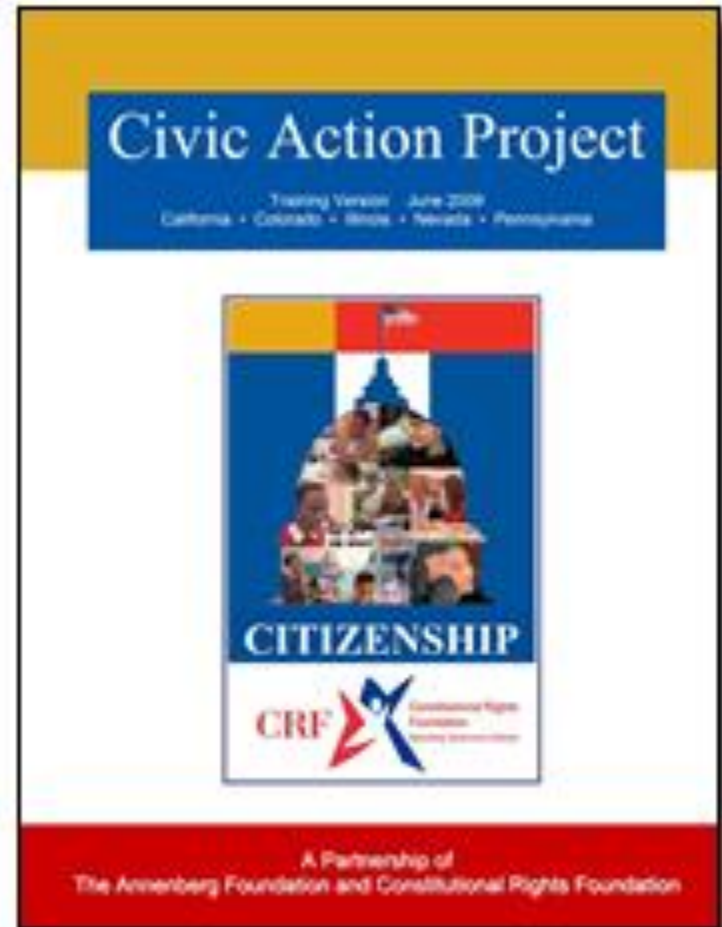


Connecting Current and Controversial Issues to Classroom Activities

BY: Mary Ellen Daneels and
Hayley Lotspeich



WHAT IS CAP?

- ③ Developed curriculum that allows for students to apply what they have learned through the course of their social studies education.
- ③ Provides students with real world experiences of taking civic action.
- ③ [What is CAP?](#)



What is an Effective Citizen?

- ◆ CAP Lesson One
 - ◆ KNOWLEDGE: What do effective citizens know?
 - ◆ SKILLS: What do effective citizens know how to do?
 - ◆ ATTITUDES: What attitudes/beliefs do effective citizens have?
 - ◆ ACTIONS: What actions do effective citizens take?
- ◆ Effective Citizen Survey: Day One → Final Exam

STEPS OF A CAP

- ④ Select a problem to work on
- ④ Research the problem
- ④ Choose a Project
- ④ Plan the project
- ④ Do the Project
- ④ Evaluate the project



DON'T STOP BELIEVING



These students had different needs.....



than these students do...

EXAMPLE TOPICS

Juarez CAP Projects

- ② Stop For Safety
- ② Bringing Blue Bins To Pilsen
- ② The Green Team

Wheaton North CAP Projects

- ② Teen Center
- ② Teen Curfew
- ② Healthy Lunch
- ② Cancer Funding

ACTION

@ WHEATON
NORTH
STUDENTS
TAKE THEIR
CAP TO THE
MAYOR



STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

- ④ “I liked finding out how I could be part of the process to change gov’t rules, regulations, etc. with the CAP project.”
- ④ “It was a cool experience to feel like you may be accomplishing something important.”



MORE STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

- ② “I realized little by little we can make a change.”
- ② “I felt empowered to share our concerns with community leaders and the administration.”
- ② “I learned that it is the citizen’s job to ensure that policies are enforced.”
- ② “I learned that if we work as a community we can get things done.”
- ② “Good experience. This project changed the way I look at this community.”

Students Can Review The Progress of Bills Online....

