

Unit 1 Topic: Introducing SCOTUS

Subject Area Essential Question (s):

- How is the Supreme Court structured?
- How and why did the Founding Fathers design the judiciary branch?

Goals

A: Skills

Communicator

Receptive:

- Comprehends the relationships between time periods and events
- Comprehends trends and patterns illustrated in a data chart or table
- Recognizes bias in historical and current accounts of events

Expressive

- Summarizes information from a source
- Through speaking and writing, uses evidence to support ideas
- Participates effectively in class discussions, debates, and town-hall styled meetings

Investigator

Inquiry:

- Creates different types of questions relevant to a topic
- Analyzes source materials for relevant, sufficient, and unbiased information
- Synthesizes a variety of source materials

Innovation:

- Includes new vocabulary terms in speaking and writing
- Makes connections between past and present
- Transfers knowledge from prior units to the bigger context

Self-Directed Learner

Self-Awareness:

- Recognizes one's place in the community
- Recognizes how personal bias and opinions can influence objectivity when analyzing history and current events

Skills in Taking Responsibility:

- Adheres to deadlines

Community Steward

Skills in Awareness of Others:

- Actively seeks to understand different perspectives when analyzing history and current events

Collaboration Skills:

- Recognizes and appreciates different perspectives
- Is able to compromise effectively when working in groups

B: Content Knowledge

Historical context for the Constitution and the establishment of the Court

- Basic structure of the US Gov't
- Comprehensive overview of the US Constitution, particularly Article III and the Amendments
- The Judiciary and SCOTUS - roles, powers, limits
- Marbury v. Madison and judicial review

C: Understandings

- Rule of law
- Values: life, liberty, property, pursuit of happiness, security, democracy
- No tyranny ever again!

Evidence of Students' Reaching Goals:

Mock Trial - Boston Massacre

Make-your-own quiz

In-class discussions and small group work

Minor simulation activity - Act as SCOTUS to determine which right is least important

Inquiry - and Skill-Based Teaching and Learning Ideas:

Question generation - Mock trial

Skit - act out Marbury v. Madison!

Constitution scavenger hunt

Key Texts and Resources:

The Supremes' Greatest Hits: Th 44 Supreme Court Cases that Most Directly Affect Your Life by Michael G. Trachtman

The US Supreme Court: A Very Short Introduction by Linda Greenhouse

<https://www.oyez.org/>

