



# LAW AND JUSTICE

Foundations in Law · Foundations in Criminal Justice

## TEACHING THE LAW AND JUSTICE CURRICULUM

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the James Irvine foundation



# Introduction

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Welcome to the Law and Justice curriculum! Developed by Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC), with support from The James Irvine Foundation, the Law and Justice curriculum comprises two yearlong courses:

- *Foundations in Law*
- *Foundations in Criminal Justice*

It is designed for teachers working with grades 9–12 and beyond. Both courses are recommended for use in social studies, legal studies, criminal justice, and U.S. government classes in public schools, career academies, and postsecondary institutions.

This document describes how the curriculum is designed, provides detailed information about the curriculum materials, and offers suggestions for effectively using the materials in your classroom. It also describes additional resources available to help you implement this program. As you read, it will be helpful to refer to a copy of one of the Teacher Guides of the Foundations courses.

The curriculum is available online from EDC’s Law and Justice Web site at <http://lawandjustice.edc.org>. It is also distributed by ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career at <http://www.connectedstudios.org/>. Both courses are designed similarly and include downloadable files of the Teacher Guides and student handouts.

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## A. The Law and Justice Curriculum

### Essential Questions, Framing Questions, and Understandings

The Foundations courses each include six units. They are designed around several essential questions that address major concepts related to the study of law and may have more than one right answer. These questions engage students in issues that professionals in the legal system also grapple with. At the same time, the questions often lend themselves to multidisciplinary investigations.



The units' framing questions revolve around key knowledge that students explore throughout each unit. These questions stimulate and guide ongoing student discussion, debate, analysis, research, and reflection. Unit understandings are tied to the framing questions and seek to move students' knowledge beyond discrete facts.

| Examples of Essential Questions   | Examples of Framing Questions  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is the role of law in society?</li><li>• What are <i>justice</i> and <i>injustice</i>?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are some of the purposes behind criminal and civil laws?</li><li>• How is power divided in the U.S. legal system?</li></ul> |

### Inquiry- and Project-Based Approaches to Teaching and Learning

The curriculum design reflects inquiry- and project-based approaches to teaching and learning. The curriculum revolves around essential questions that guide the course and framing questions that guide each unit. Activities are scaffolded so that students learn knowledge and skills that they use in carrying out the unit project. Students engage in ongoing inquiry using prior knowledge and experiences, evidence based on research and investigation, and documents that reflect different perspectives. Through this inquiry, students come to question their opinions and the basis for their reasoning, thereby constructing new knowledge and understanding. The curriculum design includes instructional strategies and tools, but teachers are encouraged to draw on their own expertise to foster inquiring attitudes and habits of mind in the classroom.

### Distinctive Features of the Curriculum

Law and Justice is distinctive in that it does the following:

1. Enables students to develop foundational knowledge of the U.S. and international legal systems through different lenses and perspectives:
  - **U.S. Law and Law Enforcement:** How existing laws (civil and criminal) and their sources, including the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights, are made, enforced, and interpreted.

- **Career Exploration:** What career paths exist for entering a range of professions.
  - **Philosophical and Historical Foundations:** How and why a social contract, document, or law evolved.
  - **Power and Fairness:** How the law and legal systems can be used to protect as well as oppress individuals and groups, and how power is allocated within society.
  - **Advocacy and Policy:** How individuals and groups, including young people, can take actions to influence our legal system and achieve justice.
  - **Comparative Systems:** How the U.S. legal system compares with widely varying systems of law, philosophy, and practice in other countries.
2. Provides students with an understanding of the *legal landscape* and the relationship between law, law enforcement, and advocacy.

While journalists, policymakers, lawyers, and legal scholars use the term *legal landscape* in multiple ways, in this course the term *legal landscape* refers to both the different ways that the legal system addresses an issue (legislatively, administratively, and judicially) and the different levels at which this response occurs (local, state, federal, and sometimes international). The legal landscape also includes efforts to influence law and public policy through advocacy and civic engagement. The curriculum defines the legal landscape in these ways in order to help students better understand how laws are created, interpreted, enforced, and changed.

| LEGAL LANDSCAPE                           |           |          |
|---|-----------|----------|
| Branches of Government                    |           |          |
| Legislative                               | Executive | Judicial |
| (Local, State, and Federal Levels)        |           |          |
| The Fourth Branch                         |           |          |
| Public Advocacy by Individuals and Groups |           |          |

### Emphasis on Key Skills

Professionals emphasize the need for students to develop key skills that are essential for success in a range of careers. The six key skills are critical thinking/problem-solving, research, reading, writing, speaking/presenting, and teamwork, and include subsets of these skills, such as analyzing, reasoning, negotiating, and questioning. The Foundations courses enable students to learn and apply these skills over time. Through unit projects, journal assignments, and unit exams, students demonstrate their achievement and growth.

