

Laws and the Courts

A Workbook for Upper Elementary Students



**The State of Connecticut Judicial Branch and
The Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, Inc.**

The State of Connecticut Judicial Branch and the Consortium for Law and Citizenship Education, Inc. acknowledge and thank the Administrative Office of the Courts, Judicial Counsel of California and the Wisconsin Supreme Court for giving us permission to use some segments of their workbooks entitled *What's Happening in Court?*

In addition, the Connecticut Judicial Branch extends its sincere appreciation to the elementary school teachers and Judicial Branch interns who assisted in the development of this publication.

© 2017 State of Connecticut Judicial Branch. All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or utilized in any form, or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photo-copying, recording, or by any other information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the author. Connecticut educators may reproduce part or all of this book for educational purposes. For all other uses permission is required.

Welcome from the Chief Justice



You are now going to learn about the Connecticut court system. This is a very important area for you to learn about because the courts affect people's lives in many different ways – even children's.

The most important thing about our courts is that judges protect everybody's rights – your parents, your neighbors, your teachers and yours too. This is a very important role in a democracy and our government relies on the courts to ensure that everyone is treated fairly under the law.

This book will tell you what you need to know about laws and why we need them; who makes, enforces and interprets the law; what the different types of courts are and who are the people in the Superior Court. By the time you finish with this workbook, I am certain that you will not only have learned about our state courts, but have had a lot of fun doing so.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chase T. Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chase T. Rogers
Chief Justice

Table of Contents

Section One

What do we need to know about laws?	
What are laws?	3

Section Two

Who makes, enforces, and interprets the laws?	9
---	---

Section Three

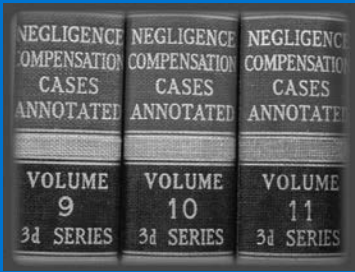
What are the different types of courts?	15
---	----

Section Four

Who are the people in the Superior Court?	27
---	----

Section Five

Let's see what you have learned	33
Glossary of Terms	43



SECTION ONE

What do we need to know about laws? What are laws?

Terms to know:

Society
Laws

Government
Enforce

Rule of Law

A **society** is a group of people living in a community.

In our society, we have a set of rules called **laws**. One example of a law is the law requiring children to attend school. Another example of a law is the law that prohibits people from stealing.

The **government** is the body that makes laws and **enforces** laws. This means that the government decides what the laws will be and makes sure that everyone follows them. A government can function successfully only when people respect the laws.

Our society is based on the **Rule of Law**. This means that everyone is required to obey the law. Senators, judges, the police and even the president must follow the laws. It doesn't matter what the person does for a job. **Everyone must follow the laws.**

We need laws to keep order and protect us, our property and our rights.



Why do we need laws?

There are many reasons why our society needs laws.

- **Laws protect us and our property from others.** Without laws, there would be no written rules to protect you or your belongings from harm.
- **Laws make people responsible for their actions.** This is like you being responsible for following the rules your parents or your teachers make.
- **Laws ensure order.** Without laws, people could do whatever they wanted. Life could be very confusing and even dangerous. For example, what do you think it would be like if drivers ignored stop signs and stop lights?

Section in review	Suggested activities
1. What are laws?	1. Do the Deserted Island Activity on page 5.
2. Why are they important to a society?	2. Complete the Word Search and sentences on page 6 and 7.
3. What is the Rule of Law?	
4. Why is it important for everyone to follow the law?	3. Discuss with your teacher and classmates how your life would be different if our society did not have laws.

Deserted island activity

What are laws and why do we need them?



Purpose:

To demonstrate your understanding of what laws are and why they are important to a society.

Directions:

1. Work in a group that your teacher has assigned. Pretend you have just been stranded on a deserted island with people you don't know very well.
2. Make a list of at least five laws that your society agrees are important. Complete this graphic organizer.
3. Present this to the class and explain how the group decided on these 5 laws.

Laws	Reasons why they are important
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

Word Search and Sentences

What are laws and why do we need them?

Directions:

Part 1: Look at the definitions below and identify the appropriate term.

Part 2: Then find the terms and circle them.

Part 3: After you have found all of the words, write three sentences using at least two of the words in each sentence (see page 7).

Part 1

- _____ To make sure that everyone follows the laws
- _____ The body that makes the laws and enforces them
- _____ Set of rules
- _____ The concept that everyone is required to obey the laws
- _____ A group of people living in a community

Part 2

Word Bank:

Government

Enforce

Society

Laws

Rule of law

W	F	D	S	D	P	A	Y	E	G	I	O	X	B	U
A	G	W	H	Q	B	S	H	O	C	O	U	C	R	F
T	A	W	R	M	L	M	V	V	H	R	K	P	Z	Q
L	W	A	L	F	O	E	L	U	R	C	O	P	R	O
P	P	M	V	Y	R	K	X	M	G	T	J	F	Y	S
B	K	A	C	N	F	H	O	H	P	S	Z	F	N	J
V	J	B	M	G	O	P	M	A	B	S	Y	M	Z	E
L	W	E	D	Z	Z	B	S	D	B	J	T	F	P	A
N	N	W	S	T	L	C	G	R	I	Q	E	B	D	V
T	Z	V	T	K	X	F	L	F	L	E	I	C	U	A
M	E	P	V	S	Y	E	L	B	N	Z	C	U	W	P
J	G	F	X	R	X	P	Q	U	M	E	O	J	W	A
W	U	C	Y	G	G	E	T	D	C	N	S	I	S	N
C	D	W	P	K	B	X	K	O	A	C	T	U	N	B
U	H	O	V	C	W	T	Q	V	L	T	P	L	K	V

Word Search and Sentences

What are laws and why do we need them?

Part 3

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



SECTION TWO

Who makes, enforces, and interprets the laws?

Terms to know:

Constitution
Legislative Branch

Federal Laws
State Laws

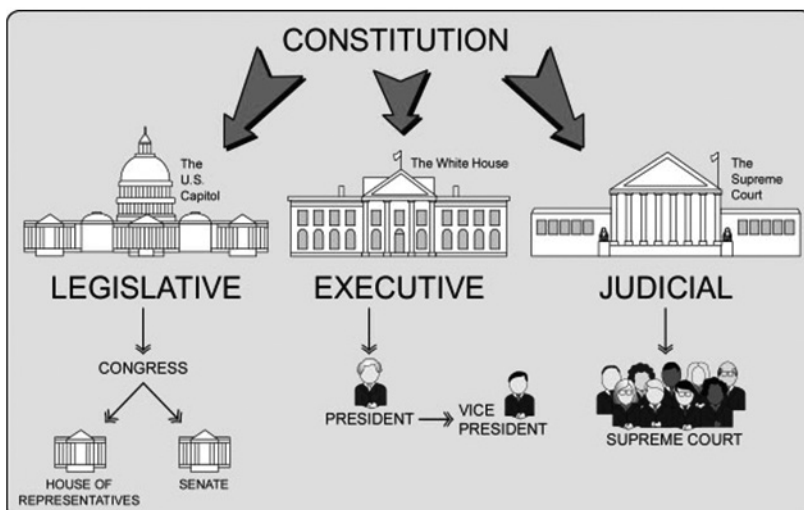
Ordinance
Curfew

Executive Branch
Judicial Branch

Constitution:

A document that explains the rules and principles of a government.

