



## WHICH BODY IS IT? TEXAS LEGISLATURE

**Learning Objectives:** The students will...

1. Compare and contrast the two houses of the Texas Legislature.

**TEKS:** 7.14A

**Materials:** Which Body Is It Cards, Which Body Is It Chart.

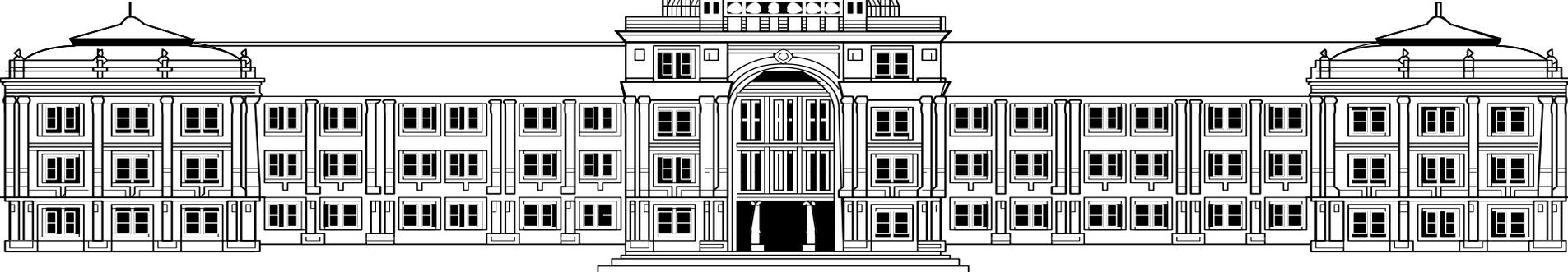
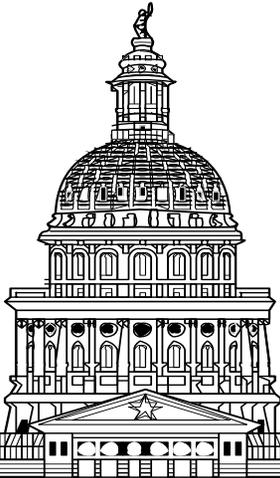
**Vocabulary:** term, bicameral, biennially, session

**Teaching Strategy:**

1. Use this activity as the introduction to the differences and the similarities of the two houses of the Texas Legislature.
2. Give each student a copy of the Which Body Is It chart provided.
3. During your introduction of the Texas Legislature, have the students take notes by listing characteristics of each body and characteristics they share on the chart.
4. After your presentation, give each pair of students a set of cards. Have students divide the cards into three categories:
  - a. Cards representing the Texas House of Representatives
  - b. Cards representing the Texas Senate
  - c. Cards that apply to both houses
5. When each group is finished, have them raise their hand, so you can check their cards. If a group after the first check is not correct, have them refer back to their notes to correct their cards. Have the first group to get the cards in the correct order, read the answers out so that the other groups can arrange their cards correctly. Students should complete notes on their chart. Blank cards are provided for additional questions.
6. After completing the exercise, have the students individually complete the following writing assignment: Using your chart, write a paragraph that includes three sentences about characteristics of the Texas House, three sentences about the Texas Senate, and a one sentence summary about the Texas legislature as a whole.

TEXAS SENATE

TEXAS HOUSE



TEXAS LEGISLATURE

## Which Body Is It Cards



Age 21



Age 26



U.S. Citizen



Qualified voter



Resident of Texas for two  
years before election.



Resident of Texas for five  
years before election.



Resident of district for  
one year.



Meets for 140 days.



Two year term (all  
elected at the same  
time)



Four year term  
(staggered terms with  
1/2 elected every two  
years)



150 Members



31 Members



Session begins on the  
second Tuesday in  
January



Biennially (every other  
year) in odd-numbered  
years only.



Presiding Officer is a  
member of this body



Presiding Officer is not a  
member of this body



Presiding Officer is  
chosen by this body



Presiding Officer is not  
chosen by this body



TEXAS HOUSE



SHARE



TEXAS SENATE



## Which Body Is It Cards—Teacher Key



TEXAS HOUSE



SHARE



TEXAS SENATE



Age 21



U.S. Citizen



Age 26



Resident of Texas for two years before election.



Qualified voter



Resident of Texas for five years before election.



Two year term (all elected at the same time)



Resident of district for one year.



Four year term (staggered terms with 1/2 elected every two years)



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Presiding Officer is not chosen by this body