

Unit Designed by: Ashley Rolph

Subject/Topic Area(s): The Judicial System

Grade Level(s): 9th Grade

Unit Title: The Judicial System

Time Frame: 2 weeks

Brief Summary of the Unit (including curricular context and unit goals):

This unit will build on students understanding of the 3 branches of government. Through a deeper examination of the court system, students will be better informed on how law and justice are enacted in the United States. Further, by talking with a judge and participating in a mock trial, students will feel more connected with the judicial system.

Desired Results

Established Goals, EALR's:

Civics:

1.1.3a Explain key concepts found within foundational documents and evaluate their impact on the contemporary U.S. political system.

1.1.3b Analyze how specific rights guaranteed by the Constitution can be modified as the Constitution remains open to change and interpretation.

2.1.3b Analyze problems and solutions related to the distribution of power between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government.

2.2.3 Explain how the Constitution is maintained as the supreme law of the land and how it is changed or amended

2.3.3c Analyze and explain how citizens can influence governments through voting, lobbying, protecting, revolution

Economics

1.1.3b Analyze how choices made by groups and individuals can impose costs on others.

2.2.3b Predict how a change in a law or custom could affect production, distribution, or consumption of a good or service.

What understandings are desired?

Students will understand that:

- The United States Constitution establishes three distinct branches of government.
- The three branches of government are constructed to check and balance each other.
- The court system is complex and consists of three separate court systems, the District, Appellate, and Supreme Court
- Individuals can voice their rights through the Judicial branch.
- The Supreme Court interprets the Constitution and rules based on how they interpret the Constitution.

What essential questions will be considered?

- Why did the framers of the Constitution separate the branches of the government?
- How are individuals affected by the judicial system?
- Are there adequate means for citizens to have their voices heard in the courts?
- Could there be other methods for having fair and impartial judgments passed on individuals?

Course Sequence**Previous Unit Topic and Key Understandings**

Students will have previously completed a unit on the legislative branch of government. This unit has developed the ideas of representation, political parties, the House of Representatives, the Senate, etc. Students will understand how elected officials make and enact laws and how citizens play a role in this process.

Next Unit Topic and Key Understandings

The next unit students will encounter is “The Executive Branch of Government.” This unit will explore the role of the president in a democracy. By examining the Executive branch, students will understand further how representative democracies work and how the previous two units all come together in the three branches of government.

What prerequisite knowledge is required of learners at beginning of unit:

<p><i>Students must know:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the Legislative branch of government works. • How the United States government was formed. • A basic knowledge of other forms of governmental systems 	<p><i>Students must be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a well reasoned short research paper. • Be able to find credible sources and summarize the main points of a source. • Cite properly in a research paper
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What key knowledge and skills will students acquire as a result of this unit?

<p><i>Students will know:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the Judicial branch of government works • How individuals are affected by the courts • The distinction between the three court system • What role the judicial branch plays in government. 	<p><i>Students will be able to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a well reasoned research paper on the Judicial branch of government. • Perform a rehearsed speech in front of their classmates • Understand historical court cases and interpret their meaning for society.
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What Evidence Will Show That Students Understand?

Include a copy of all quizzes, tests, prompts and rubrics.

1. List all Performance Tasks (Complete a *Performance Task Blueprint* for each task)

Students will be asked to write a 2 page paper on the Judicial branch of government and choose a Supreme court case which interests them. They will be asked how that case was meaningful/influential in history and what it means for individuals today.

Students will also participate in a mock trial. Each student will be assigned a role to play and will need to research the part. Ex: If a student is to play a lawyer, they will need to understand what the role of a lawyer is and what they do in a trial. If a student is to be a jury member, they will need to research the role of juries and be prepared to fulfill this role.

2. List all Other Evidence (quizzes, tests, prompts, observations, dialogues, work samples, etc)

Students will be required to take 2 vocabulary quizzes, participate in a dialogue with the teacher after mock trial, and write one observation from their mock trial experience.