The U.S. Constitution established our government. It is the document that created the three branches of government—**Legislative, Executive, and Judicial.**



In the United States, there are three different levels of government—**Federal, State and Local.**

Who makes, enforces, and... interprets the laws?

Three Different Branches

Legislative Branch

The **legislative branch** of government makes the laws. There is a legislative branch at the federal level which is called Congress. Laws created by Congress are called federal laws. These laws apply to everyone living in the United States.

Federal law is the highest law of the land. This means state and local governments cannot make laws that go against federal law.

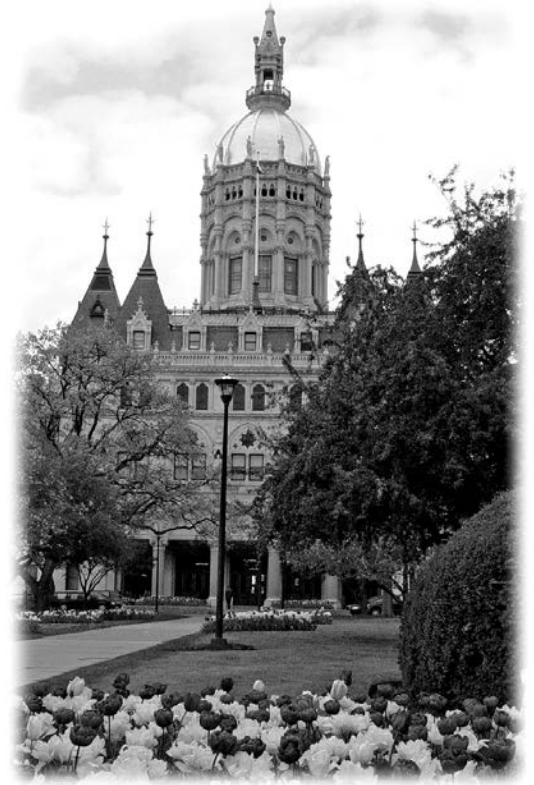
An example of a **federal law** is the law that makes it a crime to treat someone differently based on their age, gender or race.

The Connecticut General Assembly is the legislative branch on the state level. Laws made by the General Assembly are called state laws. These laws apply to everyone inside the borders of the state of Connecticut.

An example of a **state law** is the law that requires passengers in a car to wear seat belts. Most states have similar state laws, however, what is allowed in one state might not be allowed in another state.

Towns and cities also have local legislative bodies, known as town councils or city councils, that make **ordinances**. An example of a local ordinance is a curfew.

A **curfew** is a rule that restricts people from being out of their home after a given time or in a certain place. This means that they cannot be out on the street.



Connecticut State Capitol

Executive Branch

The **executive branch** of government enforces the laws. The head of the executive branch for the federal government is the president of the United States. The head of the state government is the governor and local governments are usually led by a mayor or first selectman.

- The head of the executive branch for the federal government is the president.
- The head for the state government is the governor.
- The head for the local government is the mayor or first selectman.



Connecticut Supreme Court Building

Judicial Branch

The **Judicial Branch** of government consists of the courts. The role of the courts is to resolve disagreements and determine if someone is guilty of breaking a law.

The courts also look at the laws and determine what laws mean. This is called interpreting the law.

Courts exist at the federal level and at the state level. The highest federal court is the U.S. Supreme Court and the highest state court is the Connecticut Supreme Court.

Section in review	Suggested activities
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What is the U.S. Constitution?2. What are the three different levels of government in the United States?3. What are the three branches of government?4. What are three different types of laws?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Answer the critical thinking questions on page 12.2. Complete the graphic organizer showing the three branches of government on page 13.3. Write a letter to your state senator or state representative about a law that you think should be made or changed.4. Complete the double puzzle and index card game on page 14.

Critical Thinking Questions

Who makes, enforces, and interprets the laws?

Critical thinking questions:

1. Which branch of government do you think is most important? How can you tell?

2. Which law would it be more serious to break: federal, state, or local?
Use evidence from your text to support your answer.

3. Do you think it is more challenging to be the president of the United States or a governor of a state? Use your own knowledge and information from the text to support your answer.

Graphic Organizer

Who makes, enforces, and interprets the laws?

Complete the graphic organizer below. In each box, place the name of the person or group for each branch of government on the federal, state and local levels. For example, you should write "Congress" in the first box on the top left because Congress is the legislative body for the federal government.

Graphic organizer showing the three branches of government

Organizer: Branches of Government			
	Legislative	Executive	Judicial
Federal			
State			
Local			

Double Puzzle and Index Card Game

Who makes, enforces, and interprets the laws?

Directions:

Part 1: Unscramble each of the clue words.

Part 2: Then copy the letters in the numbered boxes to the other boxes below with the same number.

Part 3: Write each term used in Part 2 on an index card. Pull 2 cards from the pile and discuss the meaning of the words with a partner. Try to explain how the words are connected or related to each other. Then, create a sentence using both words.

Part 1

SOONITTINCUT

CUFWER

CIVXEEETU BARNCH

REDFAEL WASL

VILITLAGEES RAHBCN

RACNINDEO

STEAT WALS

Part 2

12								1			

4					

								5			

8								11			13

								2			

								9	10		

J							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

8	9	10	11	12	13		

Part 3 Create a sentence using both of the words.



SECTION THREE

What are the different types of courts?

Terms to know:

Superior Court
Trial
Judge
Jury

Evidence
Testimony
Witnesses
Appellate Court

Legal Brief
Oral Argument
Affirm
Reverse

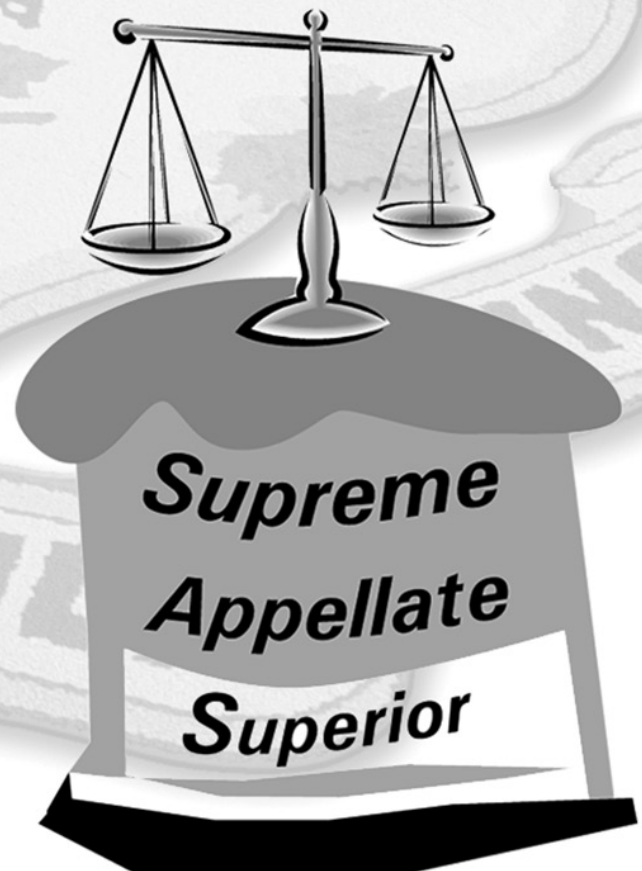
Supreme Court
Justices

Connecticut's court system has three levels.

