

Review of TCI HS Gov Unit 4

Headings from text indicated in **blue**

Quotes from text indicated in **red**

The Legislative Branch Unit 4

Compelling Question: Learn about legislators and the legislative process in American government.

Lesson 11

Unit Introduction

Lawmakers and Legislatures

What makes an effective Legislator?

Poses interesting question of “What Makes a Good Legislator?” and contains a pretest and post test on student knowledge.

While disillusioning, the text does include realistic aspects of politics. Is this appropriate for this age level? It certainly builds contempt for the job.

1. Legislators and Their Constituents

The image of Alexandria Cortez is an interesting choice and the caption mentions that she was the youngest member of the House in history. It neglects to mention that she entered the race because she answered a casting call, literally, from a left leaning group and could not have achieved office without their pivotal help. If the object is to include realistic aspects, do it consistently.

“In 1971, just 4 percent of state legislators were women. By 2018, that number had grown to about 25 percent.” While true, the text once again measures past norms by current cultural standards yet doesn’t challenge a student to ask if this is a reasonable or fair comparison.

The information and map of apportionment is out of date, showing 2010 apportionment. This should be updated to reflect the 2020 census.

The chart showing the increase in diversity of legislators' background is useful in showing current trends.

2. The Organization of Congress

"In 1913, with the ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment, the Senate became elected directly by voters instead of by state legislatures. Today, unlike the bicameral legislatures in most countries, the two houses of Congress are equal in power. Even so, the houses are clearly different, and the Senate still serves to "cool" legislation coming from the House." One must question why the text doesn't include the reasoning of both the Founders in establishing election of Senators by State Legislators, as well as the reasoning behind the 17th amendment.

Also, I am left wondering why they have not yet discussed the roles/duties of the House versus the roles/duties of the Senate.

The text provides great detail on the organization, which is useful in understanding our government.

3. The Work of Congress

This section enumerates the separate enumerated powers of the Senate and the House, but a chart would be useful in providing clarity.

It is important to discuss the fact that Congress has avoided their Constitutional duty by passing general laws which are flushed out by regulatory bodies. The unelected departments write the regulations which have the power of law, are then investigated by that department which then serves as judge and jury regarding any supposed breeches of the regulations. The courts defer to the regulatory body/department. This process abrogates the Rule of Law and the specified role of the legislature.

Useful charts showing the flow of legislation.

4. How State Legislatures Compare with Congress

“no one goes into politics to get rich.” As this text takes a realistic look at politics, it misses the mark here. Commonly, national Legislators exit office much wealthier than when they entered.

Balanced discussion of term limits is useful.

Summary

Accurate and short.