The screenshot shows the THOMAS (Library of Congress) website in a Windows Internet Explorer browser window. The browser's address bar displays <http://thomas.loc.gov/>. The website header includes "The LIBRARY of CONGRESS THOMAS" and "The Library of Congress > THOMAS Home". A navigation menu on the left lists categories such as THOMAS Home, About THOMAS, Bills, Resolutions, Congressional Record, Presidential Nominations, Treaties, Committee Reports, Government Resources, For Teachers, and Help. Below this, there are links for House of Representatives, Senate, and U.S. Code, followed by "Related Resources at the Library" including Law Library of Congress, Global Legal Monitor, and others. A "Find the Law Library on:" section provides social media links for Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and iTunes U. The main content area features a "Legislation in Current Congress" section with a search box for "Search Bill Summary & Status" (with options for Word/Phrase or Bill Number) and a "Browse Bills by Sponsor" section. To the right, there are sections for "Current Activity" (listing House and Senate floor news), "Weekly Top Five" (listing bills like H.R. 3, H.R. 3590, etc.), "Tip of the Week" (about the sharing toolbar), and a "Feature" section for "In Custodia Legis Blog". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the start button, several open windows, and the system clock displaying 12:04 PM on 11/20/08.

Another Online Review of Congressional Activity

C-SPAN Video Library - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.c-spanvideo.org/videoLibrary/

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FEATURED VIDEO 1 of 11

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Feb 15, 2011

1 hours, 1 minutes | 794 Views

President Obama held a news conference on his fiscal year 2012 budget proposal. In his remarks he...

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FINAL BRIEFINGS BY WHITE HOUSE PRESS SECRETARIES

Posted Feb 14, 2011

AID TO EGYPT DEBATED IN VIDEO LIBRARY

Posted Feb 1, 2011

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Latest Programs Aired

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House Session
House Proceeding
Feb 16, 2011

8 hours, 0 minutes | 31 views | Tags: House Proceeding

U.S. Worldwide Security Threats from Abroad
Senate Committee
Feb 16, 2011

31 minutes | 6 views | Tags: Terrorism

Defense Department 2012 Budget
House Committee
Feb 16, 2011

2 hours, 58 minutes | 34 views | Tags: Federal Budget, Dept. of Defense

Morning Hour
House Proceeding
Feb 16, 2011

1 hour, 25 minutes | Tags: House Proceeding

Senate Session
Senate Proceeding
Feb 16, 2011

9 hours, 59 minutes | Tags: Senate Proceeding

Impact of Judicial Vacancies on Civil and Criminal Cases
Call-In
Feb 16, 2011

37 minutes | Tags: Courts

Done

start

Window... | Novell G... | Internet... | Microsoft Po... | Microsoft...

Internet | 100% | 12:06 PM

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February 15, 2011

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12:02 PM

What does it mean to be an effective citizen in the global community?



The Spiraling Curriculum Leading to Effective Citizenship

- ◆ Freshmen Year: Geography
 - ◆ *What role do I play in the global community?*
- ◆ Sophomore Year: World History
 - ◆ *How does modern history affect the world?*
- ◆ Junior Year: United States History
 - ◆ *What does it mean to be an American?*
- ◆ Senior Year: United States Government
 - ◆ *What does it mean to be an effective citizen?*
- ◆ Elective: Community Leadership
 - ◆ *What does it mean to be an effective citizen in the global community?*

Bringing Controversy into the Classroom: Current Events

- ◆ What is the role of the government in a democratic republic?
- ◆ What are the rights of individuals in a democratic republic?
- ◆ How is conflict addressed in a democratic republic?
- ◆ How is power distributed in a democratic republic?
- ◆ What is an effective citizen?

