

# Washington's Capital and Capitol

## Grades 3-4

**I**ntroduction: Learning about the role of your state government is necessary to becoming an active, concerned and contributing citizen in the community. In this unit, students will begin their study at the time when Washington was a territory. They learn the history of Washington's statehood, the history of the state capitol and see how changes in technology have impacted the role of the state government and their role as citizens. Students learn about the making of laws by role-playing legislators, take a field trip to the capital and end the unit with a photo essay book of the interesting architectural features found at the capitol.

## Desired Academic Results

### Essential Academic Learning Requirements in Social Studies

#### History

EALR #1 The student examines and understands major ideas, eras, themes, developments, turning points, chronology and cause-effect relationships in U.S., world and Washington State history.

1.1 Understand and analyze historical time and chronology

1.2 Analyze the social, economic and political history of the United States, the world and the State of Washington

EALR #2 The Student understands the origin and impact of ideas and technological developments on history.

2.1 Compare the meaning of ideas in different places, times, and cultures and examine the interrelationships of ideas influencing change and conflict.

2.2 Understand how ideas and technological developments influence people, culture and environment.

#### Geography

EALR #3 The student observes and analyzes the interaction between people, the environment and culture.

3.2 Analyze how the environment and environmental changes affect people

## **Civics**

EALR #1 The student understands and can explain the core values and principles of the U.S. democracy as set forth in foundational documents, including the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

1.2 Examine the key ideals of U.S. democracy

1.3 Examine representative government and citizen participation

EALR #2 The student analyzes the purposes and organization of government and laws.

2.1 Understand and explain the organization of federal, state and local government

2.2 Understand the function and effect of law

EALR #4 The student understands the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and the principles of democratic civic involvement.

4.1 Understand individual rights and their accompanying responsibilities

4.2 Identify and demonstrate rights of U.S. citizenship

4.3 Explain how citizen participation influences public policy

## **Economics**

EALR # 1 Students understand the impact of scarcity on their personal lives and on the households, businesses, governments and societies in which they are participants.

1.2 Know that the quantity and productivity of resources limits the production of goods and services.

## **Overarching Understandings**

- Transition from Oregon Territory to Washington State
- History of the state capitol
- Basic elements of state government
- Individual's role in government

## **What the Students Will Understand**

- Process of statehood
- History and relevance of State Capitol Building; its functions and unique features
- Role and responsibility of State House and Senate, Office of the Governor and State Supreme Court
- Individual is part of state government by being an informed voter and contacting legislators
- How communication concerning state government has changed over time, from messages by wagon to present day email

## Overarching Questions

- Why did Washington become a state?
- How did the state capitol come to be?
- How does our state government work?
- What is my role in government as a citizen of our state?
- How does citizen communication impact government?

## Unit Questions

- How did Olympia become the site for the new state's capital?
- Who built it? When was it built? How was it built? What's inside?
- What do the capitol building's design and art say about our state?
- What are the jobs of the state legislators?
- How do they get elected?
- What does the governor do?
- What does the State Supreme Court do?
- How do laws get made?
- What impact can I have on state government?
- What is my responsibility as a voter?
- How do I contact legislators and the governor?
- How would I have contacted my legislator 15 years ago? 60 years ago? 100 years ago?

## Assessment: The Evidence that will Demonstrate Student Understanding

### Performance Tasks and Projects

- Role play a historical personality or event in a living map
- Hold a mock legislative session in class
- Write or email their state legislator concerning an issue the class will follow
- Write a story about an issue of possible concern in a different time period and their attempts at reaching a legislator or the governor
- Hold a mock judicial hearing will on the field trip
- Create a photo essay book of the state capitol

### Quizzes

- Create a basic flow chart of the three branches of state government
- Name the voting requirements and fill out a *Voter's Registration Application*

## Prompt

- Pretend you are a capitol tour guide: Tell five or more fascinating facts about your state capitol. Draw some illustrations to go with your “tour”.

