



The Florida Courts and the Judiciary: A Constitutional Scavenger Hunt

Overview: This activity will help participants become familiar with the Florida Constitution and corresponding provisions for the state courts system.

Objectives:

- Develop individual decision-making skills;
- Familiarize participants with the Florida Constitution;
- Examine the structure and function of the state courts; and
- Determine the jurisdiction of the state courts.

Materials Needed: Copies of the Florida Constitution
Handout: The Florida Courts and the Judiciary: A Constitutional Scavenger Hunt
Answer Key for Facilitator

Time Required: One hour

Sunshine State Standards: Grade 7: Standard 3, Benchmarks 8, 11, 13
SS.7.C.3.8, SS.7.C.3.11, SS.7.C.3.13

High School: Standard 3, Benchmark 9, SS.912.C.3.9.

Procedures:

Divide the audience into groups of five. Give each group the same questions/handout along with copies of the Florida Constitution. Participants should work in groups to answer each question and identify corresponding sections of the Florida Constitution where they found their answers. Allow 25-30 minutes to complete. Reconvene to discuss and debrief. Discuss the purpose of state constitutions and how they differ from the U.S. Constitution.

NOTE: Copies of the Florida Constitution can be obtained through the Florida Department of State. To access on-line, visit the Department's website at <http://www.election.dos.state.fl.us>.



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1. What Article in the Florida Constitution addresses the judicial branch? _____

2. The Florida Constitution establishes what levels of courts? _____

3. How many justices serve on the Florida Supreme Court? _____

4. How many justices constitute a quorum? _____

5. How is the chief justice of the Florida Supreme Court chosen? _____

6. What cases must be heard by the Florida Supreme Court? _____

7. Who determines the number of judges in Florida? _____

8. Who is eligible to be a judge in Florida? _____

9. Who investigates judicial misconduct in Florida? _____

10. How many judges hear a case in the district court of appeals? _____

11. How are county court judges chosen for office in Florida? _____

12. What happens when there is a vacancy in a judicial office? _____

13. Who does the Judicial Qualifications Commission present its recommendations for disciplinary sanctions to? _____
14. Are judges allowed to engage in the practice of law? _____

15. How are judicial salaries determined? _____



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Answer Key for Facilitator

1. Article V of the Florida Constitution
2. Article V, Section 1
3. Article V, Section 3
4. Article V, Section 3
5. Article V, Section 2
6. Article V, Section 3b
7. Article V, Section 9
8. Article V, Section 8
9. Article V, Section 12a(1)
10. Article V, Section 4a
11. Article V, Section 10
12. Article V, Section 11
13. Article V, Section 12
14. Article V, Section 13
15. Article V, Section 14