

icivics supreme court nominations activity

icivics supreme court nominations activity offers an engaging and educational approach to understanding the complex process of Supreme Court nominations in the United States. This activity, designed by iCivics, serves as an interactive tool that helps students and learners grasp the important constitutional, political, and procedural elements involved in selecting justices for the highest court. By simulating the nomination and confirmation stages, participants gain insight into the roles of the President, the Senate, and other key players in this critical aspect of American governance. The icivics supreme court nominations activity also highlights the significance of judicial philosophy, background checks, and public opinion in shaping the final decision. This article explores the components, educational benefits, and practical applications of the icivics supreme court nominations activity, providing a comprehensive overview of how it enhances civics education. The content further delves into the historical context of Supreme Court nominations and the relevance of such activities in contemporary classrooms.

- Overview of the icivics Supreme Court Nominations Activity
- The Supreme Court Nomination Process
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Overview of the icivics Supreme Court Nominations Activity

The icivics supreme court nominations activity is an interactive educational exercise designed to simulate the process of nominating and confirming a justice to the United States Supreme Court. Developed by iCivics, a well-known civics education organization, this activity provides users with a realistic experience that mirrors the decision-making and political considerations faced by the President and the Senate. Through the activity, participants assume the role of the President, selecting a nominee based on qualifications, ideology, and public opinion, before facing the confirmation hearings conducted by the Senate Judiciary Committee.

This simulation not only emphasizes the procedural steps involved, but also the strategic and political calculations that influence Supreme Court nominations. It is particularly valuable for middle and high school students, helping them understand the balance of powers and the importance of the judiciary in American democracy. The activity also integrates multimedia resources, including background information on past nominees and the constitutional framework governing the nomination process.

The Supreme Court Nomination Process

The process of nominating and confirming a Supreme Court justice is a constitutionally mandated procedure that involves multiple stages and actors. The icivics supreme court nominations activity breaks down this process into clear, understandable steps, reflecting the real-world procedures.

Presidential Nomination

The first step in the process is the President's nomination of a candidate to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. This choice is influenced by various factors such as the nominee's legal qualifications, judicial philosophy, political ideology, and often considerations of demographic representation. The President must weigh these factors carefully, as the nominee must be acceptable enough to secure Senate confirmation.

Senate Confirmation

After the nomination, the Senate Judiciary Committee conducts a series of hearings to evaluate the nominee's qualifications, background, and judicial record. This stage is critical, as committee members question the nominee and gather information from various sources. Following the hearings, the committee votes on whether to recommend the nominee to the full Senate. The final confirmation vote by the entire Senate then determines if the nominee will be appointed as a justice.

Role of Public Opinion and Interest Groups

Public opinion and advocacy groups often play a significant role in the nomination process, influencing Senators and the President. Media coverage, public campaigns, and lobbying efforts can impact the perception of the nominee's suitability and affect the confirmation outcome.

Educational Benefits of the Activity

The icivics supreme court nominations activity offers numerous educational advantages that contribute to civic knowledge and engagement. By actively participating in the nomination simulation, students develop a better understanding of the judicial branch and the constitutional processes that shape it.

- **Enhanced Civic Understanding:** The activity deepens students' comprehension of the Supreme Court's role and the checks and balances inherent in the nomination system.
- **Critical Thinking Skills:** Participants analyze complex information about nominees and political dynamics, fostering critical evaluation and decision-making abilities.
- **Engagement through Simulation:** Interactive elements increase student interest and motivation by making abstract concepts tangible and relevant.
- **Awareness of Political Influence:** The exercise highlights how politics and ideology impact

judicial appointments, encouraging nuanced discussions about governance.

- **Preparation for Civic Participation:** Understanding the nomination process prepares students for informed voting and civic involvement.

Key Components of the icivics Supreme Court Nominations Activity

The activity is composed of several integral parts that collectively create a comprehensive learning experience. Each component is designed to replicate aspects of the real nomination process while ensuring clarity and accessibility for learners.

