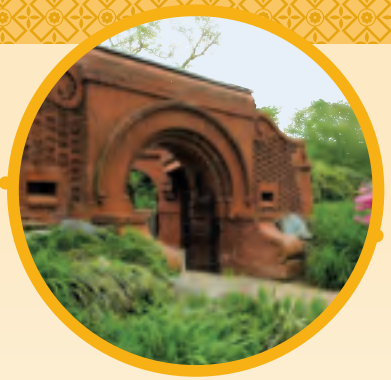
My Capitol

Discover! Explore! Art, History, Architecture and Government

A GUIDE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, GRADES 6 AND UP



U.S. CAPITOL
visitor center

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- **Exhibition Hall** located in the Visitor Center. Turn to page 3.
- The **U.S. Capitol Grounds** outside of the building. Turn to page 19.

For each tour, you will find a map with **numbered stops**. At each stop . . .

- **Read** the background information in the guide.
- **Use** the questions and activities to help you focus your looking, learning and thinking.
- **Talk** with your group about what you see and learn.
- **Take notes** to refresh your memory. Use the blank spaces on pages 18 and 23.
- **Have fun**.

Please keep this guide as a souvenir of your visit and as a reference to use at home and school.

Visitors view a scale model of the Capitol and Grounds in Exhibition Hall.

The United States Capitol

For Teachers and Parents

Designed for children ages 11 and older, this guide is intended as a self-guided tour of Exhibition Hall and the Capitol Grounds. For each of the numbered stops, this guide provides historical background, directed-looking activities, and questions to encourage discussion during the tour or for follow-up at school or home. Answers to the questions can be found on the U.S. Capitol Visitor Center's website at www.visitthecapitol.gov/studentselfguide.

If your group is larger than 20 students, we suggest dividing it into smaller groups and staggering where each group begins its tour.

PART I

U.S. CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER EXHIBITION HALL

The exhibition is titled *E Pluribus Unum—Out of Many, One*. It tells the story of Congress, the branch of government that makes the nation's laws. It also tells the story of the Capitol, the home of Congress since 1800. The Capitol is the world's most recognized symbol of democratic government.

The exhibition displays some of America's most treasured documents, objects and images. Together they illustrate how Congress works and how Congress and the Capitol have changed and grown along with the nation.

Before you begin your journey, you should know:

- **No photographs**. This helps preserve the documents in the exhibition.
- **Stay** with your teacher or chaperones at all times.
- **Don't lean** on the walls and cases.
- **You may touch** the model of the Capitol Dome and the architectural elements located near the interactive stations (see map on page 4).

Enjoy the exhibition!

A CLOSER LOOK

Where have you seen the words E Pluribus Unum before? These words are Latin for "Out of Many, One" and form the motto that appears on the Great Seal of the United States. The seal—first used in 1782—reflects the ideals the Founding Fathers held for the new nation.

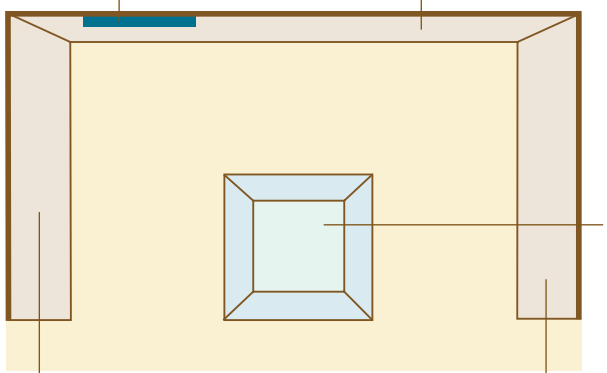
Think about what E Pluribus Unum means to you.

Search for the Great Seal throughout the exhibition. See how many you find.

Map of Exhibition Hall

Your tour of *E Pluribus Unum—Out of Many, One* begins with the model for the Statue of Freedom at the entrance to Exhibition Hall. Once you are inside the exhibition, look at the map and the legend on the opposite page.

Stops 4-17 tell the history of Congress and the Capitol during a particular time period. Each stop includes:



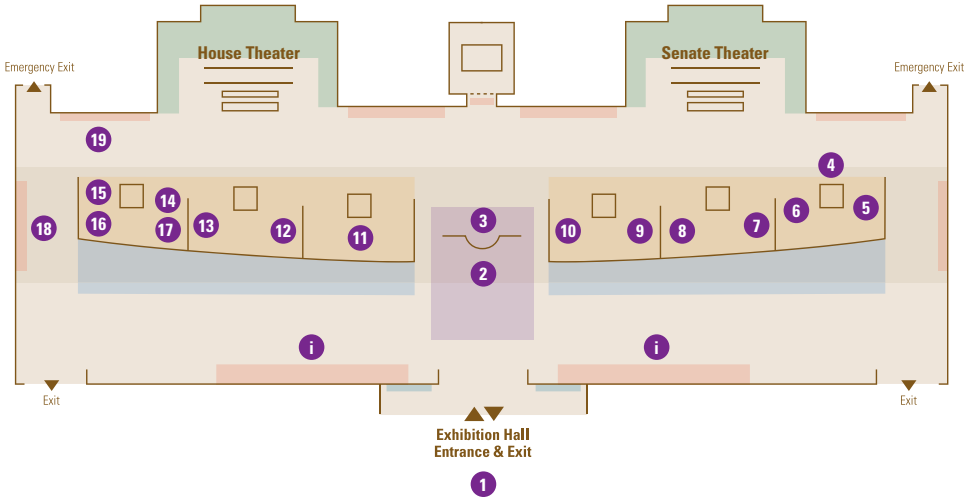
A **video screen** in the wall that highlights important legislation passed by Congress.

A **large wall** of photographs and objects related to major events that prompted Congress to act.

A **scale model** of the Capitol and Grounds that shows their expansion and architectural history.

Two large exhibit cases on either side of the large wall. The case on the left is about the **Senate**.

The case on the right is about the **House of Representatives**.



Stops

1. Plaster Model for the Statue of Freedom
2. The Dome: An Architectural Masterpiece
3. Inside the Dome: An Artistic Masterpiece
4. A Home for Congress
5. The Senate Sets Up Shop
6. The House Sets Up Shop
7. Senate Chamber Desks
8. House Chamber Desks and Chairs
9. First Full-Term African American Senator: Blanche Bruce
10. First African American Representative: Joseph Rainey
11. Challenges of a Growing Nation
12. First Woman Elected to the Senate: Hattie Caraway
13. First Woman Elected to the House: Jeannette Rankin
14. First Woman Elected to the House and the Senate: Margaret Chase Smith
15. First Asian American Woman Elected to Congress: Patsy Mink
16. First African American Woman from the South in Congress: Barbara Jordan
17. Civil Rights for All Americans
18. The Constitution and Congress
19. Working at the Capitol

i Interactive Stations

Statue of Freedom on top of the U.S. Capitol Dome.

