



CONTENT VOCABULARY ACTIVITY 8

The Judicial Branch

Directions: Select one of the Content Vocabulary terms from the box and write it in the blank of the correct sentence below.

exclusive jurisdiction	stare decisis	unanimous opinion
district court	original jurisdiction	appeals court
jurisdiction	circuit	remand
opinion	precedent	constitutional
judicial review	docket	brief
majority opinion	dissenting opinion	concurring opinion
appellate jurisdiction	concurrent jurisdiction	

Section 1

1. Sometimes state and federal courts have _____ in that they can both hear the same case.
2. _____ is a court's authority to hear and decide cases.
3. When cases can be heard only in a federal court and in no other court, it is called _____.
4. A particular geographic area that is covered by a court of appeals is a _____.

Section 2

5. A(n) _____ reviews decisions made in lower district courts.
6. There are 94 _____(s) in the United States where trials are held and lawsuits begin.
7. A judge's _____ offers a detailed explanation of the legal thinking behind the court's decision.
8. District courts have _____ because they have the authority to hear cases for the first time.
9. When appeals courts _____ a case, they reverse the original ruling and send the case back to a lower court to be retried.



RETEACHING ACTIVITY 8

The Judicial Branch

The judicial branch of our government ensures that our nation's laws are justly applied. It also interprets constitutional law to protect our rights as United States citizens.

Directions: Answering Questions Use the chart below to answer questions about the judicial branch. You will not use all of the names and terms.

"Equal Justice Under Law"	a written opinion	Samuel Alito
kidnapping	circuits	remand
three	writ of certiorari	John G. Roberts Jr.
oral argument	precedent	brief

1. What is the ideal on which our justice system is based? _____
2. What is one decision that an appeals court can make in a case? _____
3. Who is the current chief justice of the Supreme Court? _____
4. In which step in a Supreme Court case can the justices question the lawyers? _____
5. The U.S. Court of Appeals is divided into what type of geographic areas? _____
6. How many levels does our federal court system have? _____
7. The Supreme Court receives most of its cases based on what type of request that directs a lower court to send its records to the Supreme Court to review?

8. In what way does the Supreme Court announce its decision? _____
9. What does a judge use as a guide when deciding a case? _____
10. Which type of crime can be tried in federal court? _____



GUIDED READING ACTIVITY 8-2

How Federal Courts Are Organized

 **Reading Tip**

Pay attention to any mental images you form as you read. For example, you might picture the three branches of the federal government as a triangle or the federal court system as a ladder or a pyramid. Sketch these mental images to help you remember and organize information.

Directions: Answer the questions below in the space provided. Use the information in your textbook to answer the questions.

1. **Specifying** Why must all federal cases begin in district courts?

2. **Listing** What are the three ways in which an appeals court may decide a case?

3. **Explaining** How are the terms *opinion* and *precedent* related?

4. **Describing** How are federal judges selected?

5. **Specifying** What is the only way by which a federal judge may be removed?

6. **Explaining** What is the role of a United States attorney?

7. **Identifying** What are subpoenas, and which official serves them?



GUIDED READING ACTIVITY 8-4

The Supreme Court at Work

 **Reading Tip**

Copy the vocabulary words into a list or chart before you read. Then fill in a definition for each one as you find it in the text.

Directions: Answer the questions below in the space provided. Use the information in your textbook to answer the questions.

1. **Specifying** When does the Supreme Court hear cases?

2. **Summarizing** How is a court case added to the Supreme Court's docket?

3. **Sequencing** What are the five steps through which a case passes in the Supreme Court?

4. **Explaining** What are dissenting opinions and concurring opinions?

5. **Defining** What is the meaning of *stare decisis*?

6. **Identifying** How does the Supreme Court adapt laws for the changing times?

7. **Specifying** What Supreme Court case made segregation legal, and what case overturned that precedent?
