UNIT PLAN - Supreme Court Elective

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/