This three-level process is how legal disagreements are settled in Connecticut.

It can be compared to a three-layer cake.

The first level—or bottom layer of the cake—is called the **Superior Court**. Almost all court cases in our state start in the Superior Court.



What are the different types of courts?

Superior Courts

Superior Courts are where trials take place.

In a **trial**, a judge or a jury hears two sides of an issue. The judge or jury then decides which side is right based on the law and the evidence presented.

A **judge** is the person who is in charge of the courtroom. He or she hears both sides of an issue and decides who is right.

A **jury** is a group of people who are asked to come to the courthouse to hear both sides of an issue and decide who is right.

Evidence is used to show the judge or jury what really happened. It can be a document, a photograph, a videotape or DVD and testimony.

Testimony consists of statements that are made at the trial by witnesses.

A **Witness** is a person with knowledge of what happened.



Superior Courts:
The courts in Connecticut where legal cases begin.

There are Superior Court Courthouses in many Connecticut cities and towns.

At the end of a trial, the judge or jury makes a decision.

- The decision could be who is at fault in a car accident, or
- The decision could be whether someone is guilty of a crime and must go to jail.

What are the different types of courts?

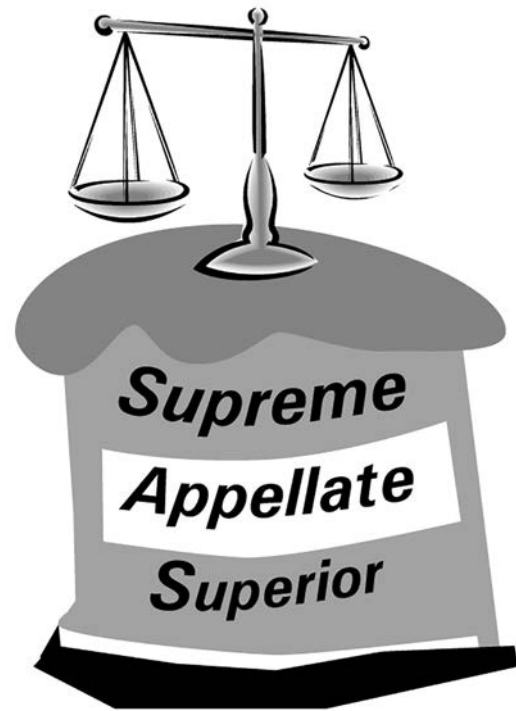
The Appellate Court



An **appellate court** is a court that reviews decisions of a lower court to see if mistakes were made.

In Connecticut, we have two appellate courts - The Connecticut Appellate Court and the Connecticut Supreme Court.

The Connecticut Appellate Court would be the second layer of the cake.



The role of the Appellate Court is different from the role of the Superior Court. Trials do not take place in the Appellate Court.

The Appellate Court is made up of nine judges. A panel of three judges review the decisions made in the Superior Court to see if they are correct.



This is the Appellate Court in Connecticut, which is located in Hartford.

What are the different types of courts?

The Appellate Court

(continued from page 17)

The Appellate Court judges do this by reading information about the case that is written by the parties. This information is called a **legal brief**.

The judges also let the attorneys present their side of the issue in “**oral argument**.” Oral argument is an opportunity for the parties’ lawyers to explain to the judges why the Superior Court judge either correctly followed the law or why the judge made a mistake. The lawyers do this by speaking to the judges and discussing the law.

Evidence is not presented to the Appellate Court judges. There are no juries in the Appellate Court.

After the lawyers have presented their case to the Appellate Court, the judges write a decision.

This decision will either “**affirm**” or “**reverse**” the decision of the Superior Court.

If the Appellate Court decides that the Superior Court did not make any mistakes, it will “**affirm**” the decision.

If the Appellate Court decides that the Superior Court made a mistake, it will “**reverse**” the decision.

In most instances, a decision from the Appellate Court is the end of the legal case.

