Learning Objectives. Students will be able to:

- Identify the constitutional powers of Congress.
- Describe the factors members of Congress weigh when voting on bills.
- Demonstrate how members of Congress weigh factors by voting on hypothetical bills.
- Evaluate information in order to apply each factor to real-life issues in the hypothetical bills.
- Weigh the importance of the factors by deciding whether to vote “yea” or “nay” on each bill.

STEP BY STEP

OPTION A: PAPER-ONLY LESSON (one class period)

☐ DISTRIBUTE one “More than ‘Yea’ or ‘Nay’” notetaking handout to each student.

☐ SHOW students how to fold the handout in half so it makes a booklet. Factor #1 should be on the front.

☐ USE the Teacher Key for the handout to guide students through filling out the handout. Discuss concepts with the class as you go along.

☐ PAUSE during the lesson to quiz the class using the mini quizzes. (see Active Participation Guide)

☐ DISTRIBUTE one “More Than ‘Yea’ or ‘Nay’” voting handout to each student—first page only. You will only guide the class through voting on Bill A.

☐ GUIDE students through the voting activity by following the instructions and discussion points on the “Class Activity Guide.”

OPTION B: POWER POINT LESSON (one or two class periods)

Day One

☐ DISTRIBUTE one “More than ‘Yea’ or ‘Nay’” notetaking handout to each student.

☐ SHOW students how to fold the handout in half so it makes a booklet. Factor #1 should be on the front.

☐ GUIDE students through the “Voting in Congress: More Than ‘Yea’ or ‘Nay’” Power Point presentation. Pause to allow students to fill in the blanks in their “booklets” as you go along. (Students will use the booklets as a reference for the Day 2 activity.) The lesson includes mini-quizzes throughout, as well as a final mini quiz for closure.

Day Two

☐ DISTRIBUTE one “More Than ‘Yea’ or ‘Nay’” voting handout to each student.

☐ TELL students to fill in their identities on the top half of the first page

☐ GUIDE students through the “Voting in Congress: More Than ‘Yea’ or ‘Nay’” Day 2 Power Point presentation. Pause for discussion of each question and issue. Students should refer to their “booklets” from Day 1 during the presentation. The presentation will tell students when it’s time to write information on their handouts and when it’s time to vote. (If you don’t get through all the bills, that’s OK.)
Mini Quizzes—Paper Version

**DIRECTIONS:** Tell the class you will ask a series of questions and that they are to answer as a chorus. Tell them to wait to answer until you ask for the answer. Ask each question twice, give wait time, then ask for the answer. Ask the class to explain why “false” or wrong answer choices are incorrect.

**Mini Quiz #1**  
(Give quiz after you’ve done Factor #1)

1. Congress can pass any law it wants to.  (F)
2. Congress has the power to create armies.  (T)
3. Congress cannot control business that happens in more than one state.  (F)
4. Congress may collect taxes for certain reasons.  (T)
5. Congress cannot make any laws about immigration.  (F)
6. Congress can make any law as long as it is “necessary and proper.”  (F)
7. When can Congress do something that is not listed in the Constitution? 
   A. Always 
   B. Never 
   C. *When it relates to something that is listed.* 
   D. Only on Thursdays

**Mini Quiz #2**  
(Give quiz after you’ve done Factor #4)

1. Members of Congress vote based only on their personal opinions.  (F)
2. Members of Congress always agree with their political party about bills.  (F)
3. When considering a bill, members of Congress should think about: 
   A. Only themselves 
   B. *Voters back home* 
   C. People on the moon 
4. If people in Congress do a bad job, voters back home can kick them out.  (T)
5. In Congress, being on a political party is like being on a ____________.  (team)
6. People in political parties share similar: 
   A. Eye Color 
   B. Opinions about movies 
   C. *Values* 
7. When voting on a bill, members of Congress usually think about four things. What are those four things? 
   *(The Powers of Congress, Personal Opinion, Political Party Views, and What the Voters Think)*
Voting Activity—Paper Version
(A Bill to Stop Mail on Saturdays)

**DIRECTIONS:** Make sure each student has a copy of the voting handout. First, let students choose their identities by filling out the top half of the handout. Then help the class put the “four factors” they just learned about into practice by guiding them through a vote to decide whether Saturday mail delivery should stop. Use the guide below to help students consider each factor properly.