Bringing Controversial Issues into the Classroom

The screenshot shows a Windows Internet Explorer browser window displaying the website for Community High School. The address bar shows the URL <http://www.d94.org/government/game.htm>. The page title is "Community High School - Windows Internet Explorer". The browser's menu bar includes File, Edit, View, Favorites, and Tools. The address bar has a "Live Search" button. The website's navigation bar includes links for Home, Site Map, Edline, Reading Groups, and Español. The date "Thursday, February 17, 2011" is displayed. The website's header features a banner with the school logo, a clock, a pen, the word "Government", an American flag, and a statue. The main navigation menu includes School, Students, Staff, Administration, Divisions & Departments, Links, LRC, Athletics, and Alumni. A search box is located on the right side of the navigation menu. The left sidebar contains a "Government Pages" section with a list of links: Welcome, Blackboard, Bill Status, Student Handbook, House Rules, Useful Links, Contact Your Elected Officials, Issue Links, Issue Group Ideas, Bill Texts, Position Papers, Political Spectrum, Election 2012, Congress and the Courts, Sheltered Government, Sample Profiles, Photos, History, Past Sessions, Committee Assignments, Constitution Review, and Games. The main content area is titled "Constitutional Concepts Games" and lists five games:

- **The Redistricting Game:** Learn how the three branches of state government are involved in drawing districts and why many believe there is a need for reform.
- **Do I Have a Right?:** Apply the amendments of the U.S. Constitution and analyze if potential clients to your law firm have a case.
- **Argument Wars:** Learn about historical Supreme Courts cases as you advance and support your arguments in court.
- **Executive Command:** Ever want to be president for the day? You can learn about the different roles of the president as you lead the executive branch.
- **Branches of Power:** Good at juggling? You will have to be to succeed at this game where you experience how the three branches interact to make law.

The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows the Start button and several open applications: Community High..., GradeQuick, My Documents, Effective citizen c..., effectiv_citiz_mc..., and mccormick. The system tray on the right shows a "Trusted sites" icon, a 100% zoom level, and the time 7:47 AM.

Questions? - Contact
 Hayley Lotspeich,
 Wheaton North HS,
 hlotspei@cusd200.org



A Look at the Bills Being Considered by Congress in 2011....

Choose by topics of your own interest, five bills that Congress is considering. State the pros and cons you can predict if each bill became a law. Also, circle any factors you believe may affect how a member of Congress might vote on the bill. Be sure to state whether you would like to see this bill become a law. (Be sure to choose 5 different topics from the list below...) Use <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/bssQuery/?Opt=s&Db=112>

Abortion	Afghanistan	Air Quality	Animals	Bankruptcy	Cancer
Crime	Drug Use	Education	Energy	Fire Arms	Foreign Aid
Health Care	Homeland Security	Illinois	Immigration	Iraq	Poverty and Welfare
Religion	School Athletics	Taxation	United Nations	Women's Rights	

An example has been done for you...

Topic Education Bill Number S7
 What the Bill Will Do: **A bill to expand educational opportunities for all Americans by increasing access to high-quality early childhood education and after school programs, advancing reform in elementary and secondary education, strengthening mathematics and science instruction, and ensuring that higher education is more affordable, and for other purposes.**

Pros - **better science and math instruction and early education, students who need extra get it**
 Cons - **I bet it's expensive!**

I would vote Yes on this law. (Yes or No)

Could the decision be affected by: (circle all that apply)

Race Religion Level of Education Age
 Gender Level of Income

Topic _____ Bill Number _____
 What the Bill Will Do:

Pros -
 Cons -

I would vote _____ on this law. (Yes or No)

Could the decision be affected by: (circle all that apply)

Race Religion Level of Education Age
 Gender Level of Income

Topic _____ Bill Number _____
 What the Bill Will Do:

Pros -
 Cons -

I would vote _____ on this law. (Yes or No)

Could the decision be affected by: (circle all that apply)

Race Religion Level of Education Age
 Gender Level of Income

Topic _____

Bill Number _____

What the Bill Will Do:

Pros -
Cons -

I would vote _____ on this law. (Yes or No)

Could the decision be affected by: (circle all that apply)

Race	Religion	Level of Education	Age
Gender	Level of Income		

Topic _____

Bill Number _____

What the Bill Will Do:

Pros -
Cons -

I would vote _____ on this law. (Yes or No)

Could the decision be affected by: (circle all that apply)

Race	Religion	Level of Education	Age
Gender	Level of Income		

Topic _____

Bill Number _____

What the Bill Will Do:

Pros -
Cons -

I would vote _____ on this law. (Yes or No)

Could the decision be affected by: (circle all that apply)

Race	Religion	Level of Education	Age
Gender	Level of Income		

Debriefing Questions:

- 1) In my opinion, the vote on _____ of the five bills could be affected by the race, religion, level of education, age, gender, or level of education of the Congressman or Senator voting.
- 2) Do you think it is important to have all races and religions represented in Congress? Why or why not? Explain your response.