Nominee Profiles

Participants are presented with detailed profiles of potential Supreme Court nominees. These profiles include professional background, judicial philosophy, past rulings, and personal characteristics. This information allows users to make informed decisions when selecting a nominee to propose.

Decision-Making Interface

The interactive platform provides a decision-making interface where users assume the President's role. Here, they evaluate nominees against criteria such as qualifications, ideology, and potential Senate support. The interface simulates the strategic considerations in balancing these factors.

Senate Hearing Simulation

Once a nominee is selected, the activity transitions to a Senate Judiciary Committee hearing simulation. Users experience questioning sessions, respond to challenges, and manage the nominee's public image. This segment demonstrates the adversarial nature of the confirmation process.

Outcome and Feedback

After the simulated confirmation vote, the activity provides feedback on the decision's success or failure, explaining the reasons behind the Senate's response. This reinforces learning by connecting participant choices to realistic political consequences.

Historical Context of Supreme Court Nominations

The civics supreme court nominations activity is grounded in the historical realities and evolution of the U.S. Supreme Court nomination process. Understanding this context enhances learners' appreciation of the activity's relevance.

Constitutional Foundations

The U.S. Constitution, in Article II, Section 2, grants the President the power to nominate Supreme Court justices with the "advice and consent" of the Senate. This framework establishes the balance of power between the executive and legislative branches in judicial appointments.

Notable Nomination Battles

Throughout American history, several Supreme Court nominations have been contentious and politically charged. Examples include the failed nomination of Robert Bork in 1987 and the confirmation battles over more recent justices. These events illustrate the political stakes and procedural complexities that the civics activity seeks to replicate.

Trends and Changes Over Time

The nomination process has evolved, with increasing media scrutiny, political polarization, and public involvement shaping modern confirmations. The activity reflects these developments by incorporating elements that simulate political pressure and public opinion.

Practical Applications in Educational Settings

The civics supreme court nominations activity is widely used in classrooms to support civics education and promote active learning. Its practical applications extend across grade levels and educational objectives.

Integration with Curriculum Standards

Educators can align the activity with national and state civics standards, including those related to government structure, the judiciary, and constitutional principles. The activity's content supports key learning goals in social studies and history courses.

Facilitating Classroom Discussions

The simulation serves as a springboard for discussions about the judiciary's role, the influence of politics in judicial appointments, and the importance of civic participation. Teachers can use post-activity questions to deepen understanding and critical thinking.

Adaptability for Different Learning Environments

The activity's digital format allows for flexible use in both in-person and remote learning settings. It can be completed individually or in groups, fostering collaboration and debate among students.

Enhancing Civic Engagement

By engaging students in realistic scenarios, the activity encourages them to become informed citizens who understand the impact of Supreme Court decisions and the importance of the nomination process in shaping American law.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the iCivics Supreme Court Nominations activity?

The iCivics Supreme Court Nominations activity is an interactive educational simulation that allows users to role-play as the President of the United States, selecting and nominating a Supreme Court justice while considering various political and social factors.

How does the iCivics Supreme Court Nominations activity help students learn about the judicial nomination process?

The activity immerses students in the nomination process by having them evaluate candidates' qualifications, political views, and public opinions, thereby teaching them about the complexities and considerations involved in Supreme Court nominations.

Can users experience the Senate confirmation process in the iCivics Supreme Court Nominations activity?

Yes, after nominating a candidate, users engage in the Senate confirmation process, encountering hearings and questions that simulate real-life Senate scrutiny, helping them understand the checks and balances in judicial appointments.

Is the iCivics Supreme Court Nominations activity suitable for all grade levels?

The activity is primarily designed for middle and high school students but can be adapted for younger or older learners interested in civics and government education.

What skills do students develop by participating in the iCivics Supreme Court Nominations activity?

Students develop critical thinking, decision-making, and understanding of constitutional principles, as well as insight into the political dynamics and importance of the Supreme Court nomination

process.