3. List Student Self-Assessment and Reflection Tasks:

Students will be asked to write one self-reflection/ observation on their experience in the Mock Trial. This will be roughly a 1 page typed assessment of what they learned from the simulation and how they will use this knowledge in the future.

Performance Task Blueprint 1: Mock Trial

Which understandings/goals will be assessed through this task?

This performance task will be assessing students understandings of:

- How individuals affected by the judicial system?
- Are there adequate means for citizens to have their voices heard in the courts?
- Could there be other methods for having fair and impartial judgments passed on individuals?

Additionally, the mock trial performance task will address the following EALR's:

Civics: 1.1.3b, 2.1.3b, 2.2.3,2.3.3c Economics: 1.1.3b

How will students use information to demonstrate understanding?

Explain... how the Judicial branch of government works.

Interpret... laws and what those laws mean for citizens today and throughout history.

Empathize with... those who have been victimized and need the courts to enact justice for them.

Overcome the naïve or biased idea that... the judicial branch of government only serves as check and balance for the federal government and has little to do with individual rights.

Reflect on... how I might work to ensure justice for all and learn more about how the judicial branch individual rights.

Through what authentic performance task will students demonstrate understanding?

Task Prompt or Description in GRASPS format: Mock Trial

Goal Your goal is to participate in a Mock Trial. You will need to conduct research and be prepared to participate in this simulation.

Role You will be assigned a role and it is your responsibility to research the role and fully prepare for your part in the trial.

Audience Although this is a simulation of a real trial, you will need to convince your teacher as well as your fellow classmates of your role in this trial. If you are the prosecutor, you will need to persuade the jury of your evidence. If you are a jury member, you will need to deliberate on the evidence and convince the other jury members on how the verdict should go.

Situation The challenge involved in this mock trial, is to be persuasive, know your facts and understand how the courts operate.

Product, Performance and Purpose You will need to develop your character in this mock trial so that you are convincing, persuasive and believable. Your research on your character will be evident through your performance.

Standards and Criteria for Success See rubric for scoring information.

What student products/performances will provide evidence of desired understandings?

Participation in the Mock Trial simulation

By what criteria will student products/performances be evaluated?

Students will be evaluated based on a performance rubric. See attached.

Performance Task Blueprint 2: Research Paper

Which understandings/goals will be assessed through this task?

This performance task will be assessing students understandings of:

- The United States Constitution establishes three distinct branches.
- The three branches of government are constructed to check and balance each other.
- The court system is complex and consists of three separate court systems, the District, Appellate, and Supreme Court
- Why did the framers of the Constitution separate the branches of the government?

Additionally, the mock trial performance task will address the following EALR's:

Civics: 1.1.3a, 1.1.3b, 2.2.3 Economics 2.2.3b

How will students use information to demonstrate understanding?

Explain... how the Judicial branch of government works.

Interpret... one Supreme Court case that is of interest to me and how that case is significant today.

Empathize with... those who have been either positively or negatively affected by a court ruling

Overcome the naïve or biased idea that... laws that are enacted by the Supreme court only pertain to the individual or group who brought the case forward.

Reflect on...how Supreme Court rulings have significant meaning on society and where they have been, or may be influential in your life.

Through what authentic performance task will students demonstrate understanding?

Task Prompt or Description in GRASPS format: Research on Judicial system

Goal Your task is to write a 2 page, well reasoned and research paper on the Judicial system and a Supreme Court case of your choosing. You may pick any case that you feel is important to you.

Role Your job is to spend time researching the Judicial system and to be able to write a concise summary of how it works. Your other job is to select a Supreme Court case that is of interest to you and to analyze what impact it had on society, as well as how it may influence your life.

Audience You need to convince your teacher of how the Judicial system works and why your court case is important to society.

Situation The challenge you face, is to interpret how the Supreme Court case you selected has affect society. This is not as easy as it appears; most cases have much more influence than their face value. You must describe what implications exist.

