

# Represent Me

a game guide for teachers

In *Represent Me*, you'll take on the role of a legislator seeking re-election to office. You'll review and categorize legislation, then approve the bills you think will best help your constituents. Strategically supporting the people you represent will help keep you in office!



## Learning Objectives

- Understand that a legislator's job is to represent constituents
- Simulate the relationship between a legislator and a diverse constituency
- Evaluate hypothetical legislation for impact on various socioeconomic groups

## Prerequisites

None! *Represent Me* is designed to let students learn about the role of constituents by playing the game. However, it may be helpful for students to have some prior knowledge of the legislative process. We recommend having students play the iCivics *LawCraft* for this background.

## HOW TO PLAY THE GAME

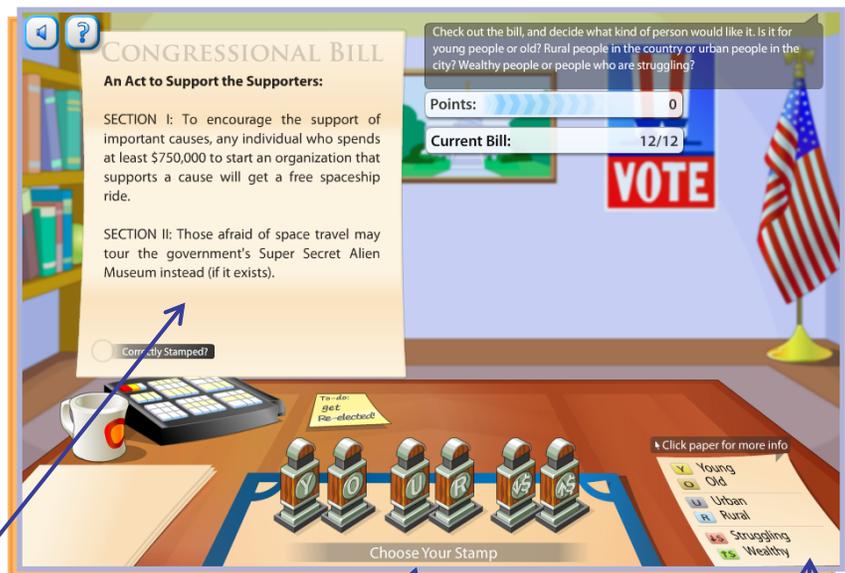
### 1. Choose a character

Select one of the available avatars.

### 2. Start categorizing bills

Next you will enter your office, where a stack of bills awaits. Your first job is to identify which group of constituents each bill would help the most.

**1** Read the bill.



**TIP:** Bills in this game are not meant to be realistic. The point of the game is to learn that legislators have a variety of constituent groups to consider.

**2** Pick up the stamp that represents the group of people you think the bill will help. Stamp the bill!

**3** Click this list to see definitions for each group of people.

## 3. Please constituents by approving bills

Now that you've looked at all the bills, you will meet your constituents. Look closely at their features and select three bills that help as many of your constituents as possible. The more you help them, the more likely they are to vote for you!

**TIP:** The symbols below the constituents show you what groups they represent. The speech bubbles tell you whether they're pleased with your bill choices!



CONSTITUENT FEATURES	
<b>Y</b>	<b>Young</b> Young people want to be treated fairly, have fun, and look forward to a bright future.
<b>O</b>	<b>Old</b> Senior citizens want to retire from working, stay healthy, and finally relax and have fun!
<b>U</b>	<b>Urban</b> City residents want friendly neighbors, clean streets, and easy ways to get around.
<b>R</b>	<b>Rural</b> Farmers and small-town residents want to protect and improve their country way of life.
<b>U\$</b>	<b>Struggling</b> Those who struggle want to find good jobs and have enough money to feel secure.
<b>T\$</b>	<b>Wealthy</b> People with lots of money want to invest in business, help others, and buy amazing things.



4 Here are the bills you just categorized. You'll be reading through them again.

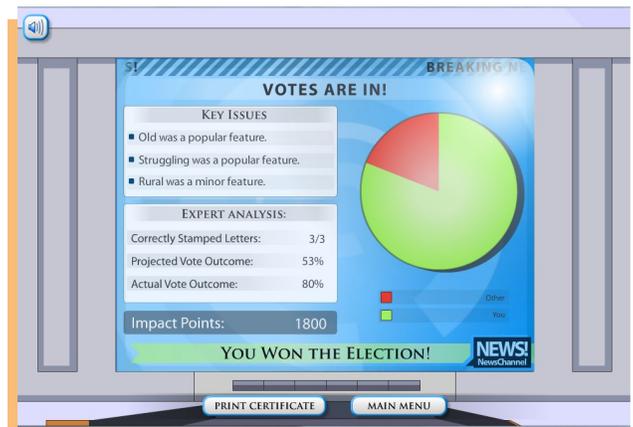
5 Here are your constituents. This time, you are looking for three bills that will please the most of them!

6 Use this approval stamp to approve bills.

## Election Results!

After you approve three bills, you'll watch a campaign ad reviewing the issues you chose to champion. Finally, you'll see if all your work won you re-election to the legislature!

At this point, you can print your game certificate or return to the main menu and play again. (Each game is different, so why not?)



## CLASSROOM CONVERSATION STARTERS

### Pre-Game Questions

You can use these questions to lead into playing *Represent Me* in the classroom.

- What is a constituent?
  - ◇ *"Constituent" is a fancy word for a person that a lawmaker represents.*
- How often do lawmakers (senators and representatives) run for re-election?
  - ◇ *U.S. senators run every 6 years; U.S. representatives run every 2 years. Term lengths vary for state lawmakers.*
- What do you think lawmakers look for when deciding which bills to pass? Do they think about their constituents?
  - ◇ *Lawmakers are elected to represent their constituents back home. They look for laws that will help their constituents, or that represent to their constituents' values.*

### Post-Game Questions

Use these questions as a way to debrief the individual experiences of playing *Represent Me*.

- What was your role as the player?
  - ◇ *The player's role was as a lawmaker (legislator).*
- What was the hardest part about choosing 3 bills to approve?
  - ◇ *Answers will vary, but guide discussion toward the fact that constituents have many different concerns, and it's hard to please everyone.*
- In the game, as a lawmaker you don't pay much attention to your own interests. Do real-life lawmakers have their own opinions and concerns? Can a lawmaker represent someone with different views? What might make it easy or difficult?
- What do you think is the hardest part about representing people?

### Activity Idea

- Ask students to write a letter of their own to a lawmaker, either individually or together as a class. Students should choose an important issue, include at least 3 reasons why the lawmaker should care about the issue, and tell the lawmaker what action to take.

