

Article I. The Legislature

Aim: How is the legislative branch organized in Article I of the Constitution?

Do Now: Listen to the song “I’m Just a Bill” by Schoolhouse Rock. Use the lyrics to follow along

I’m Just a Bill

Woof! You sure got to climb a lot of steps to get to this Capitol Building here in Washington. But I wonder who that sad little scrap of paper is?

I'm just a bill
Yes, I'm only a bill
And I'm sitting here on Capitol Hill
Well, it's a long, long journey
To the capital city
It's a long, long wait
While I'm sitting in committee
But I know I'll be a law someday
At least I hope and pray that I will
But today I am still just a bill

Gee, Bill, you certainly have a lot of patience and courage

Well I got this far. When I started, I wasn't even a bill, I was just an idea. Some folks back home decided they wanted a law passed, so they called their local Congressman and he said, "You're right, there ought to be a law." Then he sat down and wrote me out and introduced me to Congress. And I became a bill, and I'll remain a bill until they decide to make me a law.

I'm just a bill
Yes, I'm only a bill,
And I got as far as Capitol Hill
Well, now I'm stuck in committee
And I'll sit here and wait
While a few key Congressmen discuss and debate
Whether they should let me be a law
How I hope and pray that they will
But today I am still just a bill

Listen to those congressmen arguing!
Is all that discussion and debate about you?

Yeah, I'm one of the lucky ones. Most bills never even get this far. I hope they decide to report on me favorably, otherwise I may die.

Die?

Yeah, die in committee. Oh, but it looks like I'm going to live! Now I go to the House of Representatives, and they vote on me.

If they vote yes, what happens?

Then I go to the Senate and the whole thing starts all over again.

Oh no!

Oh yes!

I'm just a bill
Yes, I'm only a bill
And if they vote for me on Capitol Hill
Well, then I'm off to the White House
Where I'll wait in a line
With a lot of other bills
For the president to sign
And if he signs me, then I'll be a law
How I hope and pray that he will

But today I am still just a bill

You mean even if the whole Congress says you should be a law, the president can still say no?

Yes, that's called a veto. If the President vetoes me, I have to go back to Congress and they vote on me again, and by that time you're so old . .

By that time it's very unlikely that you'll become a law. It's not easy to become a law, is it?

No!

But how I hope and I pray that I will
But today I am still just a bill

He signed you, Bill! Now you're a law!

Oh yes!

1. How many steps does it take for a bill to become a law?
2. What can the President do even if Congress says a bill should be a law?

Article I Review

1. What are 3 important powers of Congress?
2. What is the Elastic Clause?
3. What is needed for a bill to become a law?

Assignment: Watch video “[Crash Course: Congressional Elections](#)” Then complete the guided notes below.

Article I. The Legislature

Congress – divided into two houses

A. House of Representatives

- Elected every ____ years
- Qualifications: Age ____, citizenship ____, resident ____

B. The Senate

- ____ senators per state
- Elected every ____ years
- Qualifications: Age ____, Citizenship ____, Residential ____

C. How a Bill Becomes a Law

- A bill starts in the ____ or the ____ of ____
- A bill must gain a ____ vote in both houses of the Congress to be sent to the President
- The President has 10 days to do one of three things:
 - Sign it – it becomes law
 - Veto it – it goes back to Congress
 - Leave it alone – it becomes law or a pocket veto
- Congress can override a Presidential veto with a 2/3 vote in both Houses of Congress
- ____ – indirect veto by the President of a bill presented by Congress within 10 days of Congress’ adjournment by failing to sign it or return it before they adjourn

D. Powers Granted to Congress

1. To ____
2. To borrow money
3. To ____ (foreign and interstate)
4. To create rules for naturalization and Bankruptcy
5. To ____
6. To punish counterfeiting
7. To create a Post Office
8. To grant Patents and Copyrights
9. To create Federal Courts below the Supreme Court
10. To define and punish piracy
11. To ____
12. To raise and support an army
13. To create a navy
14. To regulate the Armed Forces
15. to call out the Militia
16. To regulate the Militia
17. To rule over Federal Lands
18. ____ – to make all laws ____
____ for carrying out its above powers

E. Powers Denied Congress

1. Can not Suspend Habeas Corpus
2. No bill of attainder or ex post facto laws
3. No direct taxes
4. No export taxes
5. Can not pay favorites among the states
6. Can not use public money unless it passes a law first

F. Powers Denied the States

1. No state shall enter into treaties, alliances, coin money, or grant titles of nobility
2. No state shall impose import or export taxes
3. No state shall enter into war with other nations