

Civics Content Vocabulary

Word/Term	Part of Speech	Definition
act	noun	legislation that has passed both houses of Congress, has been signed into law by the president, or passed despite his veto, and therefore becomes law
appointment	noun	job or duty that is given to a person
appointment confirmation	noun	the process of the Senate approving the president's choices for certain positions within the government
bicameral	adjective	having two chambers (e.g. the two houses of Congress, the Senate and the House of Representatives)
bill	noun	a proposal for a law
Cabinet	noun	people appointed by the president to head executive departments of government and act as official advisers to the president
Chief Justice	proper noun	the head justice; the Chief Justice is "first among equals"
city commissioner or council member	noun	a member of the governing body of a city
committee selection	verb	how representatives and senators are chosen for their assigned committees
conference committee	noun	a temporary panel composed of House and Senate members, which is formed for the purpose of reconciling differences in legislation that has passed both chambers. Conference committees are usually convened to resolve differences on major and controversial legislation.
constituents	noun	people public officials are elected to represent
county commissioner or council member	noun	a member of the governing body of a county
court order	noun	a formal statement from a court that orders someone to do or stop doing something
executive order	noun	an order that comes from the U.S. President or a government agency and must be obeyed like a law
home rule	noun	self-government by citizens at the local level
how a bill becomes a law	noun	the process of how a proposed law ("bill") moves through Congress and the president in order to become a law
impeach	verb	to bring formal charges of wrongdoing against a public official (such as the U.S. President)
judgment	noun	a formal decision given by a court
judicial review	noun	the power of the judicial branch to review the actions of the executive and legislative branches and determine whether or not they are unconstitutional (this includes laws passed by Congress); the U.S. Supreme Court case Marbury v. Madison established this power such actions are consistent with the U.S. Constitution
jurisdiction	noun	the right and power for courts to hear a case, interpret and apply the law
law	noun	a rule established by government or other source of authority to regulate people's conduct or activities
majority leader	noun	a position where a Member of Congress is elected by the majority party to serve as the chief spokesperson for that party and to manage and schedule the business of either house
majority party	noun	the political party with the most elected members
majority vote	noun	more than half (50%) of the votes
mayor	noun	the head of government for a city or town

Word/Term	Part of Speech	Definition
minority leader	noun	a position where a member of Congress is elected by the minority party to serve as the chief spokesperson for the party and to support the majority party in managing and scheduling the business of either house
minority party	noun	the political party second in the number of elected members
nominate	verb	to suggest a person for a position or office
ordinance	noun	a law enacted by a city or county affecting local affairs such as traffic, noise, and animal control
pardon	noun	the formal act of forgiving someone or excusing a mistake
President pro tempore of the Senate	proper noun	the person who presides over the Senate when the Vice President is not present
presidential appointment	noun	the power of the U.S. President to choose members of his or her cabinet, ambassadors to other nations, and other officials in his or her administration
school board	noun	the group of persons elected to manage local public schools
Speaker of the House	proper noun	an office identified in Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution; the leader of the U.S. House of Representatives, usually the highest ranking member of the majority party
special committee	noun	a permanent committee established under the standing rules of both houses of Congress that focuses specific subject areas (e.g. Special Committee on Aging)
special interest groups	noun	a group of people who are concerned with a particular issue and who try to influence legislators to act in their favor, also known as an interest group
standing committee	noun	permanent committee that focuses on specific subject areas (e.g. Education and the Workforce Committee)
state legislator	noun	a member of the Florida House of Representatives (state representative) or Florida Senate (state senator)
state representative	noun	a member of the lower house of a state legislature (the Florida House of Representatives)
state senator	noun	a member of the upper house of a state legislature (the Florida Senate)
statute	noun	a law enacted at the state level
summary judgment	noun	a judgment decided by a trial court without that case going to trial; a summary judgment is an attempt to stop a case from going to trial
U. S. Representative	proper noun	a member of the U.S House of Representatives; representatives are elected in districts throughout each state
U. S. Senator	proper noun	a member of the U.S. Senate elected to represent an entire state, there are two senators per state
veto	noun	a decision by an executive authority such as a president or governor to reject a proposed law or statute
writ of certiorari	noun	the procedure to see if the U.S. Supreme Court will hear a case; a writ of certiorari is issued when a higher level court agrees to hear an appeal of an inferior court's decision