

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP



BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

HIGH SCHOOL U.S HISTORY

AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

THEME 11: The United States in a Global Age [2008-Present]

Anchor Standard: History 15. Historical Change, Continuity, Context, and Reconciliation

- 9-12.US. Evaluate how the events between 2008 and the present impact people from diverse groups.**

Anchor Standard: 18. Critical Consciousness and Perspectives

- 9-12.US.126. Examine the ways in which gender roles changed and stayed the same between 2008 and the present.**

Anchor Standard: History 19. Power Dynamics, Leadership, and Agency

- 9-12.US.135. Examine contemporary civil and human rights struggles and successes.**

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

African American Women in Leadership: Breaking The Glass Ceiling

High School U.S. History

Theme 11: The United States in A Global Age [2008-Present]



Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown

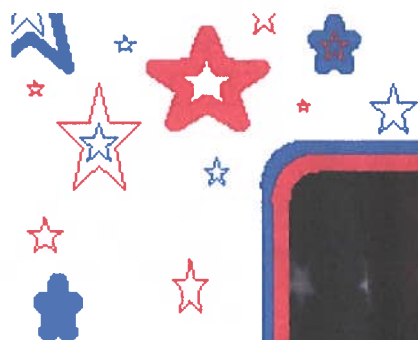


Vice President Kamala Harris

- Introduce the lesson to the class about African American Women In Leadership: Kamala Harris, The Vice President and Supreme Court Justice, Ketanji Brown. 2020 Presidential Election. 2022 Supreme Court Hearings.
- Students read the excerpts about Kamala Harris, her life and being the first woman [and woman of color] to be sworn in as Vice President of the United States. Discuss the historic moment and what it means for each person in the class and our country.
- Students read about Judge Ketanji Brown, the Supreme Court's first black woman, and one of its younger justices to ever serve. Students reflect how her nomination offers a diverse expertise to the position, including her work as a public defender, a federal district judge and member of the United States Sentencing Commission.
- Allow 2+ class periods.

RESOURCES

- Kamala Harris: Rooted in Justice by Nikki Grimes and Laura Freeman. August 2020. Atheneum Books.
- Ketanji Brown Jackson: The Road Between District Court and Supreme Court. Starworld Press. March 2022.
- Amendment XII of the U.S Constitution: Election of President and Vice President.
- Resources and Optional Activities for the Vice President and Supreme Court Lessons



Kamala Harris

1st Black Vice President of the United States.

Kamala Harris was born on October 20, 1964, in Oakland, California.

She is the 49th vice president of the United States.

She served as one of the senators of California since 2017.

In 2013, Kamala was elected district attorney of San Francisco.

Kamala is married to husband, Douglas Emhoff.

Kamala Harris has no children of her own. Still, she enjoys being a stepmom to the two wonderful children from her husband, Ella and Cole.

Her name came from an Indian word meaning "lotus." Kamala is also the name of the Hindu goddess Lakshmi or the great wisdom goddess which portrays purity, success, and piety



Kamala Harris

by
Meneese Wall

"While I may be the first woman in this office, I will not be the last," said Kamala Harris in her November 7, 2020 acceptance speech as Vice President-elect. She is an experienced lawyer and public servant whose positive leadership will help guide the U.S. through its many current challenges.

Kamala Devi Harris was born in Oakland, California to immigrant parents—her mother from India - a biologist and researcher, and father from Jamaica - a professor of economics. Her parents divorced when Harris was seven. At twelve, she moved with her mother and sister to Canada. She attended Howard University, a historically black university in Washington, D.C., and University of California Hastings College of the Law.

Harris's professional law career began as deputy district attorney in Alameda County, California. Eight years later, she was recruited as deputy district attorney in San Francisco. She next worked for San Francisco City Hall and ran the Family and Children's Services Division. In 2011, she was elected Attorney General of California and served in that position through 2017, when she was then elected to the U.S. Senate. Throughout her legal career, she fought against consumer fraud, waste, and abuse; and for consumer privacy protections, LGBT rights, environmental protections, criminal justice reform, and more.

In January 2019, Harris announced her run for president of the United States. This brought her in front of a national audience; and in 2020, Joe Biden chose her as his Vice Presidential running mate.

