

ACTIVITY BOOK:

ALL ABOUT THE FEDERAL COURTS



U.S. DISTRICT COURT

Southern District of Indiana



Welcome!

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana is pleased to present this fun, educational resource designed to help students learn about the functions of the federal judiciary. The activities in this workbook will help explain how the federal courts work, why they are important, and how their work differs from that of state courts.

Federal courts play an important role in our country's democracy. An independent judicial system helps citizens resolve their disputes peacefully and provides equal access to justice to people of all backgrounds.

We hope you find these materials helpful. To explore other educational resources offered by the court, or to learn more about tours and field trip opportunities, please visit us at <https://www.insd.uscourts.gov/educational-resources>.

THE FEDERAL COURTS

SUPREME COURT



The Supreme Court is the highest court in the United States. It is made up of 9 justices. The Supreme Court is the court of final appeal for civil and criminal cases.

DISTRICT COURTS



The District Courts are the nation's federal trial courts. There are 94 District Courts in the United States. These courts often utilize juries to decide a case.

COURTS OF APPEALS



There are 13 Courts of Appeals that sit below the Supreme Court. They are divided into regional circuits. Their job is to determine if the law was applied correctly in the trial court. The Appeals Court panel consists of 3 judges and does not use a jury.

BANKRUPTCY COURTS

Bankruptcy Courts supervise liquidation or reorganization of a person or business's assets when they can no longer pay their creditors. All bankruptcy cases are filed in federal court.

ARTICLE I COURTS

Article I courts, or legislative courts, do not have full judicial power. They were created by Congress to handle specific types of claims. The Article I Courts are:

- U.S. Court of Appeals for Veteran's Claims
- U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces
- U.S. Tax Court

BANKRUPTCY APPELLATE PANELS

Bankruptcy Appellate Panels are 3-judge panels authorized to hear appeals of bankruptcy court decisions. These panels are established at the discretion of the each Court of Appeals. Not all circuits have established these panels.

OUR LOCAL FEDERAL COURTS

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA



UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA

The Southern District of Indiana hears cases from 60 of Indiana's 92 counties. Cases originating from a line from Crawfordsville to Kokomo to Muncie and south are generally within the court's jurisdiction.

There are 4 divisional locations within the Southern District of Indiana where cases can be filed - Indianapolis, Terre Haute, Evansville, and New Albany.



UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS FOR THE 7TH CIRCUIT

The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana is part of the regional circuit known as the 7th Circuit. Cases appealed from the Southern District of Indiana are heard by the United States Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit, which is located in Chicago, Illinois. The 7th Circuit includes all federal courts in Illinois, Wisconsin, and Indiana.



UNITED STATES SUPREME COURT

Cases appealed from the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals go to the United States Supreme Court. The Supreme Court is the court of final appeal for all cases. It is located in Washington D.C.



WHO WORKS AT A FEDERAL COURTHOUSE?

There are many important jobs at the Federal Court.
A few key positions include...

DISTRICT JUDGE

District Judges are trial court judges for the federal courts. They hear civil and criminal cases. District Court judges are appointed by the President, confirmed by the Senate, and serve lifetime appointments as long as they don't violate the terms of what the Constitution calls "good behavior."

MAGISTRATE JUDGE

Magistrate Judges assist District Judges in the performance of their duties. This includes conducting initial proceedings in criminal cases, conducting pretrial civil and criminal matters on behalf of District Judges, conducting settlement conferences, and deciding civil cases with the consent of all parties. They are appointed by District Judges to 8-year terms.

COURT REPORTER

A Court Reporter transcribes spoken speech into written form using machine shorthand. The written copy produced serves as the official transcript of a court hearing or trial.

COURTROOM DEPUTY

A Courtroom Deputy assists a judge with processing and managing court proceedings. The deputy also manages the judge's caseload.

CLERK OF COURT

The Clerk of Court is an officer of the court who is responsible for managing and maintaining the court's records. The Clerk supervises a staff of deputy clerks, who assist with these duties.

LAW CLERK

Law Clerks work for Federal Judges. They review, summarize, research, and analyze matters before the court. They assist in drafting opinions and preparing for the disposition of cases.

