

A “Tail” of the Supreme Court

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Grade Level: 6

Subject Area: Social Studies

Project Summary: This lesson explains the role of the Judicial Branch through Chief Justice Marshall Mouse and his fellow justices on the Supreme Court. This lesson focuses on how court cases arise, how they are argued, and how the justices make a decision. Learners will be exposed to literature to commence their thinking into our country’s judicial system.

Lesson Plan:

Essential Questions/Issues:

1. Is our judicial system set up in a manner that is fair for all people?
2. Do all judges need to interpret the law in the same fashion?
3. Do all legal cases need to follow that same process to reach the U.S. Supreme Court?

Objective(s):

- Learners will reflect on new understandings regarding the influence of the judicial system on how cases arise, how they are argued, and how decisions are made.
- Learners will identify and describe through discussions and art works, the influences of the judicial system.
- Learners will begin to develop and apply skills in visual arts as a form of comprehension and communication.

GRASP: Your Mission

GOAL: Your mission is to create an original piece of artwork, as an illustrator, around the judicial system that shows your understanding of one of the following topics: how court cases arise, how they are argued, and/or how decisions are made. Then, write a commentary on how your visual images/quotes/representations show that understanding.

ROLE: An illustrator for a children’s book.

AUDIENCE: General Public.

SITUATION: Exhibition for general public, potential for your image to be made into an authentic art piece for display/sell.

Performance: Artwork must include the following criteria.

- An image on one of the following: how court cases arise, how they are argued, and/or how decisions are made.
- Use of the elements (line, shape, texture, form and space) are used effectively to highlight or dramatize important concepts.

You may include any of the following in your artwork.

- Your own drawings
- Famous quotes
- Words or numbers
- Use of symbolic shapes.

You must include the following criteria on your lined 5x8 index card.

- The title of the image that inspired you.
- Why you chose the subject, the images, and /or quotes.
- How you used the art elements to convey meaning in the image.
- How you think the concept learned from the book, *Marshall, the Court House Mouse: A Tail of the U.S. Supreme Court*. Peter W. Barnes and Cheryl Shaw, is related to your image.
- What actions (if any) should be taken to ensure the judicial system is fair.

Standards for Success: Students demonstrate synthesis of ideas in words, images or both.

Quality Criteria: Teacher/Peer Scoring Guide/Rubric**Assessment Scoring Rubric for Artwork**

4 – Advanced application of understanding	3 – Proficient application of understanding	2 – Approaching proficiency in applying understanding	1 – Below proficient understanding of concepts
An image regarding how court cases arise, how they are argued, and/or decisions are made in the U.S. today is clearly depicted in your artwork and conveys meaning to the viewer clearly. The viewer is moved to respond to your work of art. (Evokes commentary about the subject of your composition).	An image regarding how court cases arise, how they are argued, and/or decisions are made in the U.S. today is clearly depicted in your artwork and conveys meaning to the viewer clearly.	An image regarding how court cases arise, how they are argued, and/or decisions are made in the U.S. today is clearly depicted in your artwork that conveys most your meaning to the viewer.	An image regarding how court cases arise, how they are argued, and/or decisions are made in the U.S. today is hard to understand based on the artwork presented
The image reflects the core idea regarding the judicial system; you are trying to communicate in the design of the artwork effectively, and works as a “hook” to draw your audience in for a closer look.	The image reflects most of the core idea regarding the judicial system; you are trying to communicate in the design of the artwork.	The image is present, but may not convey your meaning clearly.	Lacking an image is confusing
Use of the visual art elements (line, shape, form, space, and texture) communicates effectively and enticingly for the viewer. There is an aesthetic level to the artwork that suggests a level of complexity.	Use of the visual art elements (line, shape, form, space, and texture) is evident and effective to help you communicate your message.	Use of the visual art elements (line, shape, form, space, and texture) is somewhat evident and effective.	Visual arts elements do not seem to be applied with the purpose of communicating your message.