## Other Evidence

- Informal class observation and discussion
- Cooperative group work
- Self-assessment of photo essay contribution and behavior on field trip

# Learning Experiences and Instruction

## Knowledge and Skills

- Key terms: for example, capitol and capital, legislature, senate, judicial, citizen, civics
- Current issues before the legislature
- Modes of earlier communication
- Use a camera
- Read a pamphlet
- Make a flow chart
- Read a state map
- Use a computer

## Field Sites

### **The Washington State Capitol**

(360) 586-TOUR

Students see the legislative building and see the House and Senate Galleries.

Tour guides will try to arrange a meeting with a legislator from the school's district. Students will also learn about the State Supreme Court and participate in a mock trial.

### **The Old Capitol Building**

(360) 586-8687 for tour information

You can also take a self-guided tour. Call to get a brochure. This is the building in which OSPI resides.

## State Capital Museum

(360) 753-2580

211 West 21<sup>st</sup> Ave

(Walking distance from the Capitol)

Closed on Mondays

\$1 per student for just the tour (1 ½ hours)

\$3 per student for the tour and art activity

## Lessons

### Part I: Geography and Historical Background

#### Geography

Using a state map, have students locate the capital, Olympia. Find its direction in relation to your community by using the compass rose. Calculate the approximate distance in miles from your school to the capitol. Check your prediction at [www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com). (Go to maps, then driving directions. Type in the school's address and the capitol's for a print out of how to get there and the total distance.) What else can you learn about the capital from the map? What does the key tell you? Why do you suppose this location was chosen for a state capital? What might be the benefits? What might be the disadvantages?

#### The Road to Statehood

1. Share the story of how Washington became a state and Olympia became the capital. Begin at the time when our state was part of the Oregon Territory. Read the essay from [www.historylink.org](http://www.historylink.org) detailing how the region then transitioned into becoming the Washington Territory. What were some of the problems the settlers of the region faced when it was known as the Oregon Territory? Washington Territory? Compare and contrast how long it would have taken to communicate with "local" government then than with communications abilities today. Why would the settlers of the region want it to become a state under the United States Government? Relate this to current U.S. territories such as Guam and Puerto Rico. What are arguments for and against becoming a state? The District of Columbia could also be included in this somewhat controversial topic. What did statehood mean for the Native Americans of the Washington Territory? Research why the first bill for Washington statehood was rejected by the U.S. Congress. Find out what Washington had to do in order to become a state. What other Washington towns and cities sought to be the capital? How did Olympia, the capital throughout the territorial period, retain its title as capital when Washington became a state? Use *Discovering Washington, Washington Images of a State's Heritage*, maps and essays at [www.historylink.org](http://www.historylink.org) to help illustrate this story.

2. Transform the classroom, or use some other empty space, to make a living map where students act out the historical geography of the people of Washington. Have students role play people traveling the Oregon Trail, pioneers in the Puget Sound region, traders in the Hudson Bay Company, members of Native American tribes, the establishment of the Washington Territory, the state constitutional convention, the granting of Washington state status, etc. Have them choose a character to play. They create a costume and prepare a short monologue or dialogue with others. Invite other classes to come in and view the living map. The students can pretend to be coin operated machines in which visiting students drop a pretend coin through a slot, then the theatrical performance begins.
3. Have students write a story about an issue of possible concern in a different time period and their attempts at reaching a legislator or the governor. Use the essay headlined, *Washington Territory is Established by President Fillmore on March 2, 1853*, on [www.historylink.org](http://www.historylink.org) to present students with an example.