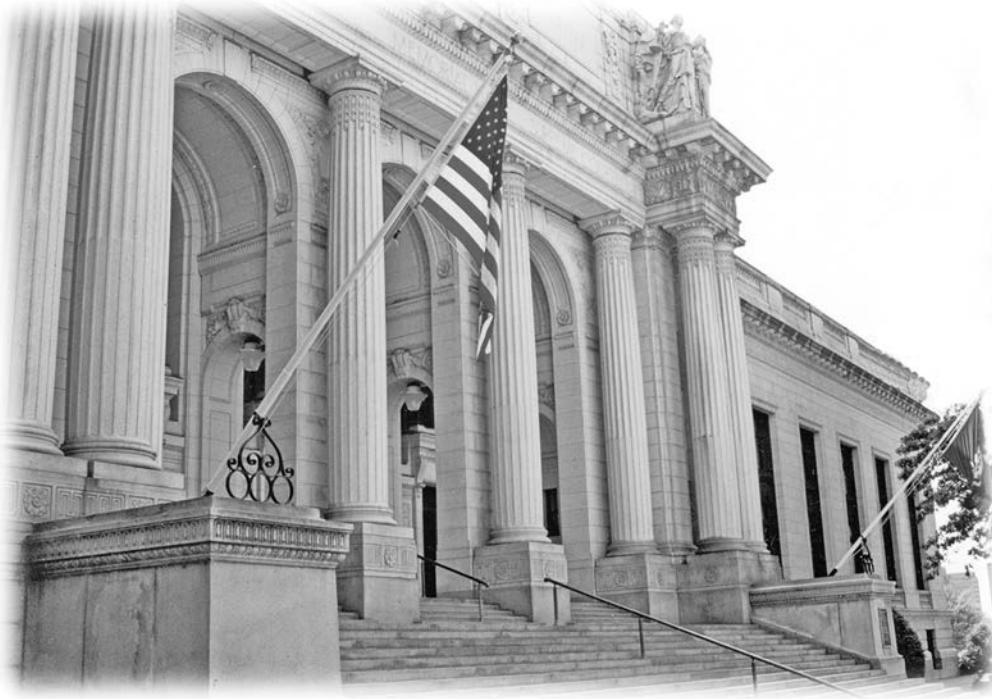


Connecticut Appellate Court Courtroom

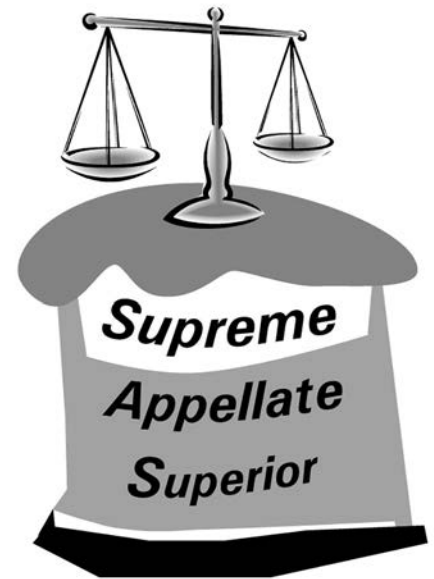
Laws and the Courts

What are the different types of courts?

The Supreme Court



Supreme Court building located in Hartford.



The Supreme Court is the highest court in Connecticut. Justices of the Supreme Court review decisions of the Superior and the Appellate courts to see if any mistakes were made.

We have one Supreme Court in Connecticut. It would be the top layer of the cake.

The Supreme Court is also an appellate court, because it reviews decisions of lower courts to see if any mistakes were made.

The Supreme Court is made up of seven judges called "**justices**."

The Supreme Court listens to cases in the same way that the Appellate Court listens to cases.

Lawyers try to persuade the justices why the Appellate Court, or in some cases the Superior Court, made the right or wrong decision in the case.

What are the different types of courts?

The Supreme Court

(continued from page 19)

Like the Appellate Court, no evidence is presented to the Supreme Court. And, there are no juries in the Supreme Court.

If the Supreme Court finds that a mistake has been made, it can order the Superior Court to start the case all over again, from the beginning.

Once in a while, the Supreme Court of the United States will review decisions of the Connecticut Supreme Court.

But, in almost every case, it is our Connecticut Supreme Court that will have the final say on the law.



Supreme Court Courtroom in Hartford.

What are the different types of courts?

Section in review	Suggested activities
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What are the three different courts in Connecticut and how do they differ from each other?2. What are three characteristics of a trial court?3. What are the main differences between trial courts (Superior Courts) and appellate courts (the Supreme and Appellate Courts)?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete the word search on page 22 and 23.2. Complete the “Trial Court or Appellate Court Exercise” on page 24 and 25.3. Go onto the Judicial Branch’s website at www.jud.ct.gov and see if you can find the names of the seven justices of the Connecticut Supreme Court.

Word Search

What are the different types of courts?

Directions:

Part 1: Look at the definitions below and identify the appropriate term.

Part 2: Find the terms listed in the word bank and circle them.

Part 1

_____ Testimony, papers or objects presented at trial to prove a fact.

_____ The courts in Connecticut where legal cases begin (trial courts).

_____ The middle-level court in Connecticut.

_____ The highest court in Connecticut.

_____ A document filed with the court in support of a position.

_____ The chance to persuade Supreme or Appellate Court judges that the trial court has or has not made the right decision.

_____ The word used by the Appellate or Supreme Court when it decides that the Superior Court made the right decision.

_____ The word used by the Appellate or Supreme Court when it decides that a lower court ruling was not correct and must be changed.

Word Search

What are the different types of courts?

Word Bank:

Supreme Court
Affirm

Appellate Court
Reverse

Superior Courts
Oral Argument

Evidence
Legal Brief

Part 2

H	C	O	M	T	J	I	R	R	R	U	Q	A	B	S
S	L	J	A	R	T	V	A	W	E	R	I	T	T	L
H	U	H	C	U	I	X	U	N	Q	Y	W	R	E	E
T	M	P	V	O	E	F	J	M	P	S	U	V	D	G
Z	T	N	R	C	F	L	F	N	C	O	I	D	C	A
S	J	C	B	E	O	W	Q	A	C	D	N	A	B	L
L	I	G	Z	T	M	K	Q	R	E	B	F	V	E	B
F	X	I	C	A	L	E	O	N	I	H	Z	V	H	R
E	F	S	F	L	V	I	C	E	M	G	Y	M	W	I
O	A	M	H	L	R	E	B	O	J	C	S	H	L	E
S	L	O	M	E	N	M	G	G	U	B	W	P	C	F
W	I	N	P	P	M	R	M	E	S	R	E	V	E	R
S	G	U	M	P	T	B	U	E	A	K	T	U	J	E
F	S	O	R	A	L	A	R	G	U	M	E	N	T	V
E	F	W	U	T	J	B	T	Q	N	H	C	P	Z	A

Which Court?

What are the different types of courts?

Part 1

Identify whether the matter would take place in the Superior Courts (trial court) or in the Supreme or the Appellate Court (appellate courts).



Be prepared to explain why based on text evidence.

*Circle **T** for **trial court** and circle **A** for **appellate court**.*

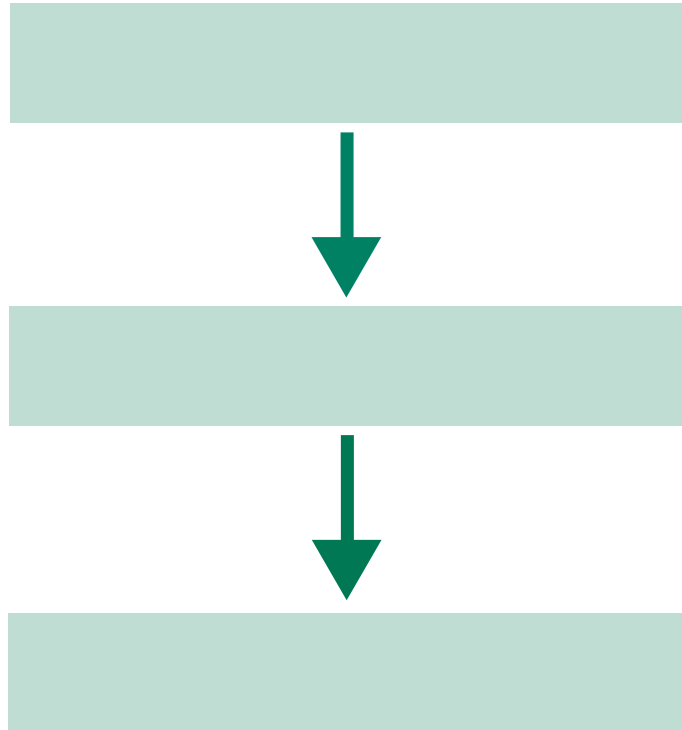
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | A | 1) The jury decides that it was the restaurant's fault that Matt got sick. |
| T | A | 2) Monica testifies that the bank robber pointed a gun at the teller. |
| T | A | 3) A three-judge panel decides that a person should not have been able to serve as a juror because he was disqualified. |
| T | A | 4) A police report from a car accident is entered into evidence. |
| T | A | 5) Five justices hear the case and issue a decision. |

Which Court?

