



Lobbying: Lesson Plan

Topic	
Lobbying is trying to convince those in power to approve or eliminate particular legislation. Anyone can lobby. Some people band together under particular causes and form interest groups while other people are hired by groups or corporations to lobby on their behalf. People can influence officials by gathering facts and data, drafting legislation, or using money. Lobbying has hotly been debated, but regulations have been rather lackluster.	
Possible subjects/classes	Time needed
History, Government, Politics, Philosophy	30-45 minutes
Video link:	
https://academy4sc.org/topic/lobbying-lend-me-your-ear/	
Objective: <i>What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?</i>	
Students will be able to... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define lobbying. • List the different kinds of lobbyists. • Explain the different ways individuals can influence legislators. 	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
Legislation, Representatives, Congress	
Materials Needed	
Student internet access (for optional perspective taking activity), Worksheet (for optional activity)	
Before you watch	
Think-pair-share: How can you influence what legislature is passed? Consider the local, state, and federal level.	



While you watch

1. What is lobbying?
2. Who can lobby?
3. What are two things people can use to influence elected officials to vote particular ways?

After you watch/discussion questions

1. What are some interest groups you've heard of? Which ones do you think hold the most sway?
2. Why do you think it can be difficult to reform lobbying at the federal level?
3. What are some other ways people can lobby for change?

Activity Ideas

- **Perspective Taking:** Have students group up and take the perspective of a particular interest group of their choosing. Give groups a few minutes to pick their interest group and then find the group's member size and money at their disposal. Then tell them to imagine a topical bill is introduced to Congress. Taking into consideration the specifics of their interest group, have each group brainstorm specific and effective ways they could make their collective voices heard.
- **Activism:** Have students work in partners or small groups and find a political issue they're all passionate about. Allow each partnership/group to research and find any relevant legislation up for debate in their town, county, or state. Each partnership/group should then make a list of five specific ways they could lobby for or against this issue. Students should then pick one method and take (or begin taking) necessary steps into implementing it.
- **Worksheet:** Individually complete the Worksheet. Then discuss answers in small groups.

Sources/places to learn more

1. Alemanno, Alberto. (2016, Jun). *Citizen Lobbying: How Your Skills Can Fix Democracy* | Alberto Alemanno | TEDxBussels [Video]. Tedx Talks. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqNf2OPdu8c>.
2. Campos, Nauro F. and Francesco Giovannoni. "Lobbying, corruption and political influence." *Public Choice*, vol 131, Nov 2007, pp 1-21. Doi: 10.1007/s11127-006-9102-4.



3. Gilens, Martin. *Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America*. Princeton University Press, 2012. ISBN: 9780691162423.
4. Hall, Richard L. and Alan V Deardorff. "Lobbying as Legislative Subsidy." *American Political Science Review*, vol 100, issue 1, Feb 2006, pp 69-84. Doi: 10.1017/S0003055406062010.
5. Potters, Jan and Frans van Winden. "Lobbying and asymmetric information." *Public Choice*, vol 74, Oct 1992, pp 262-292. Doi: 10.1007/BF00149180.