

**THE OFFICIAL**  
**Legislative Activity Book**  
**of the**  
**California State Senate**



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# California State Senate

SENATOR

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Dear Student:

This activity book was created as a fun introduction to the California State Legislature.

The California Legislature has two houses – the Senate and the Assembly. Both are located in the California State Capitol in Sacramento.

When the Legislature is not working in Sacramento, the Senators go home to their districts to meet with their constituents. Constituents are the people – men, women and children – who live in the district.

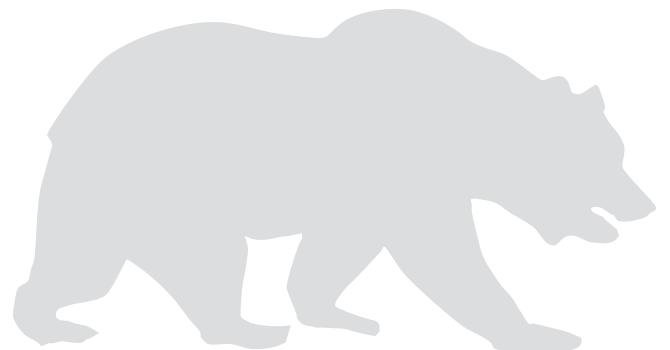
There are more than 37 million people living in California. That’s a lot of people to represent! California is divided into legislative districts – 40 Senate and 80 Assembly. There are 40 Senators, each representing about 931,349 people, and 80 Assembly Members, who each represent about 465,675 people.

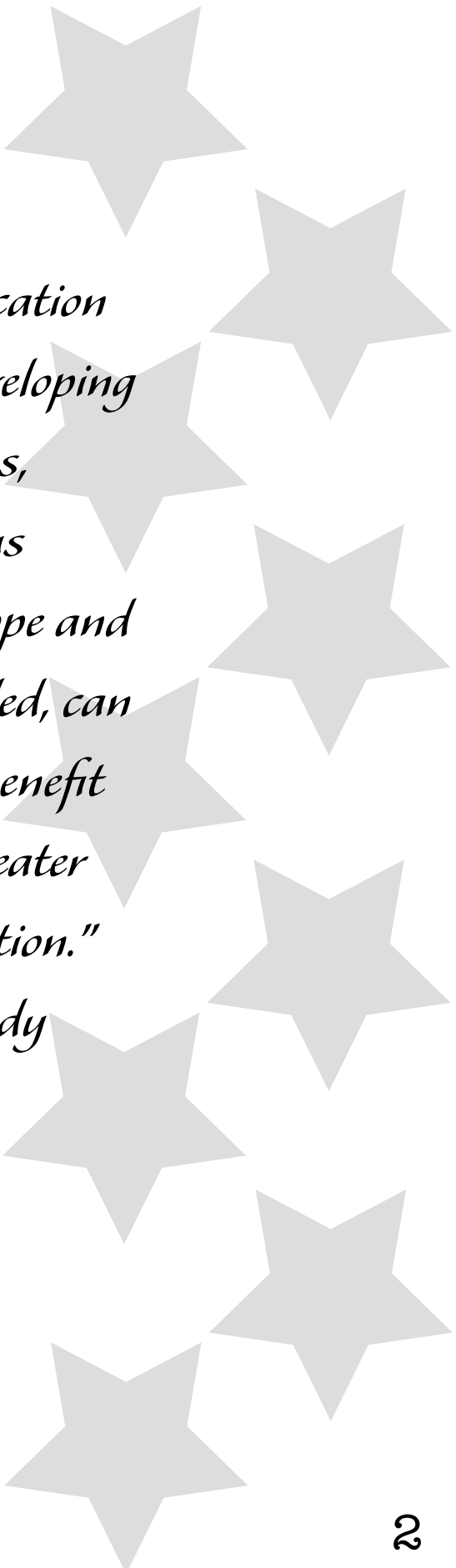
The legislative or “lawmaking” process begins with an idea. Ideas can come from anyone, including you! If you have an idea for a new law, you can write it down and present it to your Senator and ask him or her to write a new piece of legislation, or what is also referred to as a “bill.”

