

Preparation/Homework (for student & teacher)

Teacher:

1. Review slide on requirements of a legal memo - guide: <https://lawtutors.net/structure-of-an-objective-legal-memo/>
2. Read and review *Plyler v. Doe* – make slides regard the holding and key applicable principles of the case. Students will review this case for their legal memorandum and review each other’s work together in class. Create slides with each section of a legal memo applied to *Plyler*.
3. Prepare discussion slides on connection between the holding in *Plyler* to modern legal issues of immigration, access to education, and protection of children in legal precedent.
4. Prepare slide with the 2nd Amendment. Consider issues regarding meaning of *arms* and issues with the comma clause. Read and review *District of Columbia v. Heller*; create slide that highlights the holding and exceptions/limitations (e.g. dangerous and unusual weapons; restrictions for mentally ill and felons upheld).

Student:

1. Read and brief *Plyler v. Doe*. Refine legal memo highlighting significance of the case and articulating implications of the case on current issues like immigration, access to education, and (potentially) the protection of children.
2. Read and brief *District of Columbia v. Heller*. As you read consider and take notes on the key issues the Court raises regarding the 2nd Amendment. Think about the restrictions and limitations the Court upholds – what do you think?
3. Bring legal memo to class for workshop and peer review in second class of the week.

Lesson Objectives

1. Strengthen legal writing skills specifically through a legal memorandum.
2. Consider how Supreme Court opinions have lasting impacts on social policies like immigration and access to education.
3. Practice translating holdings and breaking down Supreme Court precedents for an academic audience.

Journal (beginning of class) &/or Discussion Prompt (prior to class)

1. As we break down holdings and case law like those in *Plyler v. Doe* what complications have you encountered or what questions do you have about translating that language for your memorandum? What strategies can you use to establish whether you can clearly communicate through your writing? What questions do you have?
2. What responsibilities do legal writers have when covering issues like immigration, education, and the 2nd Amendment? Do those responsibilities change based on audience? If so, how?

Activity in Class/Discussion

1. **Presentation:** Review the requirements of a legal memorandum and briefly describe how those would apply to *Plyler*.
2. **Small Group:** get out your case briefs over the past two weeks, talk with your peers about strategies you found particularly effective and helpful. Make a list to share with the class. Brainstorm effective strategies to check if legal writing/communications are clear.
3. **Class Discussion:** How do we effectively translate complex legal issues for academic and other audiences?
4. **Writing:** refine your outline and expand into complete legal memorandum; teacher to check in for questions/concerns.
5. **Peer Review:** bring refined legal memo to class and exchange with peer to review together. Teachers may lead guided peer review with a sample slide that covers how *Plyler* could be covered in a legal memo. Guided peer review.

Connection to Course Objectives

1. Students practice legal communication and refining legal writing through their legal memorandum.
2. Students consider the consequences of legalese-type language on public interpretations of fundamental rights.
3. Students practice synthesizing legal holdings to articulate potential future implications into writing.
4. Students critique their own and others’ work through peer review and in-class revisions.

Reflections (draft notes below)