COMMON COURTROOM TERMS

ACQUITTAL

Judgment that a criminal defendant has not been proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt; in other words, a verdict of "not guilty"



APPEAL

A request, made by a party after losing a case, that a higher court (appellate court) review the trial court's decision to determine if it was correct

ARRAIGNMENT

The appearance before a judge by a person charged with a crime to enter their plea

BENCH



Judge's desk, usually raised, where the judge sits while presiding in the courtroom

BENCH TRIAL

Trial without a jury in which the judge decides which party prevails

BENCH WARRANT

Order signed by a judge for a person's arrest

BRIEF

A written statement submitted by each party in a case that explains why the court should decide the case, or particular issues in a case, in that party's favor

CHAMBERS

A judge's private office, typically including work space for the judge's law clerks and administrative assistant

CONTRACT

An agreement between two or more parties, often involving payment for goods or services

CROSS-EXAMINATION

Questions posed to a witness by the opposing party's legal counsel

DAMAGES

Money awarded as a result of court proceedings to a person injured by unlawful actions or negligence of another party



DEPOSITION

An oral statement made and recorded before an authorized party; these statements are often taken to examine potential witnesses, obtain discovery, or for use in trial

DEFENDANT

The accused party in a court proceeding

DISCOVERY

The process before a trial allowing one party to learn what evidence the other party will introduce during the trial

DOCKET

List of cases to be heard by a court

EXHIBIT

Item or document, such as a weapon, used as evidence during a trial



FELONY

Serious crime, such as robbery or attempted murder, for which the consequence is a prison sentence of at least one year

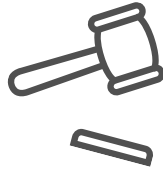
COMMON COURTROOM TERMS

GRAND JURY

Group of citizens who listen to evidence of criminal allegations, which is presented by the prosecutor, and determine if there is enough evidence to charge the party under investigation with a crime

HUNG JURY

Jury that cannot agree on a verdict



INDICTMENT

Formal charge issued by a grand jury stating that there is enough evidence of criminal wrongdoing by a defendant to justify having a trial; used primarily for felonies

PETIT JURY

Group of citizens who hear the evidence presented by both sides at trial and determine the facts in dispute; federal criminal juries consist of 12 people, while federal civil juries must have at least 6 people



MIRANDA WARNING

A police officer's warning prior to questioning suspects in custody advising them of their constitutional rights to remain silent and to have an attorney

MOTIVE

A need or desire that causes a person to commit an act

PAROLE

Conditional release of a prisoner after serving part of a sentence, requiring supervision by a parole officer

PLAINTIFF

Party who starts a civil lawsuit against another party

PLEA

A defendant's formal declaration in court that he or she is guilty or not guilty

PROBABLE CAUSE

Reasonable legal basis for allowing the search and seizure of evidence or arrest of a person

PROSECUTOR

A lawyer who represents the government in a criminal case; in federal court, the prosecutor is an attorney from the U.S. Attorney's Office



SEARCH WARRANT

A judge's signed order allowing law enforcement to search a specific area for evidence of a crime

SENTENCE

Punishment assigned to a defendant found guilty of a crime in court

TESTIMONY

A formal statement given by a witness under oath

TRANSCRIPT

Official record of court proceedings

VERDICT

Decision of a jury, reached after it has weighed all evidence presented during a trial

STATE V. FEDERAL JURISDICTION

FEDERAL

- Crimes violating statutes enacted by Congress
- Cases involving federal laws or regulations
- Matters involving interstate or international commerce
- Patent and copyright issues
- State law cases involving "Diversity of Citizenship" (opposing parties residing in different states)
- Bankruptcy matters
- Disputes between states
- Habeas corpus actions

STATE

- Crimes violating legislation enacted by a state
- State constitution issues and civil cases involving state laws
- Landlord and tenant disputes
- Family law issues
- Real property issues
- Most private contract disputes
- Most personal injury lawsuits
- Probate and inheritance matters
- Most traffic violations

BOTH



- Crimes punishable under both state and federal law
- Federal constitutional issues
- Certain civil rights' claims
- Class action cases
- Environmental regulations
- Certain disputes involving federal law



FUN FACTS ABOUT

THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT FOR THE SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF INDIANA



The Hon. Benjamin Parke served as the first District Judge for the United States District Court for the District of Indiana.

Visitors to the courthouse are awed by the building's unique spiral staircases - legend has it that these stairs were built by a prisoner serving time in Indiana's state penitentiary!

The First Session of Court for the United States District Court for the District of Indiana was held in Corydon, IN, on May 5, 1817.



In 1984, Judge Sarah Evans Barker became the first woman to be appointed to the bench in the Southern District of Indiana.



