



# Capitol History Gateway

## Lesson Plan

There Ought to be a Law - 4th Grade

### Summary

This lesson uses a case study from Oregon's Bottle Bill to explore why we have laws, and how ordinary people can drive the lawmaking process to make a better Oregon for us all.

### Lesson

<b>Duration</b>	<b>Two 30-minute class periods</b>
<b>Resources Needed</b>	<p><b>Provided</b></p> <p><a href="#">There Ought to be a Law Slide Deck</a> - For yourself</p> <p><a href="#">Bottle Bill Background</a> - For each student / to project</p> <p><a href="#">"Reader's Theater" Script - House Committee Hearing on Oregon's Bottle Bill</a> - For each student / to project</p> <p><a href="#">Character Cards</a> - to assign for the Reader's Theater</p> <p><a href="#">KWL Chart</a> - For each student / to project</p> <hr/> <p><b>Not provided</b></p> <p>If desired; projector, printer, scissors/paper cutter</p>
<b>Lesson Goals</b>	<p><b>Students will be able to:</b></p> <p>Describe how a bill becomes a law in the Oregon Legislature.</p>

## Essential Practices

### Social Studies Essential Practices

Develop questions for social science inquiry.

Use chronological thinking skills, connecting the past with the present to recognize continuity and change in human history.

Seek and analyze diverse perspectives to develop a more complete understanding of past and current events.

### Capitol History Gateway Goals

*Capitol History Gateway is the interpretive plan for the Capitol's Visitor Services Department. All lessons are developed to complement these interpretive goals.*

The quality of my life has been and continues to be shaped by what happens in Oregon's Government.

It is easy to get involved in Oregon's democracy.

## Standards Met

### Oregon Social Studies

4.14 Explain the organization and functions of the Oregon Government. (2018)

4.C.IR.3 Examine how identity shapes perspectives about a local or state issue. (2024)

4.C.CE.5 Describe the importance of civic participation, including the ballot initiative process, in changing Oregon's laws and constitution. (2024)

### NCSS

Theme 10: Civic Engagement

### Oregon English Language and Arts Standards

Knowledge of Language 3. Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening.

a. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.

### Oregon Literacy Standards

4RI.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (i.e., in charts, graphs, diagrams, timelines, animation, or interactive elements on web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.

# Lesson

## Lesson A

1. Lead a class brainstorm for why we have laws, how laws are made, who makes them, some laws students are aware of, and what they want to know with the [KWL Chart](#)
  2. As a class or small groups, read the [Bottle Bill Background](#).
  3. Add to the KWL chart with what students have learned/want to learn in the next lesson
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## Lesson B

1. Review the key points of the Bottle Bill via the There Ought to be a Law slide deck
  - a. On slide 9 there is a built-in break to reenact the committee hearing using the reader's theatre script, if desired.
  - b. There are 15 characters in the [Reader's Theater](#), with [character cards](#) (if desired), assign these to students. Other students can act as the Senators and Representatives, and vote on the bill after the committee.
2. Review the KWL Chart for final learnings and outstanding questions

## Extension Activities

### B

#### *Students Create their own Bills*

1. *Break students into groups of 3-5 (odd numbers so there are no ties in voting), to write their own bills*
  - a. [Link to Bill Format](#)
2. *Each group should have a*
  - a. *Secretary*
  - b. *Researcher*
  - c. *Presenter*
3. *Once the group has an idea for a bill, the Researcher finds evidence for why this bill is needed (Ex - Ban chewing gum in schools, there is too much under the desk. Extend recess by 30 minutes, students need more physical activity, etc.). The Secretary writes the bill, the Presenter shares the bill with the class.*
4. *Groups not presenting bills become the committee*
5. *The committee votes on each bill*
6. *The teacher acts as the Governor and signs the passed bills into law*