Teacher Guide: CONGRESS

In order of appearance in Preparing for the Oath, the Civics Test items covered in this theme are:

16. Who makes federal laws?
   • Congress
   • Senate and House (of Representatives)
   • (U.S. or national) legislature

17. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?
   • the Senate and House (of Representatives)

18. How many U.S. Senators are there?
   • one hundred (100)

19. We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?
   • six (6)

20. Who is one of your state’s U.S. Senators now?
   • Answers will vary. [District of Columbia residents and residents of U.S. territories should answer that D.C. (or the territory where the applicant lives) has no U.S. Senators.]

24. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?
   • all people of the state

21. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?
   • four hundred thirty-five (435)

22. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?
   • two (2)

23. Name your U.S. Representative.
   • Answers will vary. [Residents of territories with nonvoting Delegates or Resident Commissioners may provide the name of that Delegate or Commissioner. Also acceptable is any statement that the territory has no (voting) Representatives in Congress.]

25. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?
   • (because of) the state’s population
   • (because) they have more people
   • (because) some states have more people

47. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?
   • Paul Ryan
Overview
This Teacher Guide will take you through the Civics Test questions covered in the theme, Congress. The instructional steps provided here target ESL students at the high beginning level. Watch the video on the Help screen and take some time to familiarize yourself with the elements and navigation of Preparing for the Oath so that you are comfortable presenting it to your class.

Special notes: Remind your students that immediately prior to their naturalization interview, they should visit these websites for current information on Congress: www.senate.gov, www.house.gov, and www.speaker.gov. See the notes on the previous page regarding D.C. residents and residents of U.S. territories.

Introduction
To start the lesson, open the theme and present the Introduction Screen. Read the introductory paragraph aloud and discuss it with the students.

Congress is one branch of the federal government. It is also called the legislative branch. This branch makes laws. There are two parts of Congress: the House of Representatives and the Senate. Both parts of Congress have representatives from every state.

Explore the Questions
These steps will help you guide your class through the theme, using an LCD projector:

1. Distribute the handout Key Vocabulary—Congress and review the definitions with the students.
2. Click on the Start button to begin the first video, Congress.
3. Play the video for the class with the captions on or off.
4. Pause the video where appropriate to discuss the vocabulary and images with the class.
5. Play the video again without pausing.
6. If there is a Practice activity available for this question, click on the “Practice” tab.
7. View and discuss the Practice activity.
8. Click on the “Try” tab.
9. Listen to the Civics Test item and have the students select the answer. Click on the “hear question” button to listen to the item repeatedly. After choosing the correct option, students can hear the answer aloud while they read along at the bottom of the screen.
10. Go through the rest of the videos in this theme, using the steps above.
11. Once the class has gone through all of the videos in this theme, wrap up this lesson with the handout, Matching—Congress, or assign it to the students for homework.
Key Vocabulary—Congress

**act:** a law that is officially accepted by the government

**bill:** a proposed plan for a law that the government reviews

**census:** a formal count of the population in a city, county, state, or country

**citizen:** a person who legally belongs to a country and has the rights and protection of that country

**debate:** to discuss an issue in order to make a decision

**district:** an official area of a state whose citizens elect a Representative to the House of Representatives

**equal:** to be the same

**federal:** part of the central U.S. government, not state or local governments

**mental disability:** a condition of the mind that makes it difficult for someone to do things most people are able to do

**physical disability:** a condition of the body that makes it difficult for someone to do things most people are able to do

**represent:** to make decisions for another person or group of people

**representative:** elected members of a government group in the United States, such as in Congress

**run for office:** to seek a political position, such as in Congress

**sign:** to write your name on a document to show that you approve

**term:** the period of time someone serves in a political office

**treat:** to behave towards someone in a particular way
Matching—Congress

Match the question with the correct answer.

______ 1. The House of Representatives has how many voting members?
   A. Congress
   B. one hundred (100)
   C. six (6)
   D. all people of the state
   E. two (2)
   F. four hundred thirty-five (435)
   G. (because) some states have more people
   H. the Senate and House (of Representative)

______ 2. Who does a U.S. Senator represent?

______ 3. Why do some states have more Representatives than other states?

______ 4. We elect a U.S. Representative for how many years?

______ 5. How many U.S. Senators are there?

______ 6. What are the two parts of the U.S. Congress?

______ 7. We elect a U.S. Senator for how many years?

______ 8. Who makes federal laws?

Check the Information—Congress

1. Who is one of your state’s U.S. Senators now?

2. Name your U.S. Representative.

3. What is the name of the Speaker of the House of Representatives now?

Visit http://americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship/index.html?theme=4 to go directly to the Congress theme.