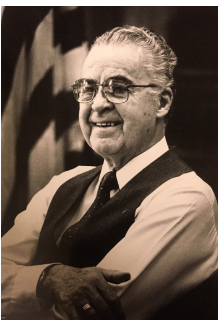
The current Federal Courthouse in Indianapolis opened in 1905; the building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Courtroom scenes for the movie Eight Men Out were filmed one of the historic courtrooms at the Federal Courthouse in Indianapolis.

In 1928, the District of Indiana was split into two separate jurisdictions - the Northern District and the Southern District.

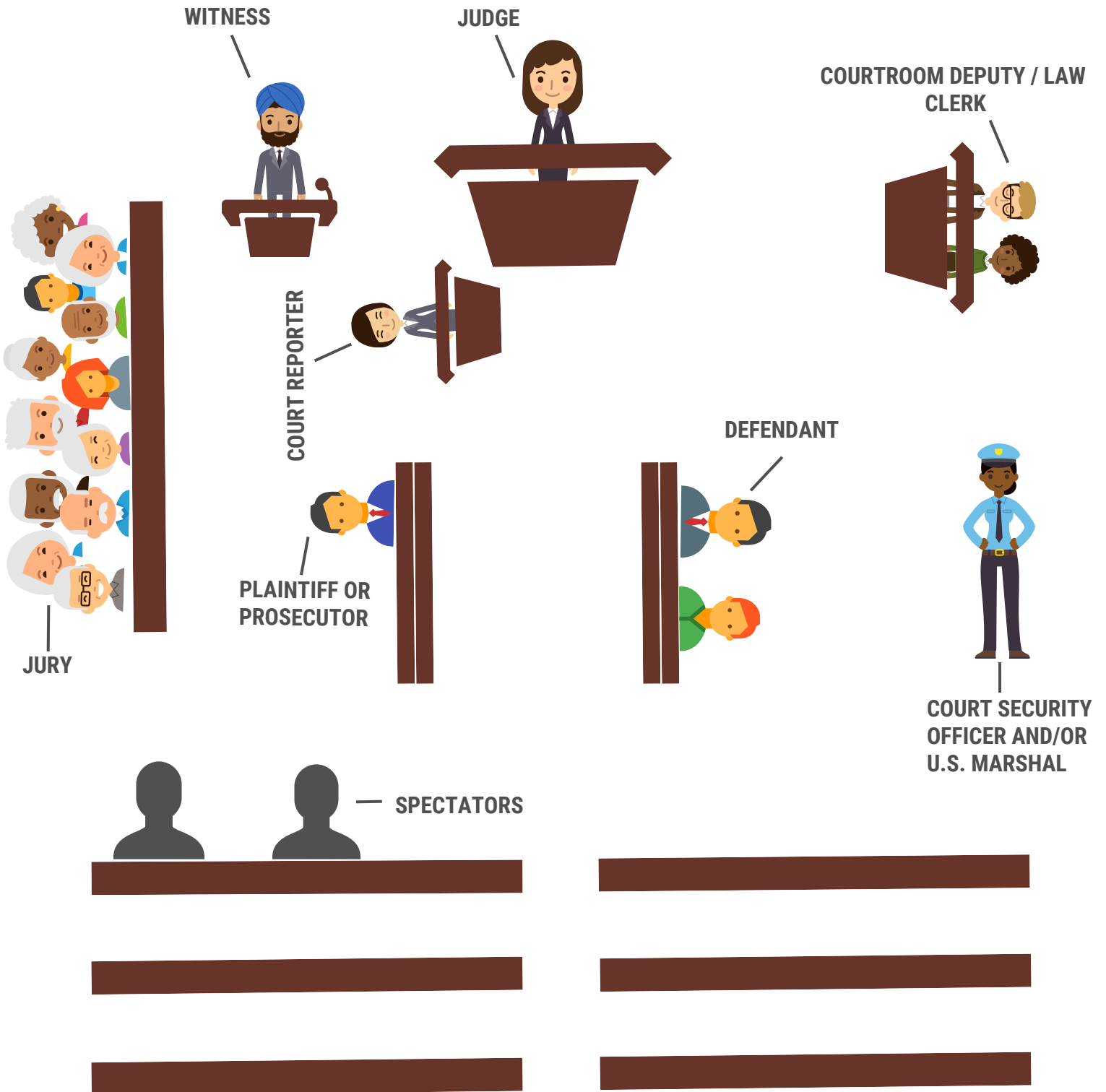


In 2010, Judge Tanya Walton Pratt became the first African American to be appointed to the bench in the Southern District of Indiana.



