

WPS Political & Legal Education Unit 2

Unit: Social Sciences and History , Grade(s) Grade 9 - Grade 12

Students will become familiar with the organization and powers, both formal and informal, of the Judicial Branch. It is necessary for students to understand the relationship of this powerful institution with the other branches of government. Students will primarily study the Supreme Court and the federal judicial branch. In addition, students will view how the Supreme Court may evolve gradually or change dramatically as a result of crisis. Students will also examine judicial interpretation of various civil rights and liberties such as freedom of speech, assembly and expression; the rights of accused; and the rights of minority groups and women. It is important that students be able to assess the strengths and weaknesses of Supreme Court decisions as tools of social change.

Duration: 10 Weeks

Unit

Essential Questions/Enduring Understandings

Essential Questions

How can American citizens participate in the American political process? How is civic participation affected by rule of law?

How are rules or laws that govern the election process beneficial to the citizen of America?

Why is being an informed voter important to society?

How do political parties, the media, and special interest groups influence the way Americans vote?

How are the powers of the judicial branch unique among the three branches of government?

How does the principle of federalism work in the judicial branch?

In what ways do the ideas of judicial restraint and activism reflect different ideals of our society?

How have court decisions defined the Constitution and the civil liberties of American citizens?

Why are due process rights important to individuals accused of committing a crime?

Why is it important to explicitly state rights like those found in the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment?

How are criminal actions defined in America?

Why do people commit crimes and what effects do these criminal acts have on their intended victims?

How effective are various sentencing options at resolving conflict?

Enduring Questions:

Society and the courts have driven changes to the Constitution

The civil and criminal justice systems manage conflict, create order, and provide justice.

Decisions reached at the national, state, and local levels influence society.

Knowledge of social and civic issues expands ones' understanding of society.

Mass media influences the American political process.

Public opinion and interest groups influence laws and policy.

Students will be able to...

Analyze the duties, qualifications, and powers of the president and other members of the executive branch.
Recognize the structure and authority of federal courts and relate Supreme Court decisions to the United States Constitution.
Explore the organization and powers, both formal and informal, of the Judicial Branch.
Examine the jurisdiction of the federal courts and the impact of their decisions on American society.
Interpret and apply judicial decisions concerning various civil rights and liberties inclusive of freedom of speech, assembly and expression; the rights of the accused; and the rights of minority groups, specifically African-Americans.
Assess the strengths and weaknesses of Supreme Court decisions as tools of social change.
Comprehend and evaluate the differences between Civil and Criminal law.
Analyze and determine the extent and nature of juvenile crime locally, throughout New Jersey and the nation.
Describe how law systems have developed over time and state the legal rights and responsibilities of Americans
Explain the challenges Americans face with the development of technology

Evidence of Learning/ Assessment

Summative assessment 1- [Presidential Presentation](#)

Summative assessment 2- [Moot Court](#)
[Petitioner](#)
[Respondent](#)

Formative Assessment:

Quizzes- case studies

- Research
- Mock cabinet meeting
- Speeches
- Magazine reviews

Check ins- online discussion

- Current events
- Supreme court sheets
- Election game
- Media reviews
- Role play
- Powerpoint Presentations
- Survey
- Backchanneling
- Discussion
- Writing a letter
- Constructing a collage
- Illustration

Accommodations/ Differentiation

To be completed

Instructional Design/Learning Plan

Scope and Sequence

Unit Materials

Civics Today Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Glencoe

Guest Speakers- Burlington County law speakers, political speakers, lobbyists

Field Trip to New Jersey Model Congress

Government on File, Facts on File, Inc.

U.S. Constitution copy

UpFront Subscription

Court Cases

- Marbury v Madison
- McCulloch v Maryland
- Plessy v Ferguson
- Brown v Board of Education of Topeka Kansas
- Regents of the Univ. CA v Bakke
- Phillips v Martin Marletta Corp.
- Grutter v Bollinger
- Gratz v Bollinger
- Dred Scott v Sandford
- Gibbons v Ogden
-

Griswold v Connecticut

- Roe v Wade
- US V Nixon

Library of Congress www.loc.gov.

www.whitehouse.gov

www.supremecourts.gov

www.ct.gov

www.ccle.org

Civics.org

Ozey.org

Congress.org

Debate formats- parliamentary and policy debate

Videos for Clips:

Democracy for the People

Hot Coffee

Law and Order

Schoolhouse Rock

Gideon's Trumpet

Frost Nixon

All the President's Men

Mr. Smith Goes to Washington

Olympus has Fallen

Lions and Lambs

Thank you for Smoking

13 hours

Real Justice, PBS

Standards Covered

*ELA NJSL

W: Writing

Text Types and Purposes

- W.11-12.2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

*Social Studies NJSL

SOC.6.1.12: U.S. History: America in the World: All students will acquire the knowledge and skills to think analytically about how past and present interactions of people, cultures, and the environment shape the American heritage. Such knowledge and skills enable students to make informed decisions that reflect fundamental rights and core democratic values as productive citizens in local, national, and global communities.

SOC.6.1.12.9: Contemporary United States (1970-Today)

- SOC.6.1.12.A.14: Civics, Government, and Human Rights
 - SOC.6.1.12.A.14.a: Evaluate the effectiveness of the checks and balances system in preventing one branch of national government from usurping too much power during contemporary times.
 - SOC.6.1.12.A.14.b: Analyze how the Supreme Court has interpreted the Constitution to define the rights of the individual, and evaluate the impact on public policies.
 - SOC.6.1.12.A.14.c: Assess the merit and effectiveness of recent legislation in addressing the health, welfare, and citizenship status of individuals and groups.
 - SOC.6.1.12.A.14.d: Analyze the conflicting ideologies and actions of political parties regarding spending priorities, the role of government in the economy, and social reforms.
 - SOC.6.1.12.A.14.e: Evaluate the effectiveness and fairness of the process by which national, state, and local officials are elected and vote on issues of public concern.
 - SOC.6.1.12.A.14.f: Determine the extent to which nongovernmental organizations, special interest groups, third party political groups, and the media affect public policy.
 - SOC.6.1.12.A.14.g: Analyze the impact of community groups and state policies that strive to increase the youth vote (i.e., distribution of voter registration forms in high schools).
 - SOC.6.1.12.A.14.h: Assess the effectiveness of government policies in balancing the rights of the individual against the need for national security.

SOC.6.3.12: Active Citizenship in the 21st Century: All students will acquire the skills needed to be active, informed citizens who value diversity and promote cultural understanding by working collaboratively to address the challenges that are inherent in living in an interconnected world.

SOC.6.3.12.A: Civics, Government, and Human Rights

- SOC.6.3.12.A.2: Compare current case studies involving slavery, child labor, or other unfair labor practices in the United States with those of other nations, and evaluate the extent to which such problems are universal.

SOC.6.3.12.CS2: Analyze sources of prejudice and discrimination and propose solutions to eliminate them.

SOC.6.3.12.D: History, Culture, and Perspectives

- SOC.6.3.12.D.1: Analyze the impact of current governmental practices and laws affecting national security and/or individual civil rights/ privacy.
- SOC.6.3.12.D.2: Analyze a current foreign policy issue by considering current and historical perspectives, examining strategies, and presenting possible actions.

Additional Properties

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