

Guided Reading Activity

**networks**

The Structure of Congress

Lesson 5 *Staff and Support Agencies*

Review Questions

Directions: Read each main idea. Use your text to supply the details that support or explain each main idea.

A. Main Idea: Trained staff does much of the important legislative work of Congress.

1. **Detail:** The work of Congress is so extensive and complex that lawmakers rely on their

_____ to help them draft bills, stay informed on issues, and represent their

_____.

B. Main Idea: The number of staff members has grown significantly since 1947, with a huge leap in numbers between 1977 and 2009.

1. **Detail:** As lawmaking became more _____, requiring greater knowledge of

issues, and as constituents place increased demands on their lawmakers, the number of staff

members has _____ significantly.

C. Main Idea: Each senator and House member has an allowance to pay for personal staff, and lawmakers can hire and fire staff members at will.

1. **Detail:** The _____ serves as the chief of staff, and

the _____ typically establishes the legislative

agenda and informs the lawmaker on legislative matters.

2. **Detail:** _____ are involved in committee meetings

and keep track of what is happening on the floor, while _____

_____ manage the media relations of a lawmaker and

_____ handle the many requests for help from a member's constituents.

D. Main Idea: Every committee and subcommittee in Congress has a staff.

1. **Detail:** The tasks of _____ staff members include drafting bills, studying issues,

collecting information, planning hearings, and preparing reports.

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E. Main Idea: A number of agencies in the legislative branch provide services that support the Congress.

1. Detail: In addition to its books and other holdings, the Library of Congress has a

_____ that provides
information for lawmakers, their staff, and committees.

2. Detail: The _____
coordinates the budget work of Congress, studies the budget proposals of the president, and
projects the cost of proposed programs.

3. Detail: The _____
oversees how the funds Congress appropriates are spent.

4. Detail: The _____
promotes government transparency by publishing, in print and online, the multitude of reports,
bills, and official records produced by Congress.

Summary and Reflection

Directions: Summarize the main ideas of this lesson by answering the question below.

How do the various staffers and agencies enable lawmakers to carry out their duties?