Judge William E. Steckler was the longest serving judge in the history of the Southern District of Indiana, having served 45 years on the bench - 28 of those as Chief Judge!

WHO SITS WHERE IN THE COURTROOM

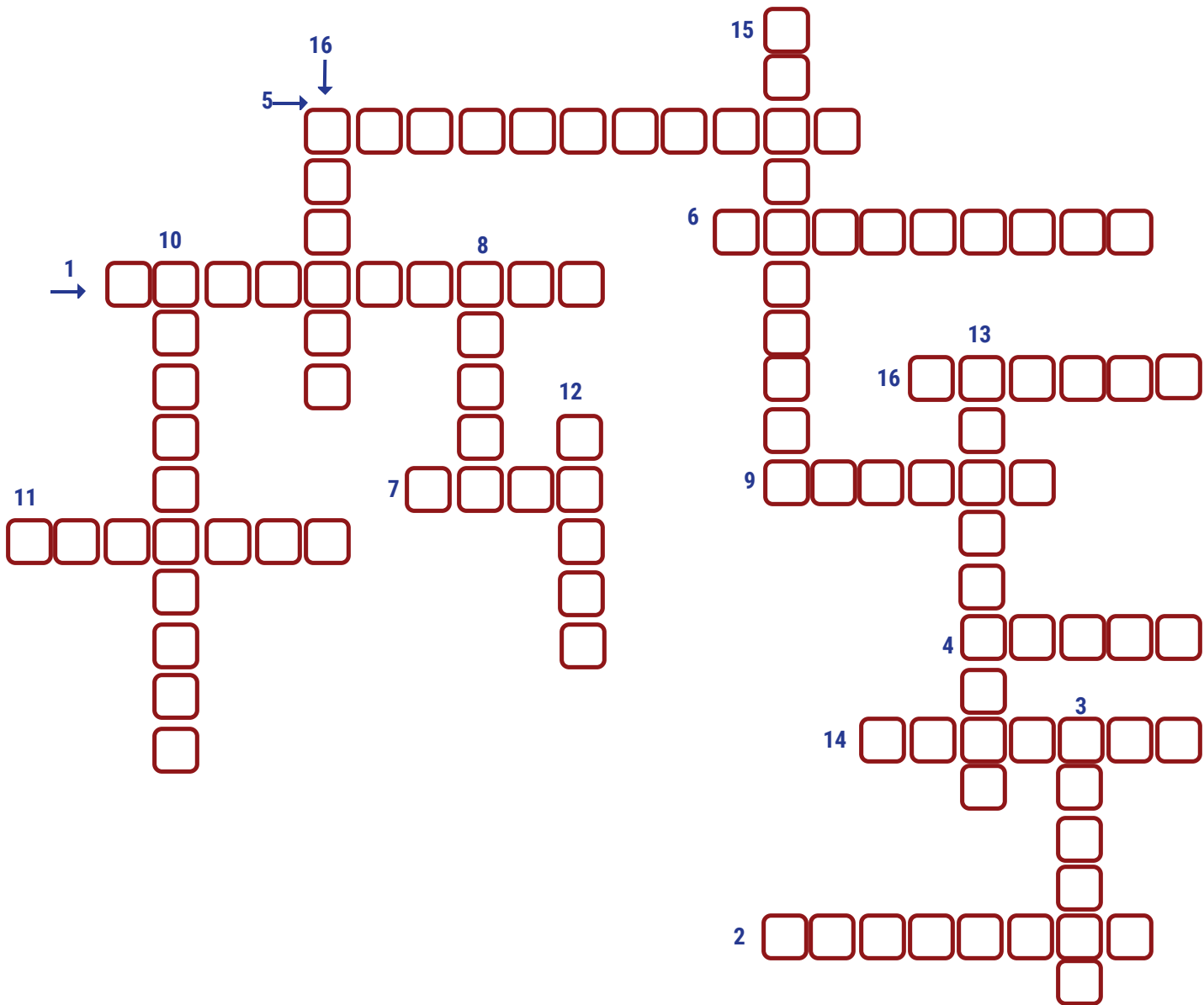


ACTIVITIES

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE WITH THESE FUN, COURT-THEMED,
CHALLENGES



SOLVE THE WORD PUZZLE



A federal criminal case begins when the 1 presents 2 to a grand jury. After reviewing the evidence, the grand jury decides if there is sufficient proof to 3 the accused party. The accused is then brought before a 4 for 5 on the charge. A 6 can choose to plead guilty or not guilty. If a not guilty 7 is entered, the case is scheduled for 8 at a later date. If a 9 plea is entered, the court sets a sentencing date.

