



<p>Grades: 9-12</p>	<p>The Minnesota Supreme Court Traveling Oral Arguments: Lesson Plan for Attorney Classroom Visits to Champlin Park High School and other Anoka-Hennepin High Schools</p>	 <p>MINNESOTA JUDICIAL BRANCH</p>  <p>MINNESOTA STATE BAR ASSOCIATION CIVIC EDUCATION ▲ COMMITTEE</p>
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Objective:

- 👤 Students will understand the role of the Minnesota Supreme Court in the context of Minnesota's Judicial Branch
- 👤 Students will know what to expect when observing an oral argument, especially what is expected of them with respect to courtroom decorum
- 👤 To the extent that they are able, students will understand the case to be argued at their school
- 👤 Students will be prepared to ask thoughtful and appropriate questions during the Q & A portion of the visit

Materials:

- 👤 Handout 1: Court Jurisdiction
- 👤 Handout 2: A Visitor's Guide to Oral Arguments: Minnesota Supreme Court

Instructions/Lesson Plan (one class period):

1. Introduction:

Tell the students your name, occupation and the purpose of your visit – they will be observing the Minnesota Supreme Court preside over a case at their school! (3 minutes)

2. Read the following disclaimer to the students:

“I am in no way associated the litigants in this case or their attorneys. As a licensed attorney, I am offering my personal legal interpretation of this particular case for educational purposes.”

Explain to them what is called “Canon 3A of the Code of Judicial Conduct,” a rule that prevents a judge from making “public comment about a pending or impending proceeding in any court, and shall require similar abstention on the part of court personnel subject to the judge’s direction and control” (If necessary, explain what that means, why it relates to your visit and that it will be important again during the Q & A portion of the visit as well). (3 minutes)

3. Go over with the students briefly Handout 1: “Court Jurisdiction.”

Explain to students the role of the Minnesota Supreme Court in the context of the Minnesota Judicial Branch being careful not to get caught up in nuance. This portion of the presentation will be a success if (1) students leave knowing that the Minnesota Supreme Court is the highest court in the state of Minnesota and, for the most part, holds final authority on issues of constitutional rights of the people of the state of Minnesota; and (2) understand the general purpose of the courts. You may also want to point out that the Minnesota Supreme Court automatically hears all first degree murder appeals; particularly if that is the type of case to be heard during the argument at their school. (5 minutes)

4. Go over with students Handout 2: “A Visitor’s Guide to Oral Arguments: Minnesota Supreme Court.”

Tell students about the oral argument process. Again, do not get stuck in detail! Go over the bolded bullet points under “What Happens During Oral Arguments?” and “Courtroom Decorum” reminding them

that they will be observing an official proceeding that will decide issues of great importance to both of the parties involved in the case.

Stress to the class that they will be expected to adhere to this decorum and could be asked to leave the auditorium – or worse – if they are disruptive. BECAUSE OF THE NATURE OF THE CASE, THIS PORTION OF THE LESSON PLAN IS VERY IMPORTANT. (5 minutes)

5. Review with students the background on the case they are going to hear. Refer to the provided “CPHS Case Summary” (20 minutes)

6. Formulate Student Questions (5 minutes or more if time allows):

Reminding students of the implications of “Canon 3A of the Code of Judicial Conduct” (they can’t ask about any case!), tell students they will have an opportunity to ask Justices questions about their job and the Minnesota Supreme Court; one of the Justices’ favorite parts about these visits (seriously).

Have the students write down questions that they may want to ask the Justices. Ask students to share the questions they have written down. Encourage students who have great questions and respectfully guide students to better questions for those who have questions that...aren’t so good...