About The Civic Action Project

Civic Action Project (CAP) is a different kind of civics and government program. It is a practicum for high school students in civics and government, in which they see how the content of a government course can apply to the real world. By taking civic actions, they also practice what real citizens do when they go about trying to affect policy or solve a real problem.

The CAP curriculum consists of lessons connected to the civic action process. Lessons 1-5 are key to helping students identify an issue, problem, or policy and to begin taking civic actions. Lessons 6-14 provide specific examples of ways citizens impact public policy and help students develop civic skills such as persuasion, presenting to audiences, and deeper policy analysis. Through the readings and interactive classroom activities contained in the lessons, students learn how government content applies to policymaking at the local level, how policy is made and can be influenced, and strategies for effective citizenship.

Interested – You can take a webinar or download lessons from the Constitutional Rights Foundation site at <http://www.crfcap.org/>

For more information, you can contact Dee Runaas at runaas@crfc.org

The screenshot shows the Civic Action Project website in a Windows Internet Explorer browser window. The address bar shows <http://crfcap.org/>. The website features a blue header with the title "Civic Action Project" and the logo of the Constitutional Rights Foundation. A navigation menu includes links for Home, About CAP, TEACHERS, Talk, STUDENTS, CAP Planner, Discuss, Blog, Action, and PARENTS. Below the navigation, there are three main sections: "STUDENTS" with a photo of students at a computer, "TEACHERS" with a photo of a woman, and "SCHOOLS & ADMINISTRATORS" with a photo of a school building. A "NEW" section highlights a webinar titled "CAP A Web Based Practicum for Teaching Government" and a resource for teachers titled "How to Get Started". A video player is embedded with the title "Civic Action What is CAP? CITIZENSHIP". The footer contains logos for the Constitutional Rights Foundation and The Annenberg Foundation, along with the text "A Partnership of The Annenberg Foundation and Constitutional Rights Foundation Copyright 2011 Constitutional Rights Foundation". The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows several open windows and the system clock at 12:16 PM.

Congress.org - Siteuser - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.congress.org/siteuser/profile

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Your name on the site will display as [Hotspot](#) [change this](#)

Write your lawmakers Get on your Soapbox

My News Feed

Illinois's 14th District

Show: All activity

Rep. Randy Hultgren (R-Illinois) voted Yea on Health Care Repeal Rule, which Passed

Rep. Randy Hultgren (R-Illinois) voted Yea on Reducing the amount authorized for salaries and expenses, which Passed

Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.) written by Daniel Newhauser
Rep. Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.) was shot at a constituent event in Tuscon, Ariz., today. This is the CQ profile which was written earlier this year.
18 days ago - See related stories on [Rep. Gabrielle Giffords](#)

YOUR LAWMAKERS
Illinois's 14th District

Rep. Randy Hultgren (R-Illinois)
[Write this official](#)

Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Illinois)
[Write this official](#)

Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Illinois)
[Write this official](#)

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http://www.congress.org/siteuser/profile

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Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Illinois) voted Yea on START Treaty Ratification, which Passed

Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Illinois) and Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Illinois) voted Yea on Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011, which Passed

Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Illinois) and Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Illinois) voted Yea on Don't Ask, Don't Tell Repeal Act of 2010, which Passed

Sen. Mark Kirk (R-Illinois) voted Nay on Cloture Motion; DREAM Act, which Failed

Sen. Richard Durbin (D-Illinois) voted Yea on Cloture Motion; DREAM Act, which Failed

Page 1 of 8
Viewing posts 1-10 of 76 [Next >](#)

Congressional staff surveyed in a new report say their bosses are more likely to be influenced by voters than lobbyists.

Obama seeks cooperation in address
President Obama called on Congress to come together Tuesday night, but the positions he outlined are sure to spark intense legislative battles.

Perfect Strangers: State of the Union
Some of the bipartisan pairings at the State of the Union Tuesday night seemed more like an '80s TV sitcom than the U.S. Congress.

