



YALE NATIONAL INITIATIVE

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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2019 Volume III: American Democracy and the Promise of Justice

Grade Level Gavel Student Court: Justice for All

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Grade Level Gavel Student Court: Justice for All, is a student-centered approach to learning history and understanding identity. This Curriculum Unit consists of three major components: Introductory Ancestry Project, Student Courtroom Debate and Discussion Setting and a Culminating Writing Project.

Students will begin the academic year with a three-week structured beginning segment on ancestry, wherein they will be completing a rubric based, research and presentation project exploring a chosen Ancient Kingdom of Africa once they have learned about and explored each one. Students will complete the project by completing a display board, accompanying essay and a presentation for this content.

The students will then be participating in a Student-Centered Courtroom wherein they will study, discuss and debate specific historical events following a timeline. Students will facilitate writing of discussion rules for the courtroom as it will serve as the vehicle for the History Curriculum. The debates will be focused on the premise Justice vs. Injustice to the people.

Finally, the students will be participating in a Culminating Writing Project. Students will use their reflections of the class debates that will be housed in notebooks, to develop and complete a collaborative writing piece.

(Developed for History and Geography, grades 4-12; recommended for History and Geography, grades 4-12)

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