

Blackhawk School District

CURRICULUM

Course Title: Legal Oratory and Debate
Grade Level(s): 10th-12th
Length of Course: Daily-1 Semester-.5 credits
Faculty Author(s): Jeff Tripodi
Date: June 2014

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In this advanced semester course, students will study legal procedure and the criminal justice system. Students will apply knowledge in conducting direct and cross examination, laying foundation, raising evidentiary objections, and crafting opening statements and closing arguments. Class will consist of lectures and hands-on experience in small groups, using case materials created by the Pennsylvania Bar Association's Young Lawyers Division, and will prepare students for mock trial and moot court exercises.

| Unit | Concepts | Standards | Resources |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Introduction to Law | Criminal justice system Federal and state court systems How litigation moves through the courts Legal vocabulary Legal procedure Case law vs. written law Constitutional law | 1.2.12.D: Evaluate textual evidence to make subtle inferences and draw complex conclusions based on and related to an author's implicit and explicit assumptions and beliefs about a subject. 1.2.12.E: Identify, analyze, and evaluate the structure and the format of a variety of complex informational texts for clarity, simplicity, and coherence, as well as appropriateness of graphics and visual appeal. 1.6.12.A: Listen critically and respond to others in small and large group situations. Respond with grade level appropriate questions, ideas, information or opinions. | Thomson West <i>Criminal Procedure and the Constitution</i> Chapter 1-3, various supplements |
| Legal reasoning and case study | Legal concepts and terminology Complaints Briefs Rules of evidence Rules of procedure Fact analysis Analogical reasoning Legal research | 1.6.12.B: Demonstrate awareness of audience using appropriate volume and clarity in formal presentations. 1.8.12.B: Conduct inquiry and research on self-selected or assigned topics, issues, or problems using a wide variety of appropriate media sources and strategies. Demonstrate that sources have been evaluated for accuracy, bias, and credibility. Synthesize information gathered from a variety of sources, including technology and one's own research, and evaluate information for its relevance to the research question. Demonstrate the distinction between one's own ideas from the ideas of others, and includes a reference page. CC.8.5.11-12.F: Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence. CC.8.5.11-12.G: Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem. | Mock Trial Case Materials, Pennsylvania Bar Association (previous year); various supplements |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Legal procedure | Objections Evidentiary procedure Ethics and professionalism Pleas Inquiries | <p>CC.8.5.11-12.H: Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.</p> <p>CC.8.5.11-12.I: Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.</p> <p>CC.8.6.11-12.A: Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.</p> | Thomson West <i>Criminal Procedure and the Constitution</i> Chapter 1-3; various supplements |
| Competitive debate and forensics | Rhetoric Refutation Parliamentary debate Original oratory Interpretation: humorous, dramatic, duo Extemporaneous speaking | <p>CC.8.6.11-12.F: Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.</p> <p>CC.8.6.11-12.G: Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the specific task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.</p> <p>CC.8.6.11-12.H: Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> | <i>The Art of Debate</i> , 12th Edition by N. André Cossette; various supplements |
| Litigious simulation | Case preparation Mock trial | <p>CC.8.6.11-12.I: Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.</p> | Mock Trial Case Materials, Pennsylvania Bar Association (current year); various supplements |