body composed of the _____ and the _____.
- B. Each Congressional term is _____ years long, beginning in January of odd numbered years and divided into _____ sessions of one year each.

II. Membership of the House

- A. The Constitution requires that Representatives be at least _____ years old, citizens of the United States for at least _____ years, and legal residents of the state that _____ them.
- B. Since representation in the House is based on _____, information from the national census, which is held every _____ years, is used to determine the apportionment of the 435 House seats among the states.
- C. _____ is the process of drawing district boundaries to give one political party an electoral advantage.
- D. Two ways to redraw districts are _____, in which one party's voters from several districts are squeezed into one district, and _____, in which a district having many supporters of one party is divided into smaller districts.

Guided Reading Activity *cont.*

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III. Membership of the Senate

- A. Senators serve terms of _____ years, are elected _____ rather than according to districts, and must be at least 30 years old. Senators must have been American citizens for at least _____ years and must be legal residents of the state they represent.
- B. Members of Congress set their own _____ and enjoy many _____ and privileges in addition to their income.
- C. Each house has methods for punishing its members for disorderly behavior, including _____, which is a vote of formal disapproval of a member's actions.

IV. The Members of Congress

- A. In addition to the _____ representatives and _____ senators, there are _____ delegates to the House, who represent the District of Columbia and four U.S. territories.
- B. Many members of Congress are lawyers and, although in the past most members were middle-aged Caucasian _____, the membership has slowly changed over time with changes in our _____.
- C. _____, members who are already in office, are more likely to be reelected, resulting in very slow changes in congressional membership.

Summary and Reflection

Directions: Summarize the main ideas of this lesson by answering the question below.

In what ways is the House of Representatives structured to be more representative of the general population than is the Senate?
