



ORIENTATION MATERIALS

So, now you are excited about the conference in February, but how do you get your delegates prepared? The 4-H KYG Committee wants **all** the delegates prepared to fully participate in the mock legislature at the conference. It is important that delegates have an understanding of the legislative process and the role of lobbyists so they can get their bill passed. In addition to practicing parliamentary procedure and learning about the various players in the Legislature game, this curriculum will provide information on the Legislature and how it fits in with the other two branches of government.

Meeting 1: Introductions and Parliamentary Procedure

- Activity 1: Introductions
- Activity 2: Overview of KYG Conference; Handout Registration Materials
- Activity 3: Overview of County Orientation Meetings and Schedule
- Activity 4: TRAPPED! Video
- Activity 5: Parliamentary Procedure

Meeting 2: The Legislative Process

- Activity 6: Register Conference Delegates and Write Letters to Legislators
- Activity 7: Overview of the Legislative Process
- Activity 8: Roles in the Legislative Process
- Activity 9: The Legislative Process Game

Meeting 3: Mock Committee Hearing

- Activity 10: Mock Committee Hearing
- Activity 11: Pick Your Bills for the Conference

Meeting 4: Prepare for Conference

- Activity 12: Prepare Bill Display and Finish Legislative Process Game
- Activity 13: Practice Testimony
- Activity 14: What is happening at the conference?
- Activity 15: Finalize plans

Objectives of Orientation Meetings (When orientation is complete, delegates will have...)

- ❖ Awareness of what is to take place at the conference in February
- ❖ Knowledge of the legislative branch and how it interacts with the other branches
- ❖ Experience with parliamentary procedure
- ❖ Familiarity with the Legislative Process and the people involved
- ❖ Skills to perform their role at the conference
- ❖ Ability to testify for or against a bill
- ❖ Knowledge of their legislative district and who represents them in Olympia

In the interest of saving trees, we are relying on the coordinators to access the material not included in the packet, via the Internet. We recognize that some people are not as proficient at using the computer/Internet as others. If so, here are suggestions to get your materials:

- Contact your County 4-H Program Coordinator for help with accessing links
- Assign the job of downloading material to a delegate or parent
- Go to the 4-H KYG page on the 4-H website and click on the links via the curriculum file

To Insure a Smooth Beginning . . . Prepare Delegates for KYG Activities

Discuss guidelines for conduct during presentations by invited speakers, workshop sessions and meetings. Agree on expected dress, the importance of advance preparation for meetings, and considerate behavior during the activities. Consider setting ground rules and encourage delegates, rather than adults, to ask and answer questions when appropriate.

Discovery learning. All the answers cannot be found within this packet and will require research on the part of delegates. Use the media to explore issues to be dealt with in the 2010 Session. Newspaper clippings are an excellent way to spark group discussion. Are there any local issues that will be a topic during the session? Are County Commissioners or the City Council dealing with any issues of interest at their meetings? Check out their agenda and plan to attend a commission or council meeting so they can observe a public hearing and people testifying.

Build in think time for processing and reflecting on what was learned by the activity, and how it can be applied and shared. For significant learning, members need to question and think through what they have seen and heard, and apply it to what they already know. We have prepared a series of questions on several topics in the curriculum to compel the delegates into thinking differently about issues they may have thought about many times. Use these questions to spark a discussion. Attempt to draw youth out of their culture-centralized understanding of issues. To improve the quality of this citizenship experience, ask questions to build bridges to new insights. Look for applications to real life and plan how to share what was learned.

Maintain mutual respect. In identifying and debating issues, emphasize the need to talk to others, read about and listen to all opinions, and to understand and clarify a personal point of view. Focus on the facts, write down those that support your view, but also look for areas of compromise. Stress that delegates must rely on facts and avoid adversarial and emotional arguments, which are unproductive and prevent people from working together on solutions to problems. An important objective of this curriculum is for delegates to communicate effectively. This objective includes listening carefully to what others say; clearly stating thoughts, feelings, and ideas; and settling disagreements in ways that are not hurtful.

