**1. Introduce the Legislative Process and Document Analysis**

Review the basic steps of the legislative process with students using textbooks or the overview available from [C-SPAN.](https://www.archives.gov/global-pages/exit.html?link=http://www.c-span.org/US-Congress/The-Legislative-Process/) If students are not familiar with analyzing primary source documents, review this as well. For tips on working with primary source documents see the [National Archives Educators' Toolbox](https://www.archives.gov/global-pages/exit.html?link=http://docsteach.org/activities/6833).

**2. Define the Steps of the Legislative Process**

Divide students into small groups. Distribute to each group both pages of the handout Congress at Work: The Legislative Processand a set of the Process Cards. The handout is an outline of 12-steps in the legislative process with a basic description of each step. Each Process Card contains a randomly lettered statement of a step in the legislative process. Groups should read each Process Card and then match it to the appropriate step on the handout by placing the card on top of the correct step. After they have matched all the cards, students should use Worksheet 1 or a sheet of notebook paper numbered 1-12 to record their answers (students should write the letter of each Process Card or Cards next to the number of the corresponding step). When all groups have finished, review as a class to make sure the answers are correct and the students understand the legislative process before moving to the next activity.

**3. Demonstrate the Legislative Process in Action**

Students will use their understanding of the legislative process to analyze documents that were created or received by Congress as Congress drafted legislation. Groups of students will examine 18 documents in random order to determine at which step in the process each was created. Students should read each document carefully and look for clues to determine what action is illustrated in the document. Students will then match each document to the Process Card which describes the action taking place in the document. Groups should take 2-3 documents at a time from the 18 document set and continue to switch until they have seen and matched all documents. If students have trouble determining the appropriate step illustrated by a particular document, encourage them to continue with other documents and return later to the difficult one. Students should mark Worksheet 1 with the numbered document that matches each of the 12 steps. When all groups have finished, hold a class discussion to check for understanding and to discuss any documents students found difficult.