CIVICS & LAW Academy

RESOURCE GUIDE
CIVICS & LAW
Academy

RESOURCE GUIDE

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What is a Civics and Law Academy?
A “Civics and Law Academy” engages young people of middle school and high school age in learning about law and society. The purpose of an Academy is to prepare young people to be participants in our democratic society. In an Academy, knowledgeable, civically active adults share their expertise, experience, and enthusiasm for civic engagement with young participants. Academies may be conducted by lawyers, judges, teachers, youth workers, or other civic leaders. Each Civics and Law Academy provides participants with a minimum of eight (8) hours of curricular focus. As an Academy organizer, you may arrange your instructional hours to suit your specific situation. For example, an Academy may consist of four (4) two hour sessions or two (2) four hour sessions, or it might be planned as an overnight retreat to accommodate the time required.

Why Civics and Law?
Academies are designed to develop civic competency, which requires knowledge about law. Understanding of law and legal issues is essential to understanding the functioning of government, culture, and society. By participating in an Academy, young people gain the knowledge, skills, and values needed to function effectively in our pluralistic, democratic society based on the rule of law.

Who sponsors a Civics and Law Academy?
An Academy may be sponsored by a state or local bar association, young lawyer affiliates, a civic organization, a school, or any organization or agency engaged in civics and law activities.

Who are likely partners for delivering your Academy?
The goals and target audience of Civic and Law Academies are sure to appeal to civic-minded groups. Among the organizations and agencies that would make great Academy partners are community service organizations such the League of Women Voters, Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce; youth leadership organizations such as YMCAs and Boys and Girls Clubs; educational stakeholders such as parent and teacher associations, educators’ professional groups, colleges and universities; law-focused organizations such as police associations, local and state bar associations, young lawyer affiliates and law schools.

What is in this Guide?
In this Guide you will find the tools for a successful Academy. Section I: Pathways to Understanding provides six different content focuses, or “pathways,” for an Academy and describes co-curricular activities that can be used in addressing each focus. Section II: Planning Your Academy offers a checklist for getting organized followed by examples of optional agendas. Section III: Engaging Young People in Active Learning details seven tried-and-true strategies that go beyond lectures and discussions. The section closes with an attorney’s advice for making successful presentations.
The six “Pathways to Understanding” outlined here represent different approaches for the Civics and Law Academies. They are intended for use by Academy leaders to identify the content focus of their particular Academy. Each Pathway provides participants with opportunities to explore issues of law and civic participation. Choose one Pathway. Then select your content and curriculum from the accompanying list of concepts and topics. These illustrate the range of issues that can be addressed under each Pathway although you may think of others. One caution—don't try to treat too many but choose a few concepts/topics with which you are comfortable and that are suited to your participants and your Academy timeframe. The cases suggested here can be used as background information for presenters or excerpted for use with students. You will find lesson plans for the Pathways at www.americanbar.org/publiced/civics.

As you design your Academy, we encourage you to include co-curricular activities and events to enrich your Academy (see page 8 for ideas).

### Choosing Your Curriculum

#### Law and Justice

Following this Pathway, participants examine the nature and function of law in society and, in particular, in American society. They explore the ideal of justice, the relationship of law to justice, and the operation of legal institutions.

**Concepts and Topics**
- concept of rules
- principle of rule of law/due process of law
- resolution of disputes peacefully through legal process v. vigilante justice/mob rule
- ideal of justice as motivation for action
- law as an instrument of social change
- independence of the judiciary
- adversarial legal system
- presumption of innocence in criminal trials

**Suggested Cases**
Pathways

**POWER AND EMPOWERMENT**

Following this Pathway, participants are introduced to the concept of power in politics and government, focusing on the United States. Participants explore the purpose, authority, and limits of political power. Looking at power in the context of democratic government, they consider how “we the people” can be politically engaged and empowered to participate in civic life.