## B. Curriculum Materials

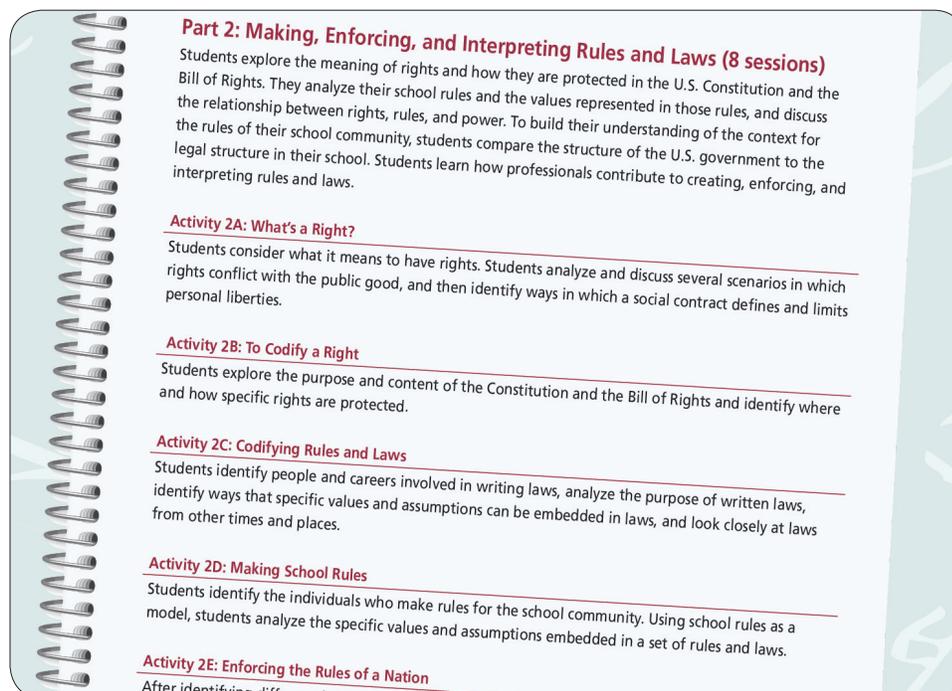
### The Teacher Guide

The Teacher Guide for each unit contains an overview that includes a unit project description, framing questions, understandings, law and justice content and skills addressed, a list of formative and summative assessments, and an explanation of where the unit fits in the context of either *Foundations in Law* or *Foundations in Criminal Justice*. The Teacher Guide also includes images of the student handouts for each unit activity along with suggested student responses. At the end of each unit are lists of materials, teacher resources, media resources, and references:

- **Teacher Resources** include additional background information about key content, guidelines for selected activities, images or other materials that accompany activities, sample instructional techniques, materials for role-play activities, and discussion guidelines.
- **Media Resources** are annotated links to Web sites for in-class use or for student research.
- **Assessments: Skills and Understandings** correlate standards to the knowledge and skills learned and applied in each unit.
- **References** identify sources of materials used to develop the curriculum.

### Structure of the Units

- **Parts and Activities:** Each unit has four to six parts, and each activity in a part represents one 50-minute class session. Each part and activity contains a short overview. The instructions for each activity are divided into numbered steps.



**Part 2: Making, Enforcing, and Interpreting Rules and Laws (8 sessions)**  
Students explore the meaning of rights and how they are protected in the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. They analyze their school rules and the values represented in those rules, and discuss the relationship between rights, rules, and power. To build their understanding of the context for the rules of their school community, students compare the structure of the U.S. government to the legal structure in their school. Students learn how professionals contribute to creating, enforcing, and interpreting rules and laws.