When all of the Senators meet on the floor of the Senate to vote on a bill, it is called “Floor Session.” Senators use a voice vote. When their names are called, they answer “Aye” for yes, or “No.” Assembly Members vote by pressing a button at their desks.

A lot can happen to a bill while it goes through the process. To make sure things go smoothly, each house elects a leader. The Senate elects a President pro Tempore and the Assembly elects a Speaker.

This should give you a head start with this activity booklet. Use the information from this page to start the first game. Have fun!



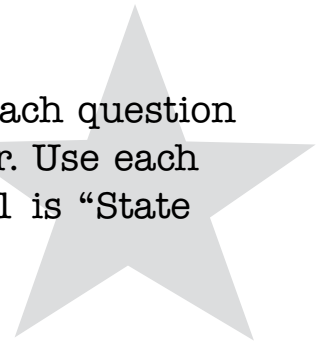


*“Let us think of education  
as the means of developing  
our greatest abilities,  
because in each of us  
there is a private hope and  
dream which, fulfilled, can  
be translated into benefit  
for everyone and greater  
strength for our nation.”*

*John F. Kennedy*

# Fill in the Blank

Based on the information on the previous pages, answer each question by filling in the blank with the letter of the correct answer. Use each answer just once. To get started, the answer to question #1 is “State laws,” so fill in the letter “C.”



1. The Legislature is the group of people that make \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The Legislature meets in our State Capitol in the city of \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Each Senate District has about \_\_\_\_\_ people.
4. The Legislature is divided into two parts: the Senate and the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Each Assembly District has about \_\_\_\_\_ people.
6. It is the job of the Senate and Assembly to \_\_\_\_\_.
7. There are \_\_\_\_\_ Senators in California.
8. There are \_\_\_\_\_ Assembly Members in California.
9. Senators vote using their \_\_\_\_\_.
10. When the entire Senate meets, they are in Floor \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Legislators can introduce \_\_\_\_\_ that may become laws.
12. The leader of the Senate is called the \_\_\_\_\_.
13. People who live in the Senator’s district are \_\_\_\_\_.
14. When Senators are not working in Sacramento they return to their \_\_\_\_\_.
15. There are more than \_\_\_\_\_ people living in California.

