

Student Worksheet

DIRECTIONS

Read the following news story and answer the reading comprehension and discussion questions. Use additional paper if necessary.

STORY

Obama Nominates Sotomayor to High Court, 05/29/2009

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/us/jan-june09/scotus_05-26.html

READING COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is Sonia Sotomayor?

2. Why is her nomination historic?

3. Would Sotomayor make the Supreme Court more liberal or conservative?

4. What kind of nominee did President Obama want to select?

5. What is judicial activism?

6. How does someone become a Supreme Court Justice?

7. How many Supreme Court nominations have been rejected?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (more research might be needed)

1. What qualities do you think are important for a Supreme Court justice to have?

2. President Obama said that he wanted to nominate someone who is empathetic to the lives of everyday Americans. Do you agree with him? Why or why not?

3. If confirmed, Sotomayor would be the first person of Hispanic descent and the third woman to sit on the Supreme Court. Do you believe it is important to have a diverse Supreme Court? Why?

4. Use this lesson plan to explore how the Supreme Court affects your life:

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/teachers/lessonplans/history/scotus_function.html

and these lesson plans to look at the confirmation process

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/teachers/lessonplans/socialstudies/confirm2_7-20.html

Extension Activity

Have students write a 300-500 word essay on this topic providing clear examples. Send your completed editorial to NewsHour Extra (extra@newshour.org). Exceptional essays might be published on our Web site.