

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington

Name _____ Period _____ Date _____

Characters:

Jefferson Smith- Newly appointed senator. A simple, honest, patriotic man, who works with children and helps people in needs; leader and organizer of the Boy Rangers (like the Boy Scouts).

Senator Joseph Paine- The senior senator from the state. He is very powerful and respected in the Senate. He knew, and was close friends with, Jefferson Smith's father when he was younger. He is in conflict about trying to do the right thing and being influenced to do the wrong thing by Jim Taylor.

Jim Taylor- A businessman and political party boss from the state. He has a lot of power and influence in the state; kind of runs things from behind the scenes.

Miss Saunders- Senator Paine's secretary. She is assigned to help Mr. Smith. She is jaded and disillusioned by what she has seen working in Washington DC.

Governor Huber "Happy" Hopper- Governor of the state in the movie. Does whatever Jim Taylor tells him to do.

Chick McGann- Jim Taylor's helper.

Diz Moore- Newspaper reporter who covers the Senate for his newspaper. A friend of Miss Saunders.

Susan Paine- Senator Paine's daughter.

About the Movie: This movie takes place in a fictional U.S. state and in our nation's capital of Washington DC. When one of the senators from the fictional state dies, the Governor has to select a replacement. Jim Taylor, the political party boss in the state, and the other senator from the state, Joe Paine, want the new senator the governor picks to be weak-minded and easy to control. Jim Taylor and Senator Paine have a secret, illegal land-buying deal (Willet Creek) going on, and they want to make sure the new senator does not interfere with their plans.

Directions: Please answer the following questions while you watch and enjoy the movie.

1. What reasons do the Governor's children give as to why they want their father to pick Mr. Smith as the new senator? **He is a hero to the boys, knows about Washington and Jefferson, put out a forest fire**
2. What gift do the Boy Rangers give Mr. Smith at his party? **A briefcase**
3. While Mr. Smith is on the train talking with Senator Paine, how do they say Mr. Smith's father died? **He is shot. Was killed while helping a miner.**
4. What does Mr. Smith say he would like to do on the morning before he goes to the Senate for the first time? **Go to Mt. Vernon- George Washington's home**
5. When the newspaper reporters interview Mr. Smith, what does he tell them he would like to do for the country? **Build a national boy's camp in his home state.**

6. Why is Mr. Smith angry and punching all of the newspaper reporters?
They wrote articles that made him look foolish.
7. What is Miss Saunders' first name? Clarissa
8. Why is Willet Creek important to Mr. Smith? Why is it important to Jim Taylor and Senator Paine?
Smith wants to build his boys camp there. Paine and Taylor have bought all the land around Willet Creek and are going to sell it back to the government. Paine introduced a bill into the Senate asking for the government to build a dam on Willet Creek.
9. Why does Susan Paine keep Mr. Smith away from the Senate? So he won't hear the bill read that deals with Willet Creek dam.
10. How does Mr. Smith find out about the Willet Creek Dam Project? Ms. Saunders tells him.
11. What does Senator Paine accuse Mr. Smith of doing?
He accuses Smith of owning the land around Willet Creek and trying to sell it back to the government, and stealing money from kids. Essentially they accuse Smith of what they were doing.
12. After the Senate committee hearing, where does Mr. Smith go? Who finds him? What do they decide to do? He goes to the Lincoln Memorial. Saunders finds him. They decide to fight back and clear his name.
13. When Mr. Smith returns to the Senate and takes the floor to speak, what does he do to prove that he is innocent? He starts a filibuster.
14. How do the children help Mr. Smith?
Print a newspaper trying to give Smith's side. They protest against what Taylor is saying about Smith.
15. In the end, what happens to Senator Paine?
He confesses. Tries to kill himself. (Just hear the gun shot)
16. What qualities of good citizenship does Mr. Smith demonstrate? Answers will vary.
17. What did you learn about the legislative process and how a bill becomes a law from watching the movie?
Steps of how a bill becomes a law. How to introduce a bill. Filibuster.