Scoring Rubric for Written Commentary

(Use of grade-level writing standards is expected for a 3 or 4)

4 – Advanced	3 - Proficient	2 – Approaching Proficiency	1 – Below proficient application of understanding in writing
Thoughtful and critical analysis addresses why you chose the subject, the images, quotes and title.	Clearly addresses why you chose the subject, the images, quotes, and title.	Somewhat addresses why you chose the subject.	Doesn't address why you chose the subject.
Thoughtful and critical analysis addresses how you think the judicial system works.	Clearly addresses how you think this issue is related to the judicial system.	Somewhat addresses how you think that judicial system works.	Doesn't make the connection between the judicial system and its responsibilities.
Thoughtful and critical analysis of actions (if any) should be taken to ensure the judicial system is fair.	Clearly addresses what actions (if any) should be taken to ensure the judicial system is fair.	Somewhat addresses what actions are needed.	Doesn't refer to any actions or lack of action needed.
Thoughtful and critical analysis of how you used the art elements to convey meaning in the image using the visual arts vocabulary accurately.	Clearly addresses how you used the art elements to convey meaning in the image using the visual arts vocabulary accurately.	Somewhat addresses how you used the art elements.	Does not refer to the art elements or reasons for their use.

Lesson Activity Steps: This lesson could be divided into 2-3 class periods per teacher discretion and student need.

Purpose	Teacher	Learners
<p>Hook <i>Engage learners</i></p> <p>5 minutes</p>	<p>Teacher sets up a rehearsed conversation, with a pre-selected student, discussing eating a certain type of cheese on a given day (role playing). Refer to <i>Marshall, the Court House Mouse: A Tail of the U.S. Supreme Court</i> on page 11 for ideas about “cheese conversation”.</p>	<p>Discuss within a small group feelings about being told what type of cheese you are allowed to eat on a certain day.</p>
<p>Into 15-20 minutes</p> <p>Through 10 minutes</p> <p>Research/ Draw 30 minutes</p>	<p>Read the story of <i>Marshall, the Court House Mouse: A Tail of the U.S. Supreme Court</i>. Peter W. Barnes and Cheryl Shaw.</p> <p>In groups, or with a partner review the story within their own groups.</p> <p>Individuals work to create images on a paper template based on rubric requirements for artwork.</p> <p>When students complete their rough draft drawing, they recreate their image on the metal foil sheet.</p> <p>Individuals design and create a title and commentary, on a lined 5x8 index card, per written rubric requirements to show their understanding of a chosen aspect of the judicial system from the story read.</p>	<p>Listen to the story focusing on how court cases arise, how they are argued, and how decisions are made.</p> <p>Students discuss the story and the three main ideas within.</p> <p>Individuals create their images on their foil metal sheet. (Some symbols may include a turtle – for the slow and steady path of justice, a scale for the balance of justice, judges, a courthouse, jury box, protesting signs, gavels)</p> <p>Individuals write their commentaries to accompany artwork.</p>
<p>Beyond 15 minutes</p>	<p>Gallery-walk the results.</p>	<p>Artwork is displayed for public viewing. Response cards are available for viewers to assess the image and commentary.</p>

Special Needs of students are considered in this lesson:

For pre-reading activities, please use the AVID handouts (attached to the lesson plans). Auditory and visual resources are available for different types of learning processes to take place. Heterogeneous groups at tables will allow for stronger process and products. Grouping gifted learners with grade level students and learning challenged students with grade level peers is suggested for best results. Hands-on learning through images, words, discussions, and collaboration efforts will help elevate higher order thinking scenarios. The opportunity for student choice creates differentiated instruction, as well as student ownership of learning.

Extension Ideas:

Students find a current issue regarding the judicial system and create artwork that displays their understanding of how court cases arise, how they are argued, and how decisions are made.

References:

www.dickblick.com (art company that sells metal foiling by the foot).

www.senate.gov/reference/bibliography/kids/kids.htm (Children's books and web sites about the U.S. government).

Visual art elements guide (see attached).

For pre-reading activities, please use the AVID handouts (attached to the lesson plans).

A "Mice" Way to Learn About Government, by Peter and Cheryl Barnes.

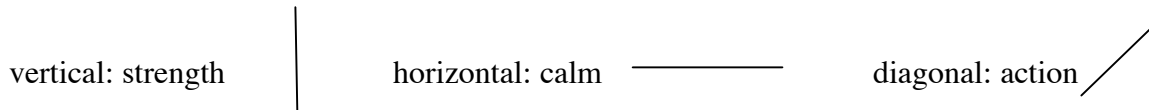
AVID handouts

Supplemental resources

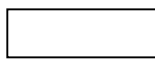
Visual Arts Elements Guide

Use the elements (line, shape, color, texture) to enhance your meaning in the artwork. Using a variety of each kind of element is highly recommended! Here are some helpful hints about each element.