## Part II: The Role of State Government

1. Present the story about how the dragonfly became the state insect. Review the steps the students at Crestwood Elementary took to make their bill become law. If you were to add or change a law, what would you do? What if you could change or add a school rule? Have students write a persuasive essay arguing for the change or addition of a school rule. Share these when students are finished. Using the legislative process, how might we go about changing or adding a school rule? Read the pamphlet, *How a Bill Becomes a Law*.
2. Tell students that we are going to hold a mock legislative session in the class where the students will all play the role of legislators and the other classes in the school will be our constituents. There are a number of ways this can be done. You could have executive power to choose which of the proposed changes can be taken to the legislature, do it democratically and have students vote, ask another teacher in the building to discuss this with his/her class and have them propose the bill or use a real problem you see in your school. Appoint representatives for each class in the building. Don't leave out the adults in the building that have no classroom. Take the *legislature* through all the steps in which a bill takes to become law. When (or if) it is accepted by both houses, (you may want to skip the second house) invite the principal in to sign it into law, or veto it.
3. Guide cooperative groups to examine the tasks of the three branches of government. Use the role play the students just participated in to discuss the concept of checks and balances. What would have happened if the principal

- vetoed the bill? What would have happened if the bill were instead something that is illegal in our state, such as no more school? Talk about how the judicial branch checks to see that bills that become law are constitutional.
4. Assign homework to watch for state issues of interest to the students. How is each of the three branches of government involved in the issue? Have students look up where their legislator stands on the issue. Students can compose a letter to their legislator and send it via email. Remind students how the constituents north of the Columbia River were feeling when Washington was part of the Oregon Territory. Examine the communication technology of the past and compare it to today. How have faster modes of communication changed government, the role of legislators and citizen participation? Invite your local legislator into the classroom to talk about his/her job and to explain how citizen participation influences public policy. Guide students in learning interviewing skills before s/he arrives. Be sure to ask how email has impacted the job of legislators. Send thank you letters to the legislator for taking the time to visit.
  5. Give quizzes on the roles of the three branches of government and recognizing voting rights. Have students fill out a voter registration form.

### Part III: The Capitol Building

1. Talk to the students about our Nation's Capital. Where is it? Who is there? If you were to visit Washington D.C. what things might you see? (Washington Monument, Lincoln Memorial, Vietnam War Memorial, etc.) Get a sense for what students already know about famous places in our Nation's Capital. Share an example of a photo essay book. Photo essay books are simply pictorial books with short essays describing the significance of the sites in the photos. It is a great way to blend art, technology and writing. There are endless examples of photo essay books available. However, little is available on our State Capital. Instead, look for photo essay books about Washington D.C. One recommendation is *Washington Past and Present: A Pictorial History of Our Nation's Capital*. Ask students, who was the author's audience? What can we learn from it? Another book to consider is a children's scrapbook of Washington D.C. While this book isn't just a photo essay book, (it has drawings, dialogue, map, etc.,) it will give students ideas as to how they can record information while on their field trip and how to organize their photo essay book.
2. Tell students that they are going to make a photo essay book of our state capitol's buildings and grounds. Their audience is going to be children. There is a severe lack of children's books about our state's capitol and capital. You can ask for a copy of *Olympia: A State Capital* written by high school students in the Olympia School District from the State Capitol Museum. While the books are out of print, the museum has a box of them and, at the present time, is still happy to send you one. Guide students in

conducting research about the grounds of the capitol and the architecture of the buildings. Look at books, photos, blueprints, web sites, etc. Explore the technology of a dome building. Invite an architect into the classroom to answer questions and learn about architectural trends. What architectural influences do you see in the state capitol building? What was the architect trying to convey by adopting this design?

3. Prepare students for a field trip to the state capital. Give them time to learn how to use the equipment for making a photo essay book (digital cameras or regular cameras). Teach them how to record information about each picture as they take them so the name of the object in the photo and information about it isn't forgotten.
4. Visit our state's capital. The capitol offers a wonderful tour package for 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders. It's best to go when the legislature is in session. Students will get a tour of the legislative building, meet a senator or representative from the school's district, see the House and Senate chambers and participate in a mock hearing to get a feel for how the State Supreme Court works. The entire tour can take 3-4 hours. You'll also want to leave time to tour the Old Capitol Building. When you call to set up your tour, ask if they can include it. If not, call the Old Capitol Building to get a self-guided tour pamphlet. This is the same building that houses OSPI. After the field trip, have students reflect on their field trip efforts with a self-assessment.
5. Put together your photo essay book. Make it available to others by putting a copy in the school library, your local library and/or by putting it on the internet. Send a copy to the visiting legislator. Have the former *representatives* share the book with their *constituents*.
6. Have students self-assess their contributions to the photo essay book. Assess their learning with the following essay prompt: Pretend you are a tour guide at the capitol. What five fascinating facts would you share? Draw some illustrations to go with your tour.

