

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? 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. What is the "pet project" that Mr. Smith tells the press he would like to pursue?
 5. How does the press 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. Describe the process of writing and passing a bill, as explained by Ms. Saunders.
4. Why does Mr. Smith's bill create such a stir when he presents it?

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?

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?

You are responsible for answering all of these questions.

SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT: To what extent is the plot of *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington* still relevant today?

You must make a SPECIFIC CLAIM, which will serve as the THESIS for your paper. And of course, your claim must be substantiated with EVIDENCE. All evidence used must be properly cited!!

Stay tuned for more specifics (due date, length, # of sources, etc)!!