LINE short/long, thick/thin, broken/solid, zigzag/curved, spiral/straight



SHAPE

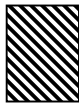


Geometric/Man-made



Organic/Nature-made

TEXTURE



COLOR has meaning or emotional tone.

COLOR MEANING for Western Cultures	
RED	Patriotism with white and blue, conservative, can mean "stop" anger or violence
ORANGE	Religious connotations, nature. old world
YELLOW	Nature, earthiness GOLD opulence or wealth
GREEN	"environmental" or "go ahead" move forward, grow, energy
BLUE	"water" cold, isolation, calm "democratic"
VIOLET	Spiritualism, power, otherworldly
BLACK	Apathy, anger, defiance, absence of emotion, void, strength, right or wrong
WHITE	Summer, spiritual, innocence, youth, purity

Be A COMPOSITION DESIGNER

Use Unity and Emphasis

Unity: Making artwork as a whole look like all the components fit together through: repetition of shape, color, line, or pattern.

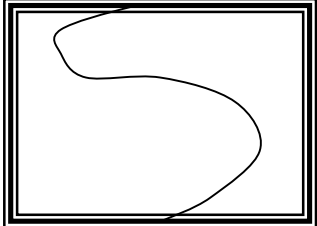
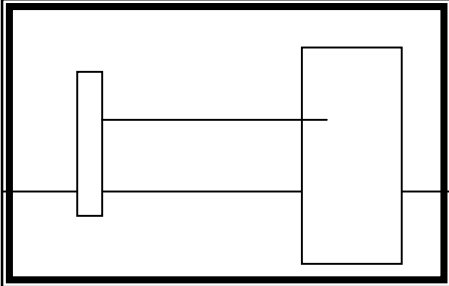
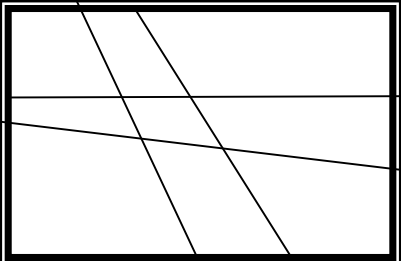
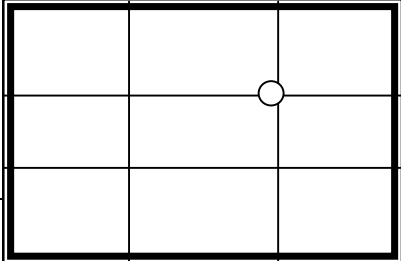


Emphasis: The visual art principle of design that has one item in a piece of art stand out the most to focus the viewer on the most important concept in the art.

Emphasis can happen by...

- making an object larger than others
- giving it a stronger shape (triangles create the most strength; open shapes are the weakest in energy).
- use of strong color
- making it a different texture than the rest of the artwork
- creating lines or shapes around it working like "arrows" pointing toward the important area
- overlapping shapes with the most important on top

Place shapes in one of these *tried and true* compositional templates.

<p>Form an S Curve</p> 	<p>Form a Bridge</p> 
<p>Form an intersection</p> 	<p>Find the Golden Mean or Section (Rule of thirds)</p> 



Prereading: *Working Inside a Text*

Use the questions and/or instruction in the left column to guide your prereading. Record your responses in the right column.

Surveying the Text	
What is the title of the text? Who is the author?	
Describe any visuals in the section you have been asked to read.	
Provide some comments about the text (e.g., length, number of paragraphs, layout, visuals, etc.).	
Noting Organizational Signals	
Briefly describe the layout of the text, observing titles, subtitles, sections, and page breaks.	
Predicting the Main Idea	
Read the title of the text and make predictions about the main idea. What will this text be about?	
Now, read the first and last paragraphs. What do we know about the text that we didn't know before?	
Predicting the Genre	
What do you know about this genre?	
How will the text be shaped and developed?	



Vocabulary Awareness Chart

Scan the title, subtitles, captions, reading aids, and first and last paragraphs. Identify ten words that seem important (for instance, words that are essential to the topic, content vocabulary, or key concepts). Once you have identified these words, write them in the “Word” column. Assess your own knowledge of each word by placing a check mark in the column that best represents your understanding of each word. Use a dictionary to look up the words you don’t know.