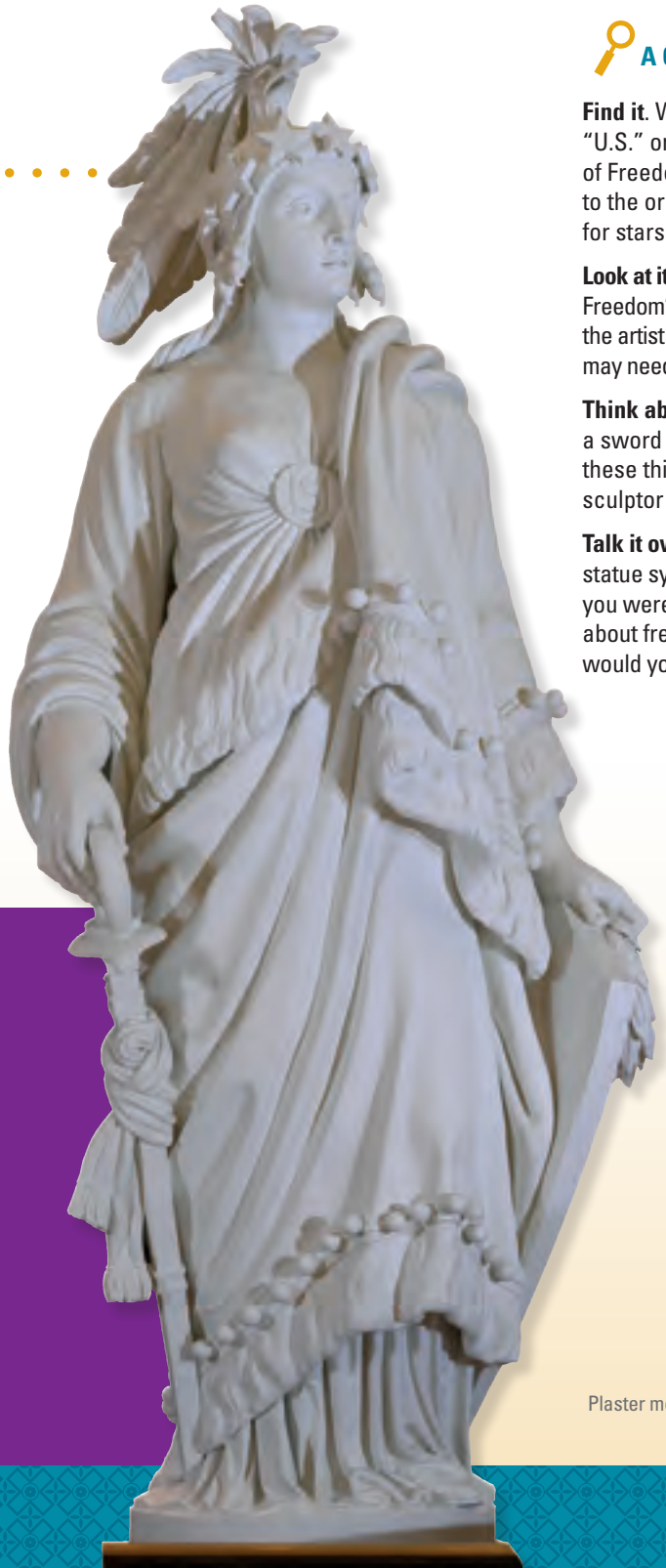
STOP 1

Plaster Model for the Statue of Freedom

This is a full-size plaster model for the bronze Statue of Freedom that is on top of the Capitol Dome. Designed by **Thomas Crawford**, the statue depicts a female figure representing freedom. In her right hand, Freedom holds a sword (a symbol of war). In her left hand she holds a wreath of laurel leaves (a symbol of peace) and a shield (a symbol of protection). Together, the symbols represent the ideal that freedom can triumph in both war and in peace.

Making the Statue of Freedom

- The sculptor, Thomas Crawford, created the plaster model in his studio in Rome, Italy.
- The model was shipped in six crates to a foundry (a factory for casting metal) near Washington, D.C.
- At the foundry, Clark Mills cast in bronze the five pieces that made up the statue.
- Phillip Reid, an enslaved African American worker, assisted Clark Mills in casting the Statue of Freedom.
- Piece by piece, the statue was raised to the top of the Dome and assembled there.
- The last piece, the head, was bolted in place on December 2, 1863.



Plaster model for the Statue of Freedom

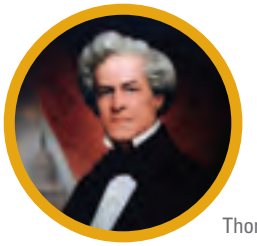
A CLOSER LOOK

Find it. Where are the initials "U.S." on the model for the Statue of Freedom? Also find a reference to the original 13 states. (Hint: Look for stars and stripes.)

Look at it. What do you see on Freedom's head? Why do you think the artist chose this symbol? (You may need to take a few steps back.)

Think about it. Freedom is holding a sword and shield. In choosing these things, what was the sculptor saying about freedom?

Talk it over. Which elements of the statue symbolize freedom to you? If you were asked to design a statue about freedom, what symbols would you include?



Thomas U. Walter

Construction of the Dome

Model of the U.S. Capitol Dome; cutaway model of the Dome.

STOP 2

The Dome: An Architectural Masterpiece

The U.S. Capitol Dome may be America's most famous landmark. Designed by **Thomas U. Walter**, a Philadelphia architect, it is the second dome that has crowned the Capitol. The proportions of the original dome became too small when the Capitol's two wings were enlarged to accommodate more senators and representatives.

Unlike the original wooden dome, the new dome was made of cast-iron, making it fireproof. By the time the Capitol Dome was completed in 1866, close to nine million pounds of iron had been lifted into place by steam-powered cranes.

Neoclassical Architecture

The Capitol is an example of the **neoclassical** ("new" classical) style of architecture. Neoclassical buildings were inspired by the architecture of ancient Greece and Rome. In addition to a dome, they are likely to have:

- Columns
- A crowning statue
- Many small windows
- Balustrades (repeating small posts like a porch rail)
- Pilasters (flat columns)

Find the neoclassical features listed above on the scale model. It's okay to touch it.

A CLOSER LOOK

Find the answer. How tall is the U.S. Capitol Dome?

Look at it. The lights inside the model cycle on and off every two minutes.

Look more closely at the top of the dome under the Statue of Freedom. Lanterns there light up at night when either the Senate or the House holds an evening session.

Talk it over. What does your state capitol building look like? How is its architecture the same or different from that of the U.S. Capitol?

Think about it. What other buildings have you seen that have a dome? What does a dome tell you about the building's importance? See if you can name five other Washington, D.C., buildings or monuments that have domes.

STOP 3

Inside the Dome: An Artistic Masterpiece

This side of the model shows the inside of the Capitol Dome. Look for the painting on the Dome's ceiling. It is called ***The Apotheosis of Washington*** and honors **George Washington** as a national hero.

The Apotheosis was painted in 1865 by the Italian artist Constantino Brumidi and took him 11 months to complete. Brumidi moved to the United States in 1852 from Italy, where he had painted murals in the Vatican and in Roman palaces.

