**The Legislative Branch**

The Constitution

From: Nicole Gilbertson, 2015

**History Standards: Government 12.4.1**

Discuss Article I of the Constitution as it relates to the legislative branch, including eligibility for office and lengths of terms of representatives and senators; election to office; the roles of the House and Senate in impeachment proceedings; the role of the vice president; the enumerated legislative powers; and the process by which a bill becomes a law.

**CCSS Standards: Reading, Grades 11-12**

2. Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

**Guiding Question:** How do senators and congressmen get selected?

**Overview of Lesson:**

This activity is part of a larger unit examining the powers enumerated by the Constitution and particularly the legislative branch. Begin with a warm up in which students list everything they know about the legislative branch. After 5 minutes, have students volunteer answers and list them all on the board. Have students get into partners and organize these ideas into a graphic organizer of their choice. Have them discuss and discard ideas they believe are incorrect. Bring the class back together and have them share out.

Remind students that our basis for everything our government does is the Constitution. Have students search a cope of the document to find the section detailing the legislative branch, and label it appropriately. Briefly unpack Section 1 as a class, and then distribute the document below. Have students work again in partners to answer the first two questions. Debrief with remaining time and have students respond orally to the third question. Homework tonight is to find out when changes were made.

“Section 2:

The House of Representatives shall be composed of Members chosen every second Year by the People of the several States…

Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several States which may be included within this Union, according to their respective Numbers, which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three Years after the first Meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent Term of ten Years…

Section 3:

The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, chosen by the Legislature thereof, for six Years; and each Senator shall have one Vote”

What are significant differences in the election processes of congressmen vs. senators?

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How do such differences aim to influence the character of each body?

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Have these rules changed since the writing of the Constitution?

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