

# Sandra Day O'Connor

“As women achieve power, the barriers will fall. As society sees what women can do, as WOMEN see what women can do, there will be more women out there doing things, and we'll all be better off for it.”

**Sandra Day O'Connor was the first female justice of the Supreme Court.** Being the first Sandra paved the way for women in positions of power in government; learn more about her in this monthly patch!

Complete 3-Daisy, 4-Brownie, 5-Junior, 6-Cadette, and 7-Senior/Ambassador steps to earn your patch.

All monthly patches are custom designed patches. Once we get the final number of patches after the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, we place an order. Patches take about a month to create and then we mail them to you. You will get a confirmation email once the patches are headed your way.

*Order patch on-line by December 15, 2019 at*

**GETYOURGIRLPOWER.ORG**

## Discover

1. **Sandra Day O'Connor grew up** on a ranch in Arizona. Her family's ranch was 160,000 acres, which is one-fifth the size of Rhode Island. They described it as their own little country. What responsibilities do you think Sandra had while growing up on a ranch? Would you like to grow up on a ranch? Why or why not?
2. Not only was Sandra the first women on the Supreme Court; before this, she was the first women to serve on the Arizona Senate. How do

you think it would feel to be one of the first? Would you be excited, scared, or nervous? What is something you would like to be the first for?

3. Sandra was the only women serving on the Supreme Court for 12 years; until 1993 when Ruth Bader Ginsburg was appointed. As different as these two ladies were, they immediately became allies; especially **regarding women's rights**. Discover more about Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Sandra Day O'Connor's friendship. Discuss what you learn with your troop. How did their journey to the Supreme Court differ? How was it similar?
4. The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. It is the head of the judicial branch of government. There are three branches of government. What are they? What do they do? What power does each branch have? It is important to understand our government and the systems we have in place. Take some time to learn more about our government.

### Connect

5. After graduating from law school at the top of her class, Sandra had a hard time finding a job because of her gender; while her male classmates easily found jobs right out of law school. Do you think this is fair? How far have we come since **the 1950's in terms of women being nominated for office**? How many women have served on the Supreme Court?
6. In her first year on the Supreme Court, Sandra received over 60,000 letters from the public, more than any other justice in history. Write **your own letter to Sandra Day O'Connor**. Is there a cause you care about or a recent Supreme Court case that you have an opinion on?

Look up some of the cases that Sandra played a part in and write in your letter to her how these cases shaped history.

7. Sandra is quoted saying she felt a sense of responsibility to demonstrate that women could do the job of Justice of the Supreme Court. Is there something that you feel a responsibility toward? Maybe a responsibility to be a good role model to your siblings? A responsibility to try out something new? Possibly a reasonability to pave the way for women in a certain course of study as you get older? Whatever it is, write down what that sense of responsibility means to you. What actions will you need to take to see that responsibility through?

### Take Action

8. In February 2009, O'Connor launched Our Courts (which has since changed to iCivics), a website she created to offer interactive civic lessons to students and teachers. She was concerned about the lack of knowledge most young Americans knew about how their government worked. Take some time to visit this site. There are fun, interactive games and lessons. After taking the time to explore the site, discuss with your troop what you have learned. Pass along to at least one other person, that this website is available. You could tell your teacher, a friend or a family member! *Disclaimer: this site is primarily for middle school and high school age students.*
9. **Sandra's husband suffered from Alzheimer's disease, which lead to her retirement from the Supreme Court. In 2018 Sandra announced that she too had been diagnosed with the early stages of Alzheimer's.** This is a horrible disease that affects many people. What can you do to help?

There are often Walk to End Alzheimer's events. You can go to the Alzheimer's Association website at [alz.org](http://alz.org) to learn more. You can also visit your local nursing homes. You could make a nice craft for the residents or even spend an evening reading to them or doing an activity with them. Work with the nursing home staff to find out what you could do to help.

10. Although you have to be nominated for the Supreme Court, we are going to pretend that you are running for office. Come up with your campaign slogan, and design your campaign button. What policies would you put in place? What are your views on major subjects impacting the country? What would you do to make a difference? For younger girls you can simply run for class president at your school, and think about how you could make a change at school. For older girls, think about the United States and do research about the position you would want to run for. Establish your opinions and views on issues going on in our country today.