

**Mr. Smith Goes to Washington** starring Jimmy Stewart as Mr. Smith; directed by Frank Capra 1939

**major characters:** **Jefferson Smith**--he goes to Washington to become a Senator

**Senator Joseph Paine** (“the silver knight”)--other Senator from Smith’s home state

**Susan**—Paine’s daughter

“**Boss**” **Jim Taylor** – mogul back in Smith’s home state

**Chick McGann**--Taylor’s henchman

(**Clarissa**) **Saunders**--Smith’s secretary in Washington (previously worked for Paine)

**Diz Moore**--a drunkish reporter who is Saunder’s friend

Terms: deficiency bill, convene, quorum, Willet Creek (Dam), filibuster

**Questions, Part I: Mr. Smith is introduced**

1. How does Smith become Senator (who chose/why)? Do you think Smith is a good selection?
2. What role does Taylor play in politics? Why does he care who becomes the new Senator?
3. *What are the plans for Willet Creek??*
4. How does the press in Washington DC manipulate views of Smith?

**Questions, Part II: Mr. Smith gets acquainted**

1. Why does Smith want to review the bills in/of the Senate?
2. Why does Paine encourage Smith’s idea of a boy’s camp?
- 3..\*\*SEE/ANSWER QUESTIONS ON HANDOUT! (please write out with questions)

**Questions, Part III: Mr. Smith learns a lesson**

1. What does Paine accuse Smith of doing? Why?
2. Why does Taylor come to Washington?
3. How does Paine explain his relationship with Taylor to Smith? What is your opinion of the relationship Paine has formed with Taylor?
4. Describe what occurred during the Privileges and Elections Committee hearing.

**Questions, Part IV: Mr. Smith teaches a lesson**

1. What tactic does Smith use towards the end of the movie? What is your opinion of this special right of Senators?

IN ADDITION TO THE QUESTIONS, IN A FEW PARAGRAPHS, PLEASE ANSWER:

*What parallels can be drawn from this movie to today? What is your opinion of the movie and do you think it is a worthwhile movie to show to government classes?* EXPLAIN YOUR REASONING THOROUGHLY.

**Bonus:** A. How is the Willet Creek Dam Project an example of an earmark?

B. How can an individual Congressman or Senator influence lawmaking through the Committee system?

Please turn in all questions TOGETHER when the movie is over.....this assignment counts as a QUIZ.