ALERTS FROM GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

112th Congress Begins!
by [Americans For The Arts](#) on January 4

CFED: Working with the New Congress on Asset-Building Policies from Day One
by [CFED](#) on January 4

Ask Your Congressman to Join the U.S. COPD Caucus!
by [COPD Foundation](#) on January 5

Support Early Retirement for Frequently Deployed Reservists (HR 181)
by [Fleet Reserve Association](#) on January 6

Attacks Continue on EPA
by [Friends Committee on National Legislation](#) on January 6

[View more calls to action >](#)

Internet 100%

Congress.org

Questions? - Contact
Hayley Lotspeich,
Wheaton North HS,
hlotspei@cusd200.org

Customizing A Video Clip from A Speech, Committee Meeting, or the Floor Of Congress....

Go to <http://www.c-span.org/>

Click on c-span websites

Click on c-span video library

Type topic into the search engine

Locate a program of interest.

Find your section of interest in the transcript section

Click on "share" by the image.

Mark it in the video with the minutes designated in the transcript. Preview it to see you have all you need.

Email it to yourself, and in a couple of hours, you will have your own clip.....



Questions? - Contact
Hayley Lotspeich,
Wheaton North HS,
hlotspei@cusd200.org

3. Circle the central question(s) of the course the article deals with.

What is the role of the government in a democratic republic?

What are the rights of individuals in a democratic republic?

How is conflict addressed in a democratic republic?

How is power distributed in a democratic republic?

What is an effective citizen?

4. What is your response to the central question of the course that the article deals with? Do your beliefs put you to the right or left of the spectrum on this issue? Explain below.

5. Write a resolution for class debate relating to the issue you examined in the assignment by filling in the blanks below.

Be it enacted a STATE OR FEDERAL law to _____

Governments
Final Constitution Project
Effective Citizen

Name:

Knowledge: What do effective citizens know?	Attitudes: What attitudes/beliefs do effective citizens have?
Skills: What do effective citizens know how to do?	Actions: What actions do effective citizens take?

Governments
Final Constitution Project
Effective Citizen

Name:

Knowledge: What activities improved your knowledge?	Attitudes: What activities affected your attitudes/beliefs?
Skills: What activities improved your skills?	Actions: What activities will empower you to take action in the future?

EFFECTIVE CITIZENSHIP

The Legislative Semester is designed to teach the basic tenets of effective citizenship in a republican democracy. In its aftermath, you are asked to assess your progress towards this end through a two-part test where knowledge, skills and activism are measured separately on twenty-five point scales, allowing placement in one of the four defined categories within the matrix listed on the next page.

Attributes of Knowledge: Please rate your levels of knowledge and skills using the rankings listed below as they pertain to the following questions. Then, combine the five scores for a cumulative knowledge and skill score.

5-High

2-Medium-to-low.

4-Medium-to-high.

1-Low.

3-Medium.

1. Familiar with the structures of government. Day One: ____ Now: ____
2. Awareness of leaders who occupy positions of political leadership.
Day One: ____ Now: ____
3. Understanding of the paths a citizen can pursue to influence the political process. Day One: ____ Now: ____
4. Ability to communicate through writing. Day One ____ Now: ____
5. Ability to convey one's message through public speaking.
Day One: ____ Now: ____

Cumulative Knowledge Score: Day One: ____ Now: ____

Attributes of Activism: Please rate your levels of activism using the rankings listed below as they pertain to the following questions. Then, combine the five scores for a cumulative activism score.

5-High

2-Medium-to-low.

4-Medium-to-high.

1-Low.

3-Medium.

1. Regularly monitors political news through several media outlets, with occasional submissions of opinion-editorial pieces to news publications.
Day One: ____ Now: ____
2. Participates in civic organizations. This may include, for example, the local chamber of commerce, countywide political parties, or national interest groups like the National Right to Life Foundation or Sierra Club.
Day One: ____ Now: ____
3. Communicates regularly with elected political representatives.
Day One: ____ Now: ____
4. Attempts to engage and persuade others through political discourse. May take the form of oral debate, written communication, direct campaigning, demonstrations, etc. Day One: ____ Now: ____
5. Votes in local, state, and national elections. Day One: ____ Now: ____

Cumulative Activism Score: Day One: ____ Now: ____

Take your Cumulative Knowledge and Cumulative Activism scores and place them in the matrix below and read the corresponding description of your matrix positions both at the start of the semester and now..

