

Topic: Civics

Badge: Democracy for Juniors

Suggested Supplies: paper, writing utensil, access to the internet would be helpful

Steps/Activities:



Step 1: (Pick One)

- Visit your town hall, city hall, or Mayor's office:
 - Visit one of these places and talk to someone. Have them explain their job and what they do. Come up with some questions before hand to ask.
 - If you can't visit in person, try calling them on the phone to talk to them. Make sure to ask if they have time to talk to you first! You could also do some online research about your local government to see what all they do.
- Talk to an expert:
 - With help from an adult, find an expert who can talk to you about your local government. This could be someone elected to local office, a teacher, a lawyer, or a judge. Have them explain all the jobs that are done in your local government and find out how local elections work.
- Go to a city or town hall meeting:
 - With help from an adult, make plans to go to a meeting when a vote is being held. Before you go, do a little research and talk about what will be voted on and try and decide how you would vote if you could.
 - If you can't go in person, many towns and cities are holding virtual town hall meetings. Find out when and hop on!

Step 2: (Pick One)

- Visit your state capitol building:
 - Take a field trip and talk to someone there about how your state government works. How do the three branches of government work together? Come up with some questions to ask in advance.
 - If you can't go in person, try finding someone who works at the capital and see if they are willing to have a ZOOM call or phone call with you to talk about your state government.
- Campaign for governor:
 - With help from an adult, find out who your governor is and some of the things they are responsible for. Now pretend that you are running for governor. Make a campaign speech to give to your friends and family; make sure to include the changes you would make in your state and the things you are more passionate about.
 - Giving your speech doesn't have to be in person. You can have it on a web call or post it to social media!
- Explore an issue:
 - Almost every political issue has people who feel strongly on both sides. Can you think of an example that's making news in your state right now? Find out everything you can about both sides of the issue.
 - If you are able, have a friend or family member pick a side and you both debate which side you think is right.

Step 3: (Pick One)

- Draft a bill:
 - Do some research and find out how a bill becomes a law. Then draft your own bill on a topic or issue that is important to you. Share your bill with your friends or family.
- Map the Country:
 - Each state, no matter the size, has two people representing them in the United States Senate. Since there are 50 states, that is 100 senators total in the Senate. But the House of Representatives is a little more complicated. There are 435 House members, and the number for each state is decided by the size of its population (the number of people living in that state). With some help, do some research to find out how many representatives each state has.
 - Here is a helpful video that explains why we have the two houses and how they work:
<https://youtu.be/hltv8-nzcUc>
- Talk about representation:
 - With help from an adult, find out how many women are currently serving in the United States Senate and House of Representatives. Compare this year to previous years. What was the number when you were born? How about when some of the older women in your life were your age? Talk to some of these women about the political shifts they've seen over time. How do they feel about them? Do they believe women are represented well in government today?

Step 4: (Pick One)

- Compare presidents and prime ministers.
 - Find a place led by a prime minister—such as the United Kingdom—and compare that role with the president of the United States. How are they alike? How are they different? Talk about what you read or see with friends or family. For more fun, look into a country that has both a president and a prime minister. How do their roles differ?
- Create a presidential trivia contest:
 - Which president had a cat named socks? How many presidents have stars on the Hollywood Walk of Fame? Come up with fun questions and quiz your friends or family on a range of presidential topics. For more fun host a trivia night for your family.
- Craft Branches:
 - Start by drawing a picture of a tree with three branches, then label the branches with each branch of government; legislative, judicial, and executive. Then add leaves to the branches of the different people in those branches (like president and vice president for the executive branch).

Step 5: (Pick One)

- Talk to a lawyer:
 - Have an adult help you contact one to talk about what they do. Why did they choose their profession? What do they think are the most important cases in national history? Ask any other questions you may have.
- Talk to a judge:
 - Find out about what they do. How does the judicial branch work with the other two branches of government? What's the difference between the Supreme Court and local courts? How does a case make it to the Supreme Court? Ask any other questions you may have.

- Talk to a social studies, history, or civics teacher.
 - Find out how they teach their students about the judicial branch. How does the judicial branch work with the other two branches of government? Ask any other questions you may have!

You have now earned your Democracy for Junior Badge!

*Once completed, this badge can be purchased at the Girl Scout shop for \$3.00 at:

<https://www.girlscoutshop.com/democracy-for-juniors-badge>

or emailing info@gswestok.org