**Concepts and Topics**
- ideals and realities of political power
- popular sovereignty: government of the people, by the people, and for the people
- legitimacy of government
- checks and balances and separation of powers
- federalism and shared powers: local, state, and national governments
- representative institutions and electoral democracy
- jury as a democratic institution
- civic action and democracy
- civil disobedience
- making and enforcing law

**Suggested Cases**

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**CONSTITUTIONS AND CONSTITUTIONALISM**

This Pathway engages participants in examining the ideal of constitutionalism, the general principle that the authority of government derives from the people and is limited by law, and the actual practices of constitutional governments. It contemplates how and why the U.S. Constitution has changed over time and has been interpreted by the federal courts and amended through constitutionally established procedures. Participants also analyze the institutions and political/legal processes critical to sustaining American civil society under the rule of law.

**Concepts and Topics**
- government under law
- idea of written constitution
- judicial review
- limited government
- ways to interpret the Constitution: living Constitution and original understanding
- drafting and ratifying the U.S. Constitution
- amending/changing the U.S. Constitution
- comparing U.S. to other national constitutions
- comparing U.S. to state constitutions
- relationship of constitutionalism to democracy: balance of majority rule and minority rights

**Suggested Cases**
Rights and Responsibilities

This Pathway explores the concept of individual rights and the challenges in protecting and guaranteeing such rights. It identifies basic political and individual rights secured under the U.S. Constitution and the reciprocity of rights and responsibilities, such as those related to voting.

Concepts and Topics

- concept of enumerated rights/origins of Bill of Rights
- First Amendment freedoms (speech, press, assembly, religion, petition)
- habeas corpus rights
- rights of the accused
- search and seizure
- intellectual property/tangible property rights
- Second Amendment
- concept of human rights
- concept of the right of privacy
- distinction between political and socioeconomic rights
- voting as a right and responsibility
- judicial protection of individual rights

Suggested Cases


Freedom and Equality

This pathway leads participants to explore two fundamental, highly cherished principles of American constitutional democracy—freedom and equality. Participants examine how the principles are related. They study how individuals and groups have secured freedom and equality under law, which has sometimes involved using the law to challenge the status quo.

Concepts and Topics

- civil liberties
- equal protection of the law/Fourteenth Amendment
- incorporation/application of Bill of Rights to states
- relationship of political to social equality
- linking political freedom to equality/Declaration of Independence/Gettysburg Address
- affirmative action/equality of opportunity
- expanding the franchise/voting rights amendments and legislation
- civil rights, women’s and gay rights movements/equal rights

Suggested Cases

AMERICAN IDENTITY AND PLURALISM

Following this Pathway, participants seek answers to questions, such as “What does it mean to be an American?” “What does it mean to be a citizen?” “How is American identity forged in the context of a complex pluralistic society?” They examine how the legal standards and political ideals enshrined in America’s founding documents and symbols help form that identity. They also explore the ways the diverse values and beliefs Americans hold influence our sense of national identity and the core norms of civil society.

Concepts and Topics
- defining U.S. citizenship under law/14th Amendment
- use of law and legal system to address changing values of American identity and pluralism
- law and popular culture
- relationship of law to custom, norms, and values
- history of immigration law and policy
- fundamental values and principles of constitutional democracy
- law and symbols of American identity (flags, pledge of allegiance, Constitution, official motto, citizenship oath, loyalty oaths, passports, Liberty Bell)

Suggested Cases

IDENTIFYING CO-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

In addition to curricular instruction, you will want to enrich your Academy program with co-curricular activities and events. The term “co-curricular” is a deliberate choice. It conveys the fact that all such activities and events are integral to the course of study of the Pathway you are following. When carefully chosen and undertaken, the activities and events enrich the Pathway curriculum and enhance participant understanding and appreciation of law and civics.

Co-curricular activities and events may be held at the meeting site of the Academy or conducted off-site in the community. Listed below are some community-based agencies and organizations to consider for securing on-site speakers and presenters as well as for off-site visits.