Word	Know it	Seen it; don't know it	No idea	Definition or notes for those words you do not know
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				
7.				
8.				
9.				
10.				
Which of the above words were the most challenging? Why?				



30-Second Expert

To complete this activity, take a few minutes to fill in the left column, "What do I know about this topic?" Once you have written all that you know about the topic, follow the steps below.

Step 1: Stand and find a partner. Stay standing.

Step 2: One person shares his or her thoughts while the other listens. You have 30 seconds to share. Begin by saying, "I am an expert on this topic because I know..."

Step 3: The listener will summarize what he or she has heard. Begin your summary with "According to" (insert name) and summarize what you heard. After your summary, ask, "Did I get that right?"

Step 4: Reverse rolls. Speaker becomes listener and listener now speaks.

Step 5: Be sure to thank your partner when you are finished.

Step 6: Record any new knowledge in the right column.

Topic or prompt: _____

Partner's name: _____

What do I know about this topic?	What new knowledge or understanding have I gained from listening to my partner?



Keeping Track of New Vocabulary

Use the tables on this handout or create similar tables in your Cornell notes to help keep track of new vocabulary. To complete the table, write the word, its definition, and its part of speech in the appropriate boxes. In the box titled "Original Sentence," copy the sentence that contains the vocabulary word. Then, draw an image that best represents the word in the box titled "Illustration."

Word:	Illustration:
Definition:	
Original Sentence:	

Word:	Illustration:
Definition:	
Original Sentence:	

Word:	Illustration:
Definition:	
Original Sentence:	

Student Impact:

Assessment:

Learners will be evaluated through informal checks for understanding, teacher observation, self-reflections, and performing an authentic task evaluated by a rubric.

Standards:

CA History Social Science Standards

1.1 Students describe the rights and individual responsibilities of citizenship.

1.1.2. Understand the elements of fair play and good sportsmanship, respect for the rights and opinions of others, and respect for rules by which we live, including the meaning of the “Golden Rule.”

2.3 Students explain governmental institutions and practices in the United States and other countries.

2.3.1. Explain how the United States and other countries make laws, carry out laws, determine whether laws have been violated, and punish wrongdoers.

3.4 Students understand the role of rules and laws in our daily lives and the basic structure of the U.S. government.

3.4.1. Determine the reasons for rules, laws, and the U.S. Constitution; the role of citizenship in the promotion of rules and laws; and the consequences for people who violate rules and laws.

4.5 Students understand the structures, functions, and powers of the local, state, and federal governments as described in the U.S. Constitution.

4.5.1. Discuss what the U.S. Constitution is and why it is important (i.e., a written document that defines the structure and purpose of the U.S. government and describe the shared powers of federal, state, and local governments).

4.5.2. Understand the purpose of the California Constitution, its key principles, and its relationship to the U.S. Constitution.

5.7 Students describe the people and events associated with the development of the U.S. Constitution and analyze the Constitution’s significance as the foundation of the American republic.

5.7.4. Understand how the Constitution is designed to secure our liberty by both

empowering and limiting central government and compare the powers granted to citizens Congress, the president, and the Supreme Court with those reserved to the states.

5.7.5. Discuss the meaning of the American creed that calls on citizens to safeguard the liberty of individual Americans within a unified nation, to respect the rule of law, and to preserve the Constitution.

6.7 Students analyze the geographic, political, economic, religious, and social structures during the development of Rome.

6.7.2. Describe the government of the Roman Republic and its significance (e.g., written constitution and tripartite government, checks and balances, civic duty).

CA Language Arts Standards

2.0 Reading Comprehension

Students identify the basic facts and ideas in what they have read, heard, or viewed. They use comprehension strategies (e.g., generating and responding to questions, comparing new information to what is already known). The selections in *Recommended Literature, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve* (California Department of Education, 2002) illustrate the quality and complexity of the materials to be read by students.

2.3 Connect to life experiences the information and events in texts.

2.0 Creative Expression

Creating, Performing, and Participating in the Visual Arts. Students apply artistic processes and skills, using a variety of media to communicate meaning and intent in original works of art.

2.7 Use visual and actual texture in original works of art.

Materials/Budget:

Marshall, the Court House Mouse: A Tail of the U.S. Supreme Court. Peter W. Barnes and Cheryl Shaw.

Black Tempura paint, metal foiling, bold point pens, wet wipes, lined 5x8 index cards, and blank paper.