



Yale-New Haven
Teachers Institute®

Curriculum Units by Fellows of the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute
2004 Volume I: The Supreme Court in American Political History

The Americans with Disabilities Act, the Supreme Court and Self-Advocacy

Guide for Curriculum Unit 04.01.06
by Joanne R. Pompano

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a landmark federal law which protects persons with physical or mental disabilities from discrimination. Signed into law on July 26, 1990, the ADA prohibits physical barriers in employment, public accommodations, transportation, housing, telecommunications, recreation, health services, voting, and government services. This civil rights statute guarantees that Americans with disabilities will have the same protection against discrimination that is provided to other individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex and religion. The ADA has been litigated numerous times since it became law in 1990. In 1999, for instance, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that correctable conditions, such as the ability to improve vision with eyeglasses, do not qualify under the guidelines of the ADA. And recently the Supreme Court ruled on a case that pertains directly to the ADA. This case, which considers access to state buildings, will be a powerful starting point for curriculum development, discussion and examination of the rights guaranteed by the Constitution. This topic will allow students the opportunity to focus on a subject important to their community and will allow them to gain skills necessary for self-advocacy. The students will gain an understanding of the laws that pertain to their disabilities and the way the Supreme Court defines these rights. (Recommended for U.S Civics and Law, grades 9-12.)

<https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu>

©2019 by the Yale-New Haven Teachers Institute, Yale University
For terms of use visit <https://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/terms>