



Lesson 4

Lesson 4: ***The Judicial System***

Objectives:

1. To be able to demonstrate an increased understanding of what happens in a real court of law.
2. To be able to learn and apply a variety of questioning techniques.
3. To be able to apply effective oral communication skills.

Materials:

Stone Fox by John Reynolds Gardiner

(Prior to the lesson read *Stone Fox* either as a read aloud or a trade book OR distribute and read the excerpt of *Stone Fox* included in the Teachers' Guide.)

Book: *The Cupcake Thief* by Ellen Jackson

Writing a Mock Trial: An Instructional Framework (Extension Activity)

Mock Trial: *Jackson Wyoming vs. Stone Fox*

You Be the Judge activity sheet and graphic organizer

We the Civics Kids magazine for Lesson 4

Student Voice Bulletin Board Activity

Literacy Link book with bookmark: *The Lorax* by Dr. Seuss

Common Core Standards:

- CCSS-ELA-Literacy RL 4.1 Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.
- CCSS-ELA-Literacy RL 4.5 Explain major differences between poems, drama, and prose, and refer to the structural elements of poems (e.g. verse, rhythm, meter) and drama (e.g. cast of characters, settings, descriptions, dialogue, stage directions) when writing or speaking about a text.
- CCSS-ELA-Literacy W 4.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
 - W4.3a Orient the reader by establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
 - W4.3b Use dialogue and description to develop experiences and events or shows the responses of characters to situations.
 - W4.3c Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.
 - W4.3d Use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events precisely.
 - W4.3e Provide a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events.
- CCSS-ELA-Literacy W 4.4 Provide clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

National Standards for Civics and Government

NSS-C. K-4.3 Principles of Democracy

How Does the Government Established by the Constitution Embody the Purposes, Values, and Principles of American Democracy?

- What is the United States Constitution and why is it important?

NSS-C. K-4.2 What is Government?

What is Government and What Should It Do?

- What are the purposes of rules and laws?
- How can you evaluate rules and laws?
- Where do people in government get the authority to make, apply and enforce rules and laws and manage disputes about them?



Lesson 4:
The Judicial System

Lesson Procedures: Session 1

1. Introduce your class to the four different ways in which we resolve conflict:
 - a. We can try **negotiation** ... that is when two people who are having a conflict discuss and resolve their own problem.
 - b. We can try **mediation** ... that is when we ask an impartial third person to help us discuss and resolve our conflict.
 - c. We can go to **arbitration** ...that is when the impartial third person resolves our conflict for us.
 - d. We can go to **adjudication** ...that is when a judge and/or a judge and jury hear the facts about our conflict and determine guilt or innocence.

Lesson Procedures: Session 2

1. Read and discuss *The Cupcake Thief* to provide background information about the judiciary. As the story goes through the process of the trial, read the “Did You Know’s” to provide information on the roles of the trial participants and vocabulary.
2. Using the conflict resolution techniques above, how could Zack and Tyler have solved their disagreement before they went to trial?

Lesson Procedures: Sessions 3 - 5

1. Review *Stone Fox* if book was already read to/by the class, or read the summary of the book.
2. Distribute the Mock Trial including the background information, story summary and actual trial.
3. Assign students different parts in the trial. Be sure to have 12 students serve as the jury.
4. Practice the Mock Trial
5. Present the Mock Trial
6. Have the jury decide the case and share why they came to their decision.

Lesson Procedures: Session 6

1. In preparation for determining if Little Willy really won the race, distribute the graphic organizer *Who Won the Race?* Ask students to consider the rules of the race when deciding if Willy should or should not have been declared the winner.
2. Have students work in small groups to share ideas and complete the organizer.
3. Review ideas as a class when complete.
4. Have each student post his/her decision on the Student Voices Bulletin Board.

Lesson Procedures: Session 7

1. Remind students that schools have some rules that are designed specifically for the students’ safety. (Highlight some of your school rules that are for this purpose.)
2. Tell the students that they will act as the judge for an incident that happened at a school, one that could be a safety issue. They will have to decide.
3. Distribute the *You Be the Judge* activity sheet. Read orally.
4. Students will write their decision and support it with at least three reasons.



Lesson 4

Lesson Extension:

1. Choose a piece of classroom or classic literature and develop a Mock Trial with your class using the Instructional Framework provided.

Other Suggested Readings:

- Literacy Link book with bookmark: ***The Lorax*** by Dr.Seuss

Tech Connections:

- **Congress for Kids:** http://www.congressforkids.net/Judicialbranch_index.htm
- **We the Jury:** <http://icivics.com>