

# LESSON 7

Grade Level & Subject: Middle School History

Lesson: Michigan Court System (Part 2)

## State Standards and Benchmarks

Social Studies. Strand 3 Civic Perspective. Standard 3.1 Purpose of Government. Students will identify the purpose of national, state, and local governments in the United States, describe how citizens organize governments to accomplish their purposes, and assess their effectiveness. Standard 3.2 Ideals of American Democracy. Students will explain the meaning and origin of the ideas, including core democratic values, expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and other foundational documents of the United States. Standard 3.4 American Government and Politics. Students will explain how American governmental institutions at the local, state, and federal levels, provide for the limitation and sharing of power and how the nation's political system provides for the exercise of power.

## Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify the courts that make up the Michigan judicial system
- State responsibilities of each court
- Diagram a flow chart for how a case moves to the Michigan Supreme Court
- Compare the courts based on common characteristics

## Rationale/Purpose for Lesson

Students need to begin to organize their thoughts to clarify how our judicial system functions.

## Resources/Materials Needed

- Student notes from yesterday
- Large paper
- Markers or pens
- Student Court Comparison Chart

## Introduction

Today the class will continue to work with the material about each of the courts in Michigan's system. The purpose is to understand how a case may flow through the judicial system.

## Procedures

### 1. OPTIONS

- A. In groups of 2-3 students, are to share the important information they highlighted when they read yesterday. On large chart paper they are to create a graphic organizer. It may be an outline, a web, or any other way they may find to present the material.
  - B. You may want to have the groups take an individual court and create a “teaching tool” for that court including a 5 question quiz on the material they present.
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2. The finished products are presented to the class. Give students time to process the information. Ask the following questions:
    - a. What similarities did you find?
    - b. What may account for the differences?

## Closure

Explain that it is important for us as citizens to be familiar with and understand the judicial system of Michigan. It is also important to understand that the Michigan Supreme Court only rules on whether or not there has been a violation or misinterpretation of the state constitution.

## Guided Study/Homework

Give students the “Court Comparison Chart”. They are to use their informational packet to complete the chart.

## Extended Lesson Options

1. Have students research the courts in the community, then have them spend the morning observing in a courtroom. They would write a paper of their experiences and findings.
2. Invite a local judge or attorney to speak to the class. Have students write articles for the school or local newspaper including pictures.