

Congressional Job Description Answer Key

The students' job descriptions should include the following:

1. **Job title:** Congressional Representative, Congressman, Congresswoman, Senator, or Representative
2. **Objective:** this should consist of three or four (or more) sentences that explain that the job -- in this case, it should be a short paragraph explaining that the purpose of this job is to represent the will of the people
3. **Summary:** this is a short paragraph that should sum up the job itself, so it should talk about what is expected of the representative
4. **Responsibilities:** this list should include some of the following responsibilities:
 - a. Initiate revenue bills (if in the House)
 - b. Establish annual budget
 - c. Levee taxes/tariffs
 - d. Authorize borrowing/spending (including mandating how monies are spent)
 - e. Impeach federal officials (if House) or convict in impeachments (if Senate)
 - f. Approve presidential appointments (if Senate)
 - g. Ratify treaties (if Senate)
 - h. Declare war
 - i. Write and pass laws
 - j. Change existing laws
 - k. Establish district courts
 - l. Establish federal courts of appeal
 - m. Determine number of federal courts
 - n. Override presidential vetoes
 - o. Conducts oversight of executive branch through hearings
 - p. Maintains Government Accountability Office (GAO)
 - q. Represent constituents
 - r. Hold town hall meetings
 - s. Speak to different groups and organizations
 - t. Help organizations find and apply for federal grants

- u. Help constituents deal with federal agencies
- v. Help constituents file complaints
- w. Offer student internships
- x. Help constituents apply for benefits
- y. Nominate students who want to attend military academies

While detailed, this is not an exhaustive list. Depending on the students and their experiences, they may be able to add to the list, particularly when it relates to “additional responsibilities.”

5. **Qualifications and skills:** these should include both hard and soft skills.
 - a. For hard skills, students would want to include requirements to hold office
 - i. Senate: at least 30 years of age, a U.S. citizen for a minimum of nine years, and live in the state that he/she represents
 - ii. House of Representatives: at least 25 years of age, a U.S. citizen for a minimum of seven years, and live in the state that he/she represents
 - iii. Hard skills may also include education, knowledge of the government, an understanding of the law, etc. These are quantifiable skills.
 - b. For soft skills, students would want to focus on skills such as being able to communicate, speak in public, manage time, and solve problems. Other soft skills include having a good attitude, self-confidence, and the ability to work under pressure.

Again, this is not an exhaustive list. Depending on the students and their experiences, they may be able to list additional hard and soft skills.

The students may or may not include the information below:

6. **Company overview:** this would be a short description of the U.S. government
 7. **Salary and benefit information:** it is unlikely that the students will know this without doing research.
 8. **How to apply:** this would be the campaign process itself. Depending on the students, they may or may not know how the process works.
-

The purpose of this assignment is to get the students thinking about what is involved in being a congressman or woman and to talk about how the job goes beyond simply making laws and approving presidential appointments.