On-site Guest Speakers and Presenters
Inviting speakers and presenters with experience and expertise to meet with young people can enrich your agenda topics. Guest speakers can expand on a topic under study or address related questions of interest to participants, such as “What do lawyers do?” A single speaker or a panel can address such questions. Always caution speakers to keep their speeches short. Give them a precise time frame and allow time for audience interaction. Don’t schedule more than one or two speeches in the course of an Academy. Other-
wise you run the risk of losing a participant's attention and, besides, the best instruction actively engages them. You may wish to invite additional guest presenters to engage more actively with participants. Two resources that should be helpful in assisting presenters in working with young people are “Twelve Hints for Lawyers” (see page 18) and “Tried-and-True Strategies” (see page 14).

Off-site Visits
The most productive visits are ones that are carefully coordinated with the hosting institution. Well ahead of your anticipated visit, select the institution or agency and confirm the visit. Explain your purpose for having young people make this visit—what you hope they experience and learn from their observations and discussions. Tell officials something about the participants (ages/grades) and what they are studying. It would be helpful to forward copies of Pathway lessons and other pertinent material for them to preview. Establish where you will meet, what will occur and who will be involved, and how long the visit will last. Prior to departure, prepare participants for the visit explaining where they are going and what they can expect to experience there. Establish protocol regarding dress and decorum and give instructions (preferably written) regarding what they should be looking for as it relates to your curriculum topic. When you return, debrief the visit linking new information and insights to the Pathway course of study.

These are some institutions and organizations to consider visiting:

Courts: municipal, district, federal; criminal and civil courts (such as traffic and small claims). Court visits give young people opportunities to talk with judges and other court officers and to observe a court in session during voir dire, jury trials, or bench trials.

Law schools. Participants can meet with school administrators to learn about course offerings and general information about the school. Faculty members can be invited to talk with young people about an area of the law relating to your course of study. These might be torts, contracts, constitutional law, environmental law, intellectual property law, law of commerce, or another area of interest. Participants can also meet with law students to discuss their reasons for going to law school, what the experience is like, how difficult it is, what areas of the law interest them, and what they plan to do after graduating.

Law firms and offices of district and state’s attorneys. Depending on the size of your community, you will probably be able to identify a law firm that deals with some aspect of the law pertinent to your Academy study. During their visit participants should have an opportunity to talk with one or more attorneys about their practice and experiences in working with clients and the courts. Consider linking a visit to a district or state’s attorney’s office with a visit to a law firm specializing in criminal defense law.

Police headquarters. Police officers can give the young people insights into such law-related matters as how law is enforced in the community, what police do “on the street” to balance public safety and individual rights, the role of police in court procedures, and community relations with the police department. A visit to police headquarters may be especially relevant when studying Pathway issues related to power, rights, or equality.

City or county councils/municipal offices. Here you may be able to sit in on a hearing, observe the council in session, or meet with the mayor or other officials. In this visit participants will learn how local government responds to civic challenges.

Community service agencies. Agencies to consider for site visits include those that deal with family, youth, and senior services; environmental issues; immigration; property rights; and drug and alcohol rehabilitation. Any of these will provide opportunities for young people to see law and public policy in action.
PLANNING YOUR ACADEMY

PLANNING CHECKLIST • establish a planning committee • invite collaboration and co-sponsorship • find a location • raise funds • distribute publicity • identify and prepare instructors/presenters/speakers • recruit and select participants • consider liability issues • keep your eye on the prize

The above suggested checklist will help you plan a successful Civics and Law Academy. The list is intended as a catalyst, not a blueprint. Some suggestions may work for you. Some may not. Pick and choose or take a different approach.

Establish a Planning Committee
A planning committee can give valuable advice, assist in the work that goes into organizing an Academy, and tap into community resources. It should be small enough to manage effectively but large enough to represent key stakeholders in the community. Members should include representatives from a youth leadership group, high school and/or middle school social studies departments, youth-focused community groups such as the YMCA, parents groups, community service organizations such as the League of Women Voters and the Rotary Club, public officials, and, of course, your local and/or state bar association and young lawyers affiliates.