Product, Performance and Purpose You will need to create a well written, two page research paper using at lest 3 sources.

Standards and Criteria for Success Please see attached writing Rubric.

What student products/performances will provide evidence of desired understandings?

Students will write a short, 2 page research paper on the Judicial branch and select a Supreme Court case which highlights their interests. This will demonstrate their understanding of how the Judicial branch works.

By what criteria will student products/performances be evaluated?

Students will be evaluated using a 6-Trait writing Rubric. The rubric will allow fair and even evaluations while allowing feedback.

Judicial System Research Paper Rubric

Teacher Name: **Ms. Rolph**

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Grammar & Spelling (Conventions)	Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 3-4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes more than 4 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.
Support for Topic (Content)	Relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable.	Supporting details and information are relevant, but one key issue or portion of the storyline is unsupported.	Supporting details and information are relevant, but several key issues or portions of the storyline are unsupported.	Supporting details and information are typically unclear or not related to the topic.
Accuracy of Facts (Content)	All supportive facts are reported accurately.	Almost all supportive facts are reported accurately.	Most supportive facts are reported accurately.	NO facts are reported OR most are inaccurately reported.
Sources (Content)	All sources used for quotes and facts are credible and cited correctly.	All sources used for quotes and facts are credible and most are cited correctly.	Most sources used for quotes and facts are credible and cited correctly.	Many sources used for quotes and facts are less than credible (suspect) and/or are not cited correctly.
Flow & Rhythm (Sentence Fluency)	All sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud. Each sentence is clear and has an obvious emphasis.	Almost all sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud, but 1 or 2 are stiff and awkward or difficult to understand.	Most sentences sound natural and are easy-on-the-ear when read aloud, but several are stiff and awkward or are difficult to understand.	The sentences are difficult to read aloud because they sound awkward, are distractingly repetitive, or difficult to understand.
Transitions (Organization)	A variety of thoughtful transitions are used. They clearly show how ideas are connected.	Transitions clearly show how ideas are connected, but there is little variety.	Some transitions work well; but connections between other ideas are fuzzy.	The transitions between ideas are unclear or nonexistent.
Adding Personality (Voice)	The writer seems to be writing from knowledge or experience. The author has taken the ideas and made them "his own."	The writer seems to be drawing on knowledge or experience, but there is some lack of ownership of the topic.	The writer relates some of his own knowledge or experience, but it adds nothing to the discussion of the topic.	The writer has not tried to transform the information in a personal way. The ideas and the way they are expressed seem to belong to someone else.

Mock Trial Rubric

Teacher Name: **Ms. Rolph**

Student Name: _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Role	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were consistently in character.	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were often in character.	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were sometimes in character.	Point-of-view, arguments, and solutions proposed were rarely in character.
Required Elements	Student included more information than was required.	Student included all information that was required.	Student included most information that was required.	Student included less information than was required.
Historical Accuracy	All historical information appeared to be accurate and in chronological order.	Almost all historical information appeared to be accurate and in chronological order.	Most of the historical information was accurate and in chronological order.	Very little of the historical information was accurate and/or in chronological order.

Unit Assessment Plan

Unit Name: **The Judicial System**

Day	Task Name	Purpose	Format	Scoring	Feedback	Notes
1						
2						
3	Small group activity on 3 Court system	Develop understanding of court system	Small group activity completing worksheet	Points allotted for each question answered correctly. (-, check, or +) for working well in group.	Students who did not participate in group work or let others answer questions for them will be talked with about behavior.	
4	Vocabulary Quiz Polite Listening	Check for understanding of terms used in unit. Learning how to behave while listening to a guest lecturer.	15 word quiz. Matching terms to definitions In class lecture by visiting Judge/Lawyer	1 pt for each answer correct. Total of 15 pts. No score, but will make notes on behavior.	After guest has left, will comment to class on over all observations. Will talk to students on an as needed bases for behavior problems.	
5	Small group web activity	-Hands on learning through web based activity in small groups.	Web based. Searches, readings, and survey.	Points assigned for completing, participations.	Feedback on time spent working. Points will be docked for wasting time. Individual time will be allowed for student-teacher questions.	

