

Courting Gerrymandering

Listen to the ROOM 2B podcast **COURTING GERRYMANDERING** at mrreview.org and complete the following exercise. Be prepared to discuss with your classmates.

1. Why does gerrymandering exist? Explain the difference between reapportionment and redistricting.
2. Find examples of gerrymandering in your state. Draw the shape of one of your state's Congressional Districts. Explain why the lines were drawn this way. Has the district delivered the anticipated results? Explain.
3. Investigate three (3) of the four (4) U.S. Supreme Court cases below and report back on how our judicial branch has entered the political thicket:

Baker v. Carr (1962)
Davis v. Bandemer (1986)
Vieth v. Jubelirer (2004)
Whitford v. Gill (2016)

4. Read the scenario below and answer the prompts that follow:

Put differently, we believe that reapportionment is one area in which appearances do matter. A reapportionment plan that includes in one district individuals who belong to the same race, but who are otherwise widely separated by geographical and political boundaries, and who may have little in common with one another but the color of their skin, bears an uncomfortable resemblance to political apartheid. It reinforces the perception that members of the same racial group—regardless of their age, education, economic status, or the community in which they live—think alike, share the same political interests, and will prefer the same candidates at the polls. We have rejected such perceptions elsewhere as impermissible racial stereotypes...

...Racial classifications of any sort pose the risk of lasting harm to our society. They reinforce the belief, held by too many for too much of our history, that individuals should be judged by the color of their skin. Racial classifications with respect to voting carry particular dangers. Racial gerrymandering, even for remedial purposes, may balkanize us into competing racial factions; it threatens to carry us further from the goal of a political system in which race no longer matters—a goal that the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments embody, and to which the Nation continues to aspire. It is for these reasons that race-based districting by our state legislatures demands close judicial scrutiny...

Source: Shaw v. Reno (1993)

- A. Describe the main idea or essential claim.
- B. In the context of the scenario, explain how the claim discussed in (A) is affected by local elections.
- C. Explain how the principle of “one man one vote” impacts reapportionment.