Invite Collaboration and Co-Sponsorship
Collaborators and co-sponsors, who may also be members of your planning committee, can be valuable partners in securing support and expanding resources for your Academy. Consider inviting organizations and agencies whose standing in the community lend cachet and credibility by simply having their names listed. But also look for partners who can provide tangible support. While financial support is always welcome, in-kind support is often easier to secure and is every bit as valuable. In-kind support that can benefit Academies includes printing and photocopying, providing transportation, food and beverage services, loan of AV equipment, meeting sites, and publicity opportunities. In identifying potential partners, consider what you need and what agency or organization might be able to provide it. Then, don’t hesitate to make that call, secure in the knowledge that the goals and target audience of Civics and Law Academies are sure to appeal to civic-minded groups.

Note: Whether your Academy is held in a school or somewhere else in the community, it is important to secure the support of the school administration. School policy may or may not permit co-sponsorship, but a public statement of support would be very helpful.

Find a Location
Academies may be conducted either in a school or in an out-of-school community setting or even a summer camp. Your planning committee and co-sponsors/collaborators should be able to assist in securing a location. In deciding which setting will work best for you, here are some things to think about.

School-based Academies. When considering a school-based Academy, you will want to explore the idea with a civics or law teacher and/or the chair of the social studies department. In this discussion review the alternative Pathways; explore curricular fits; and explain Academy goals, instructional resources, and requirements. If the teachers are receptive or, better yet, eager to host an Academy, the next step is to decide if the Academy will engage students in a single classroom or draw students from several classes. If a single class, your Academy schedule will be determined by the class schedule and you will need to work closely with that classroom teacher to plan and conduct the class sessions. In-school Academies that draw students from several classes will probably need to be held after-school or on weekends
Planning

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Reach out through social networking sites. Create a Facebook group page. Tweet from your events. Blog about your program to add a personal touch.

Identify and Prepare Presenters
Your planning committee and co-sponsors will be able to help in finding good resource people for your Academy. The section on Identifying Co-Curricular Activities and Events (see page 8) offers suggestions for both identifying sites and preparing these presenters to work with your participants.

Recruit and Select Participants
Your publicity campaign will initiate your recruiting process by alerting young people to the opportunity to participate in the Academy. As the news spreads, a targeted recruitment campaign should be focused on schools and community youth groups. The application packet should include information about the Academy and the application forms for young people to complete.

Consider Liability Issues
Because you are dealing with minors, it is critical that you secure the signatures of parents or guardians giving permission for young people to participate in all on-site and off-site activities of the Academy. Furthermore, consider having applicants sign a document indicating that they are committed to participate in all Academy activities unless there are extenuating circumstances. The latter should stress for applicants their personal responsibility as Academy members. These signature forms can be part of the application packet.

It is important that you check to be certain that the Academy site and the sites you visit have certificates of insurance to cover any unforeseen circumstances. You should also confirm that any modes of transportation the Academy uses are approved for transporting youth.

Keep Your Eye on the Prize
Planning anything as challenging and potentially productive as a Civics and Law Academy is sure to be hard work. Lighten the load by welcoming others to join the effort. And, always remember why you started this process in the first place. For the kids. For love of the law. To encourage civic engagement.
SELECTING YOUR ACADEMY FORMAT

Each Civics and Law Academy should provide participants with a minimum of 8 hours of focus on content and engagement in curriculum activities. Additional time will be needed for warm-up and debriefing and any off-site/co-curricular activities. To achieve this, Academy directors may choose from a range of formats with complementary agendas. No matter what format is used, every first-session agenda should introduce the Academy Pathway focus and provide the schedule of sessions. The final session should conclude with a review/wrap-up addressing the essential points covered in the Academy and awarding of academy certificates. Here are three alternative formats to consider.

