

Quest

Grade 8

Mini Model Congress

Stage 1-Desired Results	
<p>Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn the role of representatives in Congress • Learn the use of parliamentary procedure and nurture debating ability • Learn research skills and the process of examining more than one point of view • Understand role as a citizen in a representative government • Develop the skills of communication by speaking and writing • Develop self-confidence, self-awareness, and leadership skills • Learn non-violent ways of resolving conflicting views 	
<p>Understandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are varying points of view. • There are non-violent ways of resolving conflicting views. • Citizens are the heart of a democratic government. 	<p>Essential Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the role of citizens in a democratic government? • How are laws created? • How does one debate a point of view?
<p>Knowledge Students will know...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of representatives in Congress • Parliamentary procedure • How laws are created 	<p>Skills Students will ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep journals • Research current events • Collaborate with other students • Write bills • Debate • Examine multiple points of view • Participate in a simulated congress
<p>NJCCCS:</p> <p>6.2 (Civics) All students will know, understand and appreciate the values and principles of American democracy and the rights, responsibilities, and roles of a citizen in the nation and the world.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.2A 1-6 • 6.2B. 2 • 6.2.D 1,2 <p>9.2 (Consumer, Family, and Life Skills) All students will demonstrate critical life skills in order to be functional members of society.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.2.A.1,2,4 • 9.2.C.1-6 • 9.2 D 1,3,4 	

Stage 2-Assessment Evidence	
Performance Tasks: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group activities• Debate• Reading responses and discussion• Conduct research	Other Evidence: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher observation• Research of current events• Written bills
Stage 3- Learning Plan	
Learning Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Group activities and labs• Writing bills• Debate• Reading and discussing articles• Guest speakers• Participation in the Mini-Model Congress	
Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mini-Model Congress Curriculum from the National Talent Network• Roberts Rules of Order• Various texts• Articles• Local politicians• Websites	

Mini-Model Congress

(From EIRC Manual)

“The EIRC Mini Model Congress helps students in grades six through eight understand the American political, legislative and legal processes. Students are introduced to the need for law, the different levels of government, and citizens’ role in government, as well as the basic legislative process. The program requires students to use research and debating skills; to understand parliamentary procedure and use of by-laws (rules and procedures); to write legislative bills; and, at a one-day simulation of Congress, to "adopt" the role of a legislator by debating bills first in a committee and then during a full House or Senate debate. In addition to learning about government and citizenship, students gain self-confidence, are better able to express their ideas, and learn non-violent ways of resolving conflicting issues.”

Through objectives for Mini Model Congress students will:

- Understand the process of forming and passing laws,
- Learn the role of representatives in Congress,
- Learn the use of parliamentary procedure,
- Learn research skills and the process of examining more than one point of view,
- Understand their role as a citizen in a representative government,
- Develop the skills of communication through speaking and writing,
- Enhance their debating ability,
- Cultivate self-confidence, self-awareness, and leadership skills,
- Learn non-violent ways of resolving conflicting views.

The Mini Model Congress objectives are met as students learn to research and debate issues in preparation for a one-day Congress simulation. In order to prepare for their roles as “legislators”, students will:

- 1) Investigate issues and discuss them from "opposing" points of view. Students learn how to: research issues, collect relevant data, consider many aspects of an issue, develop logical arguments and consider effects of their opinions.
- 2) Write concise (one page) legislative bills which, if voted into law, would regulate an important national issue. Effective bill writing requires a full understanding of an issue, a clear use of language, knowledge of bill structure, and an ability to state an issue concisely.
- 3) Debate legislation. Students begin debating by discussing opposing views of an issue. They extend their debating skills through legislative committee work which requires understanding parliamentary procedure, responding to time constraints, developing a persuasive style, and cooperating with debaters who take the same position on an issue.
- 4) Identify and contact their legislators. Students become aware of their legislative representatives on a state and federal level.