**Factor #1: Does Congress have the power to stop Saturday mail delivery?**

- Does Congress have power over post offices (therefore the postal service)?
- Have students check the list in their booklets under Factor #1
- Have students fill in the information for Factor #1 on the voting handout.

**Factor #2: In your opinion, should Saturday mail delivery end?**

- **WAIT!** Some things to consider (discuss each one with the class):
  - The Postal Service pays for itself with the money it brings in from its services.
  - The Postal Service has been losing a LOT of money because people are sending fewer letters
    - Why might people be sending fewer letters (email; paying bills online)
  - In 2009, the Postal Service lost $3.8 billion. Stopping Saturday mail would save $3 billion.
  - However, a lot of people want to get mail 6 days per week!
- Have students fill in the information for Factor #2 on the voting handout.

**Factor #3: Would your political party support stopping mail delivery on Saturdays?**

- Tell students to look at the checklist of values on the front of their voting handout. Which value most matches the purpose of this bill? Which political party most likely supports that value? (cost saving—Republican)
- Have students fill in the information for Factor #3 on the voting handout.

**Factor #4: Would your voters support stopping Saturday mail delivery?**

- **WAIT!** More things to consider (discuss each with the class):
  - In 1957, Congress passed a bill to end Saturday mail delivery. It lasted one Saturday. Voters were so angry that Congress passed another bill to bring Saturday mail delivery back!
    - Did they have email and online bill pay in 1957? Might that make a difference?
  - For this activity, have students pretend the majority of voters they represent are older voters. Older voters are more likely to use the Postal Service, while younger voters are more likely to do business online. If the majority of their voters are older, will the voters likely support this bill?
- Have students fill in the information for Factor #3 on the voting handout.

**Time to Vote!**

- Tell students to weight the four factors and mark their vote for or against the bill on their voting handout
- Tally the votes
- Discuss results with the class
Congress is ______________ by what the __________________ says.

Here is what Congress can do:

• Collect ___________ to raise money to pay ______________, to ____________ the country, and to provide for the __________________ of the U.S.

• Pass laws about ______________ that happens in more than one ______________, with __________ countries, and with Indian ______________.

• Make laws about ___________________.

• Make laws about ___________________.

• Establish ________________________.

• Declare _____________.

• Raise and support ________________.

Congress can also make all ____________ laws for executing the ____________ powers on the list above.

That means Congress can sometimes do things that are ______________ on the list if it is related to something that __________________ on the list.

The ____________ of _____________

What the _____________ Think

There would be too many people in Congress if there were more voters than the U.S. can handle. So voters choose a ___________ people to represent them.

Members of Congress are responsible for __________________ the voters back ______________.

So they’d better think about those voters, because voters ________ people to Congress . . . and voters can ____________ people _________!
Members of Congress are _____________________, just like you!

. . . but sometimes they ___________ with a bill . . .

. . . and sometimes they are totally ________________ a bill.

Members of Congress, being on a political party is like being on a team. Members of the team ____________ each other and try to create viewpoints that reflect their values. For a member of Congress, they work for those values.

People in a political party share similar views. Personal _______________

. . . by about bills . . .

Usually members of Congress ___________ with their political party that reflects their values. Sometimes members of Congress are totally love a bill just like you!
Congress is limited by what the Constitution says. Here is what Congress can do:

- Collect taxes to raise money to pay debts.
- Pass laws about bankruptcy.
- Make laws about immigration.
- Make laws about bankruptcy.
- Establish post offices.
- Declare war.
- Raise and support armies.
- Declare war.
- Establish post offices.
- Make laws about the general welfare of the U.S.
- Defend the country, and to provide for the common defense.

