



Comm Skills Virtual Learning

Legal Communications I & II

Courts & COVID -19

May 11, 2020



Lesson: May 11, 2020

Objective/Learning Target: Students will examine the judicial branch's response to the pandemic.

Bell Ringer/Let's Get Started

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered almost all sectors of our lives.

Think for a few minutes about how some businesses or organizations have changed their operations.

Sketch out a list of reforms made to keep things running during this time.

Lesson/Activity

The Supreme Court has the power to interpret the Constitution. Its rulings on cases determine the meaning of laws and acts of Congress and the president. During oral arguments, attorneys for each side of a case present their positions to the Court and respond to questions from the Justices. Prior to the oral arguments, each side submits a legal brief which are reviewed by the Justices so they have complete understanding of the facts of the case and the positions of each party.

During “normal” times, visitors from all over the world are welcomed; take a [look](#) at this line.

Lesson/Activity

Let's plan a trip to [The Supreme Court Building](#).

Answer the questions below to help plan our trip (note: we will plan to travel after all travel restrictions, stay-at-home orders, and social distancing guidelines have been lifted)

1. What are the days that we could not visit?
2. What are the hours that the Supreme Court Building is open?
3. What are some exhibitions that we could view?
4. What are the procedures for attending a Courtroom Lecture?
5. How long is the Visitor Film?
6. Draw a diagram of the Courtroom Seating Chart. Star who you want to see!
7. Describe the necessary etiquette for this trip.

Lesson/Activity

Let's now take a look at the [Court and its Procedures](#). After reading this section, please sketch out a timeline of the main events.

Practice

The Court in the Age of COVID -19

As you noticed from our tour of the building and our review of the procedures, many people are involved with hearings in the Supreme Court of the United States. In order to keep people safe and still continue operations, as of May 4th, SCOTUS now hears oral arguments remotely.

Read or listen to this [story](#).

Then, explain the process. Next, look through 2 or 3 of the cases and identify the main arguments.

Additional Resources

[SCOTUS Argument Audio](#)

[SCOTUS Argument Transcripts](#)

[SCOTUS Press Releases](#)