

Teacher Guide: **COURTS**

In order of appearance in **Preparing for the Oath**, the Civics Test items covered in this theme are:

37. What does the judicial branch do?
 - reviews laws
 - explains laws
 - resolves disputes (disagreements)
 - decides if a law goes against the Constitution.
38. What is the highest court in the United States?
 - the Supreme Court
39. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?
 - nine (9)
40. Who is the Chief Justice of the United States now?
 - John Roberts (John G. Roberts, Jr.)

Overview

This Teacher Guide will take you through the Civics Test questions covered in the theme, **Courts**. The instructional steps provided here target ESL students at the high beginning level. Watch the video on the Help screen and take some time to familiarize yourself with the elements and navigation of **Preparing for the Oath** so that you are comfortable presenting it to your class.

Special note: Remind your students that, immediately prior to their naturalization interview, they should visit www.supremecourt.gov for current information on the Supreme Court.

Introduction

To start the lesson, open the theme and present the Introduction Screen. Read the introductory paragraph aloud and discuss it with the students.

The courts are one branch of the **federal** government. The courts are also called the judicial branch. This branch resolves disagreements and reviews laws. There are many different types of courts, like state courts and municipal courts. These lessons are about **federal** courts.

Explore the Questions

These steps will help you guide your class through the theme, using an LCD projector:

1. Distribute the handout **Key Vocabulary—Courts** and review the definitions with the students.
2. Click on the Start button to begin the first video, **Judicial Branch: Purpose**.
3. Play the video for the class with the captions on or off.
4. Pause the video where appropriate to discuss the vocabulary and images with the class.
5. Play the video again without pausing.
6. If there is a Practice activity available for this question, click on the “Practice” tab.
7. View and discuss the Practice activity.
8. Click on the “Try” tab.
9. Listen to the Civics Test item and have the students select the answer. Click on the “hear question” button to listen to the item repeatedly. After choosing the correct option, students can hear the answer aloud while they read along at the bottom of the screen.
10. Go through the rest of the videos in this theme, using the steps above.
11. Once the class has gone through all of the videos in this theme, wrap up this lesson with the handout, **Crossword Puzzle—Courts**, or assign it to the students for homework.

Key Vocabulary—Courts

breaks the law: to not follow the law

case: a question or an argument that is decided in the court system

constitutional: when something is allowed because it is in the U.S. Constitution

federal: part of the central U.S. government, not state or local government

illegal: not allowed by the law

justice: 1. a judge on the U.S. Supreme Court; 2. fairness under the law

nominate: to officially recommend a specific person to work in a political office

segregation: to make people live, work, and study separately because of their race, religion, or ethnicity

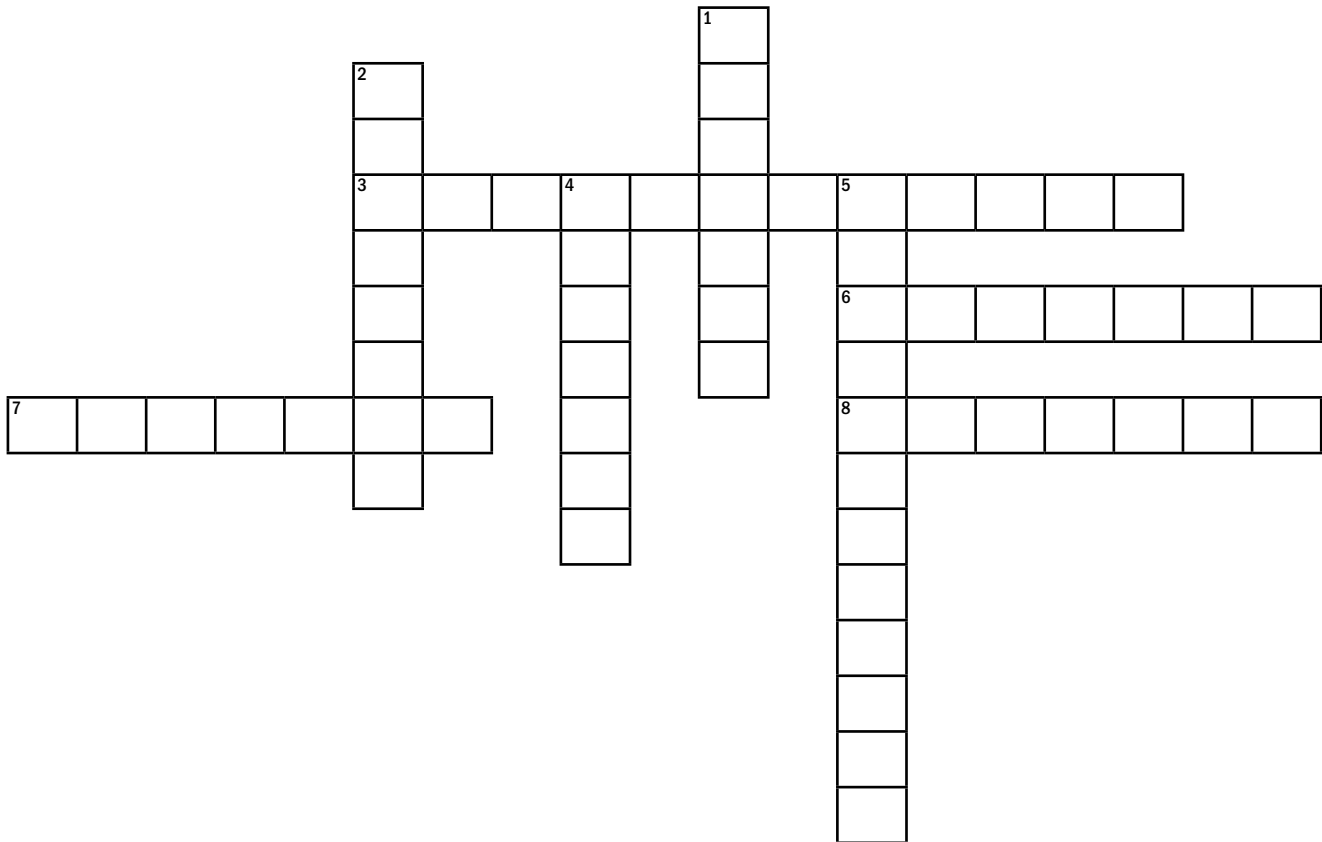
separate: to keep something or someone apart

Crossword Puzzle—Courts

Think about the **Courts** theme and the key vocabulary you have studied. Read the sentences below and fill in the correct word or words in each blank. Then write those words in the crossword puzzle.

IMPORTANT REMINDER:

Visit www.supremecourt.gov right before your naturalization interview for current information on the U.S. Supreme Court.



Across

- 3. The _____ is the highest court in the United States.
- 6. It is _____ to break the law.
- 7. The judicial branch _____ if a law goes against the Constitution.
- 8. _____ means part of the national U.S. government and not the state or local government.

Down

- 1. _____ justices are on the Supreme Court?
- 2. There are nine _____ on the Supreme Court.
- 4. The judicial branch _____ laws.
- 5. Who is the _____ of the United States?



Visit <http://americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship/index.html?theme=3> to go directly to the **Courts** theme.