

## **Gray v. Sanders TEACHERS GUIDE**

1. Who is James O'Hear Sanders?

**James O' Hear Sanders is a voter from Fulton County, Georgia who feels that, as an urban voter, his vote does not have as much influence as the votes of people who live in rural counties.**

2. What issue is Sanders bringing to the court?

**Sanders brings forth the issue that the votes of people living in largely populated areas count for less than the votes of those living in less populous areas due to Georgia's county voting system. He believed votes should be counted equally regardless of where the voter lives.**

3. What is the county unit system?

**The county unit system is a system of voting used in Georgia from 1917 until the 1960s which classified every county in the state into three categories: urban, town, and rural. Urban counties received six votes, town counties received four, and rural counties received two.**

4. Does the county unit system benefit one group(s) of voters over another?

**Rural counties enjoyed control of statewide government elections that was disproportionate to their size. Often that power was used to protect policies like segregation by limiting the influence of more liberal voters and Black voters who populated urban counties.**

## PREPARING FOR COURT

Imagine you are James O’Hear Sanders and you have to defend your argument in court. A strong case includes strong evidence to prove your point. For this case, we want to find proof that our rights as citizens are being violated. Where can we find a list of all our guaranteed rights as American citizens? That’s right: the Constitution! Gather your evidence in the case file below.

A list of the United States Constitutional Amendments can be found here:  
[https://www.senate.gov/civics/constitution\\_item/constitution.htm#amendments](https://www.senate.gov/civics/constitution_item/constitution.htm#amendments)

### EVIDENCE FILE: Gray v. Sanders

#### Amendment #17

Circle one: **VIOLATED** or UPHELD

How was this constitutional amendment violated or upheld? Please explain.

**The 17th Amendment gives citizens the right to fill vacancies in the Senate via elections: “When vacancies happen in the representation of any State in the Senate, the executive authority of such State shall issue writs of election to fill such vacancies: Provided, That the legislature of any State may empower the executive thereof to make temporary appointments until the people fill the vacancies by election as the legislature may direct.”**

#### Amendment #14

Circle one: **VIOLATED** or UPHELD

How was this constitutional amendment violated or upheld? Please explain.

**“No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws”**

#### Amendment #14

Circle one: **VIOLATED** or UPHELD

How was this constitutional amendment violated or upheld? Please explain.

**“Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state...”**