As the daughter of immigrants, Harris has firsthand experience with race and immigrant discrimination. Along with her years of experience in government, Kamala Harris is positioned to deeply hear our country's concerns and to take a personal interest in finding solutions.

Kamala was finally ready to climb the mountain of her dreams:

First, Deputy District Attorney.

Next, the first female

District Attorney of San Francisco.

Then, the first black woman

Attorney General of California.

Peak by peak, she rose,

eventually becoming

the second black woman

voted into the US Senate.

Lawyer, prosecutor, Senator—

the little girl named “lotus flower”

had turned herself into a person


others could call on for help.

“Did she use magic to turn herself into that person?” asked Eve.

“No, sweetie. Kamala just used hard work.”





A stylized illustration of Kamala Harris from the chest up. She has dark hair, large expressive eyes, and is wearing a black top with a large pink bow and a black beaded necklace. The background features a city skyline with various buildings and a bridge.

Months into the race, Kamala realized that running for President cost more money than she thought, and Kamala's campaign team didn't have enough. She decided to give up her run for the 2020 presidential nomination.

"That's okay," said Eve. "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."
"Exactly," said her mom.

The Senator's sadness lifted, though, when a soft-spoken man named Joe invited her to be his running mate. And after a hard-fought campaign, Kamala won an historic new name: Madam Vice President!

REFLECTIONS



Vice President Kamala Harris

After discussing the readings about Vice President Harris, reflect upon these ideas. Answer the following two questions. Be ready to share.

- 1. Why is the election of Vice President Kamala Harris an historic moment in our country? How do you think she might offer a diverse or a different perspective about governing? Think about her life and career.**
- 2. What does Kamala Harris's position as Vice President of the United States of The United States mean to you? How will her service, visibility and representation impact groups that have been historically underrepresented at the highest levels of our government and in the West Wing in Washington, DC?**

Who is Ketanji Brown Jackson?

President Biden's reported Supreme Court nominee is a conventionally qualified judge with a strong background in criminal justice reform.

By Ian Millhiser Feb 25, 2022, 8:51am EST

President Joe Biden has chosen Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson, a former public defender and current judge on a powerful Appeals Court circuit, as his nominee to replace retiring Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer, multiple outlets reported Friday.

If confirmed, Judge Jackson will be the first Black woman ever to sit on the Supreme Court, and she enters the confirmation process with an impressive resume full of the kind of elite credentials typical for new justices. Yet, while Jackson has been a judge for nearly a decade, her record is heavy on complex, technocratic cases and light on the sort of contentious issues that typically drive confirmation fights.

In a less polarized era, Jackson's mix of superb legal credentials and a largely apolitical record would have made her a shoo-in for confirmation. In today's era, it means that she will probably be narrowly confirmed.

Jackson graduated from Harvard twice, once with honors and once with high honors, and clerked for Breyer — a particularly coveted credential typically reserved for young lawyers with absolutely stratospheric academic and professional records. At age 51, Jackson would also be the second youngest justice, behind Justice Amy Coney Barrett, if confirmed.

She is also a leading expert on federal sentencing policy, having previously served as vice chair of the United States Sentencing Commission, where she helped reduce sentences for drug offenders. If confirmed, she will also be the only justice with significant experience representing low-income criminal

defendants (though not the only justice to work as a criminal lawyer; Justices Samuel Alito and Sonia Sotomayor were once prosecutors).

Jackson has been a federal judge since 2013, serving first as a trial judge in DC. In 2021, Biden elevated her to the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, which is widely viewed as the second most powerful court in the country because of its steady diet of cases challenging federal policymaking and other major actions by federal agencies.



Supreme Court Nomination 2022: Ketanji Brown Jackson FAQ



What is the Supreme Court of the United States?

The **US Supreme Court** is the highest court in the United States. It was established by **Article III** of the US Constitution. The court is made up of **nine justices** who hear cases and issue decisions. The Supreme Court deals mainly with cases which have already been decided by lower courts but have been **appealed** to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court can either **uphold** the ruling of the lower court, **overturn** the ruling, or send the ruling back to the lower court for reconsideration. The Supreme Court also deals with cases involving entire States, ambassadors, or government officials.

