



Democracy for Ambassadors

Troop Leader Guide

Welcome to the Richard Nixon Presidential Library! To earn your “Democracy for Ambassadors” badge today, you must complete the five activities listed on this worksheet and have an adult witness sign it. Good luck and have fun!

Become an expert on your government and the roles of the officials you will help elect.

1. Find out about local government.
2. Find out about state government.
3. Find out about the federal legislative branch.
4. Find out about the federal executive.
5. Find out about the federal judicial branch.

When you earn this badge, you will have learned more about your local, state, and national government - and you will be ready to use that knowledge to inform your voting.

Exhibits of interest for this badge: *America's Government (front of Theater 37) and the Title IX display (front of East Room).*

- 1) What is the federal legislative branch?

The legislative branch makes laws and comprises the House of Representatives and Senate.

Senators serve six-year terms, and these terms are staggered so that about one-third of the Senate is up for reelection every two years. A senator must be 30 years old, a U.S. citizen for nine years, and live in the state they represent. There are 100 U.S. senators. Go to www.senate.gov to find your Senators.

Members of the U.S. House of Representatives serve two-year terms. All 435 members get elected every midterm and presidential election year. A representative must be at least 25, a U.S. citizen for at least seven years, and live in the state they represent. The number of representatives a state has depends on its population. Go to www.house.gov to find your representative.



2) What is the federal executive branch?

The federal executive branch carries out laws and comprises the president, vice president, Cabinet, and most federal agencies. An election for president and vice president of the United States happens every four years on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November. The first woman was elected Vice President in ____.

The cabinet members are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Fifteen executive departments, each led by an appointed member of the President's Cabinet, carry out the day-to-day administration of the federal government. The President also appoints the leaders of independent federal commissions, federal judges, and ambassadors.

3) What is the federal judicial branch?

The government's judicial branch interprets laws and comprises the Supreme Court, Circuit courts, and local and city courts. The system progresses up to the highest court in the United States, the Supreme Court.

4) What is the Supreme Court?

The Supreme Court, sometimes called "the highest court in the land," comprises nine special judges called justices. The first woman was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1981, and today the court is a mixture of men and women. Justices are appointed, not elected, and they serve lifelong terms, which means they generally stay on the court until they pass away or retire. The Constitution gives Congress the power to impeach—or try to remove—justices for "Treason, Bribery, or other high Crimes and Misdemeanors."

5) Who was the first woman appointed to the Supreme Court?

The first woman appointed to the Supreme Court was Sandra Day O'Connor, who joined the court in 1981. She was a Girl Scout too!

Reflection

Go online and research important Supreme Court rulings. Choose one and find out everything you can about it. What was the process for getting the case to the Supreme Court? How close was the vote? Do you agree with the result?

- 6) Why do you think it's significant that Supreme Court justices serve lifelong terms?
- 7) Would you want to be a judge or member of the Supreme Court? Why or why not?
- 8) How can you share what you've learned with other girls?

