

26. Government & Public Administration Cluster - Legislative Careers (4 hours)

Purpose/Abstract: To introduce students to entry-level legislative careers.

NCCCS Adult Education Standards: R.5.1.7 , W.5.2.3 , S.1.2.2, M.1.2.10

Learning Objective:
By the end of the session, students will be able to:

- Describe basic elements of a courtroom trial
- Compare and contrast opposing points of view
- Multiply two-digit and one-digit numbers accurately

Soft Skills	professionalism, communication, critical thinking and problem-solving	Resources	<p>Skills to Pay the Bills (STPTB) (for instructor reference to define each soft skill category)</p> <p>43-4031.00 - Court, Municipal, and License Clerks (for career-related information)</p> <p>Math: 2-Digit Multiplication Interactive Worksheet Education.com Multiplication with Regrouping Interactive Worksheet Education.com Word Problems Learning Check Interactive Worksheet Education.com (for extra practice)</p> <p>Judicial Branch and Courtroom Roles presentation adapted from Discovering Justice (for the group activity section)</p> <p>NC Career Clusters Guide(for instructor reference)</p> <p>Handouts: Legislative Vocabulary - 1 for each student Compare and Contrast Text - 1 for each pair</p>
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Additional Materials

- Legislative Vocabulary, one for each student
- Compare and Contrast Text - one for each pair
- Art supplies (glue, glitter, markers, paint, etc.)
- Pencils, paper, and scissors
- Computers for student use

Icons	 Activity	 Check-In	 Review
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PREPARATION

- Review the worksheets and games on education.com and print out the following worksheets:
 - [2-Digit Multiplication | Interactive Worksheet | Education.com](#)



- [Multiplication with Regrouping | Interactive Worksheet | Education.com](#)
- [Word Problems Learning Check | Interactive Worksheet | Education.com](#)
- Review the [Instructional Support Guide](#) and print/prepare referenced scaffolds.
- Review the [Judicial Branch and Courtroom Roles](#) presentation adapted from [Discovering Justice](#).
- Print handouts.
- Familiarize yourself with [O*NET](#)
- Familiarize yourself with [Skills to Pay the Bills](#), though it won't be used directly in this lesson.

INTRODUCTION (30 min)

Welcome students to the class!

Begin the lesson with an ice-breaker: Play a game of "Two Truths and a Lie" to introduce students to the concept of multiple perspectives and differing viewpoints.

Discuss the importance of legislative careers in the Government & Public Administration Cluster, particularly in local government and law offices. Highlight how these careers help create and pass laws that affect our daily lives. Explain that they ensure fairness, justice, and order in our communities. Tell students that legislative professionals play a crucial role in making our government work effectively and serving the needs of the people.

Share real-life examples of entry-level jobs in this pathway, such as court clerks or law office clerks. You can use the information available here: [43-4031.00 - Court, Municipal, and License Clerks](#)

Engage students in a short discussion about their understanding of a courtroom trial, encouraging them to share their prior knowledge and experiences. Consider using examples of famous trials that students might be aware of.

Introduce the objectives of the lesson.

VOCABULARY, READING & WRITING (45 min)

Distribute the vocabulary crossword and allow 15 minutes for students to complete it. Review the terms and definitions with the whole class.

Share this [custom link](#) containing skills, abilities, and key work values required for entry-level legislative careers.

Tell students to read with their partner and together write an opinion piece on why they will be a good fit for these roles, with reasons to support their opinion. Encourage students to use linking words such as 'because', 'and', and 'also' to connect opinions and reasons and provide a concluding statement for the passage.

Walk around and provide support to students to help organize their thoughts.

 REFLECTION (10 minutes)

✓ Have 2-3 students read out their opinion pieces. Model how to give constructive feedback and encourage the rest of the class to give feedback as well.

Lower Level	Higher Level
Consider pairing lower-level and higher-level students to support each other during the reading and writing activities.	Challenge students to come up with synonyms for words they find challenging and list them out. Provide a thesaurus if available, or direct them to websites on the internet they can refer to.

MATHEMATICS (30 min)

Inform students that they will continue practicing their multiplication skills.