Four sessions each with 2 hours of curricular focus

This format would work for weekday after-school hours, weekends, or summer vacations. Sessions may be conducted on consecutive days, every other day, or consecutive weeks, with one to two sessions each week. It is best not to allow more than one week between sessions, as each is intended to build on the preceding.

Agenda for session #1:
- Opening: Welcome, Introduction to Academy Pathway, topics, and schedule of sessions; warm-up group-building activity • 30 min
- Curricular activities • 60 min
- Closing: Debrief and preparation for next session • 15 min

Agenda for session #2 & #3:
- Opening: Introduction of topic and warm-up group-building activity • 15 min
- Curricular activities • 90 min
- Closing: Debrief and preparation for next session • 15 min

Agenda for session #4:
- Opening: Introduction of topic and warm-up group-building activity • 15 min
- Curricular activities • 90 min
- Closing: Debrief and review/wrap-up addressing essential points covered in the Academy; Awarding of academy certificates • 30 min

Optional off-site activities, such as a court visit, could be scheduled between weekly sessions or as a bonus follow-up to the final session.

Visit www.americanbar.org/publiced/civics/ for lesson plans.
Two sessions
each with 4 hours of curricular focus

These sessions may be conducted over two consecutive days (e.g., a Saturday and Sunday) or scheduled a week or, at most, two weeks apart. Each should begin with an introduction/warm-up and conclude with wrap-up. Each 4 hours of curriculum focus should be broken into 1 hour to 1 1/2 hours of discussions/activities with breaks in between. The time may be structured in various ways. Here is a possibility:

Agenda for session #1
- Opening: Welcome, Introduction to Academy Pathway and topics; warm-up group-building activity • 30 min
- Curricular activity • 1 1/2 hours
- Lunch – with or without speaker focusing on Pathway topic
- Curricular activity • 1 1/2 hours
- Closing: Debrief and preparation for next 4-hour session • 30 min

Agenda for session #2 (same time frame as first session):
- Same as for first session with exception of opening and closing
- Opening: Greetings and quick review of last session with participant feedback • 30 min
- Closing: Debrief of this session plus review/wrap-up of essential points covered in Academy; awarding of academy certificates • 30 min.

Optional off-site activities (visits to courts, law schools, etc.) can be incorporated with focus on curriculum. For example, this might be an extended afternoon excursion and investigation with concerted focus on the curricular topic.

Overnight retreat

Best suited for weekends, periods of no school (such as between terms), and summer breaks. There are many ways to organize such a retreat. Here is one possibility.

Friday evening
Opening: Welcome, Introduction to Academy Pathway and topics; warm-up group-building activity • 30 min
Dinner with movie focusing on some aspect of the Pathway topic with follow-up discussion, focusing on curriculum issues • 2 1/2 hours

Saturday
Breakfast
Warm-up • 15 min
Curricular activity • 1 1/2 hours
Break
Curricular activity • 1 1/2 hours
Lunch with a speaker focusing on a Pathway topic • 60 min
Review/wrap-up of essential points covered in the Academy; awarding of academy certificates • 45 min.
ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE IN ACTIVE LEARNING

Research shows that young people learn better when they are actively involved in their own learning. The lessons you use and the ways you interact with students are critical ingredients for engaging students. Tried and True Strategies are ways to get students actively participating. Twelve Hints for Lawyers provides guidelines written by a lawyer for lawyers on how to get the most from your work with students.

TRIED-AND-TRUE STRATEGIES

Over the years, educators and lawyers have developed basic strategies that engage students and that work in approaching almost any law and civics topic. Use them yourself and share them with your resource people.

1. BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming works as an icebreaker and a way to get participants started thinking about a topic. The list that is generated also gives you an idea of what participants are thinking or already know about a topic.