What are the different types of courts?

Part 2

Using the graphic organizer, list the three courts in Connecticut.



Part 3

Using the graphic organizer below, circle whether the term listed is associated with the trial courts (Superior Courts) or the appellate courts (Supreme and Appellate Courts).

Panel of Judges	trial courts	appellate courts
Evidence	trial courts	appellate courts
Jury	trial courts	appellate courts
Oral Argument	trial courts	appellate courts
Witness	trial courts	appellate courts
Affirm	trial courts	appellate courts
Legal Brief	trial courts	appellate courts



SECTION FOUR

Who are the people in the Superior Court?

Terms to know:

Civil Case

Criminal Case

Judge

Bench

Juror

Jury

Prosecutor

Lawyer

Judicial Marshal

Interpreter

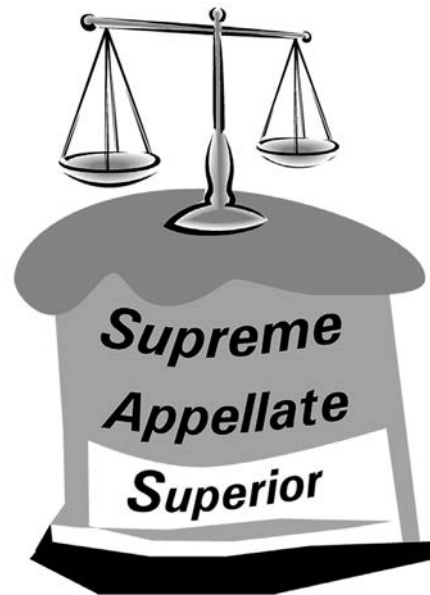
Court Recording Monitor

Transcript

Clerk

Witness

As you learned in **Section Three**, the Superior Court is the first level of the court system.



When people are arrested, or when people can't resolve their disagreements, they first go to the Superior Court.

There are different types of cases. A **civil case** is a case that involves people who disagree. An example of a civil case is an injured person looking for money from the person who caused the harm.

A **criminal case** occurs when someone is arrested and charged with breaking a law. In these cases we say that the person has committed a "crime against the state," and so the state brings the case against the person charged with the crime.



Who are the people in the Superior Court?

There are many people who work in a court system and each person has an important job to do.

First, there is the **judge**. The judge wears a black robe and sits at the front of the courtroom behind the **bench**.

The judge is like a referee at a ball game. The judge makes sure that everyone follows the rules in the courtroom. Sometimes, the judge is the person who listens to both parties' arguments and decides on the best outcome.



For example, if two people come to court because they disagree about money, the judge might be the person who finally decides who gets the money.

Other times, a group of people decides who wins the argument. These people are called **jurors**. Jurors are everyday people who come to court to listen to each side of a disagreement. Then the jurors decide how the disagreement will be settled.

A group of jurors is called a **jury**. Citizens of Connecticut who are over the age of 18 can be called to serve on a jury.



Who are the people in the Superior Court?

The **prosecutor** is the lawyer who tries to prove that the person accused of the crime is guilty. The prosecutor works for the government.

When people go to court, they often have **lawyers**. Lawyers give advice to people on the law. They also speak for someone who has to come to court. This is called “representing” the person.

You can probably spot the **judicial marshal** easily. The marshal wears a uniform, like a police officer’s uniform. The marshal can be found either at the front door of the courthouse checking people as they come inside, or in the courtroom to help keep order.

What would happen if you had to go to court and you didn’t understand what was being said? That would be very difficult and unfair. Courts have **interpreters** for people in a court case who don’t speak or understand English. The interpreter’s job is to translate what is said in court.

The **court recording monitor** is responsible for recording what everybody says in court with a recording device. The court monitor also types up what is said. This document is called a **transcript**.

All courts have **clerks** as well. A court clerk organizes the papers about the cases. The clerk keeps track of the decisions or orders.

Witnesses are people who come to court to tell what they have seen or heard. They take a special seat and the lawyers ask them questions.

Connecticut courts are open to the **public**. So it is not uncommon to see members of the public in the **gallery**, or the section of the courtroom where they may sit.



Who are the people in the Superior Court?

Section in review	Suggested activities
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Why would a person have to go to court?2. What takes place in a trial court?3. Who are the people who work in the Superior Court?	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Complete the matching activity on page 31.2. Locate and label the people in the trial court pictured on page 32.3. If you were going to work in a courtroom, which job would you want? Explain your answer using text evidence.