When the Supreme Court hears a case, each justice individually decides the case. The justices vote and the justices in the majority write a Supreme Court **opinion**. Justices who do not agree with the majority write **dissenting opinions**.

Who currently serves on the Supreme Court?

There are **nine** Supreme Court Justices. The **Chief Justice** of the Supreme Court is John Roberts. The seven associate justices are Clarence Thomas, Stephen Breyer, Samuel Alito, Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett. Once chosen, Supreme Court Justices serve for **life** or until they choose to retire.

How does someone become a Supreme Court Justice?

The President of the United States nominates Supreme Court Justices. One someone is nominated they must be confirmed by the US Senate. The Senate usually holds **confirmation hearings** where Senators ask the nominee questions. After the hearing, the Senate votes to confirm or reject the nomination. A simple majority (51 out of 100 Senators) is needed to confirm a nominee.

Why is there an opening on the Supreme Court?

Justice Stephen Brayer announced he will retire at the end of the court's current term.

Who is President Biden nominating for the Supreme Court?

President Biden is nominating Ketanji Brown Jackson as Supreme Court Justice to fill the vacancy left by Justice Breyer. This is the first Supreme Court Justice chosen by President Biden during his term as President. Ketanji Brown Jackson currently sits on the **federal appellate court** in Washington DC. She previously spent some time working for Justice Breyer at the Supreme Court and also as a public defense lawyer in Washington DC.

Why is this important?

Ketanji Brown Jackson is the **first African American woman** nominated to the Supreme Court. President Biden committed to choosing an American woman to a Supreme Court opening during his campaign for president.

Of the nine Supreme Court Justices, three have been nominated by Democratic Presidents and six by Republican presidents. This means that conservative Supreme Court justices outnumber liberal Supreme Court Justices 6-3. Since Supreme Court justices are chosen for life, it is important for President Biden to choose a justice that can represent his views for years to come.

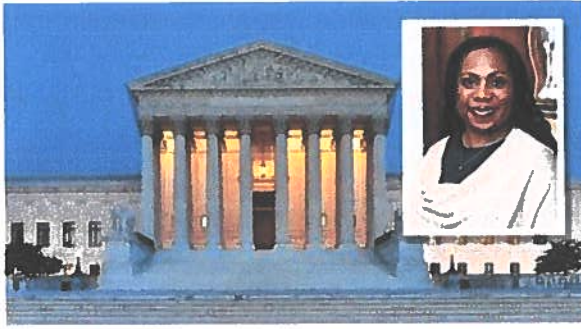
How long will the confirmation process take?

Usually, the process of selecting a Supreme Court nominee and going through confirmation hearings in the Senate takes 2-3 months. However, the confirmation process for Amy Coney Barrett in 2020 was much shorter.

Will Ketanji Brown Jackson be confirmed?

Ketanji Brown Jackson needs **51 votes** out of 100 US Senators to be confirmed to the Supreme Court. Currently, the Senate is split 50-50 between Republicans and Democrats. In the case of a tie, Vice President Kamala Harris would get to cast the deciding vote. That means that Mrs. Brown Jackson would need the support of at least all the Democratic Senators in the US Senate.

If Ketanji Brown Jackson is not confirmed, President Biden will have to select another candidate and the process will begin over again.



Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown

After discussing the readings about Supreme Court Justice Brown, reflect upon these ideas. Answer the following two questions. Be ready to share.

- 1. Why is the confirmation of Supreme Court Justice Brown an historic moment in our country? How do you think she might offer a diverse or a different perspective about the law and interpretation of the U.S. Constitution? Think about her life and career.**

- 2. What does Judge Ketanji Brown's seat on the Supreme Court of the United States mean to you? How will her service, visibility and representation impact groups that have been historically underrepresented on the Federal Court?**

RESOURCES

Election of President and Vice

President The Twelfth Amendment (1804) corrects a problem that had arisen in the method of electing the president and vice president. This amendment provides for the Electoral College to use separate ballots in voting for president and vice president. *If no candidate receives a majority of the electoral votes, who elects the president?*

Amendment XII

The electors shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom, at least, shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as President, and in distinct ballots the person voted for as Vice-President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice-President, and of the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate;—The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted;—The person having the greatest number of votes for President, shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President, the votes shall be taken by states, the representation from each state having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the states, and a **majority** of all the states shall be necessary to a choice. *And if the House of Representatives shall not choose a President whenever the right of choice shall devolve upon them, before the fourth day of March next following, then the Vice-President shall act as President, as in the case of the death or other constitutional disability of the President.* The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice-President, shall be the Vice-President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed, and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list, the Senate shall choose the Vice-President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice-President of the United States.

