

Essay Chunk #1: THE MEMBER OF CONGRESS PROFILE

Now that you know which member of Congress you will be researching for the argumentative essay and playing in CongressSim, it's time to find out all you can about them through research.

- The member's personal background** (age, race, gender, political party, religion, education, occupation before being elected to office, where they are from, etc.; you can find their net worth on crowdpac.com under "Fast Five" (at the bottom of the member's page on the site))

--	--

SUMMARY, REFLECTION, or ANALYSIS:

- ❑ **The location, size and population demographics of the member's state** (if a Senator) or their congressional district (if a Representative in the House); try to get a breakdown of party registration for their state (Senator) or district (Representative) - i.e., what percentage of voters are Republican and what percentage are Democrats?

--	--

SUMMARY, REFLECTION, or ANALYSIS:

- ❑ **The main industry (or industries) - and main employers - within the member's state (Senator) or district (Representative)** - how do the member's constituents make their living? How might this affect the member's vote on issues related to those industries?

--	--

SUMMARY, REFLECTION, or ANALYSIS:

❑ **The member's primary concerns and issue positions** (use govtrack.us to find main issue areas in which they sponsor or cosponsor bills: Search for member by name > scroll down to "Bills Sponsored" > look at "Issue Areas"; use www.crowdpac.com to determine the member's position on key issues that may be related to the bill you choose - search for the member's name > scroll down right hand side to "On the Issues" > click on "See all issues" > Look to find your member's Crowdpac ranking on an issue and how that compares to other members of their same party). **Where does the member fit on the political spectrum (from left to right), in terms of ideology** (see Govtrack and Crowdpac scores)?

--	--

SUMMARY, REFLECTION, or ANALYSIS:

The member's leadership positions (including Majority Leader, Minority Leader, Committee or subcommittee chair, ranking member of a committee), **their length of service in Congress (and in their current chamber) and any information you can find about their relationship with their party** (how often do they vote the "party line," for instance)? **Do they have a Leadership PAC?** (If yes, how much money do they have raised for it right now - see opensecrets.org to find out)

--	--

SUMMARY, REFLECTION, or ANALYSIS:

❑ **The circumstances of their last election** (when were they last re-elected? Whom did they defeat? by what margin?) **and the next one** (when is their next election? Is anyone from their party running against them in the primary election for the party's nomination? Is there any polling data on that race yet? Will they be facing a serious challenge from a significant politician of the opposing party?)

--	--

SUMMARY, REFLECTION, or ANALYSIS:

❑ How much money have they raised for their next election challenge? How much cash do they have on hand? Which interest groups, companies or individuals are their biggest campaign donors (and what are the amounts)? (You can find all this information - and more - on opensecrets.org)

--	--

SUMMARY, REFLECTION, or ANALYSIS:

Citing Sources

These three web sites will get you started. Because there are so many connected pages from which you will gather information and because you and I are already familiar with them, it is okay to simply list the site as indicated below. But if you find new sites and articles, that will not be the case (see the examples below, or the links to the MLA guidelines on the History Haus).

GOVTRACK

Works Cited page listing:

Govtrack. Civic Impulse, LLC. 2015. <<https://www.govtrack.us>>

Example of parenthetical citation: Wyden is on the left side of the political spectrum, about in the middle of the Democrats in the Senate (Govtrack).

OPEN SECRETS

Works Cited page listing:

Open Secrets. Center for Responsive Politics. 2015. <www.opensecrets.org>

Example of parenthetical citation: Wyden had \$5.6 million cash on hand as of Sept. 30, 2015 (Open Secrets).

CROWDPAC

Works Cited page listing:

Crowdpac. Crowdpac. 2015. <<https://www.crowdpac.com>>

Example of parenthetical citation: Senator Wyden is up for re-election in 2016. So far, one Democrat has indicated an intention to run against him for the Democratic nomination - Medford city councilor Kevin Stine (Crowdpac).

What if you find a news article?

Here is the sequence of information you are looking to include on the Works Cited page:

Author's last name, author's first name. "Title of article (look for headline)." Name of web site or publication. Name of publisher (look at the bottom of the web site, possibly next to copyright information). Date of publication (look at top and bottom of article, and then at bottom of web page, next to copyright information; take the most recent date). <Full web address for the page>.

Example:

Alcari, Deborah. "Why the Economy Won't Decide the Vermont Senate Election." FiveThirtyEight. ESPN. October 16, 2015.
<fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-the-economy-will-not-decide-the-Vermont-Senate-Election>

What if you find another source and don't know how to cite it?

Check the History Haus links for MLA citations on the Unit 2 page or ask me. We'll figure it out.