

## One Kid, One Vote

### Young Campers Want D.C. To Have Spots in Congress

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Noura Jaber wore a T-shirt that protested "Taxation Without Representation." She carried signs in a rally in Lafayette Square across from the White House. She sang protest songs.

Noura is just like millions of Americans who have come to Washington over the years to demand change in the nation's capital. Except that Noura is 8 years old, her rally featured cookies with American flags on them and her protest song was to the tune of "Do You Know the Muffin Man?"



D.C. kids, from left, Eliana Kanefield, Zoe Malhotra and Hannah Smulson, rally 'round the flag.

Noura was part of a group of about 10 kids from the D.C. Young Suffragists Camp who rallied for D.C. voting rights last week. The campers, ages 5 to 12, spent two weeks learning about what it means to vote and why the District has different representation in Congress than the 50 states.

When the campers sang "Do You Have a Senator?" (to the tune of "Muffin Man"), they knew the answer. No.

The District of Columbia is the home of the federal government, but is not a state. That's the way the founding fathers wanted it when they formed the country and made Washington its capital. But that means that while people who live in the District help pay for the federal government (in the form of taxes), they don't have representatives in Congress to vote for them. That is the meaning of the "Taxation Without Representation" license plate on some cars.

"I think everyone deserves equal rights, and Washingtonians don't exactly have equal rights," Noura said. The campers first learned about D.C. voting rights when they visited the Sewall-Belmont House, home of the National Women's Party, and a museum dedicated to the women's suffrage (voting) movement. The kids learned that women had to fight for the right to vote. (Women gained the right to vote in 1920 with the 19th Amendment to the Constitution.)

The next stop for the suffragists was DC Vote, an organization created to promote voting rights for Washington.

"There were people there telling us why D.C. doesn't have a senator, and why D.C. deserves a senator even though it isn't a state," said Eliana Kanefield, 8.

After learning about voting in the District, the campers got to go where the action is – Congress. Wearing their official camp T-shirts with the "Taxation Without Representation" symbol on the front and their own slogans on the back, the campers marched up the steps of the Capitol and went into the office of Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton. She is elected to the House of Representatives and can work on laws but cannot vote on legislation in the House.

"She said she wanted all the kids in D.C. before they turned 18 to go to Congress," said Eliana. "It was really exciting. I loved the walls in the building." Campers also met with Sen. James M. Jeffords of Vermont.

At the rally last Friday, Noura helped carry a D.C. flag. She also cheered, "What do we want? Senators! When do we want it? Now!" She knows that her voice needs to be heard.

Then Noura took a break to enjoy one of the flag cookies. Protesting sure can make you hungry.

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

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### One Kid, One Vote

#### Reading Comprehension & Interpretation

After carefully reading over the article, review the following questions and answer in the space provided.

1. Is Washington, DC a state?

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2. Do people in the District pay federal taxes?

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3. Do DC residents have Representatives in Congress to vote for them?

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4. What does "Taxation Without Representation" mean?

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5. Do people who live in Washington, DC, have the same rights as people who live in Virginia? How are they the same? How are they different?

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6. What is the Sewall-Belmont House?

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7. What amendment to the U.S. Constitution gave women the right to vote?  
What year was it passed?

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8. Who are the Young Suffragists? What do they want to achieve?

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9. Who is Eleanor Holmes Norton?

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10. What can Eleanor Holmes Norton do in Congress? What is she not allowed to do?

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