## Resources

### Books

Benson, Laura Lee. *Washington D.C.: A Scrapbook*. Charlesbridge. 1999.

Johnston, Norman J. *Washington's Audacious State Capitol and its Builders*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988.

Peltz, Ruth. *Discovering Washington*. Salt Lake City: Peregrine Smith Books, 1997.

Roberts, Chalmers. *Washington Past and Present: A Pictorial History of the Nation's Capital*. Public Affairs Press. 1950.

Schwantes, Charles et al. *Washington Images of a State's Heritage*. Spokane, Washington: Melior Publications, 1988.

*Visual Dictionary of Buildings*. New York: Dorling Kindersley, Inc., 1992, Domes pages 40-41.

Woodbridge, Sally B. and Montgomery, Roger. *A Guide to Architecture in Washington State*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1980.

## Materials

Voter' Registration forms and the League of Women Voters booklet, *They Represent You*, (a directory on how to contact your elected officials) are available free at the King County Public Libraries.

## Websites

For state government information:

[www.leg.wa.gov](http://www.leg.wa.gov):

[www.access.wa.gov](http://www.access.wa.gov)

For historical content:

[www.historylink.org](http://www.historylink.org)

[www.wshs.org](http://www.wshs.org)

This site connects you to the Washington State Historical Society and the Washington State Capital Museum.

For mapping information:

[www.yahoo.com](http://www.yahoo.com)

Click on maps

## Washington Territory is established by President Fillmore on March 2, 1853

From [www.historylink.org](http://www.historylink.org)

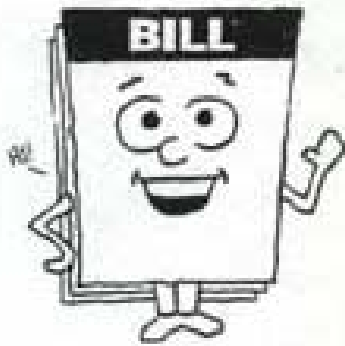
Attending the convention were 27 male citizens residing north of the Columbia River and west of the Cascades, including future Seattle resident David S. Maynard (1808-1873) who was then living in Olympia. The men drew up a memorial to U.S. Congress seeking the creation of a new territory north of the Columbia River. The primary reason for establishing a new territory was the unreasonable distance to Oregon City, the Oregon Territory capital located in the Willamette Valley.

The memorial stated:

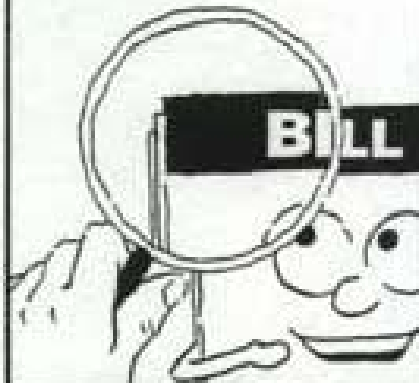
"...the Inhabitants North of the Columbia River receive no benefit or convenience whatever from the Territorial Government of Oregon as now administered. They maintain positively that it costs more for a citizen in the North of Oregon Territory to travel to a clerk's office or to reach a District Judge than it does for a man to travel from S. Lewis [sic Louis], Missouri to Boston, Massachusetts [sic] and back...." And that "[t]he Seat of Government at present is distant about three hundred miles from the principle Settlements North; The entire Legislative power is South of the Columbia River & from Locality and Geographical position the South has no interest in common whatever, with the North...Government Officers but seldom if ever visit the North; under the present condition of things, the rights of Citizens must go unredressed [sic], crimes and injuries unpunished..." (Meany, 7).