Does the iCivics Supreme Court Nominations activity include real historical Supreme Court cases?

While the activity focuses on the nomination and confirmation process, it references historical contexts and may include scenarios inspired by real cases to provide authenticity and educational value.

Can the iCivics Supreme Court Nominations activity be used in remote or virtual learning environments?

Yes, the activity is web-based and accessible from any device with internet connectivity, making it suitable for remote, hybrid, or in-class learning settings.

Where can educators and students access the iCivics Supreme Court Nominations activity?

The activity is available for free on the official iCivics website, where educators and students can create accounts to track progress and access additional civics learning resources.

Additional Resources

1. Supreme Court Confirmations: Understanding the Process

This book offers a comprehensive overview of how Supreme Court nominations and confirmations work in the United States. It breaks down the roles of the President, Senate, and interest groups in the selection process. Readers will gain insight into the political and legal considerations that influence each nomination. The book also highlights landmark confirmation battles that have shaped American jurisprudence.

2. The Supreme Court and Its Justices: An Interactive Guide

Designed for students and educators, this guide provides an interactive approach to exploring the Supreme Court, including its nomination process. It features profiles of justices, explanations of their roles, and activities related to Supreme Court nominations. The book encourages critical thinking about the impact of judicial appointments on the law and society.

3. Judging the Judges: The Politics of Supreme Court Nominations

This title delves into the political dynamics behind Supreme Court nominations, examining how ideology, party politics, and public opinion influence the confirmation process. It includes case studies of controversial nominations and the strategies used by both supporters and opponents. The book helps readers understand the high stakes involved in selecting justices.

4. Nominate and Confirm: The Journey of a Supreme Court Justice

Tracing the pathway of a Supreme Court nominee, this book provides a step-by-step look at the nomination and confirmation process. It offers insights into background checks, Senate hearings, and the final vote. Readers will appreciate the detailed narrative that reveals the complexities behind appointing a lifetime justice.

5. *Checks and Balances: The Supreme Court Nomination Process*

Focusing on the constitutional framework, this book explains how the nomination and confirmation process exemplifies the system of checks and balances in the U.S. government. It highlights the distinct roles of the executive and legislative branches and how they interact during appointments. The book includes historical examples to illustrate these principles.

6. *Behind the Bench: Stories from Supreme Court Nomination Hearings*

This collection shares firsthand accounts and stories from various Supreme Court nomination hearings. It provides perspectives from senators, nominees, and legal experts on what happens behind the scenes. The book brings the drama and importance of these hearings to life for readers interested in judicial politics.

7. *Law and Politics: Supreme Court Nominations in American History*

Covering a broad historical timeline, this book examines how Supreme Court nominations have evolved alongside American political shifts. It discusses landmark nominations and the changing criteria presidents and the Senate have used over time. Readers will learn about the intersection of law, politics, and societal values in shaping the Court.

8. *Civics in Action: Engaging with Supreme Court Nominations*

This educational resource encourages students to actively participate in simulated Supreme Court nomination activities. It includes lesson plans, role-playing exercises, and discussion prompts to deepen understanding of the nomination process. The book aims to foster civic engagement and critical thinking about the judiciary.

9. *The Power of Appointment: Presidents and the Supreme Court*

This book explores the significant influence presidents have through their Supreme Court nominations. It analyzes how appointments reflect presidential priorities and affect legal interpretations for generations. The book also considers the long-term impact of these decisions on American society and governance.

