

**CIVIC EDUCATION ACTIVITY FOR NOVEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>**

**CHAMPIONS FOR CHILDREN'S HEALTH STROLLER BRIGADE**

**GRADES 3-5**

**OBJECTIVES**

Students will participate in the Champions for Children's Health Stroller Brigade to demonstrate their concern for the health of America's children.

Students will walk to key government buildings to observe their architecture and discuss the kinds of decision-making activities that are conducted inside the buildings. Students will also increase their knowledge of the symbols and documents that embody the values and principles of American democracy.

Students will discuss the role of government in decisions that impact children's health.

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION\***

Students will receive a checklist of key exhibits in the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center that embody the values and principles of American democracy. Teachers/group leaders and students will examine the exhibits and complete a questionnaire about each key exhibit.

**VOCABULARY**

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Advocate        | 13. Participation  |
| 2. Article I       | 14. Politics       |
| 3. Authority       | 15. Representative |
| 4. Bicameral       | 16. Rights         |
| 5. Bill of Rights  | 17. Senator        |
| 6. Citizens        | 18. Values         |
| 7. Congress        | 19. Voting         |
| 8. Democracy       | 20. Representation |
| 9. First Amendment | 21. Health Reform  |
| 10. Laws           | 22. Constituent    |
| 11. Legislative    |                    |
| 12. Lobby          |                    |

\*All materials for November 4 are available online for teachers to access and make copies for their students prior to the event.

## CIVIC EDUCATION LESSON PLAN IN PREPARATION FOR NOVEMBER 4<sup>TH</sup>

Grades 3-5

**FOCUS:** Democracy, Policy, Principles and Values, US Constitution, Laws, Branches of Government, Health Reform

**OBJECTIVES:** Students will be able to:

- Distinguish the types of representation American citizens have in Congress
- Demonstrate an understanding of the needs of children with regard to health care
- Describe the civic responsibility to participate in the American democratic process
- Be a voice for themselves and other children in the nation

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS:** Butcher or chart paper/writing paper /white paper/pencils /copy of the U.S. Constitution Preamble

**SUGGESTED TIME:** 2 hours or more – may complete over two days.

**OPENING ACTIVITY:** Read aloud the definition of democracy.  
Read Aloud the Preamble to the US Constitution.

Discuss the meaning of both texts.

Have students journal how their lives and the lives of others align with or fail to align with the values and principles featured in the definition of democracy and the text of the Preamble. Allow students to share their journal excerpts.

**MAIN ACTIVITY:** *Part I*  
List various school policies to which students are required to adhere (i.e. dress code, breaks, lunch, homework, etc.). Divide students into groups and have them vote for or against the school policies they have identified. Have the groups come together to discuss why they voted for or against the policy and how their votes could impact the entire school if they were put into place.  
  
Discuss with students how Congressional leaders are elected to represent the people of the nation. Discuss the significance of our elected representatives being able to vote on policies that impact the entire nation. Provide descriptions

Grades 3-5

of both the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. Share with students the four types of representation that elected officials may embody listed below and discuss how Congresspersons come together to vote on policies.

***Trustee Model of Representation:*** Constituents elect their representatives with the assumption that their representatives have the freedom to deliberate and act in favor of the greater common good and national interest, even if it involves going against the short-term interests of their own constituencies.

***Delegate Model of Representation:*** Constituents elect their representatives as delegates to act only as a mouthpiece for the wishes of the constituency, and have no freedom from the constituency. In this model, representatives do not act on their own conscience. Essentially, the representative acts as the voice of those who are not present, the constituency.

***Ideological Model of Representation:*** Constituents elect their representatives to uphold a body of ideas reflecting the social needs and aspirations of the constituency. Decisions made by representatives must be guided by the beliefs and norms of the constituency.

***Descriptive Model of Representation:*** Constituents elect representatives that look and vote like the constituency.

Discuss how Congresspersons come together to vote on policies. Provide students with the names and profiles of at least four representatives of their community, nation, school, or other group, and give a general description of the populations they serve. Highlight a public decision that was made by the representative identified. Divide students into groups and have each group create a grid with four quadrants labeled as each type of representation. Categorize the type of representation described based on the decisions made by the representative under discussion. Also allow students to add and label an additional representative they are familiar with to the grid. Groups must justify their classifications.

Example

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| <u>Trustee</u>     | <u>Delegate</u>    |
| Principal Jones    | Mayor Wells        |
| <u>Ideological</u> | <u>Descriptive</u> |

Have students vote on which model of representation they prefer. Tally the responses and share in a bar graph.

Recommendations for Discussion:

- Which model of representation is prevalent among our national congressional leaders? Explain.
- Which model of representation are we demanding from the congressional leadership during the Champions for Children’s Health Stroller Brigade? Explain.
- What would you say to the congressional leadership about health and other needs for children in the nation?

***PART II (suggested activity following November 4 Champions for Children’s Health Stroller Brigade)***

Have students share their reactions to the November 4<sup>th</sup> activities.

Reread the Preamble to the students. Based on the knowledge gained from participation in the November 4<sup>th</sup> activities, have students create a Preamble for Healthy Children, outlining the need for affordable, simple and comprehensive health benefits for all children.

**CLOSING:** Have students present and read aloud their Preambles.

**EXTENSIONS:** ***To continue the learning process, extension activities can be used in after school settings, student groups, and as special take home projects.***

Have students develop a newsletter for parents and others in the school highlighting their November 4<sup>th</sup> experiences. Include: headlines about the day, ways to get involved, stories and responses, and photos.

Have students discuss their roles as young citizens with regard to health reform for all children. Students can view “*Mighty Times: The Children’s March*” documentary to better understand how children were engaged in civic activities in 1963.

Have students use computer applications to obtain an Internet resource or a media center reference to create a Virtual Museum Exhibit that highlights the fundamental components of the American democratic process. Students must locate, gather, and process information from a variety of primary and secondary sources. At each virtual exhibit, students must provide a description and commentary of how the exhibit impacts American democracy.