Review how to multiply a two-digit number by a single-digit number and have a few students solve problems on the board.

Distribute the following worksheets for students to solve independently.

- [2-Digit Multiplication | Interactive Worksheet | Education.com](#)
- [Multiplication with Regrouping | Interactive Worksheet | Education.com](#)

Walk around and provide assistance as needed.

 REFLECTION (10 minutes)

✓ Review the answers as a class. Address any misconceptions or difficulties encountered by the students during the problem-solving process.

Lower Level	Higher Level
Pair students up. Consider writing simple multiplication/ division facts on the board for the 2, 3, and 4 times tables for reference. Have a multiplication grid handy if students require it.	Assign this interactive worksheet to students for extra practice.

GROUP WORK (90 min)

Take students through slides 4-14 in this [presentation](#) to explain the different roles in a courtroom to them after a very brief introduction to the judicial system.

Explain the process of a courtroom trial using the information below and guide students through a short discussion about what they already know about trials from movies, books, or life experiences.



Element	Description
Opening Statements	Lawyers provide an overview of their cases and what they intend to prove.
Presentation of Evidence	Each side presents evidence such as witness testimonies, documents, and other relevant information.
Examination of Witnesses	Lawyers question their own witnesses to elicit testimony supporting their case.
Cross-Examination	Opposing lawyers question the opposing side's witnesses to challenge their testimony.
Objections	Lawyers can object if they believe evidence or procedures violate court rules.
Motions	Lawyers may make legal motions to request specific actions or decisions from the judge.
Closing Arguments	Lawyers summarize their cases, highlighting key points and attempting to persuade the judge or jury in their favor.
Jury Instructions	The judge provides instructions to the jury on the law applicable to the case and how to evaluate evidence.
Deliberation and Verdict	The jury (or judge) privately discusses the evidence and reaches a decision on the defendant's guilt or innocence.
Sentencing (if applicable)	If the defendant is found guilty, a separate phase determines the appropriate punishment.

Role Play

Inform students that they will work on a role play for a mock trial.

Divide the class into two groups.

Help students assign the following roles within their group.

<p>Scenario: The Case of the Stolen Bicycle</p> <p>Roles: Plaintiff: Maria Defendant: Ahmed Judge: Maya Jury (Group of 6-7 students) Lawyer for the Plaintiff: Emily Lawyer for the Defendant: Malik Court Clerk: Javier Court Reporter: Aisha Witnesses (can be additional participants or assigned to existing roles)</p>
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Explain the scenario to the class: *Maria claims that Ahmed stole her bicycle, and she wants the court to hold Ahmed accountable for his actions. Ahmed, on the other hand, denies the accusation and believes he is innocent.*

Allocate 30 minutes for the role play activity.

Give students the following instructions. Consider projecting this for reference as they work on their role plays.

1. Each group should discuss and strategize their arguments and positions. Lawyers should guide their respective clients (Maria and Ahmed) and prepare them for the courtroom proceedings.
2. Conduct a mock trial in each group, following these steps:
 - a. The judge (Maya) calls the court to order and explains the rules of the proceeding.
 - b. The lawyers (Emily and Malik) present their opening statements.
 - c. Maria (plaintiff) and Ahmed (defendant) present their cases and call witnesses if needed.
 - d. The lawyers cross-examine the witnesses, asking them relevant questions.
 - e. The lawyers present their closing arguments.
 - f. The jury deliberates and reaches a verdict.
 - g. The judge announces the verdict and provides a brief explanation.

Circulate the room and offer assistance as required. Check that all students have a chance to contribute.

REFLECTION (20 minutes)

✓ Have both groups perform their role plays.

After each group completes their role play, allow time for reflection and discussion. Encourage participants to share their experiences, challenges faced, and what they learned about the roles in the courtroom.

Facilitate a group discussion about the importance of each role in the judicial system and how their actions contribute to a fair trial.

Instructor Note: Please note that this section has additional time you can use if students want more time to work on their role plays or for clarification on doubts as you explain the elements of a courtroom trial or the roles in a courtroom.

