

# CRASH COURSE: GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

## EPISODE 6: CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

1. According to the host, the elections that are supposed to matter the most are when the nation elects ----.
2. What percentage of the House of Representatives is up for election every two years? What percentage of the Senate is up for election every two years?
3. Which organizations mostly determine the rules of elections, including the times the polls open and how voters will be registered?
4. What determines the number of Congressional districts a state will be broken up into?
5. Which elections are "super important" due to gerrymandering, which will be explained later?
6. Name two common characteristics of a "good candidate."
7. In 2012, how much did each candidate for Senate spend on his or her campaign, on average?
8. What is an incumbent?
9. What is the "franking privilege?"
10. What three "electoral connection" activities did David Mayhew identify as used by Congressmen hoping to get re-elected?

### Extra Credit or Discussion Question

- Do states sometimes misuse their power to organize elections? What would motivate them to manipulate the rules one way or another?
- Is spending on elections out of control? What negative impacts are caused by elections being so expensive?
- Incumbents use the franking privilege to keep their constituents informed, but this very use gives them an advantage in elections. How could this problem be fixed?
- Look for recent news articles about Senators or Representatives. What actions taken by either can be identified as advertising, credit claiming, or position taking?