

Name _____

Selecting the Guardians of Justice: How Federal Judges Are Appointed in the United States

Open-Ended Response Answer Key

1. The federal judge appointment process contributes to the independence of the judiciary by insulating judges from political pressures. Federal judges are appointed for life, which means they do not have to worry about reappointment or political consequences when making decisions. This independence allows them to interpret and apply the law impartially. For example, they can rule on cases that may be politically sensitive without fear of retaliation.
2. Answers will vary based on current events and historical examples. Students may choose cases such as the nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court, which attracted attention due to allegations of sexual misconduct and contentious Senate hearings. Outcomes could include Kavanaugh's confirmation and the subsequent impact on the Court.
3. Answers will vary, but factors to consider may include the nominee's qualifications, legal experience, judicial temperament, impartiality, and adherence to the Constitution and the rule of law. Evaluating a nominee's suitability involves ensuring that they possess the necessary expertise and character to make fair and impartial decisions that uphold the principles of justice.
4. Answers will vary, but qualities and qualifications that are often considered important for federal judges include legal expertise, experience, impartiality, integrity, and a commitment to upholding the Constitution. These qualities contribute to the fair administration of justice by ensuring that judges have the knowledge and character to interpret and apply the law objectively, protect individual rights, and maintain the rule of law in society.