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icivics supreme court nominations activity: Be the Change! Michelle Nunn, 2006 Collects brief personal stories, quotes, practical advice, and inspirational anecdotes from hundreds of citizens, business and civic leaders, sports figures, and celebrities that discuss how to make a difference in the world.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: Frontiers in Sociology of Education Maureen T. Hallinan, 2011-07-13 Scholarly analysis in the sociology of education has burgeoned in recent decades. Frontiers in Sociology of Education aims to provide a roadmap for sociologists and other social scientists as they set bold new directions for future research on schools. In Part 1 of this forward-looking volume, the authors present cutting-edge research to set new guidelines for the sociological analysis of schools. In Part 2, notable social scientists, historians, administrators and educators provide a wide-ranging array of perspectives on contemporary education to insure that

scholars make creative and broadly informed contributions to the sociological analysis of schools. The contributors to this volume examine events currently influencing education including: globalization, expansion of educational access, the changing significance of religion, new family structures, and curriculum reform. *Frontiers in Sociology of Education* offers an innovative collection of research and ideas aimed at inspiring new analyses of schools better linked to changing societal conditions.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: *Digital Social Studies* William B. Russell, 2013-12-01 The world is ever changing and the way students experience social studies should reflect the environment in which they live and learn. *Digital Social Studies* explores research, effective teaching strategies, and technologies for social studies practice in the digital age. The digital age of education is more prominent than ever and it is an appropriate time to examine the blending of the digital age and the field of social studies. What is digital social studies? Why do we need it and what is its purpose? What will social studies look like in the future? The contributing authors of this volume seek to explain, through an array of ideas and visions, what digital social studies can/should look like, while providing research and rationales for why digital social studies is needed and important. This volume includes twenty-two scholarly chapters discussing relevant topics of importance to digital social studies. The twenty-two chapters are divided into two sections. This stellar collection of writings includes contributions from leading scholars like Cheryl Mason Bolick, Michael Berson, Elizabeth Washington, Linda Bennett, and many more.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: *The Essence of Teaching Social Studies* James A. Duplass, 2020-09-30 Designed for use in elementary and secondary social studies education courses, this book supports the teaching of social studies methods in a range of educational settings. By highlighting long-standing content and principles of social studies education in a concise and direct way, this volume offers the building blocks of a comprehensive course, for use as springboards to the effective presentation of professors' desired course emphases. With sections on foundations, subject areas, and best practices, this text explains the intersection between the modelling role of social studies teachers as democratic citizens, social studies fields of study, and strategies implemented in the classroom to encourage students' critical thinking and values formation.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: *Strategic Selection* Christine L. Nemacheck, 2007 In this book, Christine Nemacheck makes use of presidential papers to reconstruct the politics of nominee selection from Herbert Hoover's appointment of Charles Evan Hughes in 1930 through President George W. Bush's nomination of Samuel Alito in 2005. By revealing the pattern of strategic action, Nemacheck takes us a long way toward understanding this critically important part of the American political system.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: *Supreme Court Appointment Process* Congressional Service, 2018-09-14 The procedure for appointing a Justice to the Supreme Court is provided for in the U.S. Constitution in only a few words. The Appointments Clause in the Constitution (Article II, Section 2, clause 2) states that the President shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint ... Judges of the supreme Court. While the process of appointing Justices has undergone some changes over two centuries, its most essential feature-the sharing of power between the President and the Senate-has remained unchanged: to receive lifetime appointment to the Court, one must first be formally selected (nominated) by the President and then approved (confirmed) by the Senate. For the President, the appointment of a Supreme Court Justice can be a notable measure by which history will judge his Presidency. For the Senate, a decision to confirm is a solemn matter as well, for it is the Senate alone, through its Advice and Consent function, without any formal involvement of the House of Representatives, which acts as a safeguard on the President's judgment. This report provides information and analysis related to the final stage of the confirmation process for a nomination to the Supreme Court-the consideration of the nomination by the full Senate, including floor debate and the vote on whether to approve the nomination. Traditionally, the Senate has tended to be less deferential to the President in his choice of Supreme Court Justices than in his appointment of persons to high executive branch positions.

