

You and the Judicial System

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Approximate Timeline: 22-30 hours

Area(s) of Core Content: Citizenship

Organizers:

How does the structure of the state and federal judicial systems affect me as a citizen?

Must I always obey state and federal laws?

Academic Expectations/Demonstrators and Core Content:

Academic Expectation 1--Apply Communication and Math Skills:

1.16 Students use computers and other kinds of technology to collect, organize, and communicate information and ideas.

Demonstrators for Academic Expectation 1.16

Conduct investigations; solve problems; create products; complete tasks by integrating various forms of technologies.

Analyze and select appropriate technologies to efficiently complete a task and/or enhance productivity.

Monitor and contribute to an electronically delivered discussion forum.

Academic Expectation 2--Social Studies:

2.14 Students understand the democratic principles of justice, equality, responsibility, and freedom and apply them to real-life situations.

Demonstrators for Academic Expectation 2.14

Predict and evaluate consequences of particular actions or behaviors related to democratic principles.

Exhibit active democratic behavior and civic responsibility.

2.15 Students can accurately describe various forms of government and analyze issues that relate to the rights and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.

Demonstrators for Academic Expectation 2.15

Analyze the relationship between authority and power in political systems.

Analyze the impact of ethical beliefs on political systems.

Evaluate various processes for political change.

2.16 Students observe, analyze, and interpret human behaviors, social groupings, and institutions to better understand people and the relationships among individuals and among groups.

Demonstrators for Academic Expectation 2.16

Analyze how individual and group beliefs affect social systems.

Academic Expectation 5--Thinking and Problem Solving:

5.3 Students organize information to develop or change their understanding of a concept.
 Demonstrators for Academic Expectation 5.3
 Analyze a concept to extract and identify supporting components.

High School Core Content--Social Studies:

- SS-H-1.1.2 Democratic governments preserve and protect the rights and liberties of their constituents through different sources (e.g., U.N. Charter, Declaration of the Rights of Man, U.N. Declaration of Human Rights, U.S. Constitution).
- SS-H-1.2.1 Powers of government are distributed and shared among levels and branches to reflect the "common good" (e.g., Congress legislates on behalf of the people; the President represents the people as a nation; the Supreme Court acts on behalf of the people as a whole when it interprets the Constitution).
- SS-H-1.3.3 In order for the U.S. government to function as a democracy and preserve individual rights, citizens must assume responsibilities (e.g., seeking and assuming leadership positions, voting) and duties (e.g., serving as a juror; paying taxes; complying with local, state, and federal laws; serving in the armed forces) for its functioning.
- SS-H-2.3.1 Various human needs are met through interaction in social institutions (family, religion, education, government, economy).

Essential Questions:

1. What do I need to know about the structure and process of federal and state judicial systems?
2. As a citizen, how do the structures and processes of the judicial system affect me?
3. Under what circumstances are laws ignored, or should be ignored?

Culminating Performance:

Students will select an appropriate media (PowerPoint, brochure, web page, oral presentation, etc.) through which they will communicate the following:

- *the structure of the federal or state court system,
- *the criminal judicial process from arrest to resolution, for one accused of a felony
- *a guide to the individual's role in the judicial process.

Students will locate and describe one website on the subject of civil disobedience, and post the results on an on-line threaded discussion. In addition, students will contribute one well-written opinion per week to the civil disobedience on-line discussion thread.

Scoring Guide

Checklist for first project:

- Format (20 pts.)
 - Selected an appropriate medium
 - Organization
 - Clarity

- Correct representation of the federal or state court system (30 pts.)
 - Jurisdiction
 - Judge selection/process
 - Graphic representation of court structure
- Correct representation of the criminal process used for felonies (30 pts.)
 - Correct sequence
 - Correct terminology
 - Correct personnel
- Individual responsibilities in the judicial process (20 pnts.)

Checklist for second project:

- Civil Disobedience Website evaluation (60):
 - Web scoring worksheet for one website (15)
 - Posted summary of the web site evaluation to the threaded discussion forum (15)

One posting per week of a well-thought-out opinion on one of the on-line discussion threads. (10 points per post)

Knowledge:

Structure of judicial systems

Process of judicial systems

Rights of accused (constitutional protections)

Landmark cases

Due process

Courtroom procedures and personnel (see "Process of judicial systems")

Civil disobedience

Technology Standards:

- T4.4.3 Use various search engines/tools
- T4.4.6 Use electronic mail to contact appropriate sources and receive information (?? – the “on-line threaded discussion forum only peripherally uses email, but falls into the same technology category)
- T5.3 Evaluate information from the Internet (including 5.3.2-5.3.3)
- T6.1 Select appropriate software for a task

Skills/Abilities:

The ability to use threaded discussion

Technology tools selected for final project (Publisher, PPT, FrontPage, IE).

