

The Watergate Investigation

For use with the Levin Center for Oversight and Democracy's [Oversight Snapshots](#).

Comprehension Questions

- 1) What happened at the Democratic National Committee Headquarters in 1972?

- 2) Why was the testimony of John Dean a turning point during the Watergate Hearings?

- 3) Explain Executive Privilege. Why is it significant in the Watergate hearing?

- 4) What happened during President Nixon's Impeachment hearings?

Discussion Questions

1. What role did the media play in the breaking of the Watergate story?
2. Explain your opinion on executive privilege. Are there circumstances that a President should be allowed to protect information? What are they?
3. Name one short term and one long term outcome of the Watergate scandal and following investigation.
4. In your opinion, why was President Nixon pardoned so quickly by President Ford? Did he deserve it?



The Watergate Investigation TEACHER FACING

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Comprehension Questions

1) What happened at the Democratic National Committee Headquarters in 1972?

Answer: A series of two break-ins at the DNC Headquarters were performed. The people were arrested while attempting to steal documents and wiretap the phones. It would be later found out that these people were directed by the Committee to Re-Elect the President (CREEP) working for President Nixon.

2) Why was the testimony of John Dean a turning point during the Watergate Hearings?

Answer: John Dean, who served President Nixon as White House counsel, admitted to laundering money, lying under oath, and knowing that President Nixon was involved with the Watergate break-in. This was a turning point because not only was he the first witness to admit the President's involvement, but his testimony was aired live on TV.

3) Explain Executive Privilege. Why is it significant in the Watergate hearing?

Answer: Executive Privilege is the ability of the US President to withhold certain confidential information from the legislative and judicial branches and the public. This privilege has been upheld through several Supreme Court cases but usually has to do with withholding information on matters of national security. This issue was significant during the Watergate hearing because President Nixon claimed Executive Privilege to try and avoid admitting he had committed crimes, rather than to protect the national interest.

4) What happened during President Nixon's Impeachment hearings?

Answer: Following a bipartisan meeting of the House Judiciary Committee, three articles of impeachment were approved and sent to the House for a vote. However, they never received a full vote by membership because President Nixon resigned on August 8, 1974. One month later, President Ford issued President Nixon a pardon.

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