Guidelines for the leader:
- Launch the brainstorm with an open-ended question related to your topic. For example, What can citizens do to change the law? or Why do people run for office? or What keeps people from voting?
- Post responses on a screen, board, or large sheet of paper for all to see.
- Record every response.
- Offer your own idea (and record it) if some area has not been explored or if participants seem “stuck,” BUT don’t overdo it!
- When ideas quit coming or you feel you have enough responses, stop the brainstorm.
- Review list and clarify meanings.
- Alternative next steps: categorize responses and label the groupings; assign items for further research or small group discussions; use as a checklist for subsequent study; keep to revisit after subsequent lesson to see if or where list needs adjusting.

Guidelines for participants (posted):
- Say anything on the topic that comes to mind.
- Build on a previous idea or add a new one.
- Don’t criticize or argue about anyone’s contribution.
- Give others a chance.

2. JIGSAW

As the name implies, Jigsaw has participants bringing separate pieces (of information) together to make a whole. The Jigsaw strategy is a good way to cover a large amount of material and give everyone a chance to become an “expert” on some portion of it. For example:

- If your material is a set of five court cases, five articles, or five sections from a text, organize the participants into five groups* and assign one case/article/text to each group. (In this way each group is responsible for one piece of the Jigsaw.)
- Participants read the case or article either individually or as a group.
- Provide the groups with questions about each case, article, or text. In their discussions, they decide how best to present this information to the others.
• Bring the Jigsaw pieces together. Regroup by having at least one person from each original group in a new group. Representatives (“experts”) from each group teach the others about their case/article/text and learn about the others. Together they discuss all cases/articles/texts, compare, and draw some conclusions.

*Groups of no more than five usually work best. If you have a large number of participants, you could have two Jigsaws going by assigning the same material to two groups.

3. Triads or Modified Appellate Hearings
This strategy can be used in addressing two diverse positions on an issue by turning them into adversarial petitions before a judge. Or it can be used to study actual arguments in an appellate court or oral arguments before the Supreme Court.

Divide the class into three groups. One group represents the appellant in the case (the party that has filed the lawsuit), one group represents the respondent in the case (the party being sued), and the third group represents the judges. If you are addressing opposing positions on an issue, provide each group with resources on the issue. If you choose to study an actual case, provide each group with the case summary, relevant law, and cases.

• Instructions for Lawyers. Both lawyer groups should review the materials, brainstorm arguments for their side, and find supporting cases, laws, or public policy to support their position. Then each group should develop and refine their arguments.

• Instructions for Judges. The judges group should review the issue, law, cases, and facts of the case and brainstorm questions they would like to ask during the oral argument.

Oral arguments:
• Appellant attorneys present their arguments (5–10 minutes). They can reserve 2–3 minutes for rebuttal. See below.

• Respondent attorneys present their argument (5–10 minutes).

• Judges ask questions (2–3 minutes). They can also ask questions at any time during the lawyers’ presentation.

• If the appellant attorneys have reserved time for rebuttal, they can respond to the respondent attorneys’ argument.

At the conclusion of the oral arguments, the judges discuss their opinions and give their decision. Wrap up with full class discussion.

Alternative ways to organize the hearings:
(1) stage one hearing with three sitting judges, and four attorneys—two representing the appellant and two the respondent; (2) stage simultaneous hearings with the same role assignments and all participants actively participating.

4. Fish Bowl
This is an excellent way to focus a small group discussion that engages the whole class. Fish Bowl works with any challenging topic for which there are diverse opinions on contested issues. The process encourages participants to listen carefully to their colleagues and make thoughtful contributions to the deliberations.

Organize chairs in two concentric circles with enough chairs to accommodate the entire class. The inner circle—the Fish Bowl—should have no more than 7 or 8 chairs with passing space left between them.

• Discussion takes place in the Fish Bowl. Those on the outside are to listen and prepare themselves to take their place in the Fish Bowl when they are ready to join the discussion. As leader, you sit in the Fish Bowl to guide the discussion. You can either assign the first group of participants in the Fish Bowl or invite volunteers when the discussion topic has been stated.

