

Civics Remote Learning 6

Federal Policy, the Supreme Court and the Pandemic

Background:

This week, we're going to examine how the Supreme Court affects federal policy, and how that matters to us in the present day.

However, I realize that everyone may not be that familiar with the basics of the Supreme Court, so you'll be doing some review first. Then, you'll examine how the Court has changed recently.

Directions:

Part I

The video below is a very quick and basic overview of what the Supreme Court is and what it does. Watch it and answer the questions below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9giPmCWnepU>

1. What is the American judicial branch made up of?
2. What is the basic function or purpose?
3. How many justices (judges) are on the Supreme Court?
4. How are Supreme Court justices chosen?
5. How long do Supreme Court justices serve for?
6. The Constitution is very vague on what the Supreme Court is supposed to do. How did it acquire the power to interpret the law?
7. How permanent are the decisions made by the Court?
8. Explain the answer above using an example cited in the video.
9. When does the Court act?

Part II

The second video discusses how the Court has become more “politicized” in recent years. Watch it and answer the questions below.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-government-and-civics/us-gov-interactions-among-branches/us-gov-checks-on-the-judicial-branch/v/increased-politicization-of-the-supreme-court>

1. According to the person being interviewed, why is the Court important?
2. Why has the Court become so important recently?
3. How has the Court, in a sense, taken over the jobs of Congress and the President?
4. The interviewer asks if the Court is “Above politics”- how does the person being interviewed respond?
5. How has this changed recently?
6. Why does this change matter?