



Operation Protect & Defend – 2023-2024
70 Years After *Brown v. Board of Education*
Lesson Plan for Teachers

Included in this year's Operation Protect and Defend civics lessons you will find a vocabulary list, two background articles, four case summaries, and two political cartoons (use one or both). The case summaries, in particular, will require teacher direction and discussion of the critical thinking questions. Please do your best to cover all the lessons in advance of the dialogue with lawyer and judge teams. Backwards planning for the date of your dialogue visit is your best bet and as you are the best judge of your classes, use the number of days you think will be required.

Recommended pacing guide for four days:

NIGHT BEFORE Day 1:

Distribute vocabulary list and have students get familiar with those terms, as they will appear in the lessons. Use your judgment about also assigning the first article on this night before Day 1. If you hold the article, then below is a suggested timeline.

Day 1:

In class, have students read the Gerson article from The New Yorker and respond to the critical thinking questions and then have a whole class discussion. What does it mean for the state to have a compelling interest? If time, project the first political cartoon and have students answer the three questions.

Have students read the first case summary at home, Plessy v Ferguson (if it is appropriate for your class) and respond to the questions attached. Most students should be familiar with this case from U.S. history classes, so it is the easiest of the four summaries.

Day 2: Option: Begin with the political cartoon as follow up to the Gerson article from yesterday if you didn't have time to project the image and discuss. Then review the Plessy case in class.

Day 3: Brown v. Board of Education should be done in class, but use your judgment if it needs to be assigned as homework at the end of day 2 so you have time to discuss it.

Evening of day 3: Bakke v UC Regents and Students for Fair Admissions case summaries. These are complicated cases, so if students struggle to complete them, then you can focus on big picture.

Day 4: Discuss with classes the broad strokes of these decisions in the way that makes the most sense in preparation for the dialogue. The judges and lawyers will not be diving into the weeds on particular case opinions. The dialogue will focus on the bigger concepts around equal protection under the law, what that means for school admissions, what that means for the government's role, and some discussion around the court changing direction and overturning previous rulings. Day 4 is for you to help students understand the big picture and possibly prepare some questions for the day of the dialogue.