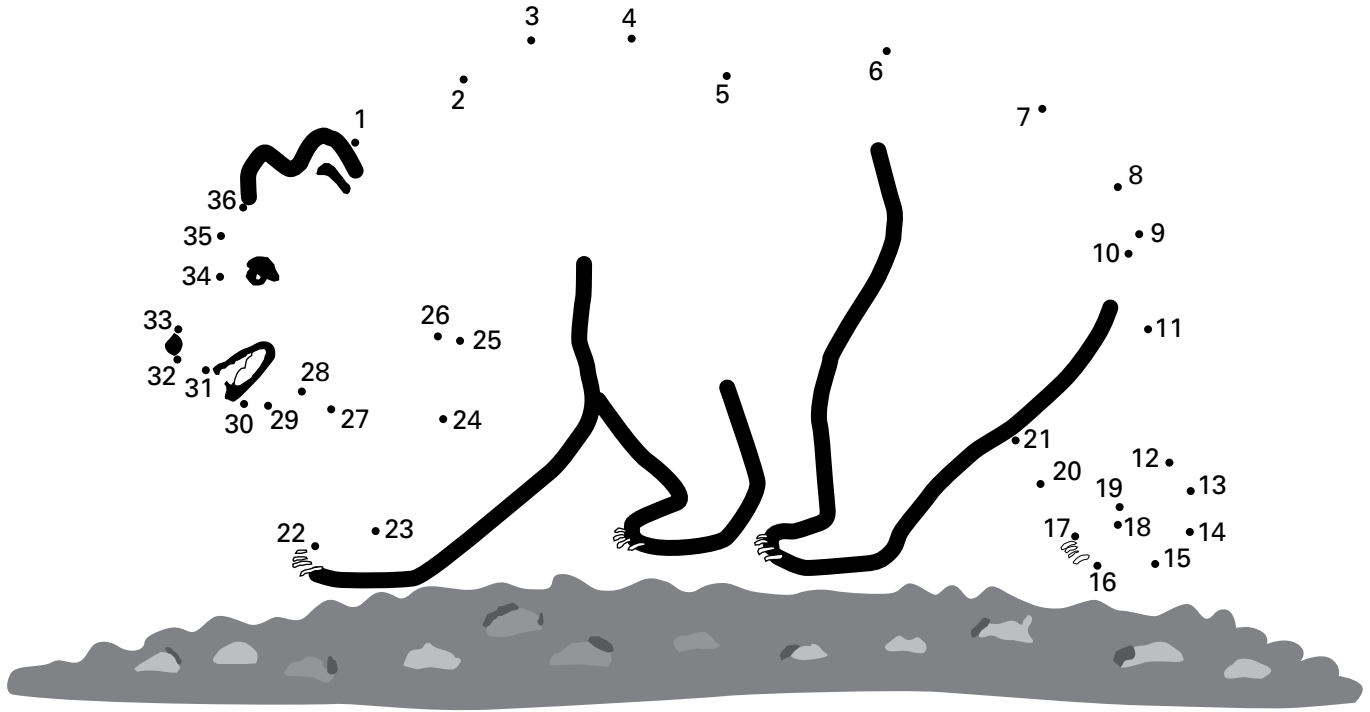
# CALIFORNI

- |                      |                        |                                 |
|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>A.</b> voice      | <b>F.</b> constituents | <b>K.</b> President pro Tempore |
| <b>B.</b> 931,349    | <b>G.</b> bills        | <b>L.</b> 40                    |
| <b>C.</b> State laws | <b>H.</b> Sacramento   | <b>M.</b> Session               |
| <b>D.</b> 37 million | <b>I.</b> 465,675      | <b>N.</b> pass laws             |
| <b>E.</b> 80         | <b>J.</b> districts    | <b>O.</b> Assembly              |

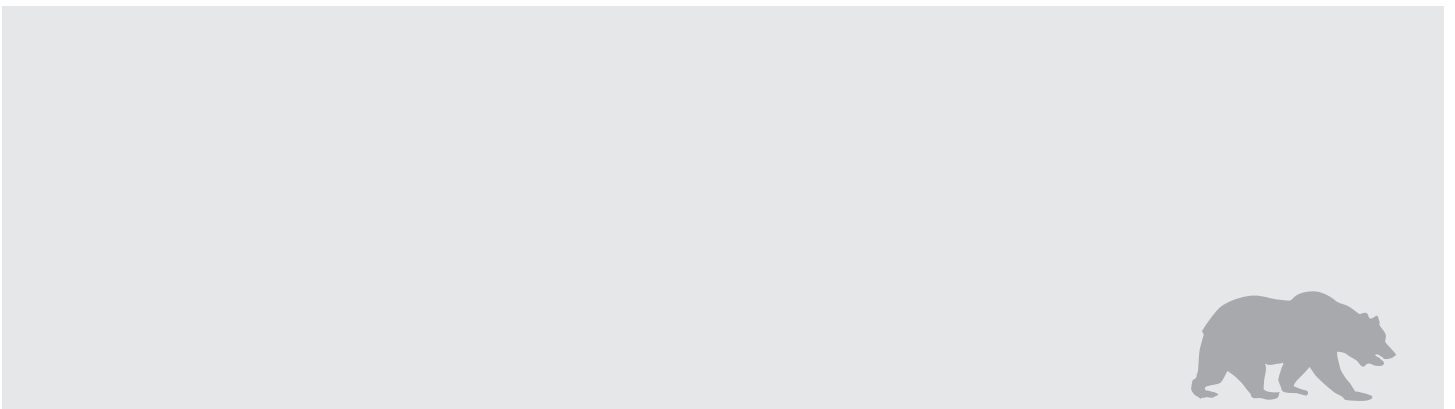
1. C 2. H 3. B 4. O 5. I 6. N 7. L 8. E 9. A 10. M 11. G 12. K 13. F 14. J 15. D

# Connect the Numbers to Find the Hidden Picture

Connect the numbers 1 to 21. Pick up your pencil and start again at number 22, finish connecting to number 30, pick up your pencil again, and begin at number 31 drawing to the end, number 36.