Guest Speakers. We strongly suggest scheduling guest speakers that can bring a little more life to this subject. We defer to your experience and the needs of your delegation on who and when. Find the contact information for your legislators at www.leg.wa.gov and invite them to speak about their experiences. There is also a program at the Legislature called “Back to the Classroom” that encourages legislators to talk to students. You can find contact information and speaking ideas for the legislator at www.leg.wa.gov/Legislature/BacktoSchool/. For more ideas on how to involve legislators, look at www.ncsl.org/public/trust/lessonp1-M.htm. There are also a number of lobbyists throughout the state and their contact information can be found at the Public Disclosure Commission website, www.pdc.wa.gov/ and clicking on “Public Resources” up top and then “Lobbyist Information” on the right.

Here are some **suggested topics** for your guest speakers: How to get involved in the political process, How a bill really becomes a law, How to write legislation, Special interests/lobbying, Parliamentary procedure, Initiative/referendum/recall campaigns, networking, etc.

The possibilities are endless and we hope you use this opportunity to let an “expert” share their knowledge with your delegation so they are that more prepared for the conference. Give your speaker an idea what you want to learn and have each delegate prepare one or two questions for the speaker. After the speaker is gone, lead a discussion on what the members learned and how it applies to this conference and to “real life”.

Another useful tool may be to **visit a county commission or city council public hearing**. Contact the county or city office and explain your needs so they can assist you in finding an appropriate time to visit. It could be easier to plan a visit during a school vacation or teacher in-service day. They may be discussing an issue important to a delegate so encouraging them to participate in the process will be a great practice for the conference.

If you have problems arranging for delegates to see a hearing in action before session begins in January, have them listen to a past public hearing on TVW, www.tvw.org. Click on “Media Archives” up top and then choose “Audio Video Archives” under the bar. Under “Legislative Events”, choose either “House Committees” or “Senate Committees” and then a year. Then you can pick a committee that looks interesting. If the Legislative session has already started (second Monday in January), have your delegates watch the hearings on the TVW channel.

Role Playing. This curriculum requires that youth place him or herself in the role of lobbyist. Their role may have them perform in a way contrary to their personal beliefs. This internal conflict may happen often in the real world if someone working as a lobbyist needs to represent the interests of their employers and not their own beliefs. Remind delegates that they will gain more from the experience if they embrace their roles and remember that other delegates are also performing in ways that may be different from their personal beliefs.

Web Research

The Legislature website (www.leg.wa.gov)

You can find legislative districts, legislator information and links to other Legislative Agencies important to the process, such as the Code Reviser office (where you can find the link to the Revised Code of Washington). There are many resources under “Visiting the Legislature.”

Most counties also have websites with commission information. To find your county’s website, you can search the web using a search engine or try [http://www.co.\(your county\).wa.us](http://www.co.(your county).wa.us). For Thurston County, the address is <http://www.co.thurston.wa.us>. Finding your county’s website might be helpful when you plan to visit a commission hearing.

Access Washington (www.access.wa.gov) is the state website and it is a good starting place if you are trying to find anything related to state government. This is where you can find Public Disclosure Commission links for the lobbyist information or links to other state agencies in the executive branch. A lot of good information!

Get Involved!

If your delegates have shown an interest in getting involved in state government, offer the following suggestions to them:

Legislative Page Program (www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/StudentsPage/)

Page duties are varied and range from presenting the flags to operational chores like distributing amendments during legislative sessions. Click on the “What is a Page? Video” for more information. There are separate application processes for the House and Senate.

Legislative Youth Advisory Council (LYAC) (www.ltgov.wa.gov/YouthandCommunities/LYAC/default.html)

LYAC consists of 22 members from around the State of Washington who are ages fourteen to eighteen. Members serve two-year terms and examine issues of importance to youth and advise the State Legislature on these issues and related legislation.

YMCA Youth Legislature (www.youthandgovernment.org)

YMCA has a great program that is scheduled after the Legislative Session so participants can use the State Capitol and fully participate in the process. If this subject interests your delegate(s), please contact the YMCA via the above link.