

RESOURCE GUIDE FOR VIDEO PROGRAM:

“George to George”

Shaping the Nation by our Constitution

A PRESENTATION OF:

The George H. W. Bush Presidential Library & Museum
Education Department



GEORGE TO GEORGE
SHAPING THE NATION BY OUR CONSTITUTION

September 2020 / 50 Minutes

I. Opening / Welcome

This educational program is learning-centric by engaging participants through Vocabulary Challenges and Discussion Issues as well as Role-Playing. The program is constructed in such a way as to permit viewers to watch the complete 45 minute program in one sitting or to divide it into smaller viewing segments.

(Please note the background paintings and read about that artwork at the end of this Resource Guide.)

Enjoy the experience!

II. The Presidency

Vocabulary Challenge!

Constitution: a document that sets out the powers, duties and limitations of the government as well as guarantees certain rights to the people

Government: people within a specific geographic boundary who exercise authority and perform functions according to a set of rules established for that region

President: an elected official who leads the branch of government responsible for enforcing the laws, dealing with foreign countries and overseeing the armed forces

Discussion Question

What is the difference between a King and a President?

King/Queen are *hereditary* based – the children of the King/Queen become the next in line for the throne whereas the President is elected.

King/Queen usually serve for life whereas President is limited to two four year terms.

King/Queen can make and enforce laws and resolve conflicts whereas the President may recommend laws and suggest resolutions to conflicts.

George Washington creates a government

George H. W. Bush's Presidency

III. Congress

Vocabulary Challenge!

Representative: a person chosen to speak for another person or group; a member of the House of Representatives

Law: a rule of conduct or action that is authorized and enforced by a governing authority

Majority: a number greater than half of the total of things being counted; a group having the greater number of votes

Discussion Question

What are some differences between the House of Representatives and the Senate?

Number of House members from each state is based upon the population whereas there are two Senators from each state regardless of population. House members serve for two year terms whereas Senators serve for six year terms. Both House and Senate members may run for reelection as often as they wish.

Currently, Democrats are in the majority in the House whereas Republicans are in the majority in the Senate.

Congress' role in government

IV. Supreme Court

Vocabulary Challenge!

Justice: the establishment of rights based upon the rules of law; the impartial determination of conflicting claims and assignment of rewards and punishments

Court: a place for the administration of justice; a judge presiding over a courtroom

Dispute: to engage in an argument or disagreement; to challenge something

V. Three Branches of Government Puzzle

Match the branch of government with the building it is associated with and the Article in the Constitution associated with the particular branch

White House: President; Article II

Capitol: Congress; Article I

Supreme Court Building: Supreme Court; Article III

VI. Concluding Remarks

VII. Role Playing: Passing the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
(*Optional – Follows immediately after the main program*)

20 students (7 Representatives, 3 Senators, 9 Supreme Court Justices, 1 President)
(If fewer than 20 students involved, attempt to keep the same proportions in terms of the numbers of Representatives, Senators and Justices.)

This exercise has House members and Senators draft and vote on a law addressing the Americans with Disabilities Act. The law they pass then goes to the President for review. Finally, the Supreme Court hears and votes on a real Supreme Court case involving a professional golfer who, because of his disability, requested permission to play tournaments using a golf cart rather than walking the courses.

A note about the background artwork: During the presentation the viewer may notice four different framed paintings in the background. These were created in 1943 by the artist Norman Rockwell - famous for his cover art for the Saturday Evening Post magazine. The four paintings were meant to illustrate the “four essential human freedoms” that President Franklin Roosevelt spoke about in his Annual Message to Congress on January 6, 1941. The Four Freedoms are: Freedom of Speech, Freedom of Worship, Freedom from Fear and Freedom from Want