How was *The Apotheosis* painted?

The Apotheosis is a **fresco**, which means "fresh" in Italian. A fresco is done by applying paint to wet plaster. Once dry, the painting becomes part of the wall. This painting technique was most popular during the Italian Renaissance. For example, Michelangelo used fresco to create the Vatican Sistine Chapel ceiling in the 1500s.

What does the painting mean?

Look at the photograph of *The Apotheosis of Washington* on the wall to the left of the model.

"Apotheosis" means elevating a person to the rank of a god or the **glorification of a person as an ideal**. Brumidi combined Greek and Roman gods and goddesses with important Americans and American achievements to create an American work of art. The group of figures in the center of the painting includes George Washington. The groups that line the perimeter of the fresco represent six themes:

1. **War**: Armed Freedom defeats Tyranny and the power of kings.
2. **Science**: Minerva teaches Benjamin Franklin and other inventors.
3. **Marine**: Neptune and Venus hold a telegraph cable being laid under the Atlantic Ocean.
4. **Commerce**: Mercury hands money to Robert Morris, a financier of the American Revolution.
5. **Mechanics**: Vulcan forges a cannon and steam engine.
6. **Agriculture**: Ceres sits on a reaper invented by Cyrus McCormick to harvest grain.

The Apotheosis of Washington

A CLOSER LOOK

Look at the photograph of *The Apotheosis of Washington* and . . .

- **Find George Washington**. Notice the 13 women that surround him. What do you think the women symbolize? (Hint: Why is the number 13 important in American history?)
- **Look for the rainbow** that arches beneath President Washington's feet. Why do you think the artist included a rainbow?
- **Find the "Science" group**. Benjamin Franklin is standing to the right of Minerva, the Roman goddess of science. What did Franklin invent?
- **Find the "War" group.** The central figure represents Freedom. Name the elements that resemble those you saw in the model of the Statue of Freedom in Stop 1.
- **Think about it**. What does *The Apotheosis of Washington* tell you about the way America wanted to present itself to the world in the 1850s? What themes would you pick to represent America today?

STOP 4

A Home for Congress

One of Congress's first tasks was to find a home for the new United States government. In 1790, during its second session, Congress authorized a 10-mile-square area on the Potomac River that included land in Maryland and Virginia as the nation's capital. The site, which was selected by President George Washington, was called "The Federal City." From the start, however, Thomas Jefferson referred to it as "Washington."

Test your history and geography.
Name the 13 original states from north to south. Where was Washington, D.C., located in relationship to the states? Why do you think that location was chosen?

A Design for the Capitol

In 1792, Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson proposed that a design contest be held for the new Capitol. None of the entries pleased President Washington, so no prizes were awarded.

In 1793, however, after the competition had closed, **Dr. William Thornton**, a physician and amateur architect, presented a plan. His design had the classical elegance and grand scale that Washington wanted, and Thornton became the architect of the new Capitol.

Left to right: Dr. William Thornton; model of Capitol Grounds in 1814
Below: Thornton's winning design of the Capitol

A CLOSER LOOK

Think about it. The Constitution calls for Congress to have two legislative bodies: the House of Representatives and the Senate. How does Dr. Thornton's design for the Capitol reflect that?

Look at the model of the Capitol (1814). Two wings of the Capitol had been completed. No dome had been built—only a temporary connection between the wings.

Notice the area around the Capitol. Would you call it urban or rural? How does it differ from today?

STOP 5

The Senate Sets Up Shop

With 22 members attending, the Senate began its first session on April 6, 1789, in New York City. Two days later, the members elected a Secretary of the Senate, who was responsible for keeping a journal of day-to-day activities. He also bought supplies, managed payrolls and paid bills.

For Congress' first 125 years, U.S. senators were elected by state legislatures, which often sent the senators instructions on how to vote.

A CLOSER LOOK

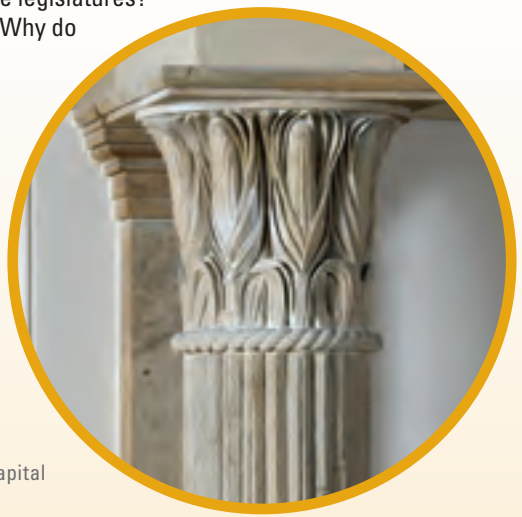
Look in the case for it. *The Journal of the First Session of the Senate* shows 19 rules that the Senate adopted for conducting business.

Also locate the Senate Payment Ledger. This volume records the payments made to senators for their salaries and travel expenses.

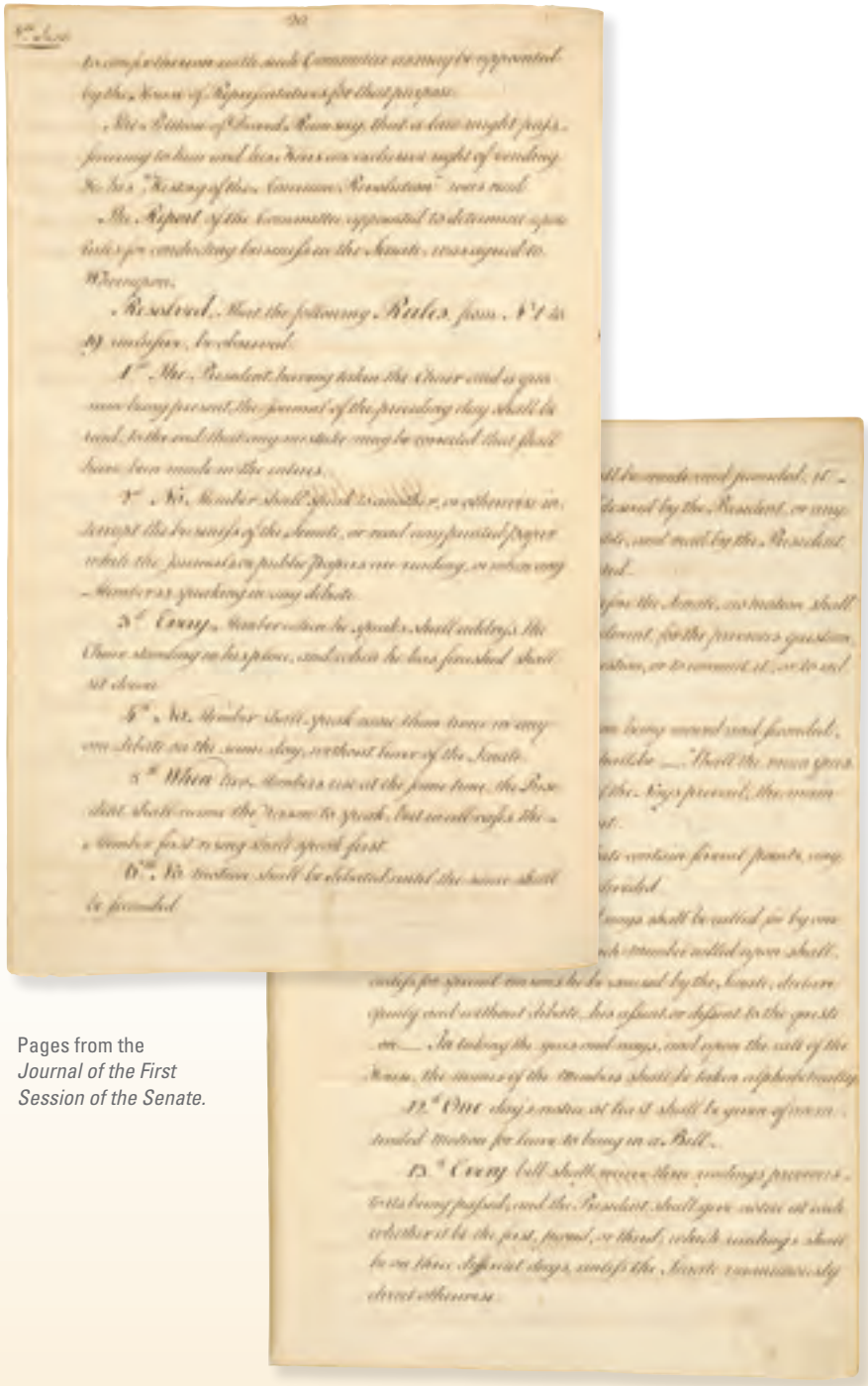
Think about it. Why did the authors of the Constitution want senators to be chosen by state legislatures? How do we select senators today? Why do you think the law was changed?