The more exacting standard usually applied to Supreme Court nominations reflects the special importance of the Court, coequal to and independent of the presidency and Congress. Senators are also mindful that Justices-unlike persons elected to legislative office or confirmed to executive branch positions-receive the opportunity to serve a lifetime appointment during good behavior. The appointment of a Supreme Court Justice might or might not proceed smoothly. From the appointment of the first Justices in 1789 through its consideration of nominee Neil Gorsuch in 2017, the Senate has confirmed 118 Supreme Court nominations out of 162 received. Of the 44 nominations that were not confirmed, 12 were rejected outright in roll-call votes by the Senate, while nearly all of the rest, in the face of substantial committee or Senate opposition to the nominee or the President, were withdrawn by the President, or were postponed, tabled, or never voted on by the Senate. Six of the unconfirmed nominations, however, involved individuals who subsequently were renominated and confirmed.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: Speed of Presidential and Senate Actions on Supreme Court Nominations, 1900 - 2010 R. Sam Garrett, 2010-10 Contents: (1) Recent Activity: Activity During 2010, 2009, and 2005-2006: Recent Nominations: Roberts, Miers, Alito; (2) Measuring the Pace of Supreme Court (SC) Appoint.; (3) How SC Vacancies Occur: Death of a Sitting Justice (SJ): Retirement or Resignation of a SJ; Nomination of a SJ to Another Position; Controversial, Withdrawn, and Rejected Nominations; (4) Date of Actual or Prospective Vacancy; Announcement-of-Nominee Date: Use of Medians to Summarize Intervals; The Duration of the Nomination-and-Confirmation Process: Changes Since 1981; Factors Influencing the Speed of the Process: How the Vacancy Occurs; The Senate's Schedule; Committee Involvement and Institutional Customs; Controversial Nominations.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: Supreme Court Appointment Process Denis Steven Rutkus, 2005 The appointment of a Supreme Court Justice is an infrequent event of major significance in American politics. Each appointment is important because of the enormous judicial power the Supreme Court exercises as the highest appellate court in the federal judiciary. Appointments are infrequent, as a vacancy on the nine member Court may occur only once or twice, or never at all, during a particular President's years in office. Under the Constitution, Justices on the Supreme Court receive lifetime appointments. Such job security in the government has been conferred solely on judges and, by constitutional design, helps insure the Court's independence from the President and Congress. The procedure for appointing a Justice is provided for by the Constitution in only a few words. The Appointments Clause (Article II, Section 2, clause 2) states that the President shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint ... Judges of the Supreme Court. The process of appointing Justices has undergone changes over two centuries, but its most basic feature -- the sharing of power between the President and Senate -- has remained unchanged: To receive lifetime appointment to the Court, a candidate must first be nominated by the President and then confirmed by the Senate. Although not mentioned in the Constitution, an important role is played midway in the process (after the President selects, but before the Senate considers) by the Senate Judiciary Committee. On rare occasions, Presidents also have made Court appointments without the Senate's consent, when the Senate was in recess. Such recess appointments, however, were temporary, with their terms expiring at the end of the Senate's next session. The last recess appointments to the Court, made in the 1950s, were controversial, because they bypassed the Senate and its advice and consent role. The appointment of a Justice might or might not proceed smoothly. Since the appointment of the first Justices in 1789, the Senate has confirmed 120 Supreme Court nominations out of 154 received. Of the 34 unsuccessful nominations, 11 were rejected in Senate roll-call votes, while nearly all of the rest, in the face of committee or Senate opposition to the nominee or the President, were withdrawn by the President or were postponed, tabled, or never voted on by the Senate. Over more than two centuries, a recurring theme in the Supreme Court appointment process has been the assumed need for excellence in a nominee. However, politics also has played an important role in Supreme Court appointments. The political nature of the appointment process becomes especially apparent when a