INDEPENDENT WORK TIME (30 min)

Divide the class into pairs.

Inform students that they will read two opposing viewpoints on student debt. Provide a brief introduction to the student loan debt elimination topic using the information found on [Student Loan Debt Elimination - Pros & Cons - ProCon.org](#).

Tell students that you will provide them with just one set of arguments for and against student loan debt elimination.

Provide each pair with a graphic organizer (T-chart) to compare and contrast the two viewpoints on the student debt debate found in the handout.

Instruct students to carefully read and analyze Viewpoint 1 and Viewpoint 2.

Have students use the graphic organizer to identify and record the main arguments, evidence, and key points presented in each viewpoint. Encourage students to discuss and compare the similarities and differences between the viewpoints, focusing on the different perspectives, supporting evidence, and proposed solutions.

In the graphic organizer, students can record the viewpoints separately in the designated sections.

Prompt students to consider the implications of each viewpoint on individuals, society, and the economy. Encourage students to engage in a thoughtful discussion, actively listen to their partner's insights, and respectfully share their own thoughts.

Monitor the pairs, providing guidance and support as needed.

 REFLECTION (10 minutes)

After completing the graphic organizer, have 2-3 pairs share their findings and observations with the class.

Facilitate a class discussion to further explore the similarities, differences, and implications of the viewpoints, promoting critical thinking, analysis, and understanding. Emphasize the importance of considering multiple perspectives and engaging in respectful dialogue when discussing complex issues like student debt. Highlight how professionalism and strong communication skills help conduct healthy debates and conversations with opposing viewpoints.

Lower Level	Higher Level
Write out a mock letter template on the board and guide students through the sections independently.	Encourage students to brainstorm where else they might use letter-writing skills in their lives and create a sample letter for one of the situations on their list.

Instructor Note: The viewpoints have been simplified for a grade 3 comprehension level, if required, to clarify terms and help students with the text.

WRAP-UP & REFLECTION (15 min)

Ask students to turn to a partner and talk about two things they learned that were new to them.



Ask 2-3 volunteer pairs to share their thoughts with the rest of the class.

Distribute exit slips to students.

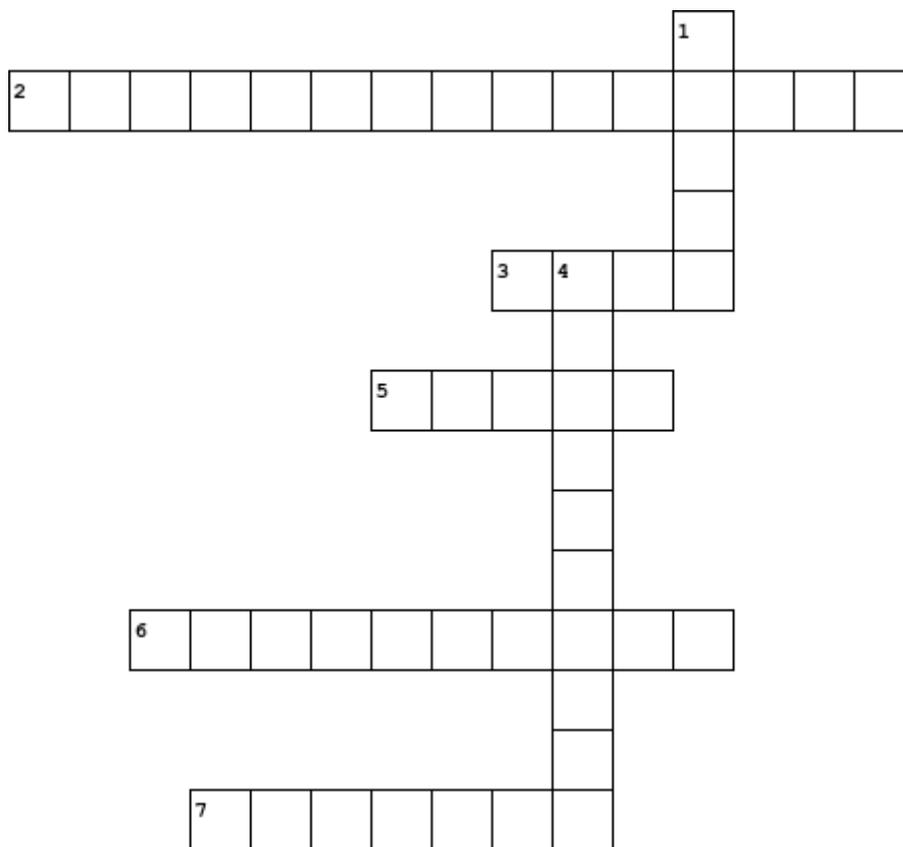
Ask for a few volunteers to share their reflections.