• Once the discussants are seated in the Fish Bowl, tell the observers that after the discussion
is underway for a few minutes and all or most of the discussants have made a point, one person on the outside who has something to offer is welcome to join.

- In joining, the new discussant must tap someone on the shoulder and take his/her place in the inner circle. As the discussion continues, another observer may join the group replacing a discussant.
- You may need to invite newcomers or slow down the exchanges depending on how eagerly those in the outer circle join the discussion. As this process is repeated, the composition of the Fish Bowl and the discussion shifts.

5. Take a Stand

Use this strategy when exploring controversial issues for which your participants are likely to have divergent perspectives. Sometimes Take a Stand is used to focus on several issues. However, focusing on only one or two issues allows participants to better understand alternative perspectives, carefully consider their position, and, with new information, perhaps change their own. Because it gets people up and moving, it is a good way to get everyone’s attention or to wake them up after lunch!

Preparation
- Develop a sheet stating the controversial issue(s) under study. For example,

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marijuana should be legalized.</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Three strikes and you are out”</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is good policy.</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Prepare three large cards with these words: AGREE, DISAGREE, UNDECIDED. Place the Undecided card above head level in the middle of a wall with the Agree and Disagree cards some distance away on either side. (You will want enough space for groups of participants to gather in front of each card.)

Procedure
- While participants are still seated, distribute the worksheet and give them time to check their position(s). [Don’t skip this step as it gives everyone time to think before acting and reduces a tendency to respond to peer pressure.]
- Read aloud one issue and have participants take a stand under the card representing their position. [Everyone will remain standing throughout the discussions that follow.]
- Each group should: (1) discuss why they have taken this position, (2) get consensus on the most persuasive argument for their position, (3) choose a spokesperson to make this argument to the others.
- Give all three spokespersons a chance to present their argument without interruption.
- Tell participants that if they are persuaded by an argument for a different position, they should join that group.
- Open the discussion for members from each group to question the others and exchange ideas on their thinking. Again, tell participants to move at any time they hear a persuasive argument for another position.
- Wrap up discussion of this issue by having those who changed position tell why. What arguments did they find particularly persuasive?

6. Carousel

The Carousel is an efficient way to address several ideas/issues simultaneously while giving all participants a chance to be involved. For example, suppose you are focusing on five freedoms guaranteed under the Constitution. Using five large sheets of paper (flip-chart pages), write one freedom at the top of each sheet. Post them, along with markers, at separated positions around the room. [It is important to place the sheets around the room—not a straight row—to represent the Carousel that metaphorically turns as participants move from sheet to sheet.] Organize participants into five equal small groups with one group positioned at each sheet. Pose the question you want everyone to consider, such as, “Why is this freedom important for sustaining democracy?” Tell participants that they will have
approximately 3 minutes at each posted freedom to write their responses before the Carousel starts turning and they are in front of another freedom. Participants should add to what is already posted, write questions or suggestions for changing what is there. Keep time and announce when the Carousel is turning. When all are back where they began, give them time to study what others have contributed. Each group should then report what has been written and discuss with the full group the ideas presented.

7. Role Play
A role play is a useful tool for helping participants work through a problem from the perspective of people caught up in a contemporary or historical situation. The “triads” strategy described above is a role play and so are mock trials. To initiate any role play, tell participants the essentials of the challenge or problem, the people involved, and the setting. For example, the problem may be a decision a community faces, such as the route of a new expressway. The setting could be a hearing before the county commissioners. The roles involved, in addition to members of the commission, could be neighboring homeowners, local political leaders, and business owners. Young people playing the roles should be informed of their characters’ circumstances and perspectives on the issue. A role play may be an informal setting with young people inventing how to interact as they go along. Or it may be a role play of an established setting such as a trial or hearing with prescribed procedures of which participants need to be informed. No script is provided. Rather the “story” unfolds as the actors play off one another in working through the problem. In assuming a role, the players “get inside” the characters’ heads and, it is hoped, gain empathy for them and appreciation of the challenges faced. No matter what kind of role play you undertake, be sure to review and debrief once young people have stepped out of their roles.

