



Lame Ducks: Lesson Plan

Topic	
Lame duck elected officials are those who have lost a re-election bid or are not seeking re-election but have not yet finished their term. A lame duck session of Congress occurs between the election and beginning of the new session and includes lame duck members rather than newly-elected members.	
Possible subjects/classes	Time needed
Government Civics U.S. History	30 - 45 min
Video link:	
https://academy4sc.org/topic/lame-ducks-the-last-quacks-of-elected-officials/	
Objective: <i>What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?</i>	
Students will be able to... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define a lame duck politician or session.• Discuss the 22nd Amendment.• Explain actions typical of lame duck presidents and Congressional sessions.	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
Constituent	
Materials Needed	
Worksheet, computers	
Before you watch	
<u>Turn and Talk:</u> Ask students to turn to a partner and discuss what comes to mind when they hear the term "lame duck."	
While you watch	



Complete the worksheet.

After you watch/discussion questions

1. Do you think the lame duck session should be shortened more? Why or why not?
2. Do you think lame duck presidents are less effective than they were in their first term? Why or why not?
3. Why is it important that elected officials be accountable to their constituents?

Activity Ideas

Short Response: Say you are a president at the end of your second term. What actions would you take? What would you prioritize? Would you do anything that could be seen as controversial, and if so, what? Write a short response answering these questions.

More Research: Research a lame duck session of Congress. Some suggestions include 1940, when a lame duck session debated how to address World War II, 1950, when a lame duck session discussed using nuclear weapons in the Korean War, 1980, when a lame duck session passed budget resolutions, and 1998, when only the House returned in a lame duck session to consider the impeachment of President Bill Clinton. Write a response explaining what the lame duck session did and whether its actions would have been possible had they taken place during a normal session of Congress.

Sources/places to learn more

1. Linton, Mark. "The Awesome Power of a Lame-Duck President." *Governing*, 5 Oct. 2015, www.governing.com/gov-institute/voices/col-myth-lame-duck-president-local-government-opportunities.html.
2. Murse, Tom. "Lame Duck Politicians." *ThoughtCo*, www.thoughtco.com/lame-duck-in-politics-3368114.
3. NCC Staff. "How the 20th Amendment Made Lame-Duck Sessions Less Lame." *The National Constitution Center*, 23 Jan. 2020, constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/blog/how-the-20th-amendment-made-lame-duck-sessions-less-lame.



4. Amadeo, Kimberly. "Lame Ducks: Presidents, Amendments, and Sessions." *The Balance*, 21 June 2019, www.thebalance.com/lame-duck-definition-session-how-it-got-its-name-3306307.