Analyzing, predicting, evaluating, drawing conclusions.

Critical Resources:

Facing History guidebook

Text

Online access in the classroom.

Videos and readings as appropriate

"Facing History"-suggested websites

Instructional/Assessment Activities:

Essential Question #1: What do I need to know about the structure and process of federal and state judicial systems?

Activity One:

Students will respond individually to the question "What is justice?". Responses will be shared. After discussion, an overhead transparency of lady justice will be displayed. Students will be asked to write their interpretation of the symbolism of the personification of justice. (scale, sword, blindfold, gender, etc.) Discussion will follow. Are these accurate depictions? Is justice really blind? How would draw justice? Where in our government is justice achieved?

Activity Two:

Students will be given a copy of the U. S. Constitution and asked to read and identify the Constitutional provisions for justice by using a study guide provided. Study guide will focus on creation of the federal judicial system.

Activity Three:

Students will be divided into groups. Students will receive two sets of index cards, one with titles of the federal court and the other explaining the duties of the courts. Students will be asked to match the title to the description. Findings will be shared, discussed, and corrected. Students will be introduced to the ideas of original and appellate jurisdiction and then asked to place the federal courts in a structure that illustrates the appellate process.

Activity Four:

Students will be given a map of the US and the location of federal district and circuit courts. Students will prepare a US map that reflects the district and circuit courts, paying particular attention to their own geographic location.

Activity Five:

Students will respond to the question "If you were president of the US and a Supreme Court position became vacant, what criteria would you use to fill it?" Responses will be shared. Students will be given appropriate materials to complete current Justice chart; it will include names and biographical information (who nominated, when nominated, etc). This information will factor into a class discussion that addresses the political nature of the "non-political" Supreme Court.

Activity Six:

After reading about the path of a case to/through the Supreme Court, students will portray Supreme Court Justices, defense attorneys, and plaintiff attorneys in oral arguments using landmark Supreme Court cases.

Activity Seven:

Students will view and discuss the video *Separate but Equal or Simple Justice* which illustrates *Brown v. Board of Education* and the power of the Supreme Court to reverse decisions as a reflection of societal change.

Activity Eight:

Using the informational pamphlet *Kentucky's Unified Court System* and their previously constructed federal court system diagram, students will create a Venn Diagram that compares and contrasts the two judicial systems. Students will also utilize Kentucky's Constitution to complete a worksheet that addresses the state courts' jurisdiction.

Activity Nine:

Students will be asked to draw a criminal. Pictures will be displayed followed by a discussion about the stereotypes associated with criminals, the various types of crime (against people, against property, white-collar, victimless, etc). Students will be given the definitions of felony, misdemeanor, civil law, and criminal law and provided with newspapers, in which they must locate an example of each term.

Activity Ten:

Students will be divided into groups and asked to create a boardgame or game show that incorporates teacher-selected vocabulary relating to trial procedure, trial personnel, and the rights of the accused. Students will write individual reflections on the role of the law-abiding citizen in the judicial process.

Activity Eleven:

Students will participate in a mock trial.

Essential Question #3: Under what circumstances are laws ignored, or should be ignored?

Ongoing Activity:

Students will read "Choices" and "Telling Right from Wrong" from the Facing History and Ourselves resource book. These, along with other selected readings, activities, and teacher-selected prompts will serve as the foundation for an on-line threaded discussion.

Web Page Evaluation Worksheet

Title of Web Site:

URL:

Directions: **Use your judgment in allotting points for the various categories. Total the points for score.**

Content/Information (0 to 15 Points)

The information will be useful to our curriculum and/or student interest.

The information on the topic is thorough.

The information is accurate.

The purpose of the page is obvious.

The information is in good taste.

The page uses correct spelling and grammar.

Authority (0 to 15 Points)

The authors are clearly identified.

The authors and/or maintainers of the site are authorities in their field.

There is a way to contact the author(s) via e-mail or traditional mail.

You can easily tell from the domain name where the page originates.

Navigation (0 to 10 Points)

You can tell from the first page how the site is organized and what options are available.

The links are logically grouped.

There is a link back to the home page on each supporting page.

The links are relevant to the subject.

Experience (0 to 10 Points)

The page fulfills its intended purpose.

The page is worth the time.

Treatment (0 to 10 Points)

Any biases towards the subject matter can be easily identified.

The page is free from stereotyping.

The page is age appropriate for content and vocabulary for its intended audience.

Miscellaneous (0 to 5 Points) -

The page has received an award(s).

There are no per-use costs involved.

There are no interactions asking for private information.

TOTAL:

Scoring:

65 - 60 Excellent
59 - 55 Good
54 - 50 Average
49 - 45 Borderline Acceptable
Below 45 Unacceptable

Comments: