

***Taxation With Representation – the Politics of Economics**

Student Instructions

INTRODUCTION

For the next few days you will be a member of Congress, serving as either a Democrat, a Republican or an Independent. Your congressional duties include drafting a tax bill, sitting on a committee, and participating in full Senate or House sessions.

After you have chosen or been assigned to a political party the first item of business in this _____ Congress _____ session is to select party leaders.

In the U.S. Congress these leaders are usually the ones with the most seniority (have been there the longest). They have much power and are good at parliamentary maneuvers and persuading other members to vote their way. Your student leaders are in charge, so choose classmates with good powers of persuasion and other leadership qualities.

PARTY MEETING

Once the leaders have been selected, the parties strategize and draw up legislative goals for this Congress (i.e., how to pass a tax bill that represents the views of their parties). Each morning there may be a brief party strategy meeting.

WRITING BILLS

You'll be working in groups. You'll receive a bill-writing rubric and a format/sample for writing your bills. Here are some drafting tips.

- Give your bill a catchy title, one that shows at a glance what it's about. The sample bill is called, "The Tax Fairness and Revenue Allocation Act," or TFRAA (TA-Fruh).
- In the "purpose" section give a short summary of what your bill will accomplish and why it's important. This is a policy statement (e.g., "To make the tax system fair to families").

As you begin to write the bill's "provisions" (the body of the bill where you spell out, in detail, how you are going to accomplish your policy goals), ask yourself the following questions:

- Are my provisions specific? For example, "Tax bracket 1 will be 10 percent of the first \$25,000 of taxable income."
- Is my language clear? Will readers understand what the bill's provisions mean?

PASSING A BILL

Your bill will be assigned to a committee. The committee will edit it and decide if it should go to the "floor" (full House or Senate). Your class House or Senate **MUST** pass **ONE** bill and one bill only. Work for bipartisan compromise. The group whose bill gets passed may get extra credit.

** Excerpted and abbreviated*