

Carolyn Barbuzza
I.S. 285K

WHO IS WORLD IS SONIA SOTOMAYOR AND WHAT IS ALL THIS FUSS ABOUT?

2 CLASS PERIODS

Unit's Essential Question: Are citizens responsible for learning the structure and function of their government in order to effectively participate?

Objectives: Students will: understand the meaning of Article III, the Judicial Branch in the US Constitution.

Justice. identify the process of nominating and appointing a Supreme Court

liberties. realize the importance of civic responsibility to ensure individual civil

Materials: 11 articles from the People for the American Way: http://site.pfaw.org/site_Articles range from a post election memo on the expectations for President Obama's choice for a Supreme Court Justice, to the confirmation of Judge Sonia Sotomayor's appointment to the United States Supreme Court. Memo strips for each group. Internet: You tube videos, "Blueprints in Action".

Skills/Strategies and/or Content

- 1 Drawing inferences and making conclusions
- 2 Distinguishing fact from opinion
- 3 Defining the terms needed to summarize the facts
- 4 Sequencing information to formulate a timeline of events
- 5 Support and formulate an opinion from factual information

Mini-Lesson *This may include: Direct instruction (content/ skills/research strategy); shared Reading (content/ skills); reading a selected portion of text aloud; reading /writing; modeling specific skills and/or strategies; viewing a film clip; making an explicit connection to previous activities; etc. This should include **differentiation** of content and/or process.*

Define: CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY, JUDICIAL REVIEW, ABRIDGEMENT

TEACHER WILL INTRODUCE LESSON BY EXPLAINING HOW THE JUDICIAL BRANCH WAS WRITTEN INTO THE CONSTITUTION THROUGH THE INFLUENCE OF JAMES MADISON AND ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRACY. CLASS WILL READ ALOUD A COPY OF ARTICLE III OF THE CONSTITUTION AND CHART CLASS RESPONSE OUTLINING THE PURPOSE, FUNCTION, AND LEADERSHIP OF THE SUPREME COURT. CLASS REVIEWS THE ROLES OF ITS MEMBERS, THE TERMS OF APPOINTMENT, AND THE PROCESS OF THE NOMINATION. TODAY'S LESSON WILL FOCUS ON THE RECENT NOMINATION OF SONIA SOTOMAYOR AND THE CONTROVERSY THAT SURFACED DURING THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH'S CONFIRMATION PROCESS.

Independent Work Time *This may includes independent work, partner work, small group work, research. This should include **differentiation** of content, process, and/or products.*

DIVIDE CLASS INTO 8-10 GROUPS OF THREE, DEPENDING ON CLASS SIZE AND DISTRIBUTE HARD COPIES OF THE 10-12 ARTICLES FROM "PEOPLE FOR THE AMERICAN WAY". TEACHER DECIDES WHAT GROUPS WILL USE THE VARIED READING LEVELS OF MATERIALS. TASK: EACH GROUP WILL SUMMARIZE THE ARTICLE AND FORMULATE A 1-2 SENTENCE SUMMARY ON A MEMO STRIP. THEY PLACE THEIR FINAL ANALYSIS ON THE BOARD. AFTER ALL GROUPS HAVE FINISHED, ONE MEMBER FROM EACH GROUP WILL REVISIT THE BOARD AND PLACE THEIR SUMMARY IN THE CORRECT SEQUENTIAL ORDER OF THE NOMINATION OF THE NEW SUPREME JUSTICE SOTOMAYER. CLASS WILL DISCUSS THE STAGES OF NOMINATING A SUPREME COURT JUSTICE AND THE SERIES OF EVENTS THAT WERE ASSOCIATED WITH THE FINAL DECISION. TEACHER WILL CHART STUDENT REACTIONS

TO THE ARTICLES, LISTING THE POSSIBILITIES FOR CONFLICT AT EACH STAGE OF THE NOMINATION. STUDENTS IN GROUPS WILL TAKE NOTES.

Share/Assessment *This may include individual or group share, formal and informal assessment. This should include **differentiation** of content, process, and/or products.*

STUDENTS WILL REGROUP AND COMBINE WITH two OTHER GROUPS TO DISCUSS THE PROS AND CONS OF APPOINTING JUDGE SOTOMAYOR TO THE SUPREME COURT. EACH GROUP OF nine WILL NOW APPOINT A “SENATOR” TO VOTE IN THE CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ON THE NOMINATION OF JUDGE SOTOMAYER. EACH VOTE MUST RESPOND WITH A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THEIR POSITION. GROUPS MAY EXCHANGE AND READ THE ARTICLES THEY DID NOT READ IN THEIR PRIMARY GROUP, THEY CAN ASSIGN MEMBERS TO CONDUCT FURTHER RESEARCH, COLLECT NEWSPAPER CLIPPINGS FROM PROVIDED CLASS MATERIALS, ETC. TIMING AND COOPERATION IS A FACTOR SINCE THEY MUST AGREE ON ONE VOTE YES OR NO, BUT THEY MUST BE PREPARED TO PRESENT A BRIEF EXPLANATION FOR THEIR RATIONALE AND POSSIBLY TRY TO INFLUENCE THE OTHER “SENATORS” TO CHANGE THEIR VOTE. PRESENTATIONS AND VOTES WILL BE CAST IN THE FOLLOWING DAY’S CLASS PERIOD. THEY MAY RESEARCH FURTHER AT HOME OR CONSULT AFTER CLASS HOURS TO MAKE THE GROUP’S FINAL DECISION. (SOME STUDENTS WILL WATCH VIDEOS FROM VARIOUS PARTICIPANTS RELATED TO THIS TOPIC AND REPORT BACK TO GROUP.)

DAY 2: VOTES AND DECISIONS WILL BE REVEALED.

Connection to Culminating Project *How does this lesson help students work towards the culminating project (in terms of skills, strategies and/or content)?*

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT:

STUDENTS WILL INDIVIDUALLY WRITE AN **EDITORIAL** REGARDING THE NOMINATION OF JUSTICE SOTOMAYER. EACH EDITORIAL WILL INCLUDE FACTS AND DETAILS FROM THE ARTICLES, CLASS DISCUSSION OR ANY OTHER RESOURCES REGARDING THE ISSUES AND CONTROVERSIES THAT SURROUNDED THIS IMPORTANT DECISION. EDITORIALS MUST INCLUDE AT LEAST **three** DETAILS FROM THE CLASS READINGS AND CONCLUDE WITH A PERSONAL RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:

IN REVIEWS OF PRESIDENT OBAMA'S CHOICE AND THE EVENTUAL NOMINATION BY CONGRESS OF JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR, IN YOUR OPINION:

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES OUR GOVERNMENT TODAY LIVE UP TO THE IDEAS OF THE CONSTITUTION?

CONNECTIONS:

STUDENTS WILL USE THINKING, WRITING, RESEARCHING AND THEIR INTERPERSONAL SKILLS TO UNDERSTAND, AND INTERPRET THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ROLES OF THE SUPREME COURT AND THE SUPREME COURT JUSTICE.

DURING THIS PROCESS OF ANALYZING INFORMATIONAL TEXT THEY WILL BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO APPLY AND EVALUATE THE IDEAS OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS IN THE CONSTITUTION AND CONCLUDE THAT THE SUPREME COURT WAS IN FACT CREATED TO MAKE SURE OUR GOVERNMENT'S LAWS LIVE UP TO THE CONSTITUTION AND PROTECT EVERY INDIVIDUALS CIVIL RIGHTS.