# How a Bill Becomes a Law

A BILL MAY BE INTRODUCED IN EITHER THE SENATE OR HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.



A COMMITTEE STUDIES THE BILL AND OFTEN HOLDS PUBLIC HEARINGS ON IT.

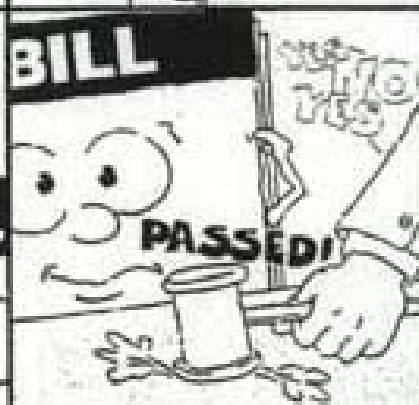
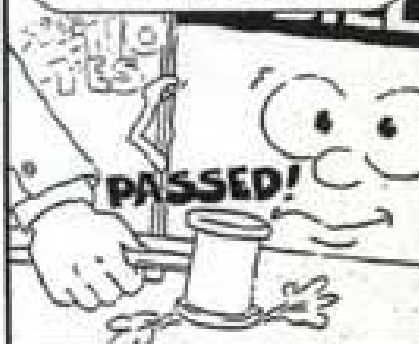


A COMMITTEE REPORT IS READ IN OPEN SESSION OF THE HOUSE OR SENATE, AND THE BILL IS THEN REFERRED TO THE RULES COMMITTEE.

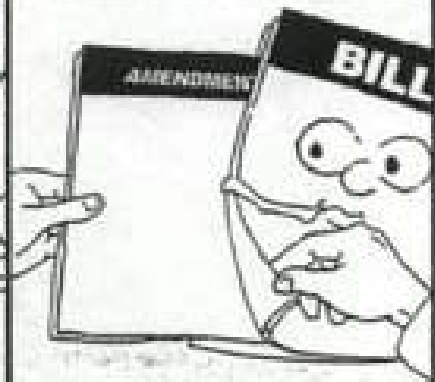


THE RULES COMMITTEE CAN EITHER PLACE THE BILL ON THE SECOND READING OF THE CALENDAR FOR DEBATE BEFORE THE ENTIRE BODY, OR TAKE NO ACTION.

AT THE SECOND READING A BILL IS SUBJECT TO DEBATE AND AMENDMENT BEFORE BEING PLACED ON THE THIRD READING CALENDAR FOR FINAL PASSAGE.

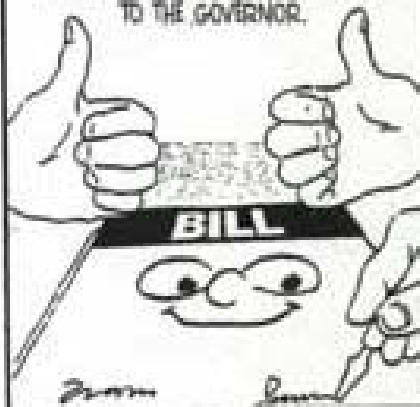


AFTER PASSING ONE HOUSE, THE BILL GOES THROUGH THE SAME PROCEDURE IN THE OTHER HOUSE.



IF AMENDMENTS ARE MADE IN ONE HOUSE, THE OTHER HOUSE MUST CONCUR.

WHEN THE BILL IS ACCEPTED IN BOTH HOUSES, IT IS SIGNED BY THE RESPECTIVE LEADERS AND SENT TO THE GOVERNOR.



THE GOVERNOR SIGNS THE BILL INTO LAW OR MAY VETO ALL OR PART OF IT. IF THE GOVERNOR FAILS TO ACT ON THE BILL, IT MAY BECOME LAW WITHOUT A SIGNATURE.