Collect and review the answers.

Legislative Vocabulary

Directions:

- Use this list of words and match them to the clues given below to complete the crossword puzzle.
 - Law, Vote, Bill, Representative, Committee, Amendment, Public
- Please note that there will be a blank square at the end of each word.



Across

- 2** A person chosen to speak or act on behalf of a group or community, such as an elected official in the legislature.
- 3** A rule or set of rules made by the government that people in a community must follow.
- 5** To make a choice or express an opinion on a particular matter, especially in an official or formal setting.
- 6** A group of people assigned to do a particular task or make decisions on a specific issue within the legislative body.
- 7** Relating to or involving the people as a whole, especially the community or society.

Down

- 1** A proposed law that is being discussed and voted on by the legislative body.
- 4** A change or addition made to a law or document, often to improve or update it.

Compare and Contrast Text

Directions:

- Read each viewpoint on student loan debt elimination carefully.
- Use the graphic organizer given below to record the main arguments, evidence, and key points presented in each viewpoint
- Remember, both viewpoints have different ideas about how to solve the problem of student loan debt in the country. It's important to understand both perspectives and think about the long-term effects of each solution.

Viewpoint 1 - Pro

Having too much student loan debt has made it hard for many people to do important things like getting married, buying a house, or saving money for the future. If we get rid of this debt, it would help everyone be healthier, more productive, and make our society better. Research shows that for women with a bachelor's degree, having more debt makes it less likely for them to get married after they graduate. It also stops people from buying homes and saving enough money for retirement.

It's not fair that people with student loan debt can't get the same benefits of bankruptcy as other debtors. Bankruptcy is supposed to give people a fresh start and help them get rid of their debts. Many famous people have used bankruptcy to start over, so why can't students with loan debt do the same?

Other types of debts like car loans, credit card charges, and medical bills can be erased in bankruptcy, but student loan debt can't. This is unfair because students who didn't understand the consequences or were misled about their future jobs can end up with huge debts for a long time. Everyone should have the same protections when it comes to loans, including student loans.

Viewpoint 2

Even though there are already some programs that forgive student loans in the United States, we still have a big problem with student loan debt. Some people who work in jobs that help the public can get their loans forgiven after making 120 loan payments. Teachers can have up to \$17,500 forgiven after teaching for five years, and nurses can have a part of their nursing education loans forgiven too. There are also plans where you pay based on how much money you make, and after 20-25 years, your loans can be forgiven. Military members, doctors, lawyers, and AmeriCorps service members also have options for loan forgiveness. Some people think it would be better to make college free or debt-free instead of just forgiving loans, as that would help stop people from taking on too much debt in the first place.

If student loan debt could be discharged in bankruptcy, some people might take advantage of the system and borrow more money than they need, knowing they won't have to pay it back. This could lead to more people filing for bankruptcy without realizing the negative effects it can have on their lives. Also, if the government forgave student loans, colleges might raise their tuition fees because they know the government will pay for it. This would create problems and make things worse.

Should student loan debt be eliminated?	
Pros	Cons



Reflection Exit Slip

In one sentence, describe what you learned in this lesson.

Today, I learned _____.

Is one of the careers discussed today of interest to you? Why or why not?

I liked / did not like _____ career because _____

Is there anything you still need help understanding?

What's one question you have?

Circle the emoji that shows how you feel about your mastery of content in this lesson.



Happy



Smart



Confused



Sad



Angry