Check it out online. The Senate still keeps a record of its daily activities. Go to www.senate.gov and click on "Daily Digest" to see the most recent entries.

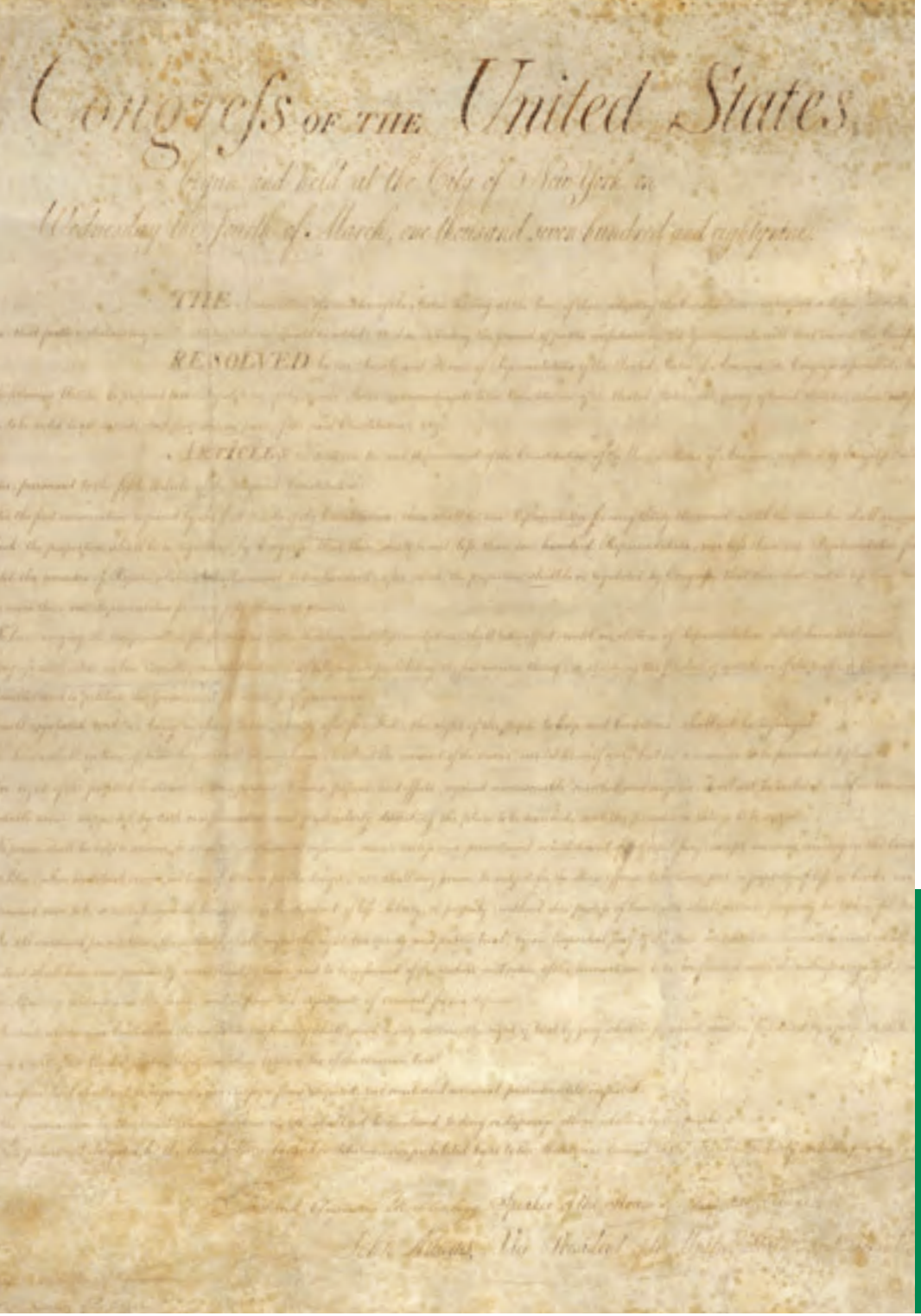
Find this column capital. What makes it unusual? Stumped? Read the exhibit label to find out.



Corn cob column capital

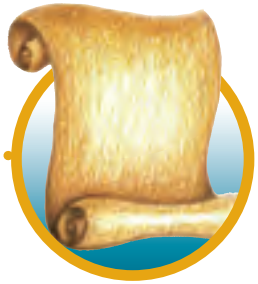


Pages from the *Journal of the First Session of the Senate.*


Congress of the United States,
begun and held at the City of New-York, on
Wednesday the fourth of March, one thousand seven hundred and eighty-nine.
THE
RESOLVED
ARTICLES

STOP 6

The House Sets Up Shop



During its first session in 1789, the House of Representatives established the way it would carry out its business. It looked to Britain's House of Commons for ideas. For example, the Speaker of the House would be responsible for presiding over debates and maintaining order. Basic rules of parliamentary procedure were adopted from the House of Commons as well.