If a case goes to trial, the prosecution must establish the defendant's guilt beyond a 10 doubt. A 11 may testify and evidence will be presented. Based on all of the 12 of the case, a 13 of 12 citizens will decide whether or not the defendant is guilty. If the 14 is not guilty, the defendant is free to go. If found guilty, the accused will return at a later date for 15. After the judge sentences a defendant, the individual may choose to 16 the conviction to a higher court.

WORD BANK

FACTS
DEFENDANT
EVIDENCE
GUILTY

REASONABLE DOUBT
PROSECUTOR
APPEAL
JUDGE

INDICT
SENTENCING
WITNESS
TRIAL

VERDICT
ARRAIGNMENT
PLEA
PETIT JURY



VOCABULARY QUIZ



1. How many judges make up an appeals court panel?
 - a) 1
 - b) 3
 - c) 5
2. Citizens called by the court to decide a case are called...
 - a) Jurors
 - b) Witnesses
 - c) Trustees
3. Who was the first woman appointed to the federal bench in the Southern District of Indiana?
 - a) Sandra Day O'Connor
 - b) Tanya Walton Pratt
 - c) Sarah Evans Barker
4. A ____ conducts initial court proceedings and pretrial matters on behalf of a District Judge.
 - a) magistrate judge
 - b) law clerk
 - c) courtroom deputy
5. The person in a courtroom who creates a word-for-word record of a court proceeding is a ...
 - a) clerk of court
 - b) plaintiff
 - c) court reporter
6. The United States District Court for the Southern District of Indiana is part of the ____ judicial circuit.
 - a) 11th
 - b) 7th
 - c) 5th
7. A ____ assists a judge with processing and managing court proceedings.
 - a) courtroom deputy
 - b) law clerk
 - c) clerk of court
8. Acquittal means...
 - a) a verdict of guilty
 - b) a verdict of not guilty
 - c) an inconclusive verdict; a hung jury
9. Which of the following is NOT a Southern District of Indiana division?
 - a) Terre Haute
 - b) Evansville
 - c) Muncie
10. What Federal Court is the court of final appeal for civil and criminal matters?
 - a) Court of Appeals
 - b) Supreme Court
 - c) District Court
11. The prosecuting branch of the Federal government who represents the United States in Federal criminal cases is...
 - a) The Federal Bureau of Investigations
 - b) The Secretary of State
 - c) The United States Attorney
12. Are the following crimes state, federal, or both (circle one)?
 - a) Habeas corpus action STATE FEDERAL BOTH
 - b) Family law issues STATE FEDERAL BOTH
 - c) Civil Rights claims STATE FEDERAL BOTH

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK!

A _____ is an order to have a person arrested and brought to court.

If a jury is unable to decide a case, they are called a _____.

A case involving patent or copyright law is said to be within _____ jurisdiction.

In a _____, questions are posed to a witness who testified for the other side.

A person charged with committing a crime is known as a _____.

A _____ is responsible for assisting a judge with research, drafting opinions, and related tasks.

A District Judge is appointed by the _____ and confirmed by the _____.

A trial without a jury in which the judge decides which party prevails is known as a _____.

A judge's private office is known as a _____.

A list of cases to be heard by a court is known as the _____.

When the police have _____, they have proven sufficient legal basis for allowing the search and seizure of evidence.

The official record of all testimony and exhibits presented during a court proceeding is known as a _____.