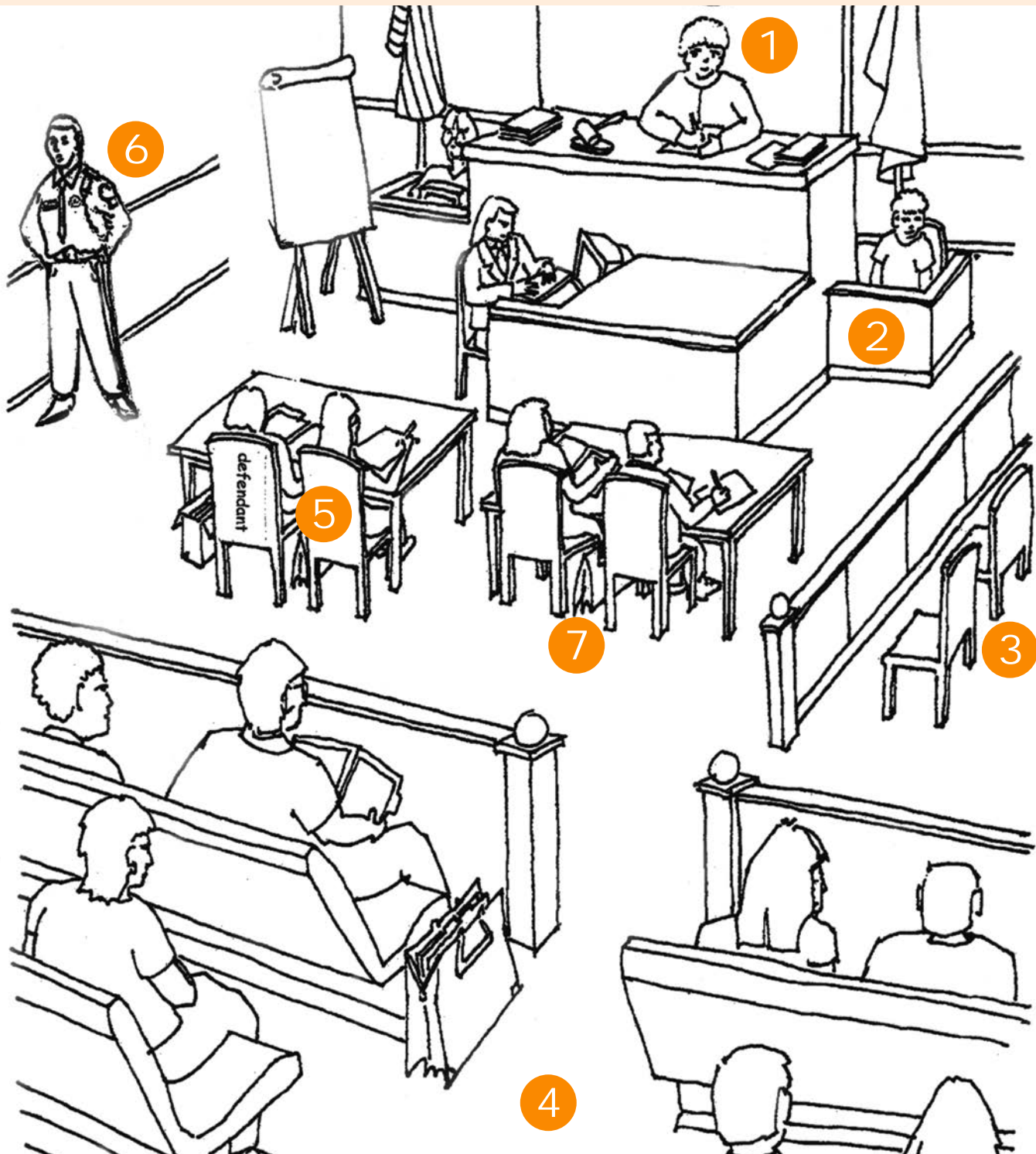
Matching Definitions

Who are the people in the Superior Court?

Match the definition with the right term by placing the letter for the correct definition next to the term.

Term	Definition
1. Interpreter _____	A. A group of everyday citizens who listen to both sides of a case in court and then decide how the disagreement will be settled.
2. Witness _____	B. A lawyer who represents the state in criminal cases and tries to prove that the defendant is guilty of the crime for which he or she was arrested.
3. Lawyer _____	C. A person whose job it is to translate what is said in court for parties who don't speak English.
4. Jury _____	D. A person whose job it is to represent, or speak for the people who come to court.
5. Judge _____	E. A person who comes to court to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard in the case.
6. Prosecutor _____	F. A person who is responsible for taking down every word in court with a recording device.
7. Court recording monitor _____	G. A person who makes decisions and makes sure everyone follows the rules.

Who are the people in the Superior Court?



Can you locate the court participants in this picture? Put the number of the person, people or item next to the term that best describes it below.

_____ Defendant's Attorney

_____ Judge

_____ Jury Box

_____ Members of the public

_____ Witness

_____ Judicial Marshal

_____ Two attorneys representing the state



SECTION FIVE

Let's see what you have learned

Mock Trial Activity

All Section Crossword Puzzle

Final Quiz

Glossary of Terms

Mock Trial Activity

Let's see what you have learned

Assignment

Follow the assigned script. Then, a jury will meet to decide the case.

The Case of the Missing Puppy

Facts

Mr. and Mrs. Green hired Amanda Barber, age 18, to baby-sit their son Mikey and their puppy Spot for the day.

They told Amanda to play with their son, to make him lunch, and to be sure their dog was tied up outside for fresh air and exercise.

While Amanda was preparing a sandwich for the child, the frisky dog broke free and ran away.

The Greens blame Amanda for carelessness and want her to give them the cost of the puppy.

Issue

Is it Amanda's fault that the dog got loose? Or, is it the owner's fault for giving Amanda a rope that wasn't strong enough to hold their dog?

Participants in trial

Plaintiffs – Mr. and Mrs. Green

Defendant – Amanda Barber

Witness for plaintiffs – Mr. Brown, the Green's neighbor

Witness for defense – Mrs. Castle, Amanda's former Girl Scout leader

Plaintiffs' lawyer

Defendant's lawyer

Court Clerk

Judge

Jury foreperson

Jury members

Judicial Marshal

Court recording monitor

Jury foreperson:

The juror, sometimes called the head juror, who asks questions on behalf of the entire jury and tells the judge the decision of the jury.

Trial Proceedings

All participants except the judge will take their places.

JUDICIAL MARSHAL: We will now hear "Green vs. Barber." All rise for the Honorable

_____ (Judge enters and sits.) All may be seated.
(name of judge)

JUDGE: Will the plaintiff's lawyer please make his/her opening statement to the jury?

PLAINTIFFS' LAWYER: Good morning ladies and gentlemen of the jury. My name is

_____ and I am the lawyer for Mr. and Mrs. Green.

In this case, we will prove that Amanda Barber was not careful and did not do the things she promised the Greens she would do. She lost their dog, Spot, and she is to blame.

JUDGE: Will the defendant's lawyer please make his/her opening statement to the jury?

DEFENDANT'S LAWYER: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, my name is _____

_____ and I represent 18-year old Amanda Barber.

We will prove that Amanda is a very careful baby sitter. We will also show that the rope the Greens gave her was worn-out and was not strong enough to hold Spot.

JUDGE: The plaintiff's lawyer may now call his/her first witness.

PLAINTIFFS' LAWYER: Your honor, I will first call the plaintiff, Mrs. Green.
(The Judicial Marshal brings the witness to the Court Clerk.)

COURT CLERK: Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

MRS. GREEN: I do.

PLAINTIFFS' LAWYER: Mrs. Green, please tell us what happened.

MRS. GREEN: My husband and I needed a baby sitter. We called Amanda Barber. She told us that she knew how to take care of children and pets.

We told her to tie our new puppy Spot outside for a while, so he could get some exercise.

Later she told us that the rope was worn-out and Spot got loose and ran away.

Our Dalmatian was very expensive, and our son is very upset. This is all Amanda's fault! She should pay for a new dog.

PLAINTIFFS' LAWYER: Thank you, Mrs. Green. Your honor, next I will call a neighbor, Mr. Brown. (The Judicial Marshal brings the witness to the Court Clerk.)

COURT CLERK: Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

MR. BROWN: I do.

PLAINTIFFS' LAWYER: Mr. Brown, please tell us what you saw.

MR. BROWN: On the day that the Greens' puppy was lost, I was looking out my window.

I saw the little Green boy and his puppy playing outside in the yard. Soon, four children rode into the Greens' driveway on bikes.

The baby sitter let them come in. I saw that they forgot to close the gate.

That's probably how the dog got out, but I didn't see it happen. Later I heard the baby sitter call Spot, but she couldn't find him.

PLAINTIFFS' LAWYER: Thank you, Mr. Brown. The plaintiffs rest your honor.

JUDGE: The defense lawyer may now call his/her first witness.

DEFENDANT'S LAWYER: First I call the defendant, Amanda Barber.
(The Judicial Marshal brings the witness to the Court Clerk.)

COURT CLERK: Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

AMANDA: I do.

DEFENDANT'S LAWYER: Amanda, please tell us what happened.