Vocabulary

majority: more than half

devolve: to pass on



© Menesce Wall

NAME

KAMALA HARRIS' CHARACTER TRAITS

DIRECT QUOTES

TALENT AND INTELLIGENCE
DEVELOPED OVER TIME

INSPIRED BY OTHERS

EFFORT

MOST IMPORTANT / LOVES
PASSIONATE ABOUT

EMPATHY

RESULTS

CHALLENGES

OBSTACLES

STANDS FOR AND
BELIEVES IN

LIFE EVENTS

LESSON LEARNED



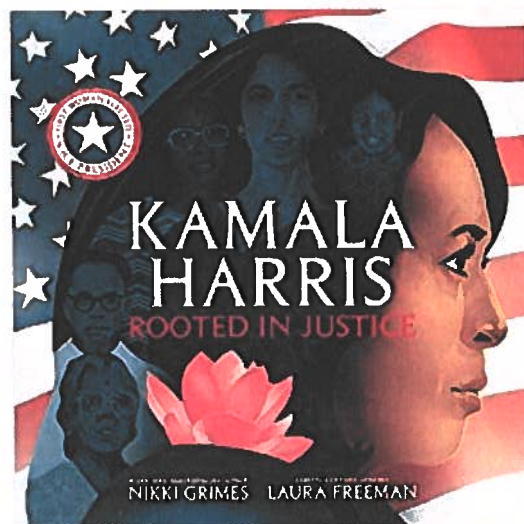


Vice Presidential Seal

The Vice President of the United States is the second highest officer of the U.S Federal government after the President of the United States and ranks first in the presidential line of succession. The vice president is also an officer in the legislative branch. The vice president is indirectly elected together with the president to a four-year term of office by the people of the United States through the Electoral College. The modern vice presidency is a position of significant power and is widely seen as an integral part of a president's administration.

During the confirmation process of a Supreme Court Justice, the Vice President plays an important role. When the debate ends about the nominee, the Senate votes on the nomination. A simple majority of the Senators present and voting is required for the judicial nominee to be confirmed. If there is a tie, the Vice President who also presides over the Senate casts the deciding vote.

KAMALA HARRIS: ROOTED IN JUSTICE
BY NIKKI GRIMES AND LAURA FREEMAN
ATHENEUM BOOKS AUGUST 2020





U.S SUPREME COURT BUILDING

NOMINATION AND CONFIRMATION PROCESS FOR THE UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT

Article II section 2 of the Constitutions states that the President “shall nominate and by and with the Advice and Consent of the Senate, shall appoint... Judges of the Supreme Court...”

The Process

- 1. The President will usually consult with Senators before announcing a nomination.**
- 2. When the President nominates a candidate, the nomination is sent to the Senate Judiciary Committee for consideration.**
- 3. The Senate Judiciary Committee holds a hearing on the nominee. The Committee usually takes a month to collect and receive all necessary records, from the F.B.I and other sources, about the nominee and for the nominee to be prepared for the hearings.**
- 4. During the hearings, witnesses, both supporting and opposing the nomination, present their views. Senators question the nominee on her or his qualifications, judgment and philosophy.**
- 5. The Judiciary Committee then votes on the nomination and sends its recommendation to the full Senate.**
- 6. The full Senate debates the recommendation.**
- 7. The Senate rules used to allow unlimited debate and to end the debate, it required the votes of $\frac{3}{5}$ of the Senate or 60 Senators. In April 2017, the Senate changed this rule and lowered the required votes to 51 to end debate on Supreme Court nominations [this is commonly known as the “nuclear option”].**
- 8. When the debate ends, the Senate votes on the nomination. A simple majority of the Senators present and voting is required for the judicial nominee to be confirmed. If there is a tie, the Vice President who also presides over the Senate casts the deciding vote.**

Name: _____ Date: _____ Hour: _____

Supreme Court Nomination 2022 Questions



Answer the following questions using information in Artifacts A, B, C and D

1. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?