President submits a nominee with controversial views, there are sharp partisan or ideological differences between the President and the Senate, or the outcome of important constitutional issues before the Court is seen to be at stake.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: U.S. Supreme Court Nominations Research Files, 1823 The collection consists of research into U.S. Supreme Court nominations of the 19th and 20th centuries, and includes 8 inches of printed materials and 7 microfilm reels (35mm), 1823-1939 (bulk 1860-1939), collected by Frank, for a research project concerning Supreme Court nominations. The original materials were transcribed, summarized or microfilmed from the following records in the National Archives: Department of Justice-Appointments Clerk; U.S. Supreme Court Justices files; Department of Justice-Supreme Court Personnel Papers; and the United States Senate-Judiciary Committee; Nomination and Confirmation of Supreme Court Justices files. Files include nominated and rejected individuals as well as nominated and confirmed individuals.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: Supreme Court Nominations Betsy Palmer, 2009 The appointment of a Supreme Court Justice is an event of major significance in American politics. Each appointment is important because of the enormous judicial power the Supreme Court exercises as the highest appellate court in the federal judiciary. Appointments are usually infrequent, as a vacancy on the nine member Court may occur only once or twice, or never at all, during a particular President's years in office. Under the Constitution, Justices on the Supreme Court receive lifetime appointments. Such job security in the government has been conferred solely on judges and, by constitutional design, helps insure the Court's independence from the President and Congress. The procedure for appointing a Justice is provided for by the Constitution in only a few words. The Appointments Clause (Article II, Section 2, clause 2) states that the President shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint . . . Judges of the supreme Court. The process of appointing Justices has undergone changes over two centuries, but its most basic feature -- the sharing of power between the President and Senate -- has remained unchanged: To receive lifetime appointment to the Court, a candidate must first be nominated by the President and then confirmed by the Senate. Although not mentioned in the Constitution, an important role is played midway in the process (after the President selects, but before the Senate considers) by the Senate Judiciary Committee. On rare occasions, Presidents also have made Court appointments without the Senate's consent, when the Senate was in recess. Such recess appointments, however, were temporary, with their terms expiring at the end of the Senate's next session. The last recess appointments to the Court, made in the 1950s, were controversial because they bypassed the Senate and its advice and consent role. The appointment of a Justice might or might not proceed smoothly. From the first appointments in 1789, the Senate has confirmed 122 out of 158 Court nominations. Of the 36 unsuccessful nominations, 11 were rejected in Senate roll-call votes, while nearly all of the rest, in the face of committee or Senate opposition to the nominee or the President, were withdrawn by the President or were postponed, tabled, or never voted on by the Senate. Over more than two centuries, a recurring theme in the Supreme Court appointment process has been the assumed need for excellence in a nominee. However, politics also has played an important role in Supreme Court appointments. The political nature of the appointment process becomes especially apparent when a President submits a nominee with controversial views, there are sharp partisan or ideological differences between the President and the Senate, or the outcome of important constitutional issues before the Court is seen to be at stake.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: *The Appointment Process for U.S. Circuit and District Court Nominations* Congressional Research Service, 2014-10-22 In recent decades, the process for appointing judges to the U.S. circuit courts of appeals and the U.S. district courts has been of continuing Senate interest. The responsibility for making these appointments is shared by the President and the Senate. Pursuant to the Constitution's Appointments Clause, the President nominates persons to fill federal judgeships, with the appointment of each nominee also requiring Senate confirmation. Although not mentioned in the Constitution, an important role is also played midway in the appointment process by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The need for a President to

make a circuit or district court nomination typically arises when a judgeship becomes or soon will become vacant. With almost no formal restrictions on whom the President may consider, an informal requirement is that judicial candidates are expected to meet a high standard of professional qualification. By custom, candidates who the President considers for district judgeships are typically identified by home state Senators if the latter are of the President's party, with such Senators, however, generally exerting less influence over the selection of circuit nominees. Another customary expectation is that the Administration, before the President selects a nominee, will consult both home state Senators, regardless of their party, to determine the acceptability to them of the candidate under consideration. In recent Administrations, the pre-nomination evaluation of judicial candidates has been performed jointly by staff in the White House Counsel's Office and the Department of Justice. Candidate finalists also undergo a confidential background investigation by the FBI and an independent evaluation by a committee of the American Bar Association. The selection process is completed when the President, approving of a candidate, signs a nomination message, which is then sent to the Senate. Once received by the Senate, the judicial nomination is referred to the Judiciary Committee, where professional staff initiate their own investigation into the nominee's background and qualifications. Also, during this pre-hearing phase, the committee, through its "blue slip" procedure, seeks the assessment of home state Senators regarding whether they approve having the committee consider and take action on the nominee. Next in the process is the confirmation hearing, where judicial nominees engage in a question and answer session with members of the Judiciary Committee. Questions from Senators may focus, among other things, on a nominee's qualifications, understanding of how to interpret the law, previous experiences, and the role of judges.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: The Selling of Supreme Court Nominees

