

Vocabulary Activity

The Supreme Court of the United States

Content Vocabulary

Directions: For each term in the left column, write the letter of the correct definition in the right column.

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|--------------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. originalism | a. a concept that claims that the Constitution is dynamic and that modern society should be considered when interpreting key constitutional text |
| _____ 2. "living" Constitution | b. a written statement setting forth the legal arguments, relevant facts, and precedents supporting one side of the case |
| _____ 3. unanimous ruling | c. likely to cause disagreement or argument |
| _____ 4. majority opinion | d. the belief that the U.S. Constitution should be interpreted according to the intent of those who composed and adopted it |
| _____ 5. brief | e. issued when the justices all agree on the outcome and the reasons for a decision in a case |
| _____ 6. contentious | f. a Supreme Court decision expressing the views of more than half of the Court's members; the ruling of the Court then becomes law |

Directions: From this vocabulary list, choose the best word to answer each question. Write each word in the blank provided. (**writ of certiorari, appellate litigation, advisory opinion, concurring opinion**)

7. Which term describes a lawsuit that is occurring at the appeals level of the court system?

8. Which term describes the views of any justices who agree with the outcome of a case, but use different reasoning than the majority?

9. Which term describes an order from the Supreme Court to a lower court to send up the records on a case for review?

10. Which term describes a ruling on a law that has not yet been challenged in court?

Vocabulary Activity *cont.*



The Supreme Court of the United States

Directions: Answer each of the following questions. Include the vocabulary words in parentheses in your answers.

11. What is a dissenting opinion, and who writes one? (**dissenting opinion**)

12. What is the purpose of an amicus curiae brief, and who might write one? (**amicus curiae**)

13. If seven Supreme Court justices want to hear a case, what happens? What if only two want to hear it? (**rule of four**)

14. What are the similarities and differences of judicial restraint and judicial activism? (**judicial restraint, judicial activism**)

15. What is a Supreme Court clerk, and what are the qualifications of a clerk? (**clerk**)

Vocabulary Activity *cont.*



The Supreme Court of the United States

Academic Vocabulary

Directions: From the vocabulary list, choose the best word to answer each question. Write each word in the blank provided. (*ideological, professional, revise, primary, amend, uniform*)

16. Which word would describe altering a written document to make corrections to, improve, or update it?

17. Which word would be used to describe a situation in which everyone is consistent in their shared conduct or opinion?

18. Which word could describe your first and most important goal?

19. Which word could be used to describe something that pertains to the body of beliefs that guide an individual, political system, or nation?

20. Which word describes the action of changing something?

21. Which word describes a person who is an expert at his or her work, such as a surgeon or airplane pilot?

Directions: Write *S* in the blank before each word that is a synonym (a word with the same or nearly the same meaning) of the listed word. Write *A* in the blank before each word that is an antonym (a word with an opposite or nearly opposite meaning). Each item has more than one correct answer.

22. preliminary

_____ first

_____ final

_____ initial

_____ closing

_____ introductory

_____ concluding

23. reject

_____ dismiss

_____ turn down

_____ accept

_____ keep

_____ approve

_____ decline