# A REPUBLIC

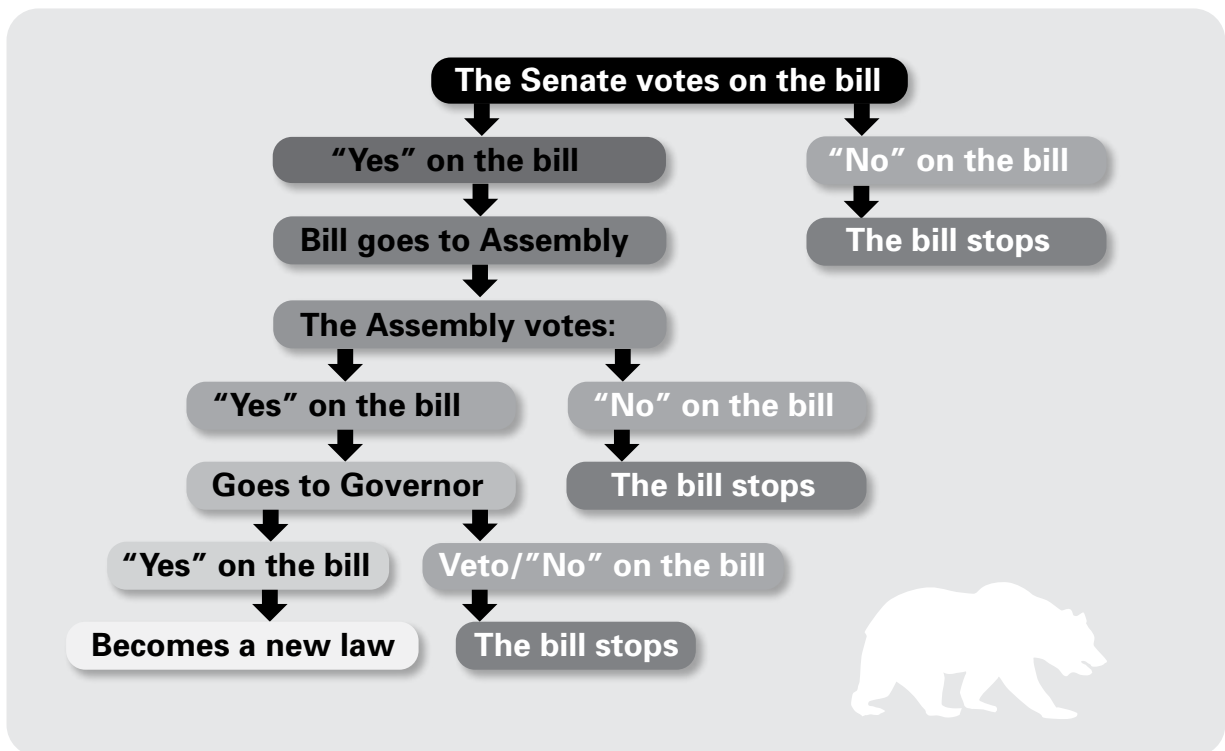




# How a Bill Becomes a Law

Read below to learn how an idea, called a “bill,” actually becomes a law. Sometimes there are even more steps, but these are the main ones.

