Module 9: The Judicial System and Current Cases 9.2 Activity Guide

KEY TERMS - JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND CURRENT CASES

It is important to remember that Article III is a very short provision and doesn't lay out many details about the Supreme Court and how it works—or even what the federal judiciary as a whole should look like. For example, it doesn't set the number of Supreme Court justices, how many lower-court judges there should be in the federal judiciary, or when we should have any lower federal courts below the Supreme Court at all.

Furthermore, Article III can be a bit hard to understand without some background first. The basic ideas are simple enough, but the language is a bit more technical than other parts of the Constitution. In this activity, you will review the key terms of the module to help deepen your understanding of Article III.

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Key Term	Definition	Paraphrase Describe each term in your own words.	Give an example that highlights each term. Either from the Constitution or a Supreme Court case that you've learned about.
Judicial Review	The power to review the constitutionality of acts of the national and state governments.		
Judicial Supremacy	The idea that the Supreme Court is the final voice on the Constitution's meaning. (Many scholars, lawyers, and judges debate this concept and whether it is a good idea.)		
Judicial Independence	The idea that the federal courts must be independent from the control of the other branches of government.		

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Majority Opinion	The opinion in a case that has the support of a majority of the justices.	
Dissenting Opinion	An opinion in a case explaining why a justice disagrees with the majority opinion and why they would decide the case differently.	
Concurring Opinion	An opinion from a justice who agrees with the majority on who should win the case, but offers some additional thoughts on how to think about the constitutional issue in the case.	
Writ of Certiorari	When four of the nine justices decide to take a case, they will issue a writ of certiorari.	
Docket	The list of cases the Court will hear in a term.	
Advice and Consent	The Senate's power to approve or reject the president's nominees, including to the Supreme Court.	