

Introducing Argument Wars:

- Write this statement on the board: “Students must come to school in the early morning.”
- Based on this statement, have the students write down a specific time that they believe students must come to school. You can call on several different students to share their answers.
- Now tell the students that a student has come to school at 10 am, and the principal gave the student a detention for arriving to school late. This case will be called: *The Student v. The Principal*.
- Divide the students in half based on where they are sitting. One side of the room represents the student who believes that the detention is unfair because he/she came to school on-time. The other side of the room represents the principal who believes the student arrived to school late. Have the students, either individually or in pairs, come up with a reason (which is called a “support” in the game) that supports their side of the disagreement (which is called the “argument” in the game). For example:
 - Most people have to get to work at 9 am, so 10 am is not the early morning; or, the sun rises before 8 am so 10 am is not early in the morning.
 - 10 am is two hours before lunch time, so it is still early in the morning; or, many students don't get out of bed until noon on the weekend, so 10 am is early in the morning.
- Call on a few students or pairs to share the reasons they came up with to support their side.
- Discuss why there is good reason for confusion or disagreement on whether the student came to school late or not. For example, the language in the rulebook is vague, or there are good reasons to support both sides. You can share with the students that it is a judge who would listen to the reasons on both sides and decide who wins the disagreement.
- Then connect this exercise to the game they will be playing today. In *Argument Wars*, the students will be playing lawyers. There is a disagreement over a rule in the Constitution. One side believes the government broke the rule, and the other side does not think there is any problem with how the government handled the situation. As the lawyer, students will choose the BEST supports to persuade the judge that their side is right!
- Now students should play *Argument Wars* games (determine which games based on your curricular needs and time constraints). The handout that goes along with each game can be completed as they go along, or the students can go back through the game a second time to find the answers. (NOTE: The handout captures the key points of the cases. It does not get into how to build strong supports for an argument before a judge.) If you want a record of the students' work in the game, remind them to print out their score sheet(s) at the end.

Reflections on Lessons:

Some discussion questions to ask students at the end of class:

- What did you learn from playing Argument Wars?
- Which types of supports seemed to get the most points?
- What did you learn about what lawyers do?
- What did you learn about what judges do?
- What is the Constitution? And what role did it play in the games?
- Why do you think there are fights about what the government can and cannot do?
- Which case(s) did you feel most strongly about and why?
- Did you agree with the Supreme Court's decision for any case? Why?
- Did you disagree with the Supreme Court's decision for any case? Why?

Argument Wars: Tracking the Cases!

Name: _____



TIP: Remember, the Constitution is the rulebook for your government. Just like your school handbook contains the rules you must follow, the Constitution includes the rules that the government must follow. If someone believes the government broke these rules, then the person can go to court. Today, you will learn about cases in which someone went to court because the government did something to him or her that might have broken these rules!

Name of Case:

_____ v.

Rule in the Constitution:

(example: 3rd Amendment)

Main Idea:

Side #1: There's a problem! What does this side believe the government has done wrong?

Side #2: There's no problem! What does this side believe the government did right?

Which side won?

Do you agree or disagree, and WHY?

Name of Case:

_____ v.

Side #1: There's a problem! What does this side believe the government has done wrong?

Which side won?

Do you agree or disagree, and WHY?

Rule in the Constitution:

Main Idea:

Side #2: There's no problem! What does this side believe the government did right?

Name of Case:

_____ v.

Side #1: There's a problem! What does this side believe the government has done wrong?

Which side won?

Do you agree or disagree, and WHY?

Rule in the Constitution:

Main Idea:

Side #2: There's no problem! What does this side believe the government did right?