		KNOWLEDGE				
		High		Low		
		25	20	15	10	5
A C T I V I S M	High	25	Effective Citizen		Faithfully Blind	
	Low	15	Political Pundit		Apathetic Non-voter	
		10				
		5				

Matrices Defined:

Effective Citizen: (Knowledge 15-25, Activism 15-25). The essence of the “virtuous citizen” that the founding fathers spoke so passionately about in their republican discourse, the Effective Citizen is the “people” embedded in democracy, where the citizens themselves govern. This matrix epitomizes what our Legislative Semester experience is about, honing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and practicing the activism embedded in effective citizenship.

Political Pundit: (Knowledge 15-25, Activism 5-15). These individuals possess an accomplished understanding and skills of the dynamics of the political process, but in reality, stand as nothing more than vocal spectators on the proverbial sidelines of politics. Often their attitude is cynical about all things political; they withdraw from the process as a sign of protest, effectively neutralizing their influence on the system itself.

Apathetic Non-voter: (Knowledge 5-15, Activism 5-15). What some would call the downfall of our democratic-republic; citizens who are not empowered with the knowledge or skills of effective citizenship, and are not inspired to partake in the political process in any capacity occupy this matrix. Voter apathy plagues the political process because of poor attitudes, and the Legislative Semester was constructed to eat at the roots of ignorance and non-participation.

Faithfully Blind: (Knowledge 5-15, Activism 15-25). The most difficult of the four matrices to define, these individuals are activists without a clearly defined cause. In essence, they are easily swayed by demagoguery and the attitudes of others because they are ill prepared for the responsibilities of citizenship. They lack the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective. The “politics of symbolism” resonates with such voters, where issues like the Confederate Flag can sway their votes at the expense of more pertinent issues. The Legislative Semester is designed to paralyze the effects of such occurrences of “thin democracy,” enabling students to draw from a deep knowledge base to combat surface activism.

ASSIGNMENT

- 1) Where did you start on the matrix? Where are you now on the matrix? How did you get there? Using the list of activities generated in the group brainstorm in class, explain the activities that were most useful in helping make you a more effective citizen this semester. Use at least one example of how your knowledge, attitudes, skills and actions were impacted by class activities to make you a more effective citizen.
- 2) Assuming that the Effective Citizen is the ideal matrix position, describe the areas where you need the most improvement on to be a more effective citizen in the future. Use the list of knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions of effective citizens generated in class to explain your answer.



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- [Constitution Review Games](#)

Constitutional Concepts Games

- **The Redistricting Game**: Learn how the three branches of state government are involved in drawing districts and why many believe there is a need for reform

- **Do I Have a Right?**: Apply the amendments of the U.S. Constitution and analyze if potential clients to your law firm have a case.

- **Argument Wars**: Learn about historical Supreme Courts cases as you advance and support your arguments in court.

- **Executive Command**: Ever want to be president for the day? You can learn about the different roles of the president as you lead the executive branch.

- **Branches of Power**: Good at juggling? You will have to be to succeed at this game where you experience how the three branches interact to make law.

- **Law Craft**: Learn how to write legislation as a Congressperson from a state of your choice.



Community High School
326 Joliet St.
West Chicago, IL 60185
(630) 876-6200

- **Supreme Decision**: Learn how the Supreme Court makes decisions as you clerk for a justice on the court.

School Students Staff Administration Divisions & Departments Links LRC Athletics Alumni

- **eLECTIONS**: Do you have what it takes to run for president? Play this game to find out.
- **Pick 12**: Learn how jury selection can affect the outcome of a case.
- **Court Quest**: Learn how to navigate the court system by giving legal advice to individuals
- **Represent Me**: Work as a legislator to represent the needs of your constituents.
- **Immigration Nation**: Learn about the naturalization process as you help individuals navigate the path to citizenship.
- **Cast Your Vote**: Decide what issues are most important to you, ask the candidates and rate their answers.
- **Responsibility Launcher**: Knock some civic sense into someone by playing this game.
- **Activate**: Do you have an idea to change your community? Learn what steps you can take to activate change.
- **Close to Home**: Join the debate concerning four case studies about how issue surrounding the First Amendment can hit "close to home"
- **Freedom Around the World**: How do your rights compare with students in other nations? Take a journey around the world and compare.