

Lesson 6

Supreme Court In Our Lives

Key Cases

Objectives: Students will analyze Supreme Court decisions and their effect on students.

Materials and Handouts: Materials for (1) *Tinker v. Des Moines School District* by Street Law and John Patrick; (2) *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* by Street Law and John Patrick; (3) *Pottowatomie v. Earls, et. al.* by Street Law, Inc.; and (4) Case Study Worksheet.

Extensions or Background: *The Court and Its Procedures* by Scholastic Home.

A. Daily warm-up and current events alert!

Check National Constitution Center's website for relevant and timely current event news alerts. www.constitutioncenter.org.

B. Landmark Cases

Limiting the focus to cases that impact students, materials are included for:

1. *Tinker v. Des Moines School District*, (1969) wearing black armbands at school to protest the war was permissible;
2. *New Jersey v. T.L.O.*, (1985), school official was allowed to search student's purse when he had reasonable suspicion that he would find evidence of student's wrongdoing; and
3. *Pottowatomie v. Earls, et. al.*, (2002), drug testing permissible for students in all extracurricular activities.

Use Handout materials 1, 2, and 3 for a set of case materials on each case. Each set contains a brief description for the case as well as an activity. Teachers may consider choosing one case for the whole class to focus on, dividing the class into groups and using all three cases, or all students doing all cases in a combination of in-class and homework activities.

The Case Study Worksheet, Handout 4, will help students understand the cases by organizing their thoughts about who the parties are, the facts, issues and arguments. The work may be completed in small group settings, individually in class or as homework.

C. Themes Extending into the Next Term

The selection and confirmation of judges makes a difference to everyone living in the United States. Themes of cases that were decided recently or will be decided in the next term include Oregon's physician-assisted suicide, Federalism, fourth amendment, fifth amendment "takings" involving private property, national security, and first amendment religious and press cases.