The House also began the process of adding amendments to the new Constitution. Why? Because the Constitution said nothing about protecting the freedom of speech, freedom of religion or other individual rights. From amendments proposed by the House of Representatives, the Senate approved 12 that were sent to the states to be ratified. The states agreed to 10 of the amendments—known today as the Bill of Rights. Name three of the rights.

Left: Bill of Rights
Below: Bronze inkstand, Smithsonian Institution, National Museum of American History, Behring Center

A CLOSER LOOK

Find this inkstand. Henry Clay used this bronze inkstand to hold the writing implements he used while he was Speaker of the House. Clay served as Speaker longer than anyone else in the 1800s.

Look for two versions of the Bill of Rights. Which version was sent to the states to be ratified? What two amendments were not ratified?

Think about it. Why do you think the First Congress was concerned about individual rights?

STOP 7

Senate Chamber Desks

In 1819, the Senate ordered 48 desks to replace those destroyed when the British burned the Capitol during the War of 1812. Made by Thomas Constantine, each desk cost $34.

Today, all of the desks remain in use. As the Senate has grown in size, desks similar to Constantine's design have been added to the Senate Chamber. It's a tradition among senators today to sign their names inside the drawer of their chamber desks.

A CLOSER LOOK

Pop quiz. How many senators serve in Congress today? How many senators represent each state? What is the length of a senator's term? Are all senators elected at the same time?

Think about it. Why don't residents of the District of Columbia and U.S. territories have representation in the Senate?

Senate chamber desk

STOP 8

House Chamber Desks and Chairs

After the British burned the Capitol in 1814, the House Chamber was rebuilt and needed furniture. The House ordered 188 desks and chairs from Thomas Constantine, a cabinetmaker from New York. These desks and chairs, however, were removed in 1857.

As the nation expanded westward and the population grew, the number of House members increased. Seating in the House Chamber was redesigned. Continuous rows of seats replaced individual desks and chairs.

A CLOSER LOOK

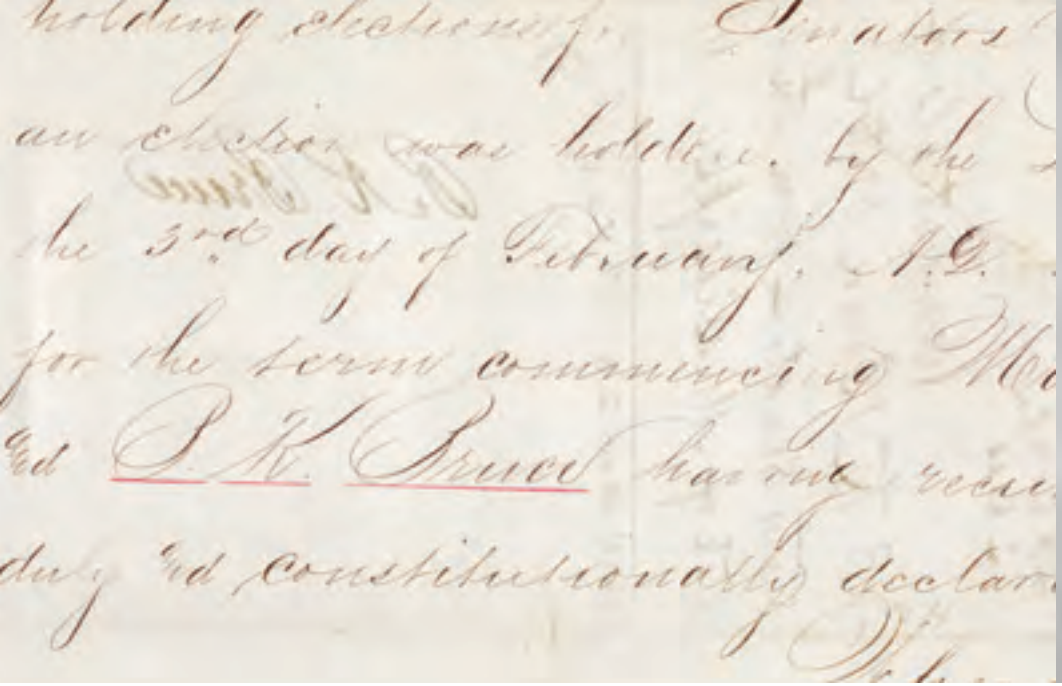
Pop quiz. What determines the number of representatives from each state? What is the length of a representative's term? How does that compare with a senator's term?

Do the math. By law, no more than 535 members may serve in Congress. If there are 100 senators, how many representatives currently serve in Congress? Name your congressional district's representative. (Don't know? Go to the interactive computer area—"Your Congress/Your Capitol"—to find out.)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Miller in memory of Nellie Holmead Fowler.

House chamber chair and desk

Collection of the U.S. House of Representatives.



Certificate of Election for Blanche Bruce; 1875

Portrait of Blanche Bruce

FIRST AFRICAN AMERICANS IN CONGRESS

After the Civil War, three amendments were added to the Constitution that addressed slavery and civil rights. The Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery in 1865. The Fourteenth Amendment, ratified in 1868, provided citizenship rights to the newly-freed slaves. And in 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment granted voting rights to black men.

In addition, African Americans could be elected to Congress. From 1863-1877 (the period called Reconstruction), 14 African American men held House seats and two served in the Senate.

STOP 9

First Full-Term African American Senator: Blanche Bruce, Mississippi

Blanche Bruce was the first African American elected to serve a full term in the Senate. He was also the first African American to preside over the Senate in its practice of rotating Presiding Officers. Born as a slave in Virginia, Bruce fled north to freedom during the Civil War. Following emancipation, he pursued a career in education and politics in Missouri and Mississippi.

A CLOSER LOOK

Look for Senator Bruce's certificate of election issued by the state of Mississippi.

STOP 10

First African American Representative: Joseph Rainey, South Carolina

A slave in his youth, **Joseph Rainey** was the first African American to serve in the House of Representatives. In 1874, he became the first black American to preside over the House. During Reconstruction, 14 African Americans held House seats.

A CLOSER LOOK

Look for the marble. Representative Rainey would have picked a numbered marble like this one to find his seat assignment. We don't know which number he pulled, but he sat with members of his party. Seating on the floor of Congress was not segregated by race. However, visitors in the galleries were segregated by race and gender.

Find out more. Research how seating is decided in the House of Representatives today.

Look at the model of the Capitol (1877). The cast-iron dome is in place, and new wings flank the original building. Compare this model to the one in Stop 4.

STOP 11

Challenges of a Growing Nation

After the Civil War, farms and small towns gave way to factories and cities. Many factory workers were new immigrants and children. Long hours, dangerous job conditions and low pay challenged Congress to find ways to improve workers' lives, especially those of children.

The photographer, **Lewis Hine**, played a major role in convincing members of Congress that they needed to act to protect children from poor working conditions and abuse. Hine traveled the country documenting child labor.

A CLOSER LOOK

Look for photos of child laborers. What jobs are the children doing?

Talk about it. How would your life be affected if you had to work a 12-hour day in a factory or on a farm?

