

Handout A: Background Essay—All Legislative Powers Herein Granted, The Legislative Process 1789-1860 Answer Key

The answers below are only sample responses. Student responses should be judged by the evidence and logic they use in their responses.

1. Congress is the law making body of the United States. Their role is to pass legislation that governs the country. The Senate is also called upon to advise the president on foreign policy.
2. The greatest challenges facing the Congress in the early republic were debates over constitutional power and economic institutions, state and federal authority, and sectionalism and the debate over slavery and its expansion.
3. People tend to naturally group themselves by like interests. It is always of benefit to have like-minded friends working together, especially in a body as diverse as the Congress.
4. The heated debates in Congress during the early republic often resulted in compromises by statesmen that allowed the peaceful resolution of issues. On the other hand, the heated debates revealed the real partisan and sectional divides in early America over several contentious issues.
5. Student responses will vary. Their responses should be thoughtful reflections that discuss the challenges of making a decision contrary to a popular opinion.