AMANDA: I am 18 years old and a very good sitter for kids and pets. When I was at the Greens' house, I followed all their directions. I tied up their Dalmatian with the rope they left me. Then I went inside to make lunch for Mikey.

While Mikey was taking a nap, I went outside to get Spot, but he wasn't there.

The worn-out rope had torn and he ran away. I looked all over for him, but I couldn't go far because Mikey was in the house asleep.

I am very sorry this happened, but it is not my fault! The Greens should have given me a stronger rope.

DEFENDANT'S LAWYER: Thank you, Amanda. Your honor, next I will call Mrs. Castle, Amanda's Girl Scout leader. (The Judicial Marshal brings the witness to the Court Clerk.)

COURT CLERK: Do you swear or affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

MRS. CASTLE: I do.

DEFENDANT'S LAWYER: Mrs. Castle, please tell us about Amanda.

MRS. CASTLE: I am a Girl Scout leader. Last year Amanda Barber earned a Pet Care badge by taking care of my dog for two weeks.

She gave him food and water, she played with him and she gave him treats. It was easy

MRS. CASTLE: *(continued)*

for me to see that she cares for animals very much and would never harm them.

I don't think she would do anything to cause someone's pet to be lost.

DEFENDANT'S LAWYER: Thank you, Mrs. Castle. That is all, your honor. The defense rests.

JUDGE: We have heard the lawyers and all of the witnesses. The lawyers will now give the jury their closing arguments.

DEFENDANT'S LAWYER: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the plaintiff did not prove that Amanda was careless.

Mrs. Castle testified that Amanda was careful with her dog. She put Spot outside like she was supposed to, but the Greens gave her a worn-out rope. She is not responsible for losing Spot.

PLAINTIFFS' LAWYER: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, by listening to the evidence today, you should decide that Amanda Barber was not paying attention to Spot.

She never checked on the dog while he was tied outside.

She should pay for a new puppy for the Greens.

JUDGE: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you have heard all of the evidence.

Now it is time for you to decide whether or not Amanda Barber is at fault for the loss of Mrs. Green's dog.

If you find that she was at fault, you will need to decide whether she should pay to replace him.

Before you decide, you must ask yourself three questions:

- 1. Was Amanda not acting responsibly?**
- 2. Do you believe that everyone has told the truth?**
- 3. Are you more than half sure that your decision is right?**

(Jury meets outside the courtroom, discusses the issues and makes a decision and returns.)

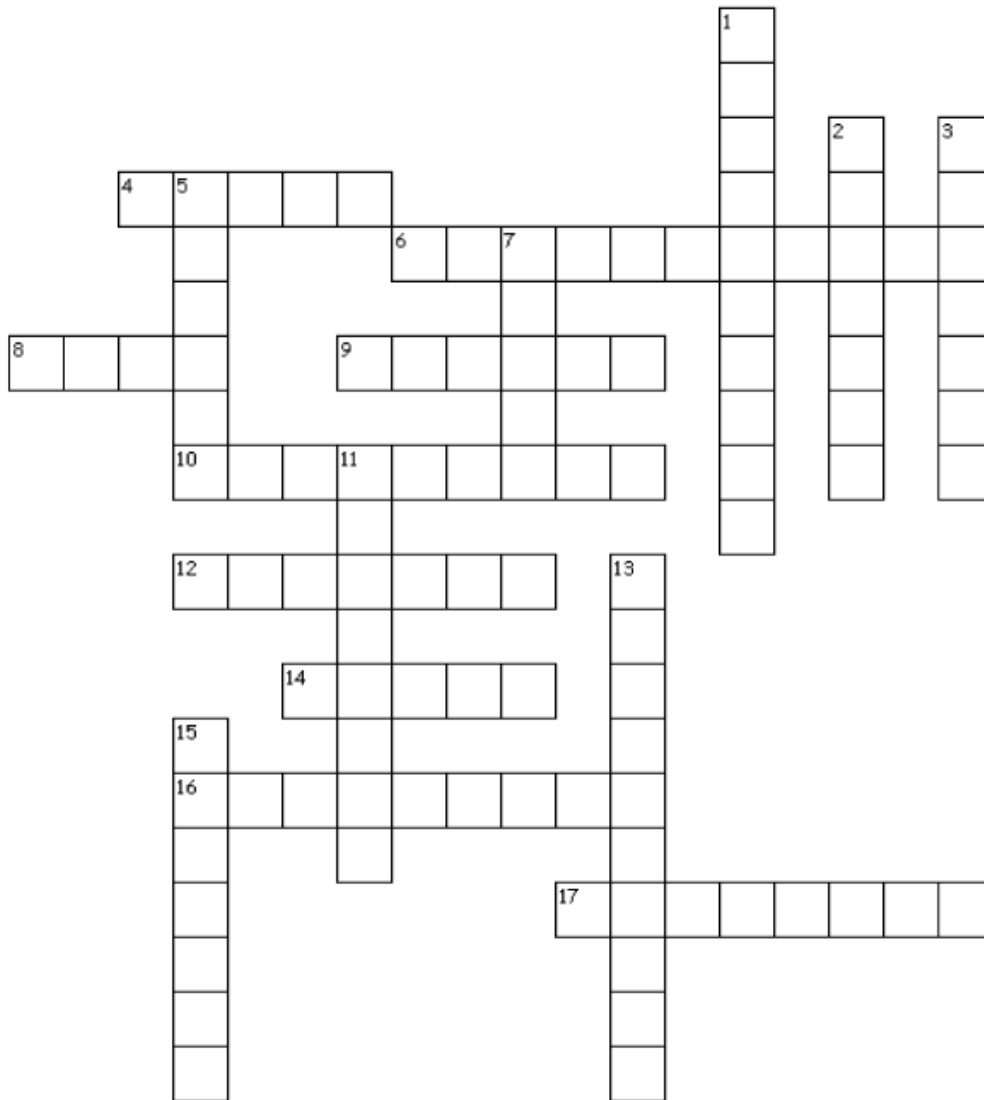
JUDGE: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, have you reached a decision?

JURY FOREPERSON: Yes, your honor.

(Decision is announced and reasons may be given.)

All Section Crossword Puzzle

Let's see what you have learned



Word Bank:

(You will NOT use all of the words)

Government

Affirm

Curfew

Lawyer

Interpreter

Witness

Judicial

Reverse

Legislative

Bench

Clerk

Executive

Judge

Trial

Society

Evidence

Laws

Marshal

Rule of law

Prosecutor

Jury

Enforce

Across

4. A person whose job it is to organize and keep track of all court papers.
6. A person whose job it is to translate what is said in the court for those who do not speak English.
8. A group of everyday citizens who listen to both sides of a case in court and then decide how the disagreement should be settled.
9. Decision of the Supreme Court agreeing with a lower court ruling.
10. The belief that everyone must respect the legal system and obey the law.
12. A group of people living in a community.
14. The large desk in the front of the courtroom where the judge sits.
16. The branch of government that enforces the laws.
17. The branch of government that is made up of the courts.