**Activity 2A: What's a Right?**  
Students consider what it means to have rights. Students analyze and discuss several scenarios in which rights conflict with the public good, and then identify ways in which a social contract defines and limits personal liberties.

**Activity 2B: To Codify a Right**  
Students explore the purpose and content of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and identify where and how specific rights are protected.

**Activity 2C: Codifying Rules and Laws**  
Students identify people and careers involved in writing laws, analyze the purpose of written laws, identify ways that specific values and assumptions can be embedded in laws, and look closely at laws from other times and places.

**Activity 2D: Making School Rules**  
Students identify the individuals who make rules for the school community. Using school rules as a model, students analyze the specific values and assumptions embedded in a set of rules and laws.

**Activity 2E: Enforcing the Rules of a Nation**  
After identifying different functions...

- **Student Handouts** for each unit include a student-friendly course overview, a unit overview, a unit project description, vocabulary, journal assignments, readings, forms and templates, writing samples, and a unit exam. Note that student handouts are available as a separate file on the Law and Justice Web site for printing and copying for classroom use.
- **Advance Preparation:** Before teaching the unit, refer to the Advance Preparation section in the unit overview. Also, the introduction to each part of the unit lists any pre-teaching preparation required by activity.
- **Vocabulary:** A vocabulary list with definitions appears in the unit overview student handout. Vocabulary words also appear in the Teacher Guide at the beginning of each part, where the words are introduced. The vocabulary listed in the Teacher Guide are words that are essential for students to know in order to demonstrate their understanding of content taught in each unit. There is a master list of vocabulary for each unit that includes potentially difficult words that are appropriate to their grade level; this list resides on the Law and Justice Web site.
- **Materials Needed:** All required and optional materials are listed for each class session. A master list of these items is in Appendix A: Materials List.
- **Teacher's Notes:** Located within activities, Teacher's Notes include additional information on instructional strategies or suggestions for ways to adapt an activity.
- **Homework and Assessments** are indicated by small icons at the point of reference.
- **Extensions—Did You Know?** At your discretion, assign the extensions for students to work on independently. These extensions provide students with additional assignments that deepen their understanding of topics and concepts. They may also be used as alternative or additional class assignments.



## C. Assessments

The Teacher Guide includes an Assessment Checklist, which provides criteria for grading student work and suggestions for **formative** and **summative** assessments. Teachers determine each assessment's point value for grading purposes. Formative assessments provide opportunities to monitor and evaluate student progress in order to identify concepts or skills that need reinforcement. Ongoing formative assessments include journal assignments, which pose questions that help students reflect on their research, new ideas, and class discussions.



Both the unit project and exam can be used as summative assessments. The project allows students to demonstrate their learning through authentic and relevant applications. Throughout the course, students develop projects that are informational, persuasive, technical, creative, and analytical. Examples of

assessments include a persuasive letter, theory of a case, civil rights narrative, research summary, and predisposition report. The unit exam enables students to illustrate their understandings of key concepts and ideas they have learned. Exams involve short-answer, essay, and problem-solving questions that require students to reflect on the framing questions, synthesize information, and provide written responses. Almost all units require one take-home essay as part of the exam. In many cases, questions have more than one answer or interpretation, and the Teacher Guide provides several possible answers.

Students conduct self-assessments of six key skills in critical thinking, reading, writing, research, speaking/presenting, and teamwork. Students revisit their self-assessments mid-year and at the end of the course and reflect on their personal growth. See the Teacher Toolkit for additional information about assessment.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### Handout 38: Research Self-Assessment

Use this assessment to help you assess and improve your research skills. Read the skill descriptions and assess your current level according to the rating scale. Think about how you can improve, and answer the questions.

**Rating Scale**

- 4 **Excellent**—I understand and use this skill well enough that I could teach or explain it to someone else.
- 3 **Competent**—I use this skill successfully whenever it is needed in my work.
- 2 **Developing**—I am gaining competence in using this skill, although I am not always sure I have used it successfully.
- 1 **Learning**—I am learning this skill, and I require help to use it successfully.

| Criteria   | Rating |
|--|--------|
| <b>When I conduct research, I . . .</b>  |        |
| a. Formulate a clear research question   |        |
| b. Find and select relevant information  |        |
| c. Analyze the credibility and reliability of my sources   |        |
| d. Synthesize different types of information (text, visual, audio)   |        |
| e. Document my research accurately, according to required guidelines, and cite my sources                        |        |
| f. Use a variety of sources to find relevant information, such as newspapers, journals, Web sites, and textbooks |        |

## D. Other Key Components of the Curriculum

### Opportunities for Integration

Integrated units, taught in the other academic disciplines, help students integrate what they are learning in *Foundations in Law* with what they are learning in core academic classes. Throughout the course, Opportunities for Integration identifies how the material connects with other academic subjects. Each unit includes several suggestions for working with other academic teachers.