John Anthony Maltese, 1998-04-24 In *The Selling of Supreme Court Nominees*, Maltese traces the evolution of the contentious and controversial confirmation process awaiting today's nominees to the nation's highest court. His story begins in the second half of the nineteenth century, when social and technological changes led to the rise of organized interest groups. Despite occasional victories, Maltese explains, structural factors limited the influence of such groups well into this century. Until 1913, senators were not popularly elected but chosen by state legislatures, undermining the potent threat of electoral retaliation that interest groups now enjoy. And until Senate rules changed in 1929, consideration of Supreme Court nominees took place in almost absolute secrecy. Floor debates and the final Senate vote usually took place in executive session. Even if interest groups could retaliate against senators, they often did not know whom to retaliate against.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: Supreme Court Appointment Process Denis Steven Rutkus, 2006 The appointment of a Supreme Court Justice is an event of major significance in American politics. Each appointment is important because of the enormous judicial power the Supreme Court exercises as the highest appellate court in the federal judiciary. Appointments are usually infrequent, as a vacancy on the 9-member Court may occur only once or twice, or never at all, during a particular President's years in office. Under the Constitution, Justices on the Supreme Court receive lifetime appointments. Such job security in the government has been conferred solely on judges and, by constitutional design, helps insure the Court's independence from the President and Congress. The procedure for appointing a Justice is provided for by the Constitution in only a few words. The Appointments Clause (Article II, Section 2, clause 2) states that the President shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint ... Judges of the supreme Court. The process of appointing Justices has undergone changes over two centuries, but its most basic feature -- the sharing of power between the President and Senate -- has remained unchanged: To receive lifetime appointment to the Court, a candidate must first be nominated by the President and then confirmed by the Senate. Although not mentioned in the Constitution, an important role is played midway in the process by the Senate Judiciary Committee. The appointment of a Justice might or might not proceed smoothly. From the first appointments in 1789, the Senate has confirmed 122 out of 158 Court nominations. A recurring theme in the appointment process has

been the assumed need for excellence in a nominee. However, politics also has played an important role in Supreme Court appointments. The political nature of the appointment process becomes especially apparent when a President submits a nominee with controversial views or there are sharp ideological differences between the President and the Senate.

icivics supreme court nominations activity: Advice and Consent on Supreme Court Nominations , 1976

