

Organization of the Federal Courts

Name _____

Directions: Each page in the Student Center ends with a Student Challenge. Click the red “Start” button to begin each challenge. Use the → to move through the questions. This worksheet will guide you through the challenges in the section on Organization of the Federal Courts. Mark your score for each challenge.

Student Center: <http://judiciallearningcenter.org/student-center/>

State Courts vs. Federal Courts

Use the → to move through the questions.

1. Case #1 – Circle STATE COURTS or FEDERAL COURTS
2. Case #2 – Circle STATE COURTS or FEDERAL COURTS
3. Case #3 – Circle STATE COURTS or FEDERAL COURTS

Click “Get Results.” Your Score: ____ / 3

Click “Next Page”

Levels of the Federal Courts

Use the → to move through the questions.

1. Which of the following is in the correct order?
Write your answer here.
Letter:
2. Which of the following is not found in the Thomas F. Eagleton Courthouse in St. Louis, Missouri?
Write your answer here.
Letter:
3. Which courts are the trial courts of the federal system?
Write your answer here.
Letter:
4. Which courts review all cases appealed from the district courts?
Write your answer here.
Letter:

5. Which court is the highest court in the nation?

Write your answer here.

Letter:

Click “Get Results.” Your Score: ___ / 5

Click “Next Page”

The U.S. Supreme Court

Use the → to move through the questions.

1. If the U.S. Supreme Court agrees to hear a case, they issue a ___ .

Write your answer here.

Letter:

2. Because the U.S. Supreme Court is the final stop for cases in the U.S., it is sometimes called the court of ___ .

Write your answer here.

Letter:

3. A legal example which must be followed in all similar cases in the future is called ___ .

Write your answer here.

Letter:

4. True or False. The U.S. Supreme Court hears less than 100 cases a year.

Circle True or False

Click “Get Results.” Your Score: ___ / 4

Click “Next Page”

About Federal Judges

Use the → to move through the questions.

1. Federal judges are appointed by the President and are subject to confirmation by the House of Representatives.

Circle True or False

2. Federal judges are appointed by the President and are subject to confirmation by the Senate.

Circle True or False

3. If I am a federal judge, age 65 and choose not to retire, I can take senior status as long as I’ve been working actively for at least 15 years. This means that I will stay on the bench, but take fewer cases.

Circle True or False

4. Which of the following groups of federal judges do not serve a life term?

Write your answer here.

Letter:

Click “Get Results.” Your Score: ___ / 4

Click “Next Page”

Judicial Independence

Use the → to move through the questions.

1. Judicial independence is necessary to make sure that the courts reach fair and unbiased decisions. Which of the following helps to ensure independent judges?
Write your answer here.
Letter:
2. Which of the following is NOT a check that the legislative branch has on the courts?
Write your answer here.
Letter:
3. The ____ is in place to guarantee that judges remain free of bias, and helps to make sure they remain truly independent.
Write your answer here.
Letter:
4. What is it called when a judge steps down from a case because the judge is concerned that someone may think he or she is biased?
Write your answer here.
Letter:

Click “Get Results.” Your Score: ____ / 4

You have reached the end of ORGANIZATION OF THE FEDERAL COURTS.

Add up your total score:

State Courts vs. Federal Courts: ____ / 3

Levels of the Federal Courts: ____ / 5

The U.S. Supreme Court: ____ / 4

About Federal Judges: ____ / 4

Judicial Independence: ____ / 4

Total: ____ / 20

Dear Teachers:

Each Student Challenge WebQuest covers one of the main sections from the Judicial Learning Center’s Student Center. The worksheet guide can be given to students as individuals or in groups, to provide a way to check progress through each content section.

Also, administration of the pre- and post- test for this section, before and after the unit of study, is recommended.

Organization of the Federal Courts – ANSWER KEY

State Courts vs. Federal Courts (3 pts)

Case #1:

STATE COURTS

*Explanation: Jan would be charged with violating a state law. Most laws about stealing, theft, or robbery are state laws, and most of these types of crimes occur within the boundaries of one state or one municipality. Thus when you break the law, you are arrested, charged, and tried in that location.

Case #2:

FEDERAL COURTS

*Explanation: Bank robbery is usually a federal crime because most banks are federally insured by the FDIC. Though the state where this crime occurred might have laws that would apply, if these crimes occurred while Jim and his friends were robbing a federally insured bank, those crimes would fall under the jurisdiction of the federal courts.

Case #3:

STATE COURTS

*Explanation: Disputes between people of different states can be settled in the federal courts, so that both parties get a fair trial. Since Sarah’s case involves such a small amount of money, she would file her suit in the state courts. If her suit had been for \$75,000.00 or more she could have sued in the federal court system.

Levels of the Federal Courts (5 pts)

1. Which of the following is in the correct order?

C. DISTRICT COURT, COURT OF APPEALS, SUPREME COURT

2. Which of the following is not found in the Thomas F. Eagleton Courthouse in St. Louis, Missouri?

B. US SUPREME COURT

3. Which courts are the trial courts of the federal system?

A. District Courts

4. Which courts review all cases appealed from the district courts?

B. Courts of Appeals

5. Which court is the highest court in the nation?

C. Supreme Court

The U.S. Supreme Court (4 pts)

1. If the U.S. Supreme Court agrees to hear a case, they issue a ____ .
B. Writ of certiorari
2. Because the U.S. Supreme Court is the final stop for cases in the United States, it is sometimes called the court of ____ .
C. Last resort
3. A legal example which must be followed in all similar cases in the future is called ____ .
A. Precedent
4. True or False. The U.S. Supreme Court hears less than 100 cases a year.
True

About Federal Judges (4 pts)

1. Federal judges are appointed by the President and are subject to confirmation by the House of Representatives.
FALSE
2. Federal judges are appointed by the President and are subject to confirmation by the Senate.
TRUE
3. If I am a federal judge, age 65 and choose not to retire, I can take senior status as long as I've been working actively for at least 15 years. This means that I will stay on the bench, but take fewer cases
TRUE
4. Which of the following groups of federal judges do not serve a life term?
C. Magistrate and Bankruptcy Judges

Judicial Independence (4 pts)

1. Judicial independence is necessary to make sure that the courts reach fair and unbiased decisions. Which of the following helps to ensure independent judges?
D. Both A and B are key elements in preserving judicial independence.
2. Which of the following is NOT a CHECK that the legislative branch has on the courts?
C. The president's power of appointment, because it allows him to select only judges that he wants to the courts.
3. The ____ is in place to guarantee that judges remain free of bias, and helps to make sure they remain truly independent.
C. Code of Conduct for Federal Judges
4. What is it called when a judge steps down from a case because the judge is concerned that someone may think he or she is biased?
B. Recuse

Total 20 pts