Research it. When you return to school, look up the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938. How does this law and others like it protect your life?

Look at the model of the Capitol (1913). What changes do you see that tell you that congressional membership had increased? What changes do you see to the Capitol Grounds?

FIRST WOMEN IN CONGRESS

Before 1917, no women served in Congress. As of the 112th Congress, 274 had served. A significant number have held leadership positions, including Speaker of the House.

Hattie Caraway

STOP 12

First Woman Elected to the Senate: Hattie Caraway, Arkansas

Hattie Caraway was the first woman elected to the Senate. She had been appointed to her husband's seat after he died in 1931. To everyone's surprise, however, she won a special election and then a general election in 1932. She was also the first woman to chair a Senate committee and to preside over the Senate.

STOP 13

First Woman Elected to the House: Jeannette Rankin, Montana

Jeannette Rankin was the first woman to be elected to Congress—four years before the Constitution gave women the right to vote. Rankin served in the House of Representatives from 1917-19 and 1941-43. She was one of the few suffragists (campaigners for women's right to vote) to serve in Congress. Also, she was the sole member of Congress to vote against U.S. participation in both World War I and World War II. She said, "I may be the first woman member of Congress, but I won't be the last."

Jeannette Rankin

A CLOSER LOOK

Find the gavel used during the House vote that declared war against Germany and Italy in 1941.

Figure it out. The Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution, which guarantees women the right to vote, was ratified in 1920. How was it possible for Jeannette Rankin to be elected to Congress in 1916? (Hint: In 1914, women residing in Montana were granted the right to vote in national elections and Ms. Rankin's activism as a suffragist.)

Above: Smith's campaign buttons
Right: Margaret Chase Smith

STOP 14

First Woman Elected to the House and the Senate: Margaret Chase Smith, Maine

Margaret Chase Smith was the first woman elected to both the House (1940-1949) and the Senate (1949-1973). Smith broke down many barriers to women in politics. For example, she served on the Senate Armed Services Committee and was a presidential candidate in 1964.

Smith's campaign button

MINORITY WOMEN IN CONGRESS

STOP 15

First Asian American Woman Elected to Congress: Patsy Mink, Hawaii

Patsy Mink was the first Asian American woman to be elected to Congress, winning a seat in the House of Representatives in 1964. In Congress, she strongly advocated for women's issues and rights. Among her achievements, she gained critical support for Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments. This legislation barred discrimination against women in schools receiving federal funds. It also opened up opportunities for women in school athletics.

STOP 16

First African American Woman from the South in Congress: Barbara Jordan, Texas

Elected in 1972, **Barbara Jordan** was the first African American to represent Texas in Congress and the first African American woman from a Southern state to serve in the House. While in Congress, Jordan's assignments included membership on the influential Judiciary Committee, which held President Nixon's impeachment hearings in 1974.

A CLOSER LOOK

Talk about it. How have women serving in the House and the Senate affected American society?

Do you know? Does your state have any women members in Congress? If so, name them.

Above: Patsy Mink; Barbara Jordan *Below:* President Lyndon B. Johnson signing the Voting Rights Act, 1965

STOP 17

Civil Rights for All Americans

In the 1960s, Congress passed two important pieces of legislation—the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** and the **Voting Rights Act of 1965**. The first bill ensured that all Americans have the right to go to any hotel, restaurant, theater, store or other place open to the public. The second bill prevented any state from discriminating against voters because of their race or color. These two landmark bills were proposed to Congress by President John F. Kennedy, but neither one passed before his assassination in 1963. In 1964, Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois, an influential debater, declared that racial integration was "an idea whose time has come." A Republican, Dirksen joined Democrats to end the filibuster against the Civil Rights Act.

A CLOSER LOOK

Look for a pen and a desk. What do they have to do with the Voting Rights Act of 1965?

Talk about it. Why was passing the Civil Rights Act of 1964 so important? What role did citizen action play in passing the act?

Close-up of the Constitution's Preamble

STOP 18

The Constitution and Congress

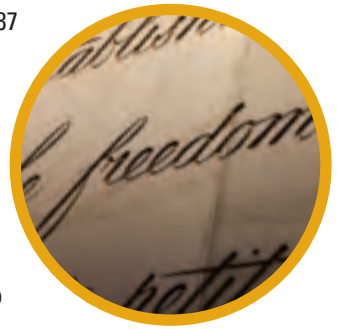
The Constitution is the supreme law of the United States and is the oldest written constitution of any of the world's nations. Framed by a convention of delegates from 12 of the 13 original states, the Constitution establishes three branches of government: Legislative, Executive and Judicial. The legislative branch, or Congress, is the foundation of the democratic framework put forth by the Constitution. In Congress, the American people speak through their representatives and senators.

A CLOSER LOOK

Look in the case and find the Constitution. The one displayed here is a reproduction of the original as it was written in 1787 (the original is in the National Archives).

Now take a step back to get a better look. How many pages does the Constitution contain? Are you surprised? How many articles does it include? Which one is the longest? Which of the three branches of government does that article establish?

Look more closely at the label titled "The House and Senate." Read it and assign the following responsibilities to the House (H), the Senate (S) or both (B).



Wall engraving in Exhibition Hall

- Initiates all laws concerning the raising of money by the federal government.
- Approves all treaties.
- Declares all wars.
- Approves all presidential nominations.
- Initiates the removal of federal officials suspected of "high crimes and misdemeanors."
- Makes all laws.

Think about it. Bills that impose federal taxes must originate in the House. Why do you think the authors of the Constitution chose the House instead of the Senate? (Hint: How were senators and representatives chosen when the Constitution was written?)

Investigate it later. Identify a bill that is currently being debated in Congress. Find out if Congress would need to raise additional money (revenues) if the bill is passed into law.

True or False? Any U.S. citizen can introduce a bill into Congress.

For more "Capitol Challenges" go to www.visitthecapitol.gov/Exhibitions/online/explore-and-discover.html.

STOP 19

Working at the Capitol

Have you wondered what it takes to keep the Capitol and Congress working smoothly? Look at the photographs—from past and present—of the many people and professions working behind the scenes.

A CLOSER LOOK

Talk about it. How many jobs can you identify?

Below: Grounds crew planting flowers; Capitol guide in 1949; Electromotive mechanic working on the Senate subway; Officers of the Senate and House expedite the legislative process; Conservator restoring a Brumidi Corridor mural

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Check out the Senate and the House of Representatives Theaters. The television monitors to the right and left of the movie screens show what is happening on the floor of the House and the Senate whenever that Chamber is in session.

Test your knowledge about Congress and the Capitol. Go to one of the interactive computer stations in the "Your Congress/Your Capitol" section of the Exhibition Hall. While you are there, also take a virtual tour of some of the rooms in the Capitol closed to visitors.

NOTES: PART I

PART II
EXPLORE THE U.S. CAPITOL GROUNDS

Like a painting in a frame, a grand building deserves a grand setting. The U.S. Capitol Grounds do just that. The Capitol's landscape plan was designed by **Frederick Law Olmsted.** Often called the father of American landscape architecture, Olmsted also designed New York City's Central Park and the National Zoo in Washington, D.C.