Day	Task Name	Purpose	Format	Scoring	Feedback	Notes
6	Guided Questions Worksheet	Keep students on track and paying attention to film	Worksheet based on information found in film	Points for each answer correct	If students missed any question, they may find the answer on their own and receive half credit.	
7	Vocabulary Quiz -Research paper Due	Check for understanding of terms used in unit. - Demonstrates understanding of topic and interest. Shows ability to research	15 word quiz. Matching terms to definitions -2 page research paper	1 pt for each answer correct. Total of 15 pts. -Rubric based. See Rubric	-Written feedback on paper strengths and weaknesses.	
8	Mock Trial	Live simulation of how the court system works. Allows students to demonstrate what they have learned.	Live trial with students performing designated roles	Pts. for participation and Rubric Based	Notes on Rubric and Student-Teacher Dialogue at end of unit.	
9	Mock Trial	Live simulation of how the court system works. Allows students to demonstrate what they have learned.	Live trial with students performing designated roles	Pts. for participation and Rubric Based	Notes on Rubric and Student-Teacher Dialogue at end of unit.	
10	Written observation Student Dialogue with Teacher	Reflect on Mock Trial experience. What do you know or understand after this experience? -Discuss how the mock trial went, and what was learned. Tie up any questions that remain. Feedback for student on role played.	Roughly 1 page typed reflection/observation -5 minute, one-on-one discussion	Check for completion (-, check, or +) based on students effort. -Full points for participation	Written feedback on students participation/ effort in Mock Trial and what they got out of the experience. -Verbal feedback on students participation in mock trial.	

Unit Schedule

Unit Name: **The Judicial System**

Day [✓ if assessment]	Lesson Title [✓ if plan developed]	Activities [Indicate WHERE TO Elements]	Resources Needed	Assignments and Homework	Notes
1	Unit Intro	Lecture on Judicial System: -Founding	Lecture Notes	Readings from text	
2	Unit Intro Continued Introduce Research Assignment	Lecture on Judicial System: -Current -Review Assignment: Q and A	Lecture Notes -Examples of Supreme Court Cases -Resources for students to find cases	Students to pick Court Case	
3	Three Tiered System	Small group activity on 3 Court system	-Directions for activity -Activity worksheet	Answer questions from activity worksheet	
4	District Court	-Lecture -Guest Lecture from local law office of Court house -Vocabulary Quiz	-Guest Lecturer	Find 3 Sources for paper	
5	Appellate Court	-Lecture -Web resource on Court of Appeals -Small group web activity	-Computer Lab	Finish activity Study for Vocabulary test Finish Readings	

Day [✓ if assessment]	Lesson Title [✓ if plan developed]	Activities [Indicate WHERE TO Elements]	Resources Needed	Assignments and Homework	Notes
6	Supreme Court Mock Trial prep	Film with guided questions Mock Trial Prep	Film worksheet Mock Trial Handouts	Finish short answers from worksheet -Research Part and prepare for trial.	
7	Finishing up	Time in computer lab to finish up any last bits of research or to type paper. -Vocabulary Quiz	Computer Lab	Finish up any late work Research Paper Due	
8	Mock Trial: Battered Child Syndrome	Perform Mock Trial	Extra scripts Copy of witness affidavits for each student		
9	Mock Trial: Battered Child Syndrome	Perform Mock Trial	Extra scripts Copy of witness affidavits for each student	Finish and bring in Personal Observation/ Reflection	
10	End of Unit wrap-up	Student-Teacher Dialogue on Mock Trial Silent reading Finish up late work	Student's Rubrics	Written Observation Due	