Here is what Congress can do:

The Constitution says, by what it limited Congress is.

The Powers of Congress

What the Voters Think

There would be too many people in Congress if everyone went.

. . . voters choose a few people to represent them.

So they’d better think about those voters, because voters can kick people out.

. . . send people to Congress.

Members of Congress are responsible for representing the voters back home.

So voters think about those voters.
Members of Congress are **human beings**, just like you!

Sometimes members of Congress **agree** with a bill...

... and sometimes they are totally **against** a bill.

People in a political party share similar **values**.

Members of the team **support** each other and try to create bills that reflect their values.

For a member of Congress, being on a political party is like being on a **team**.

Members of Congress **agree** with their political party about bills...

...but sometimes they **don't**!
More Than “Yea” or “Nay”  Name: ________________________

Choose Your Role!

I am a member of:  
□ the House of Representatives  □ the Senate  
(طعم one) Representing:  
_________________________________  
(City & State)  
Representing:  
_________________________________  
(State)

My new title is:  
Representative ____________  Senator ________________  
(Your last name)  
(Your last name)

The one value I care about most is:  
□ Liberty: means that people have the freedom to do things that they want to do  
□ Equality: means that everyone is treated fairly and has an equal 
□ Competition: means that people are encouraged to compete to succeed  
□ Cooperation: means that people are encouraged to work together to get things 
□ Cost Saving: means that the government is not spending a lot of money  
□ Generosity: means the government provides large benefits or services to citizens  

These tend to be Republican Party values.  
These tend to be Democratic Party values.

Bill “A”: No Mail on Saturdays

Factor #1
Does Congress have the power to do this?  
□ Yes  □ No  
Because ___________________________________________  
____________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________

Factor #2
In your opinion, should this bill pass?  
□ Yes  □ No  
Because ___________________________________________  
____________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________

Factor #3
Which political party would likely support this bill?  
1) Check the one value this bill stands for the most:  
□ Liberty  □ Equality  
□ Competition  □ Cooperation  
□ Cost Saving  □ Generosity  

2) This bill would most likely be supported by the:  
□ Republican Party  □ Democratic party

Factor #4
Would your voters support this bill?  
□ Yes  □ No  
Because ___________________________________________  
____________________________________________________  
____________________________________________________

Based on all four factors, how will you vote?  
□ Yea  □ Nay
Bill “B”: Raise the Minimum Wage

Factor #1
Does Congress have the power to do this?
- Yes
- No

Because ______________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________

Factor #2
In your opinion, should this bill pass?
- Yes
- No

Because ______________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________

Factor #3
Which political party would likely support this bill?
1) Check the one value this bill stands for the most:
   - Liberty
   - Equality
   - Competition
   - Cooperation
   - Cost Saving
   - Generosity

2) This bill would most likely be supported by the:
   - Republican Party
   - Democratic party

Factor #4
Would your voters support this bill?
- Yes
- No

Because ______________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________

Based on all four factors, how will you vote?
- Yea
- Nay

Bill “C”: Grant Titles of Nobility

Factor #1
Does Congress have the power to do this?
- Yes
- No

Because ______________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________

Factor #2
In your opinion, should this bill pass?
- Yes
- No

Because ______________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________

Factor #3
Which political party would likely support this bill?
1) Check the one value this bill stands for the most:
   - Liberty
   - Equality
   - Competition
   - Cooperation
   - Cost Saving
   - Generosity

2) This bill would most likely be supported by the:
   - Republican Party
   - Democratic party

Factor #4
Would your voters support this bill?
- Yes
- No

Because ______________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________

Based on all four factors, how will you vote?
- Yea
- Nay