



Lesson Plan: Freedom of Religion

Assessment: Students will be evaluated through informal checks for understanding, teacher observation, and written performance on the *amicus curiae* brief.

GRASPS:

Goal	Your goal is write a brief to the US Supreme Court to convince them that the reciting the pledge at school is either a violation or not a violation of a student's first amendment's rights.
Role	You are an attorney with the Religious Liberty Foundation. You have been asked to represent the foundation and file a brief with Supreme Court in the case of <i>Elk Grove School District v. Newdow</i> .
Audience	The justices of the US Supreme Court.
Situation	The United States Supreme Court has agreed to hear oral arguments in the case <i>Elk Grove School District v. Newdow</i> . They have asked for briefs to be submitted on the matter from individuals and organizations. The Religious Liberty Foundation has asked you to represent the Foundation and file a brief on their behalf. You must research the case and precedent Supreme Court cases on religious liberty. Based on the research conducted, you must determine whether the daily recitation of the pledge of allegiance may be a violation of a student's right to freedom of religion as protected in the first amendment.
Performance	You will prepare a written brief to the court to articulate your position on the matter.
Standard for Success	You must clearly demonstrate your understanding of the first amendment in your arguments and knowledge of precedent cases.



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Curricula for K-12 Civics Education

Quality Criteria:

	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic
Idea Development	Takes a strong, well defined position; uses at least three supporting ideas with relevant evidence.	Takes a clear position; uses at least three supporting ideas with evidence.	Position is not clearly stated; development is brief with little evidence to support.	No position taken; undeveloped reasons and no evidence provided.
Organization	Demonstrates logical sequencing of ideas through well-developed paragraphs; transitions used; gripping introduction and strong conclusion.	Well-developed paragraphs; introduction and conclusion developed.	Organization to writing, but ideas not fully developed; introduction and conclusion present but not fully developed.	No paragraph structure; no introduction or conclusion; illogical organization of ideas.
Mechanics and Language Usage	Few errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage. Use of rich vocabulary and varied sentence structure.	Few errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage. Occasional use of rich vocabulary and sentence variety.	Errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage; repetitious vocabulary; simple sentence structure.	Multiple errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and usage; weak vocabulary; simple sentence structure.
Presentation	Typed and presented according to guidelines.	Paper is legible, but may not be typed, and is presented according to formatting guidelines.	Paper is legible but not typed and may not include appropriate formatting.	Difficult to read and not written in appropriate format.