1. The Senators get together on the Senate Floor and talk about whether or not they think the bill is a good idea. Then everyone gets to vote. Senators say their vote out loud. When their names are called, they answer “Aye” (yes) or “No” and then their votes are announced. Most bills need a majority vote to pass. So with 40 Senators, it takes 21 votes to pass a bill. A bill that raises taxes needs a 2/3 vote (27 Senators) to pass.
2. If the bill passes out of the Senate, it then goes to the Assembly and they get to vote on it. Since there are 80 Assembly Members, it takes 41 votes to pass a bill out of the Assembly.
3. There is one step left. The Governor of California has the last word, and he gets to decide whether or not the bill actually becomes a law.
  - If the Governor doesn’t like the bill, he says “No,” which is called a veto. A veto means the bill will not become a law.
  - If the Governor approves the bill, he can say “Yes” by signing it, and the bill becomes a law. The Governor can also choose to do nothing for 30 days, in which case the bill automatically becomes a law.



# Write a New Bill idea

The most exciting thing about California’s state government is that everyone can be involved in making laws. Ideas for new bills can come from anyone, even from students. New laws help solve problems in the community, such as pollution and traffic problems.

Now try and think of a bill idea that will make a difference in your community and make California a better place to live.

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# The Great Seal of The State of California

Why does California have a seal? The Great Seal is like a team logo. It identifies people that live here as being part of the community called California. California's seal was adopted way back in 1849.

The Great Seal is more than just a beautiful picture. Everything in the seal has a special meaning. Find each one of the things that the designers of the seal wanted people to know about California.

- There are 31 stars in the sky, because California was the 31st state to be admitted to the Union.
- Right under the 31 stars is the Greek word "Eureka." It means "I have found it." It refers to the gold that people found in California and to the new state that people had found.
- In the foreground is the grizzly bear, which was common in California, with a sheaf of wheat on the ground, to be crushed into flour for bread.
- The California Gold Rush started in 1848 and a miner can be seen swinging his pick. Beside him are a rocker and bowl used for panning gold.
- Ships that fill the harbor are symbols of the exports of gold and other exciting new things that would be found in California and shipped from the new state.
- The person holding a staff is the Roman Goddess Minerva, the goddess of wisdom, commerce and crafts, and the inventor of music.