Down

1. The body that makes and enforces the laws.
2. A person who comes to court to explain what they saw or heard.
3. A court officer whose job it is to keep order in the courthouse and the courtroom.
5. A person whose job it is to represent or speak for the people who come to court.
7. Court hearing where the parties try to convince a judge or jury that they are right.
11. Documents, objects or even testimony that help to prove a fact of the case during a trial.
13. The lawyer that represents the government in criminal cases who is trying to prove that the defendant is guilty of the accused crime.
15. Decision of the Supreme Court disagreeing with a lower court's ruling.

Final Quiz

Let's see what you have learned

Short Answers

*Answer these questions correctly and completely.
Use an additional sheet of paper if necessary.*

1. Explain how a set of laws can ensure order in your community. _____

2. Explain the role of the three branches of government and how they relate to each other.

3. Explain how the Supreme Court differs from a Superior Court. _____

Multiple Choice

Read each statement or question and decide which answer is the best.

Circle the letter of the answer you choose. There is one right answer for each question.

1. When the Appellate Court or the Supreme Court finds that a case in the Superior Court was not decided correctly, the court can _____ the case.

- a. reverse
- b. affirm
- c. retry
- d. upturn

2. What branch of government is comprised of the court system?

- a. Executive
- b. Legislative
- c. Democratic
- d. Judicial

3. A(n) _____ is a group of people living in a community.

- a. government
- b. jury
- c. society
- d. appellate court



Final Quiz

Let's see what you have learned

4. A lawyer:
- a. Comes to court to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard in the case.
 - b. Is responsible for recording what everybody says in court with a recording device.
 - c. Represents or speaks for the people who come to court.
 - d. Wears a black robe.
5. The judge is seated _____.
- a. in the jury box
 - b. at the plaintiff's table
 - c. at the bench
 - d. at the defendant's table
6. How old do you have to be to serve on a jury?
- a. 18
 - b. 100
 - c. 15
 - d. 21
7. A rule or law that is made by a city or town is _____.
- a. an infraction
 - b. a state law
 - c. a federal law
 - d. an ordinance
8. This is a written document that explains the rules and principles of a government:
- a. Evidence
 - b. Constitution
 - c. Principle
 - d. Case
9. The prosecutor works for the:
- a. Defendant
 - b. Jury
 - c. Judge
 - d. Government
10. In Connecticut, the General Assembly adopts _____.
- a. Federal Laws
 - b. State Laws
 - c. Local Laws
 - d. National Laws



Final Quiz

Let's see what you have learned

Please circle T for True and F for False.

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | F | 1. The Supreme Court hears evidence and listens to witnesses. |
| T | F | 2. The Judicial Marshal translates what is said in court for people who don't speak English. |
| T | F | 3. Everyone, including government officials, must respect the legal system and obey its laws. |
| T | F | 4. Federal laws are made by the town council. |
| T | F | 5. Legal cases begin in the Superior Court. |

Connection questions:

Please answer these questions using the information you learned from this unit.

- 1) How will you use what you have learned? Use evidence from the text.

- 2) What are two of the most important facts you learned from the text?
Why did you choose these two?

- 3) Why is it important for students like you to learn about the law and the government?



Glossary of Terms

1. **Affirm** – The word used by the Appellate or Supreme Court when it decides that a lower court ruling was correct and should stay the same.
2. **Appellate Court** – The middle-level court in Connecticut where judges review decisions made by Superior Court judges to see if they have made any mistakes.
3. **Bench** – The large desk at the front of the room at which the judge sits.
4. **Case** – Any disagreement or possible breaking of the law brought to court.
5. **Clerk** – A person whose job it is to organize the papers and keep track of the judge's decisions.
6. **Constitution** – A written document that explains the rules and principles of a government.
7. **Court Recording Monitor** – A person whose job it is to record everything that is said in court.
8. **Curfew** – A rule that restricts people from being out of their home after a given time or in a certain place.
9. **Defendant** – A person who was arrested and accused of committing a crime.
10. **Enforce** – To make sure that everyone follows the law.
11. **Evidence** – Testimony (a witness's words), documents (papers) or objects presented at a trial to prove a fact.
12. **Executive Branch** – The branch that enforces the laws. The head of the executive branch for the federal government is the president of the United States. The head of the state government is the governor and local governments are usually led by a mayor or first selectman.
13. **Federal Laws** – Laws that apply to every one living in the United States.
14. **Government** – The body that makes and enforces the laws.
15. **Interpreter** – A person who translates what is said in court for parties that don't speak English.
16. **Judge** – The person who is in charge in the courtroom and makes decisions.
17. **Judicial Branch** – The branch that is made up of the courts.
18. **Judicial Marshal** – A court officer whose job it is to keep order in the courthouse and in the courtroom.
19. **Jury** – The group of everyday people that listen to both sides of a case in court and then decide how the disagreement will be settled.
20. **Justice** – A judge of the Supreme Court.

Glossary of Terms

- 21. Laws** – A set of rules.
- 22. Lawyer** – A person whose job it is to represent, or speak for the people who come to court.
- 23. Legal Brief** – A document prepared by a lawyer or party and filed with the court in support of their position.
- 24. Legislative Branch** – The branch that makes the laws.
- 25. Oral Argument** – An opportunity for a lawyer to speak to Appellate Court judges or Supreme Court justices to convince them that a lower court has or has not made a right decision.
- 26. Ordinance** – A law or rule made by a city or town government.
- 27. Plaintiff** – A person in court who has brought a complaint against another person.
- 28. Prosecutor** – A lawyer that represents the government in criminal cases. He or she tries to prove that the defendant is guilty of the crime for which he or she was arrested.
- 29. Reverse** – The word used by the Appellate or Supreme Court when it decides that a lower court ruling was not correct and must be changed.
- 30. Rule of Law** – Everyone, including government officials, must respect the legal system and obey its laws. In turn, we expect our legal system to protect our rights and to keep order.
- 31. Society** – A group of people living in a community.
- 32. State Laws** – Laws that are made by the state legislature, which in Connecticut is the General Assembly.
- 33. Superior Court** – The lowest level court in Connecticut where legal cases begin. It is the trial court.
- 34. Supreme Court** – The highest court in Connecticut. Justices of the Supreme Court review decisions of the Appellate Court and Superior Court to see if any mistakes were made.
- 35. Transcript** – Official written copy of the proceedings in a case.
- 36. Trial** – A trial is the hearing of a case in court. The judge or a jury hears the facts of the case presented by each side of the disagreement and then the judge or jury decides who is right.
- 37. Witness** – A person that comes to court to tell the truth about what they have seen or heard in the case.

The Judicial Branch of the State of Connecticut complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you need a reasonable accommodation in accordance with the ADA, contact a court clerk or an ADA contact person listed at www.jud.ct.gov/ADA.



**CONNECTICUT CONSORTIUM for
LAW & CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION, Inc.**



www.jud.ct.gov