

Democracy for Seniors Badge

Activity Choice Descriptions

Walk your girls through the activity choices and let them decide which ones they like best.

Meeting 2 Activity Choices

Find Out About the Federal Legislative Branch

Write a Letter: Is there an issue in the news right now that's important to you? Do you think there's something more that lawmakers can do to help? Write a letter to one of your representatives about why the issue matters and what action you'd like to see from them.

Build a Budget: One responsibility of Congress is creating the federal budget. Spend some time researching the big buckets of spending in the United States. What percentage of the budget is typically spent on the military? What about health care? Then create your own pie chart showing how you'd recommend allocating funds if you were a member of Congress.

Make a Game: Read through the process of how a bill becomes a law, then get creative! Make your own board game as a way to teach the process to others. (Maybe even younger Girl Scouts!)

Find Out About the Federal Executive Branch

Rethink an Election: Choose a historical presidential election and find out everything you can about it. Now imagine you are the campaign manager for the losing candidate. What could you have done differently to bring your candidate to victory? Share your campaign strategy.

Compare Governments: In small groups or pairs, find out everything you can about one system of government. (Such as democracy, monarchy, and oligarchy.) Each pair will then create a presentation of what they've learned and share with the larger group. The presentation can take any form—keep it loose and be creative! After everyone has had a chance to share, talk about what you've heard. Which do you think is the best system? Why?

Explore the Electoral College: Find out everything you can about its history and how it has affected recent presidential elections. With a partner, debate doing away with the electoral college or keeping it in place. After you've had a chance to argue both sides, talk about which side you agree with more.

Find Out About the Federal Judicial Branch

Judge a Justice: Choose one Supreme Court justice—past or present—and find out everything

you can about their voting history. Which case do you think was most important and why? Do you agree with their vote? Share your findings with family or friends.

Look Into Term Limits: Supreme Court justices are appointed, not elected, and serve lifelong terms. (That means they generally keep the job until they resign or pass away, though Congress does have the power to impeach justices in extreme cases.) Some people believe that this system needs to be changed. Team up with a friend and find out everything you can about the arguments for and against putting term limits in place for Supreme Court justices. Debate one side, then switch places and take the other position. Which side do you agree with? Why?

Go to Court: One of the best ways to understand the legal system is to see it for yourself! Make a plan to attend a session in court. You can start by contacting your local U.S. District Clerk's Office to find out what cases are on the calendar, what time they'd recommend for a student visit, and anything you should know before attending.