

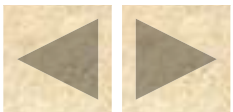
EQ #13- Who are the Members of Congress?

- Are they representative of average Americans?
- What do they do?

SECTION 4

The Members of Congress

- Most members of Congress are white, wealthy, highly educated and male with previous political experience
- However, more women and minorities are being elected



What do they do? 5 Job Roles

1. **Research Laws**- As committee members- Senators & Representatives research proposed laws and vote on them.
2. **Provide Oversight** : Members of Congress check and review the work of the executive branch as they carry out laws once they are passed.
3. **Represent needs of their state**-they represent the views of the people of their state—their constituents.
4. **As Legislators, members of Congress make laws**
5. **As politicians, members work closely with their party leaders** to influence government & laws

Four Voting Options

Senators and Representatives are elected to represent people. As legislators, they have four voting options: (write all of these down)

<p><i>Trustees</i> Trustees believe that each question they face must be decided on its merits.</p>	<p><i>Delegates</i> Delegates see themselves as agents of the people who elected them.</p>
<p><i>Partisans</i> Lawmakers who owe their first allegiance to their political party are partisans.</p>	<p><i>Politicos</i> Politicos attempt to combine the basic elements of the trustee, delegate, and partisan roles.</p>



Congress—The Pay...

- Today, senators and representatives are paid a salary of \$174,000 a year.
- Members set their own salary. Why?
- The Speaker of the House and other leaders, are paid more and have more responsibility.



Other Privileges?

- The **franking privilege** allows members of Congress to mail letters and other materials postage-free
- Congress members work long hours and face many pressures.

Membership Privileges

- Members of Congress are immune from arrest for noncriminal offenses while engaged in congressional business.
- The Speech and Debate Clause protects them from lawsuits for their words or actions as Congress members while in office.



Activity- Members of Current Congress

Demographics are studies of population groups.

Examples- Age, race/ethnicity, gender, education, income...

What are Congress Members' Demographics?

Activity- Use the handout and links to answer the prompts about

116th Congress Demographics

- Find answers to the prompts using the handouts and/or websites about the backgrounds of our current Congress members.

Turn the handout into the basket!!