Olmsted believed that city dwellers needed public parks in which to relax and enjoy nature. The Capitol Grounds' open spaces and curving walkways contrast with the straight, formal lines of the building. Groupings of trees and shrubs frame different views of the Capitol, which create opportunities for great photos.

Photos left to right: The U.S. Capitol; Frederick Law Olmsted

Map of the Capitol Grounds

Begin your tour anywhere on this map. As you follow the walkways, take advantage of the many scenic views of the Capitol.

STOP 1

The United States Capitol

The U.S. Capitol is recognized worldwide as a **monument** to the American people and their government. The Capitol with its magnificent dome has become a landmark of neoclassical architecture—a style inspired by the buildings of ancient Greece and Rome.

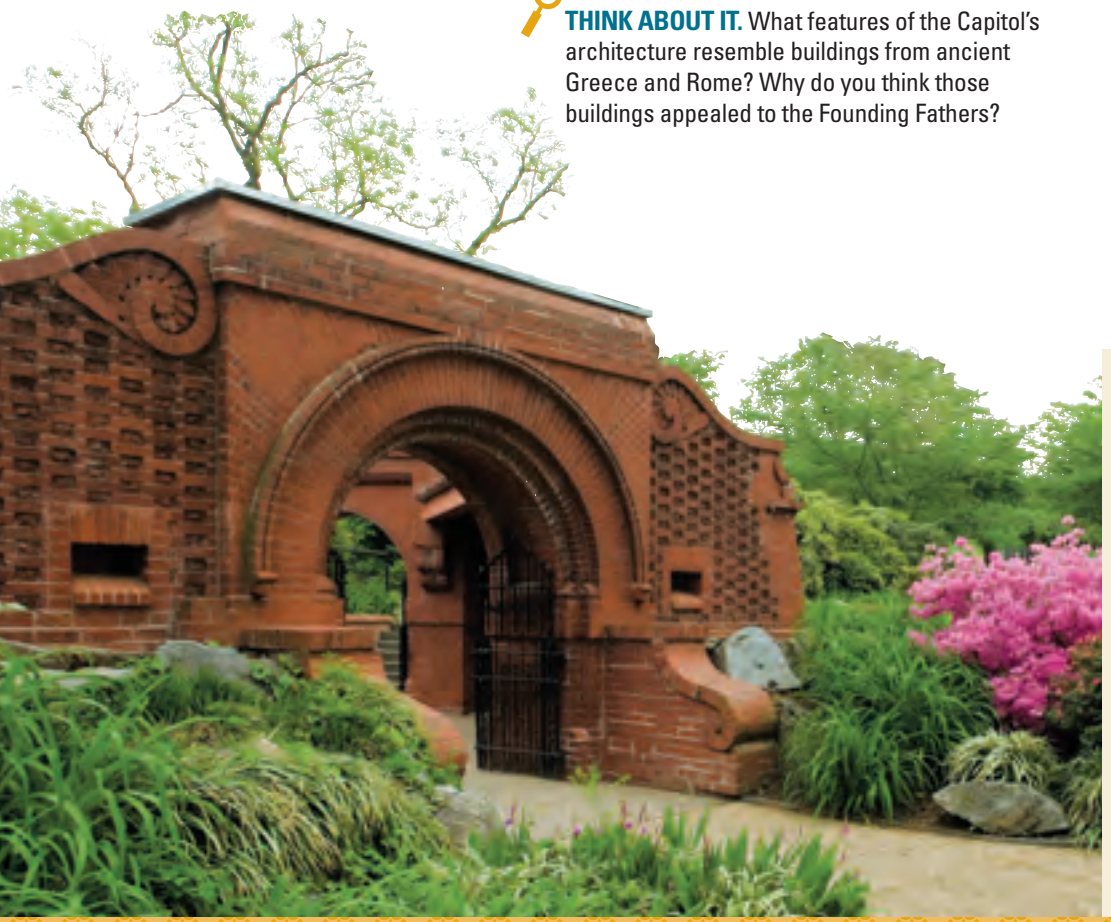
The U.S. Capitol has been the **home of Congress** since 1800. The Senate meets in the wing to the north, and the House meets in the wing to the south. When the flag is flying above a wing, it means the legislative body that meets there is in session. Since the Capitol's construction began in 1793, the building has changed many times. Its newest addition, the Capitol Visitor Center, opened in 2008.

THINK ABOUT IT. What features of the Capitol's architecture resemble buildings from ancient Greece and Rome? Why do you think those buildings appealed to the Founding Fathers?

STOP 2

Trolley Stop Shelters

Stand under the **trolley stop shelter** and imagine yourself waiting for a trolley while enjoying magnificent views of the Capitol. This wrought iron shelter is one of two built for visitors who waited for trolleys that once stopped at the Capitol. Trolley tracks used to run through the Capitol Grounds from Independence Avenue. The trolleys carried visitors to the Capitol as well as to other places in the city like the Treasury Department, the State Department, and Union Station.



STOP 3

Summerhouse

Olmsted designed the **Summerhouse** as a place to escape Washington's hot summer sun and to enjoy views of the Capitol. Sit on one of the shaded benches, relax and examine the architectural details that surround you. Above one of the benches a window looks into a small **grotto**, or cave. Listen to the water as it splashes over the rocks. The fountain in the center of the grotto once provided drinking water pumped from a spring. Now the fountain is only for display.

LOOK MORE CLOSELY. What patterns do you see on the walls of the Summerhouse?

SEARCH. See how many commemorative trees and plaques you can find. Is there a tree from your state?

STOP 4

Commemorative Trees

Many of the trees on the Capitol Grounds were planted to **commemorate** or honor members of Congress, other notable citizens, national organizations and historic events. In addition, more than 30 states have presented gifts of their **state tree** to the Capitol Grounds. Many of the trees bear plaques that identify the species of the tree and its historic significance.

STOP 5

West Front Lawn

This area creates a formal setting for the Capitol's West Front, the side of the building that faces the National Mall. Beginning with the inauguration of Ronald Reagan in 1981, **presidential inaugurations** have been held on the marble terrace named for Frederick Law Olmsted. Surrounding the lower part of the West Front lawn are stone walls, lamp posts and fountains with carvings inspired by nature.

