



Educational Resources

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE SIMULATION

Preparing a Media Report

As a member of the media or “press gallery,” your role will be to inform Canadians about what transpired in this committee meeting. In doing so, you will decide what is most important and interesting to emphasize in your story.

Preparing for the simulation

Read the bill carefully.

1. What will Canadians find interesting about this bill?

2. Is this a controversial issue? Do you expect that there will be strong opinions expressed in the committee?

3. Which clauses in the bill do you expect to pass easily?

4. Which clauses in the bill will have the most debate? Are there any clauses that you think will be defeated?

Look at the list of witnesses who will be appearing before the committee.

1. Which witnesses are likely to speak in support of the bill? Why?

2. Which witnesses are likely to criticize the bill? Why?

During the meeting

Use the following charts or make your own to take notes on the important occurrences during the meeting.

Witness presentations

Name of witness and group	Opinion and reasons	Interesting quote

Debate on amendments

Clause	Amended or not / passed	Details (arguments, quotes, etc.)

Writing the story

News stories are organized a little differently than other types of stories. The most important information in a news story is always at the very beginning, in a sentence called the “lead.” In the lead, the reporter tries to answer the “5 Ws and the H” of a story: who, what, why, when, where and how. The reporter wants the lead to capture what is important to know, but also to be interesting in order to get the reader to read the rest of the story. If the most important information is at the beginning, the least important information is at the end. That way the reader can stop reading the article at any point and still get a good sense of what happened.

In planning your article, decide first what is most important for citizens to know about what happened at the committee meeting. Did the bill pass the stage easily with little argument? Did the committee dramatically change the details? Was there a fierce debate?

Story planning structure

Headline (several words long — designed to attract attention of reader) :

Lead (No more than 30 words if possible. Remember: who, what, why, when, where and how) :

Details and quotations to use in story (listed most important to least important) :