



## Congress in Action

<b>Author:</b> Clinton Mathewson	
<b>Time Frame:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 Day to research &amp; develop arguments</li> <li>• 2 Days to debate/develop a compromise plan</li> <li>• Homework: Outside of class Reflection assignment</li> </ul>	<b>Proven Practices (indicate which practices used)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Instruction on government institutions</li> <li>✓ Use of current &amp; controversial issues</li> <li>✓ Simulations of democratic practices</li> <li>✓ Service Learning</li> </ul>
<b><u>IL Social Studies Standards</u></b>  <b>SS.IS.6.9-12: Construct and evaluate explanations and arguments using multiple sources and relevant, verified information.</b> <b>SS.CV.1.9-12: Distinguish the rights, roles, powers, and responsibilities of individuals and institutions in the political system.</b> <b>SS.CV.10.9-12: Explain the role of compromise and deliberation in the legislative process</b>	<b><u>CCSS/ELA History/Social Studies Standards</u></b>  <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2</u> 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. <u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4</u> Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text
<b>Essential Question:</b> Is Congress capable of compromise?	
<b>Supporting Questions:</b> What is compromise? What are the key components of the Virginia Plan? What are the key components of the New Jersey Plan? What are the key components of the Great Compromise? How can past congressional arguments relate to modern-day congressional arguments & procedures?	
<b>Resources Required w/Citations:</b> Virginia Plan: <a href="https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&amp;doc=7&amp;page=transcript">https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&amp;doc=7&amp;page=transcript</a> New Jersey Plan: <a href="http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/patexta.asp">http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/patexta.asp</a>	

**Recommended Procedures:**

Students will be assigned to research the key components of the Virginia Plan and New Jersey Plan (Primary Sources.) Students will meet in two separate groups to collaborate on their findings. After sharing with the group, students should prepare to debate their plan. Students should develop arguments for their specific plan they will be defending and arguments against the plan of the other group. Students will simulate a debate similar to modern-day congress. Students will be given time to present their viewpoints, yield time to colleagues, yield time for questions, vote, etc. Once the debate has been completed, the class will work together to come up with a compromise which both groups must agree to before a final vote is taken. Afterward, students will compare their compromise to the Great Compromise. To finish the lesson, students will reflect on the compromising process and compare/contrast this process to what modern-day issues Congress may have with compromising.

**Possible Service Learning Informed Action:**

- Local governmental representative(s) could be brought in to observe/contribute to debate & describe their experiences with compromise in the legislature
- Students could create flyers or posters supporting their specific plan
- Students could write a newspaper-like editorial arguing their side

**Differentiation:**

Students can take on different roles throughout the process. While in groups students could focus more heavily on research, leading group discussion, writing out the group's key ideas, being a speaker during the debate. A different version of the documents could be used for students with differing Lexile levels.

**Possible Assessments:**

Formative: Research & argument development  
Summative: Reflection

**Other Considerations:**

A similar process can be used again when discussing current & controversial issues.