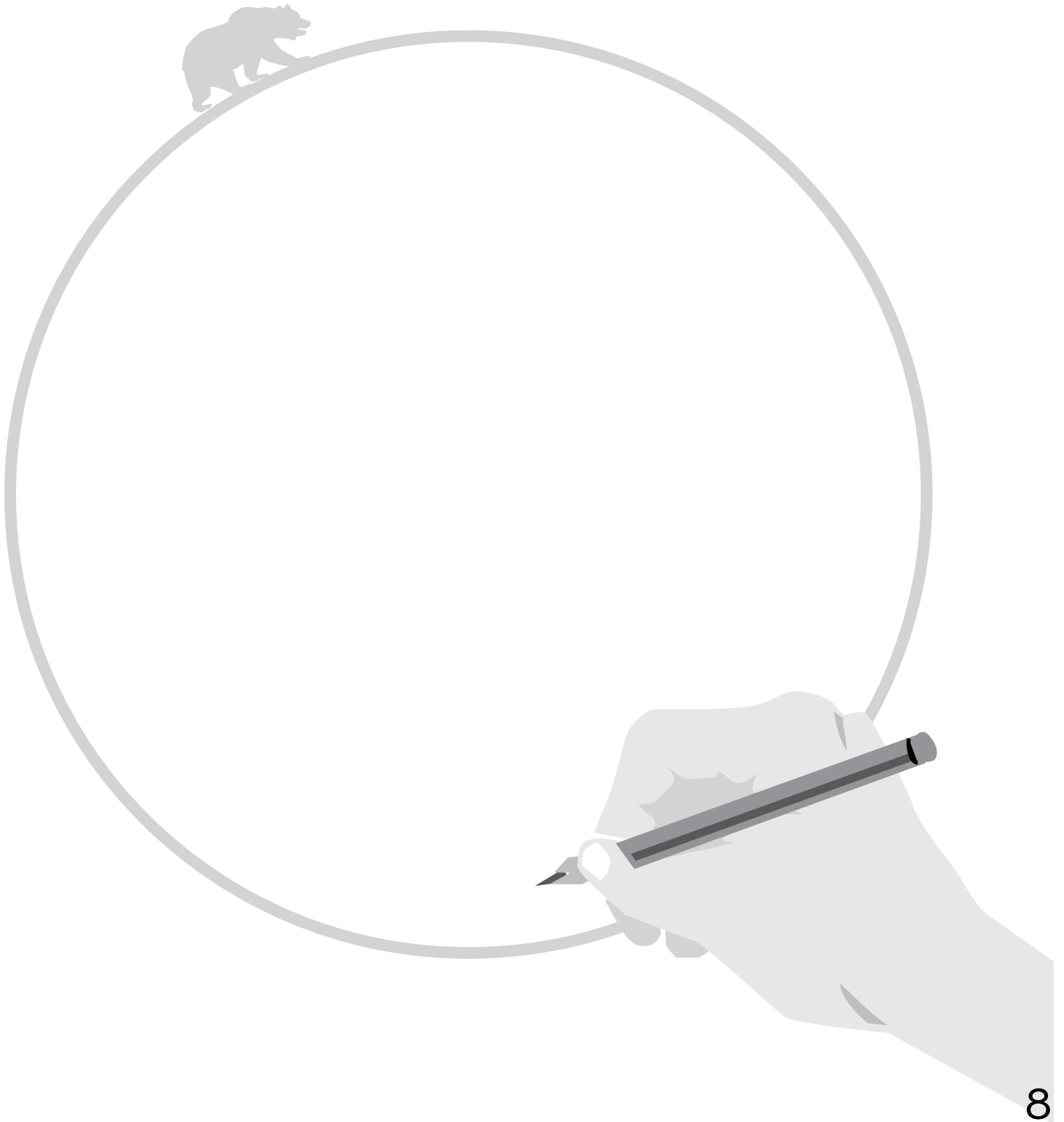




# Draw a New Great Seal

Over the years, California has changed because of the growth in population and technology. If the Great Seal was designed today, it would probably look very different. What types of things represent California today? What would a new Great Seal tell people about California?

Draw a new Great Seal that shows the things that make California special today.



# Word Search & Jumble

Find the words from the word bank in the puzzle. They may be vertical, horizontal, diagonal, upside down or backwards.

A word search puzzle grid with a faint map of California overlaid. The grid contains the following letters:

S	S	N	E	U	R	E	K	A	A	S	L
O	E	F	L	G	A	L	E	G	V	O	E
T	N	S	T	A	T	E	S	E	A	L	G
N	A	L	A	B	I	L	B	I	L	L	I
E	T	A	E	T	R	E	N	D	E	M	S
M	E	W	C	A	E	R	P	I	T	O	L
A	V	O	T	E	O	V	O	T	V	O	A
R	S	E	A	F	L	A	G	O	L	F	T
C	A	P	I	T	O	L	C	A	L	I	U
A	D	L	O	G	O	V	E	R	N	O	R
S	A	S	S	E	M	B	L	Y	V	T	E
C	A	P	L	A	V	I	T	E	S	R	V



**Word Bank:** SENATE, EUREKA, LAW, STATE SEAL, BILL, FLAG, LEGISLATURE, VOTE, CALIFORNIA, GOLDU, SACRAMENTO, CAPITOLU, GOVERNOR, ASSEMBLY

Fill in the spaces below with the underlined letters from the word bank. Then unscramble them to find out the names of California's state colors!

\_\_\_\_\_

California's state colors are: \_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_

# Your State Representatives

Many constituents write letters and call their state representatives to talk about issues.

Find out who the representatives for your community are and how they can be reached.

## California State Officers

### Governor:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### State Senator:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### State Assembly Member:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Tip: State officials can be found at:

- **the front section of the phone book;**
- the California State Government website: **[www.ca.gov](http://www.ca.gov)**;
- the California State Senate website: **[www.senate.ca.gov](http://www.senate.ca.gov)**; and
- the California State Assembly website: **[www.assembly.ca.gov](http://www.assembly.ca.gov)**.





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