



Title of Text: The Congress

Author/Illustrator: Robin Nelson/Sandy Donovan

GRL: R

Series: Searchlight

Genre: Nonfiction, Social Studies



Standard: Determine the main idea of a text and explain how it is supported by key details; summarize the text.

Lesson Objectives: to summarize the text, to sequence correctly a process, to use questioning to deepen understanding, to draw conclusions

Comprehension Strategy: Questioning

Skill: Draw Conclusions

Fluency: Intonation

Academic Vocabulary: explain or research the meanings of the words below. Discuss the morphology of the words: suffixes, taking a root word and adding to it to change the meaning of the word. Have students talk about the meaning of each word, using antonyms, synonyms and situations where each word can be used correctly.

a. amendment

b. Congress

c. executive branch

d. judicial branch

e. legislative branch

f. override

Before Reading: ENGAGE! THINK!


1. Build Background Knowledge
 - a. Let's look at the front and back cover. What do you know about Congress?
 - b. What would you like to learn about Congress?
 - c. Look at the picture on the front cover. What must it be like to speak in front of so many people? What qualities must the President have to be able to speak to such a large group?
 - d. Look at the Table of Contents – what chapter would you learn about deliberating and electing?
2. Skill Introduction:
 - a. Draw Conclusions – we are going to use the information the author gives us to make some conclusions. For example, on the back cover, I am thinking there is a special process to make a law. I wonder what that will be.
3. Strategy Introduction:
 - a. Questioning – we are going to use questions to help us deepen our understanding of the text. For example, let's go the bottom section of the back cover. Let's create some who, what, when, where, why and how questions for each of the books in this series.
4. Fluency: Intonation – read the back cover and discuss how your voice reflects a question mark being on the cover.





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Talk about how summarizing is taking the points worth remembering from a text. Tell students to summarize each chapter first, then summarize the book.

During Reading: Don't Wait Until It's Too Late! Check for Understanding (Stop after reading page 21)

1. Tell me about a part you didn't understand?
2. Turn and Talk: how is using the strategy of questioning helpful in your reading? What are some questions you developed that helped you go deeper in your understanding?
3. What idea do you have that you would like to see turned into a law? Draw some conclusions about this idea.
4.  **Standard:** Summarize what Congress' jobs are.

After Reading: EVALUATE!

1. What did you learn? What more do you want to learn about Congress or laws?
2. Tell me the process of how an idea becomes and a bill and a bill becomes a law.
3.  **Standard:** What is the most important thing to remember from this book? What are the details that can help you remember this?
4.  **Standard:** Inferring – the book tells us one bill was to cancel having school on Fridays. Make some inferences about this? What questions does this bring to you?
5. **Academic Vocabulary:** Legislative, Judicial, Executive branches – how do their names help you remember what/who each branch does/have? (legislate means laws, judicial and judge, executive means top power, etc)



Writing Standard: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

- a. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- c. Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases (e.g., *another, for example, also, because*).
- d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

Task: Write an informative piece explaining the similarities and differences between the three branches of government. Use the points above to help you.

IF/THEN: Drawing Conclusions – if students are having trouble with drawing conclusions, bring in some magazine photos with no words. Ask them to infer and draw conclusions about the pictures and ask them to tell you why they came up with those conclusions.