Visit the Civics and Law Academies companion website at www.americanbar.org/publiced/civics/ for further information and resources.

You will find:
• downloadable pdfs of this Resource Guide for Civics and Law Academies;
• downloadable lessons and activities produced by the American Bar Association and participating local, state, and national law-related and civic education programs for the six “Pathways to Understanding”;
• ready-to-use curricula integrating lessons organized by Pathway into suggested Academy formats;
• additional resources for the Academies and civic education;
• updates on Academies being conducted nationwide; and
• information on the activities of the American Bar Association Commission on Civic Education in the Nation’s Schools.
TWELVE HINTS FOR LAWYERS

A number of years ago Connecticut lawyer Leslie A. Williamson Jr. compiled a list of hints for working with students, based on his own experience in classrooms. Below are 12 hints adapted from his original list.

1. Consult with teacher/leader. Before you even enter a classroom, coordinate your visit with the teacher or Academy leader. Make sure you are in synchron. Talk with him/her before your session to determine which material should be emphasized, the background of the participants, and what will be done with the subject matter once you leave.

2. Know your subject. This is an obvious hint, but nonetheless is an extremely important one. Spend some time reviewing material prior to engaging with young people. Don't underestimate the breadth of their knowledge, their awareness of legal topics, and their interest in the law.

3. Have a plan, but be prepared to vary from it. Before you walk into the classroom, you should know what you want to say and how you are going to say it. Establish a presentation outline. However, the more interest you generate, the more probable it is that you will get “off track.” Don't be afraid of this, but don't put yourself in the position where you are unable to get back on track.

4. Control the classroom. Don't expect someone else to control the classroom for you. When you are in front of the class, you are in charge. If someone is acting up, do something. Redirect attention, engage any wayward students. Just don't ignore the situation.

5. Talk with the students, not at them. Don't stand in one place. Move around and interact with the participants. Get everyone involved. Most young people are interested in the law. They will engage in meaningful discussion if given the opportunity. Give them that opportunity! Don't spend any significant portion of the period lecturing.

6. Don't talk like a lawyer. You should not take this hint too seriously. It's meant to remind you to know your audience. Remember, you are not addressing a judge or a jury, but rather a group of young people. Talk to them in a conversational tone and use language they can understand. Take time to explain words or concepts that might not be readily known to them. Most will be fascinated to learn some “legalese.” Make sure you don't go overboard, however, and talk down to them.

7. Maintain your credibility. If you know the answer to a question, answer it. If you don't know an answer, explain that you don't know. If you try to avoid questions, students will quickly realize it and your credibility will be undermined.

8. Use examples. Use examples and anecdotes to illustrate points you are trying to make, drawn from your knowledge, experience, and imagination.

9. Don't stop with what “is”—discuss “why” it is. In examining laws and public policies, ask students to critically examine their purpose. Challenge them to evaluate facts and consider what, if any, changes or reforms might yield more equitable or just outcomes.

10. Keep a balance. Don't get caught in the middle of a school or community “hot” controversy. Students will often ask you to determine whether actions by a teacher, administrator, or public official are appropriate. Don't get placed in the position of making a judgment on the appropriateness of such an action. Try to articulate all sides of the issue and honestly examine it with students.

11. Watch your time. As interesting as you will be, don't go overtime! Students’ attention spans are likely to parallel the announced time scheduled. Know when your session is over and time your presentation accordingly.

12. Follow up. The students will appreciate a follow-up letter/email thanking them and giving your observations on their participation. Contact the teacher/leader to see if the students had any questions after you left and if there are any resources that you can recommend.
American Bar Association

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President, 2010–2011

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