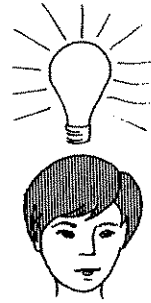
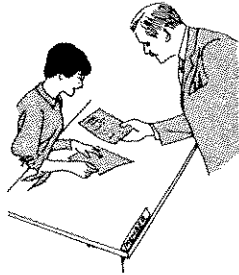


1.



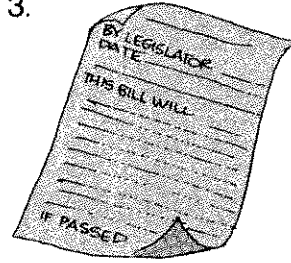
Someone comes up with an idea for a law.

2.



A legislator agrees to author the idea and take it through the official steps.

3.



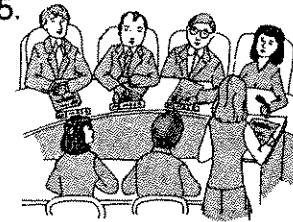
Lawyers who work for the legislators write the idea into legal language. The written idea is now called a bill.

4.



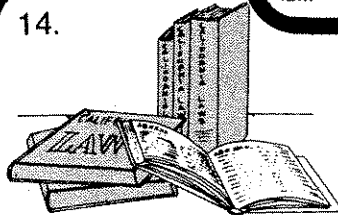
The bill is taken to the Assembly or the Senate, which can also be called a house. The title is read and the bill is given a number. Every bill number begins with AB or SB to show which house it started in.

5.



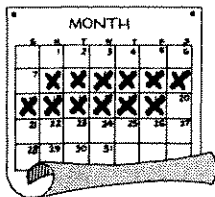
The bill then goes to a committee. A committee is a group of legislators who study the bill. They have meetings which people can attend and tell how they feel about the bill.

14.



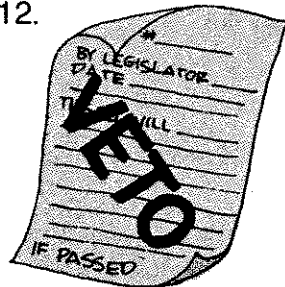
And finally, the bill becomes a law for the State of California. Most laws take effect on the first day of the following year.

13.



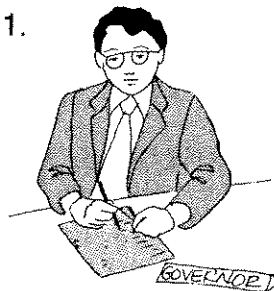
... the governor can choose not to sign or to veto it. After 12 days the bill becomes law without the governor's signature.

12.



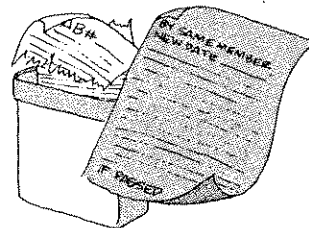
... veto it, which means reject it, or ...

11.



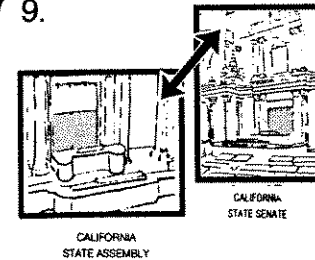
Bills which have passed in both houses go to the governor. The governor can sign the bill into law or ...

10.



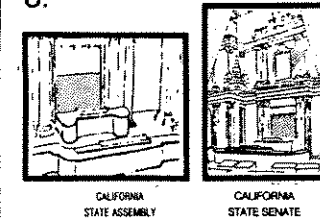
If the bill does not get the number of votes it needs from each house, it dies. It can be started again from the beginning at another time.

9.



If a bill gets enough votes to pass in the house where it started, it goes to the other house for committee and the rest of the steps.

8.



Senate bills are returned from committee to the Senate for debate and vote. Assembly bills go back to the Assembly for debate and vote. Debate is a discussion about the bill.

THE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS: HOW AN IDEA BECOMES A LAW

The official steps are more complicated, but this chart shows the basic steps.

A rule: tells us what we can or cannot do.

A state law is: a rule that all people in California must follow.

Laws are made by: legislators.

There are two groups, or houses, of legislators in California: Senators and Assemblymembers. An idea must be approved by both groups of legislators before it can go to the governor.

Ideas for laws: can come from anyone, any age, but a bill can only be taken through the official steps by a legislator.

A bill is: an idea for a law after it has been written into legal language.

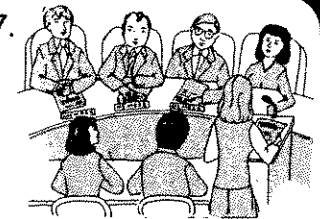
PREPARED FOR 4TH THROUGH 8TH GRADE STUDENTS BY THE STATE CAPITOL MUSEUM TOUR OFFICE, STATE CAPITOL, ROOM B27, SACRAMENTO, CA 95814

6.



Anyone, any age, can let the legislators know what they think about bills by writing letters or by telephoning them at their capitol or community offices.

7.



If the committee recommends that the bill be passed, it goes back to the Assembly or the Senate for their vote.