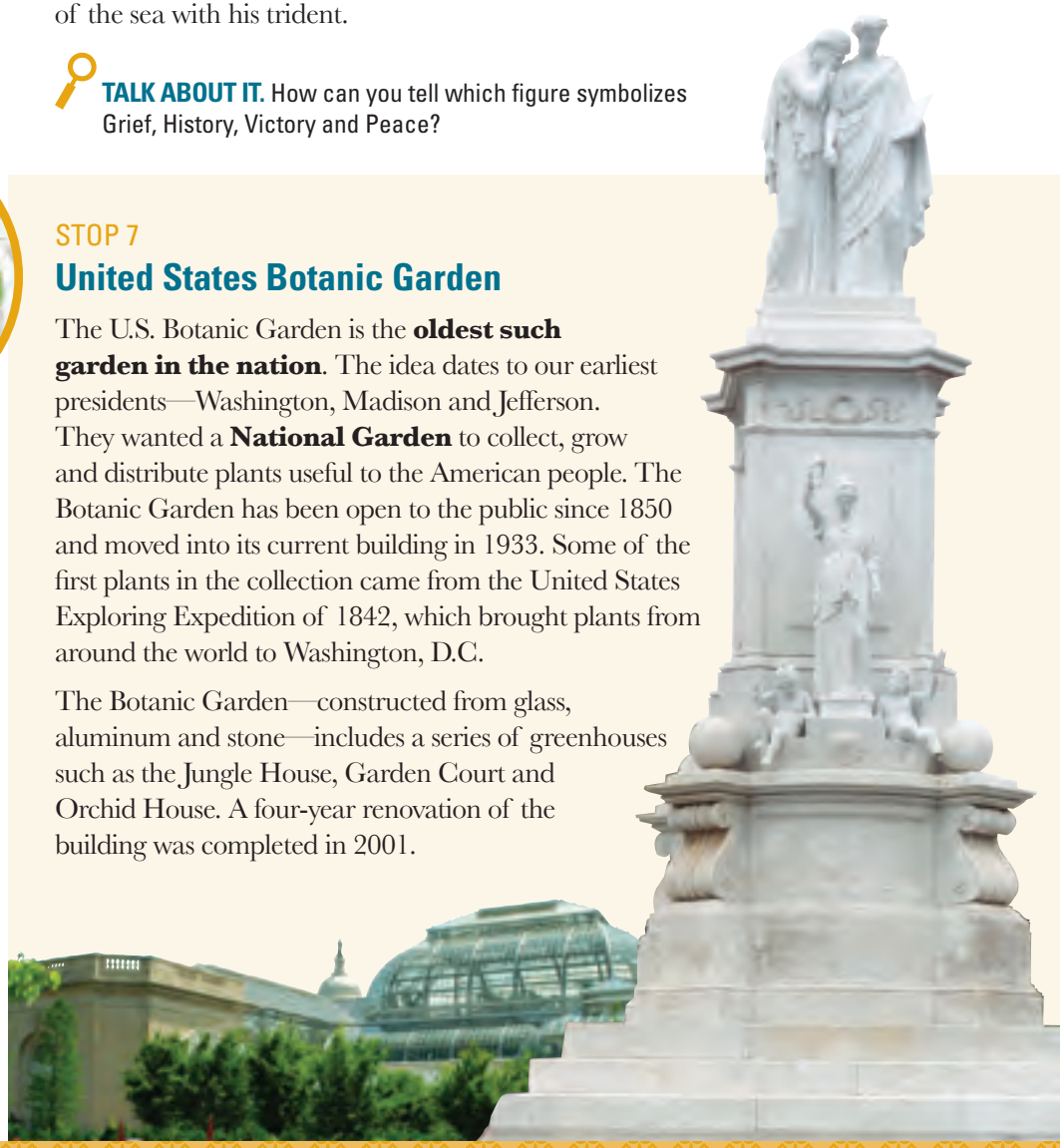
THINK ABOUT IT.
Stand back and look at the Capitol and the West Front lawn. If you were a landscape architect, what would you change or add to the landscape design. Why?

STOP 6

The Peace Monument

The Peace Monument **honors sailors** who died at sea during the **Civil War**. The marble monument is topped with two female figures wearing classical robes. They symbolize Grief and History. Below them, two other female figures represent Victory and Peace. The two infants at the foot of Victory depict Mars, the Roman god of war with his sword, and Neptune, the Roman god of the sea with his trident.

TALK ABOUT IT. How can you tell which figure symbolizes Grief, History, Victory and Peace?



STOP 7

United States Botanic Garden

The U.S. Botanic Garden is the **oldest such garden in the nation**. The idea dates to our earliest presidents—Washington, Madison and Jefferson. They wanted a **National Garden** to collect, grow and distribute plants useful to the American people. The Botanic Garden has been open to the public since 1850 and moved into its current building in 1933. Some of the first plants in the collection came from the United States Exploring Expedition of 1842, which brought plants from around the world to Washington, D.C.

The Botanic Garden—constructed from glass, aluminum and stone—includes a series of greenhouses such as the Jungle House, Garden Court and Orchid House. A four-year renovation of the building was completed in 2001.

NOTES: PART II

KEY TERMS

Architecture: The practice or art of designing and building structures. The common elements of design form an architectural style.

Bill of Rights: A summary of a people's fundamental rights and privileges that cannot be violated by a government. The first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution are known as the Bill of Rights.

Congress: The legislative branch of the United States made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Constitution: The basic principles and laws that determine the powers and duties of a nation, state or organization. A constitution can also grant certain rights and privileges to its citizens or members. The U.S. Constitution was written in 1787 and ratified (approved) by the states in 1788. It went into effect on March 4, 1789.

Democracy: A system of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people, who can exercise their power directly or indirectly through elected representatives.

District of Columbia: The city created by the U.S. Constitution to serve as the nation's capital. The original site, chosen by President George Washington, was on land provided by Maryland and Virginia. The District of Columbia is not a state but a unique federal district under the jurisdiction of Congress.

The House of Representatives: One of the two bodies of the legislative branch in which a state's population determines its number of representatives.

Legislative Branch: The branch of the U.S. government that has the power of legislating, or making laws.

The Senate: One of the two bodies of the legislative branch in which each state has two senators, ensuring equal representation among the states.

RESOURCES

For more information about what you have seen in Exhibition Hall and about Congress and the Capitol, check out the following websites:

The U.S. Capitol Visitor Center: www.visitthecapitol.gov

The Architect of the Capitol: www.aoc.gov

The House of Representatives: http://artandhistory.house.gov

The Senate: www.senate.gov

Recommended Readings:

Aikman, Lonnelle. *We, the People: Story of the United States Capitol*. Washington, D.C.: United States Capitol Historical Society, 1993.

Allen, William. *History of the United States Capitol: A Chronicle of Design, Construction, and Politics*. Washington, D.C.: Prepared under the direction of the Architect of the Capitol, U.S. Government Printing Office, 2001.

Baker, Richard Allan. *The Senate of the United States: A Bicentennial History*. Malabar, Florida: Kriege Publishing Company, 1988.

Currie, James T. *The United States House of Representatives*. Malabar, Florida: Kriege Publishing Company, 1988.

Greenburg, Ellen. *The House and the Senate Explained: The People's Guide to Congress*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1996.

Remini, Robert. *The House: The History of the House of Representatives*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007.

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to 4:30 p.m. Monday – Saturday.
It is closed on Thanksgiving Day,
Christmas Day, New Year's Day,
and Inauguration Day.

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We hope you enjoyed your visit to the Capitol. Come back to see us again soon or visit us at **www.visitthecapitol.gov**.

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