**Opportunities for Integration**  
Collaborate with a social studies teacher who is teaching the U.S. Constitution. Students can learn in greater depth the debate over the ratification of the U.S. Constitution in the late 1700s. Also consider working with a world history teacher who is teaching constitutions of different countries.

**2. Conduct primary text analysis.**  
Introduce students to strategies to better comprehend primary text. Point out that the Bill of Rights is composed of *amendments* (additions to a written constitution passed by the legislature and, in some cases, ratified by the people).

**Teacher's Note: Amendments to the Constitution**  
The process for amending the U.S. Constitution involves two steps. First, an amendment must be proposed by a *two-thirds* "super majority" of *both* houses of Congress or two-thirds of the state legislatures. Second, the proposed amendment must be ratified by *three-fourths* of the states either by their state legislatures or through special conventions. In practice, all ratified amendments were proposed by Congress. The Bill of Rights refers to the first 10 amendments to the Constitution, which were all ratified in 1791. Only 17 additional amendments have been ratified since then.

Read aloud the First Amendment:  
*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

ConnectEd: The California Center for College and Career has developed integrated lessons in English language arts, math, and science that link to *Foundations in Law* and *Foundations in Criminal Justice*. Visit the ConnectEd Studios Web site to obtain these lessons.

### Career Connections

Career Connections are central to the Law and Justice curriculum. Throughout the course, students gain knowledge and skills that are relevant to a range of careers. They learn about the roles, responsibilities, and career paths of specific professions through unit activities and *People and Careers Profiles*. Ideas for Involvement with Professionals, either in the classroom or through workplace visits, appear throughout each unit. In addition, students collect exemplary work for their *Career Portfolios*.



## Assistant General Counsel



### Quick Profile

**Name:** Sandra T. M. Chong  
**Profession:** Attorney  
**Location:** San Diego, California  
**Education:** B.A. University of California, San Diego  
 J.D. University of California, Davis, School of Law  
**Former jobs:** Law clerk and associate at private law firms, legal instructor at community and state colleges, staff attorney at the San Diego Unified School District

### Brief Bio

Sandra Chong was born in Honolulu, Hawaii. When she was 10 years old, she wanted to be a teacher. Sandra "taught" the youngest of her three sisters, using a real desk and chalkboard and writing homework assignments on the board. She got her first real job, as a store cashier, at 16. Sandra has traveled to Asia, Africa, and Australia and hopes to do more traveling. Other goals on her "to do" list include becoming proficient in martial arts, surfing, and ballroom dancing. Sandra has served on various community boards and has been recognized as one of the "40 under 40" outstanding business and civic leaders of the San Diego community.

### Job Description

As the Assistant General Counsel to the San Diego Unified School District, Sandra Chong gives legal advice to the second-largest school district in California. The district is responsible for the education of over 200,000 students.

### Career Connections: Ideas for Involvement with Professionals

- Invite a local or state legislator or other elected official to discuss the factors in a community that led to a bill's introduction in the state legislature or city council.
- Invite professionals working in the field of advocacy to talk about the professional path they took, and have them speak about how they see their work connecting to the work of others in the legal system.
- Invite legal professionals to discuss how they use the skills of informational writing, public speaking, and data analysis in their work.
- Invite a legislator or policy advocate to discuss the current debate over the status of felon voting rights in your state.



### Career Portfolio

The Career Portfolio enables students to gather information about a range of careers, collect exemplary work that demonstrates their knowledge and skills relevant to careers, and reflect on their learning and career interests. Throughout the course, students have opportunities to work on their Career Portfolio, which includes unit projects, skill self-assessments, journal assignments, and People and Careers Profiles. At the end of the school year, students revisit the work they collected and reflect on the knowledge and skills they gained, the careers they explored, and how or if their interests have grown or changed.