2. How long do Supreme Court Justices serve?

3. After the President nominates a person to be a Supreme Court Justice what is the next step in the process?

4. Who has President Biden nominated to be the next Supreme Court Justice?

5. Using the tweets in Article C, what differences do you notice in the tweets from Republicans and Democrats regarding the nomination?

6. What is Ketanji Brown Jackson's current job?

7. Ketanji Brown Jackson would be the second youngest Supreme Court Justice if confirmed by the Senate. Who is the youngest?

8. What happens if Ketanji Brown Jackson does not get the votes in the US Senate to be confirmed?

9. Why is it significant that Ketanji Brown Jackson is only 51 years old? (Use what you know about how long justices serve on the Supreme Court)

Name: **KEY**

Supreme Court Nomination 2022 Questions



Answer the following questions using information in Artifacts A, B, C and D

1. How many justices are on the Supreme Court?

There are nine Supreme Court justices.

2. How long do Supreme Court Justices serve?

Supreme Court justices serve for life or until they choose to retire.

3. After the President nominates a person to be a Supreme Court Justice what is the next step in the process?

The US Senate holds a confirmation hearing and eventually votes to confirm the nominee. A nominee needs 51/100 votes to be confirmed

4. Who has President Biden nominated to be the next Supreme Court Justice?

President Biden nominated Ketanji Brown Jackson.

5. Using the tweets in Article C, what differences do you notice in the tweets from Republicans and Democrats regarding the nomination?

Democratic tweets are supportive of Ketanji Brown Jackson, while Republican tweets are critical or claim to need more information.

6. What is Ketanji Brown Jackson's current job?

Ketanji Brown Jackson works on the Federal Court of Appeals in Washington DC.

7. Ketanji Brown Jackson would be the second youngest Supreme Court Justice if confirmed by the Senate. Who is the youngest?
Supreme Court Justice Amy Coney Barrett is the youngest Supreme Court Justice.
8. What happens if Ketanji Brown Jackson does not get the votes in the US Senate to be confirmed?
If Ketanji Brown Jackson does not get the votes needed to confirm her nomination, President Biden would nominate a different candidate to the Supreme Court.
9. Why is it significant that Ketanji Brown Jackson is only 51 years old? (Use what you know about how long justices serve on the Supreme Court)
Supreme Court justices serve for life. Being young means she could potentially serve on the Supreme Court for many years.

Artifact C



President Biden ✓ @POTUS · Feb 25

United States government official

I'm proud to announce that I am nominating Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to serve on the Supreme Court. Currently serving on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, she is one of our nation's brightest legal minds and will be an exceptional Justice.



Leader McConnell ✓ @LeaderMcConnell · Feb 25

...

The Senate must conduct a rigorous, exhaustive review of Judge Jackson's nomination to the Supreme Court. This is especially crucial as Americans families face major crises that connect directly to our legal system, such as skyrocketing violent crime and open borders.



Nancy Pelosi ✓ @SpeakerPelosi · Feb 25

...

In nominating Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court, @POTUS has chosen a widely respected jurist who will bring to the Court one of the sharpest legal minds in a generation, an unyielding commitment to justice and a strong voice for American values.



The Democrats ✓ @TheDemocrats · 3h

...

President @JoeBiden delivered on yet another campaign promise and made history.

By nominating Judge Jackson to the Supreme Court, President Biden has put forward an exceptionally qualified and talented jurist to serve on our nation's highest court.



GOP ✓ @GOP · Feb 25

...

Joe Biden just nominated a radical, left-wing activist to serve a lifetime appointment on the Supreme Court.

His pick was the preferred choice of far-left special interests.

Republicans will make sure voters know how radical his pick really is.

**KETANJI BROWN JACKSON:
THE ROAD BETWEEN DISTRICT COURT AND SUPREME COURT
INDEPENDENTLY PUBLISHED
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