

Project FOCUS  
Best Lessons  
THIRD GRADE

**Title of Lesson:** The Judicial Branch

**Theme:** Constitutional v. Unconstitutional

**Unit Number:** 2      **Unit Title:** Government/ Civic Understandings

**Performance Standard(s) Covered (enter code):**

SS3CG1a.) Explain why in the United States there is a separation of power between branches of government and levels of government.

SS3CG1b.) Name the three levels of government (national, state, local) and the three branches in each (executive, legislative, judicial), including the names of the legislative branch (Congress, General Assembly, county commission or city council).

SS3CG1c.) State an example of the responsibilities of each level and branch of government.

**Enduring Standards (objectives of activity):**

**Habits of Mind**

- Asks questions
- Uses numbers to quantify
- Works in a group
- Uses tools to measure and view
- Looks at how parts of things are needed
- Describes and compares using physical attributes
- Observes using senses
- Draws and describes observations

**Content (key terms and topics covered):**

Democracy

Three Branches

Judicial

Judicial Review

Constitution

Constitutional/ Unconstitutional

**Learning Activity (description in steps)**

**Abstract (limit 100 characters):** Students will determine if new “laws” violate the classroom Constitution.

**Details:** Students will first identify the Judicial Branch and its powers. They will then learn what the US Constitution is and what it means for a law to be constitutional or unconstitutional. The students will identify if the new laws proposed in the lesson are constitutional or unconstitutional based on the current classroom rules.

**Materials Needed (type and quantity):** PowerPoint and visible set of classroom rules

**Notes and Tips (general changes, alternative methods, cautions):** Make sure to ask the students why a law is unconstitutional. Another good idea is to ask how to make the law constitutional if it is not, and vice versa.

**Sources/References:**

**1) Judicial PowerPoint (attached)**