## Eye on the Law

A key goal of the Foundations courses is for students to be knowledgeable and reflective about current careers, events, issues, and developments in the legal system. One way the curriculum promotes development of these skills is by asking students to look for examples of the law in action in daily life. You are encouraged to incorporate Eye on the Law activities wherever possible in conjunction with the Foundations courses, and to monitor news media in order to find appropriate items to connect to these activities. The curriculum provides templates and guidance for carrying out Eye on the Law activities. Occasions when Eye on the Law activities might be appropriate include the announcement of an important court decision; a change in a federal, state, or local law; or the organization of a public protest. Through the Eye on the Law activities, students also strengthen their media literacy skills.

## E. Suggestions for Law and Justice Teachers

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### Introducing the Foundations Courses to Students

The curriculum provides course syllabi for both *Foundations in Law* and *Foundations in Criminal Justice* that you can distribute to students. You can decide how you want to use these documents and how else you might want to introduce each course to your students. You may have students review the essential questions and various parts for each course. However you decide to introduce each course, setting common expectations and a tone that encourages students to share their responses to, concerns about, and hopes for the course is as important as the information you share about its content and activities.

### Supporting Students with Limited Reading or English Proficiency

Providing support for students with reading or language challenges is essential, because the Law and Justice curriculum is academically rigorous, and the language of the materials is appropriate to the targeted grade levels. The curriculum includes literacy strategies that are embedded in each unit, and the Teacher Toolkit includes additional materials on literacy. Preview these resources before teaching the course to determine how you can use them to meet the needs of your students. The following are examples of literacy strategies in the curriculum:

- K-W-L
- Annotating & Paraphrasing
- Think Aloud
- Word Wall
- Context Clues
- Preview Text
- Mind Map
- Generating Questions

There are a number of other ways to provide this support, and, depending on your student population, you can take a more systemic approach by identifying other school-based interventions or support services. Finally, you may want to collaborate with an English language arts teacher on some of the reading and writing assignments. Suggestions are provided in each unit as Opportunities for Integration.

### **Involving the Community**

Each unit of the Law and Justice curriculum includes ideas for ways to engage institutions, local practitioners, and community-based organizations to support students' learning. Plan ahead to take students to workplaces, have professionals visit your classroom, or engage parents and the community in relevant issues. As you involve outside experts and institutions, communicate with them beforehand to ensure that they know what to expect and are prepared to make direct connections to what students are learning in the classroom.

### **Integrating Technology**

Reliable access to computers, the Internet, and necessary software for teachers and students is essential for full implementation of the Foundations courses, and proficiency with technology is important for students to succeed in college and careers. Law and Justice courses use technology as students conduct research on the Web, take part in online youth forums, and communicate information through online tools and presentation software. At the same time, the curriculum acknowledges the reality of inconsistent or unreliable Internet access in some classrooms and communities. Where possible, the Teacher Guide suggests alternatives or options, or you may want to download and copy documents or resources ahead of time to use in the classroom.



### **Adapting the Curriculum**

As a teacher of the Law and Justice curriculum, you will bring your own expertise and familiarity with your school and community. You are encouraged to adapt or enhance the curriculum through the development of additional resources and extensions, and the use of technology. At the same time, the structure and content of the units have been designed to reflect research findings about how students learn, the classroom experience of the developers and teachers who piloted the units, and the advice of educators and legal professionals. Features of the curriculum that are essential to maintaining its integrity include academic rigor and inquiry- and project-based pedagogy, comprising strategies such as critical questioning, self-reflection, and collaborative learning. These decisions were intended to maximize the opportunity for students who experience the Foundations courses to prepare for future academic and career success. Adaptations of the curriculum should therefore retain fidelity to its core principles and its approach to teaching and learning.

## F. Support for Teaching the Law and Justice Curriculum

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The Law and Justice curriculum provides support to teachers in a number of ways. The Foundations courses integrate instructional techniques and tools throughout each unit. Teacher's Notes provide additional tips, strategies, and alternatives. In addition, the curriculum includes a **Teacher Toolkit** that offers additional materials in the areas of literacy, assessment, teaching controversial issues, and teamwork.



Visit the Law and Justice Web site at <http://lawandjustice.edc.org> to access the Teacher Guides, student handouts, Teacher Toolkit, and accompanying materials.