icivics supreme court nominations activity: Supreme Court Appointment Process
Congressional Service, 2018-07-04 The appointment of a Supreme Court Justice is an event of major significance in American politics. Each appointment is of consequence because of the enormous judicial power the Supreme Court exercises as the highest appellate court in the federal judiciary. Appointments are usually infrequent, as a vacancy on the nine-member Court may occur only once or twice, or never at all, during a particular President's years in office. Under the Constitution, Justices on the Supreme Court receive what can amount to lifetime appointments which, by constitutional design, helps ensure the Court's independence from the President and Congress. The procedure for appointing a Justice is provided for by the Constitution in only a few words. The Appointments Clause (Article II, Section 2, clause 2) states that the President shall nominate, and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint ... Judges of the supreme Court. The process of appointing Justices has undergone changes over two centuries, but its most basic feature-the sharing of power between the President and Senate-has remained unchanged: To receive appointment to the Court, a candidate must first be nominated by the President and then confirmed by the Senate. Political considerations typically play an important role in Supreme Court appointments. It is often assumed, for example, that Presidents will be inclined to select a nominee whose political or ideological views appear compatible with their own. The political nature of the appointment process becomes especially apparent when a President submits a nominee with controversial views, there are sharp partisan or ideological differences between the President and the Senate, or the outcome of important constitutional issues before the Court is seen to be at stake. Additionally, over more than two centuries, a recurring theme in the Supreme Court appointment process has been the assumed need for professional excellence in a nominee. During recent presidencies, nominees have at the time of nomination, most often, served as U.S. appellate court judges. The integrity and impartiality of an individual have also been important criteria for a President when selecting a nominee for the Court. The speed by which a President selects a nominee for a vacancy has varied during recent presidencies. A President might announce his intention to nominate a particular individual within several days of when a vacancy becomes publicly known, or a President might take multiple weeks or months to announce a nominee. The factors affecting the speed by which a President selects a nominee include whether a President had advance notice of a Justice's plan to retire, as well as when during the calendar year a Justice announces his or her departure from the Court. On rare occasions, Presidents also have made Court appointments without the Senate's consent, when the Senate was in recess. Such recess appointments, however, were temporary, with their terms expiring at the end of the Senate's next session. Recess appointments have, at times, been considered controversial because they bypassed the Senate and its advice and consent role. The last recess appointment to the Court was made in 1958 when President Eisenhower appointed Potter Stewart as an Associate Justice (Justice Stewart was confirmed by the Senate the following year).

icivics supreme court nominations activity: HeinOnline , 2012* Searchable database which brings together hundreds of articles, hearings, documents, online resources and books to create a historical repository of information, primary and secondary, on the nominations of Supreme Court justices, beginning with the first Supreme Court justices. It also features the complete print series Supreme Court of the U.S. Hearings and Reports on Successful and Unsuccessful Nominations of Supreme Court Justices by the Senate Judiciary Committee. For more information:

icivics supreme court nominations activity: Supreme Court Nominations, 1789 To 2017
Congressional Service, 2018-07-20 The process of appointing Supreme Court Justices has undergone

changes over two centuries, but its most basic feature, the sharing of power between the President and Senate, has remained unchanged. To receive a lifetime appointment to the Court, a candidate must, under the Appointments Clause of the Constitution, first be nominated by the President and then confirmed by the Senate. A key role also has come to be played midway in the process by the Senate Judiciary Committee. Table 1 of this report lists and describes actions taken by the Senate, the Senate Judiciary Committee, and the President on all Supreme Court nominations, from 1789 through 2017. The table provides the name of each person nominated to the Court and the name of the President making the nomination. It also tracks the dates of formal actions taken, and time elapsing between these actions, by the Senate or Senate Judiciary Committee on each nomination, starting with the date that the Senate received the nomination from the President. Of the 44 Presidents in the history of the United States, 41 have made nominations to the Supreme Court. They made a total of 162 nominations, of which 125 (more than three-quarters) received Senate confirmation. Also, on 12 occasions in the nation's history, Presidents have made temporary recess appointments to the Court, without first submitting nominations to the Senate. Of the 37 unsuccessful Supreme Court nominations, 11 were rejected in Senate roll-call votes, 11 were withdrawn by the President, and 15 lapsed at the end of a session of Congress. Six individuals whose initial nominations were not confirmed were later renominated and confirmed to positions on the Court. A total of 119 of the 162 nominations were referred to a Senate committee, with 118 of them to the Judiciary Committee (including almost all nominations since 1868). Prior to 1916, the Judiciary Committee considered these nominations behind closed doors. Since 1946, however, almost all nominees have received public confirmation hearings. Most recent hearings have lasted four or more days. In recent decades, from the late 1960s to the present, the Judiciary Committee has tended to take more time before starting hearings and casting final votes on Supreme Court nominations than it did previously. The median time taken for the full Senate to take final action on Supreme Court nominations also has increased in recent decades, dwarfing the median time taken on earlier nominations. This report is current through 2017 and will be updated upon the occasion of the next Supreme Court confirmation.

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