

## Supreme Court Activity

The mock Supreme Court activity I completed in the first semester of my senior year was the single most important learning experience I have had throughout my high school career. Not only is it an advanced learning strategy designed to show students how the justice system works by recreating it in a classroom setting, but it also incorporates social media, a new idea usually unfamiliar to teachers but popular with teenagers. This kept the recreation interesting and fun for everyone in the class. It also kept each student engaged throughout the project, combining a new and exciting learning experience with a thorough understanding of the judicial system. This assignment provides individuals with an opportunity to share strong opinions and knowledge as well as a way to have a friendly competition against other classmates. By giving students a point to argue, even if it is not one that they agree on, the teacher is showing them how to work as a team and adapt to new situations they may not yet be comfortable with. This task is not only an interactive and innovative way to teach students about the United States justice system, it also draws on the students' strengths as well as their weaknesses throughout the project, going beyond the classroom and extending to real life situations like work presentations or public speaking.

My personal experience with this assignment was extremely positive, and even inspiring for me. In 2015 I had a stroke, and have had a speech deficit ever since. This assignment, though demanding, revealed something to me that I was not able to see in myself. By putting me on the spot and having me think on my feet, I was able to overcome something that had been holding me back for almost three years. Without this mock court, I have no idea how long it would have taken for me to get over my fear of speaking in front of others. In fact, thanks to this project, when we were assigned a similar recreational court project later in the semester, I felt confident enough to volunteer as a "lawyer" in the mock Supreme Court once again. Not only did this activity show me how to face my fear and overcome it, it also helped me to realize the potential I had in public speaking, despite my disability. I owe so much to my amazing teacher for creating and orchestrating this project, as well as my classmates for being so supportive. This activity not only impacted my learning, it strengthened my confidence and gave me an opportunity to get out of my comfort zone. I am exceedingly grateful for this assignment and hope that it continues at my school and hopefully other schools as well.

Michael