WORD BANK

PROBABLE CAUSE
HUNG JURY
LAW CLERK
DOCKET

TRANSCRIPT
SENATE
BENCH TRIAL
BENCH WARRANT

FEDERAL
CROSS-EXAMINATION
DEFENDANT
CHAMBERS
PRESIDENT



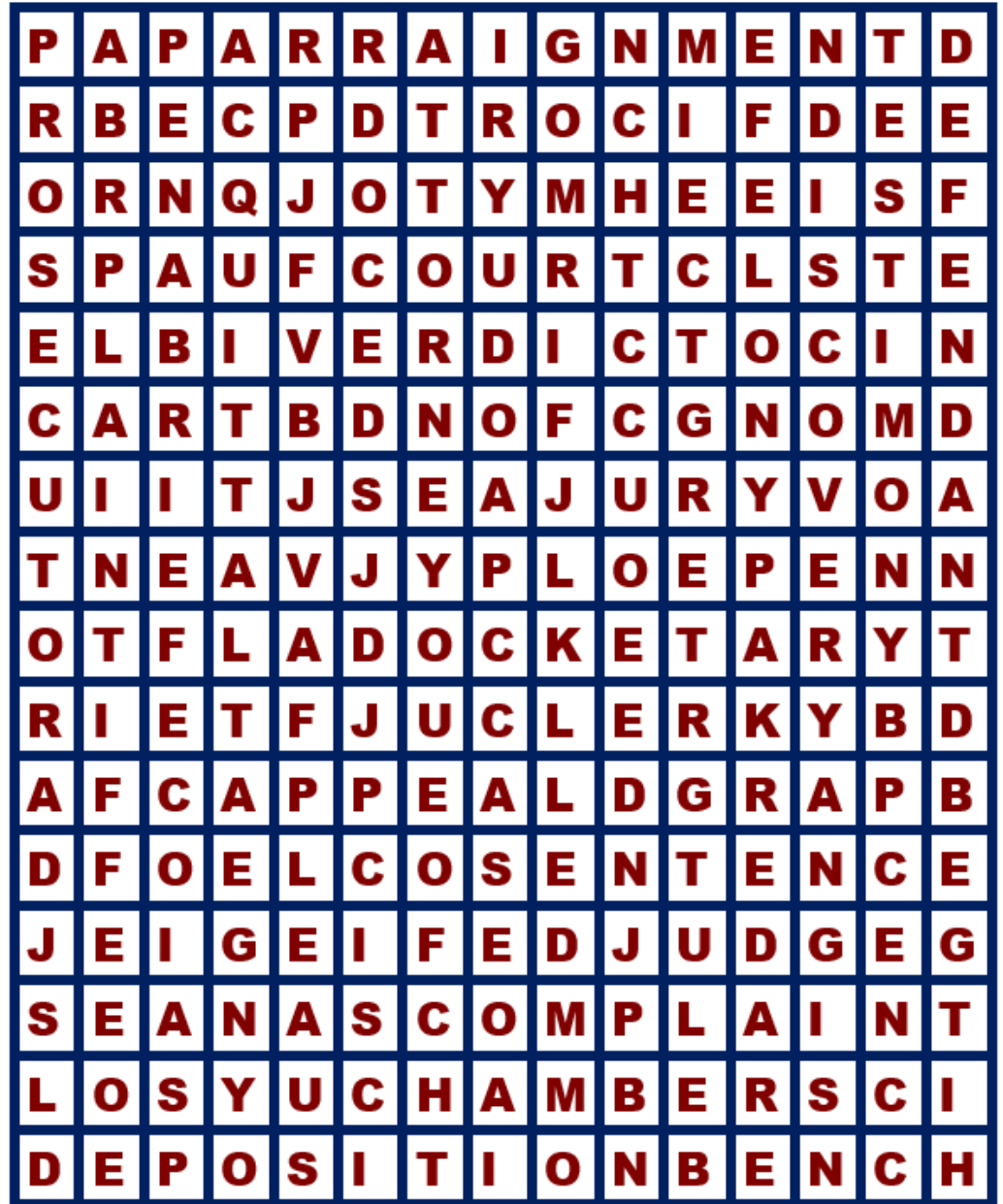
WORD SEARCH!

Find the words listed in the word bank in the search puzzle, written across and up-and-down. How many words can you find?



WORD BANK

APPEAL
ACQUITTAL
ARRAIGNMENT
ATTORNEY
BENCH
BRIEF
CASE
CHAMBERS
CLERK
COMPLAINT
COURT
DEFENDANT
DEPOSITION
DISCOVERY
DOCKET
FELONY
JUDGE
JURY
PLAINTIFF
PLEA
PROSECUTOR
SENTENCE
TESTIMONY
VERDICT





LEGAL LETTERS

Unscramble the vocabulary words using the word bank below

1. ARLPOE

2. EDUGJ

3. MHSECARB

4. RTAAWRN

5. UATQACITL

6. NTINDCMITE

7. PDIIONESTO

8. ASTRNRPCTI

9. BNHEC

10. MAEASGD

11. UYJR

12. EDVITRC

13. PAALPE

14. ELPA

15. SIYNTTMEO

16. CTANROTC

17. TSIESNW

18. ECKLR

19. KOTDCE

20. FIRBE

WORD BANK

DAMAGES
CLERK
JUDGE
ACQUITTAL
BENCH

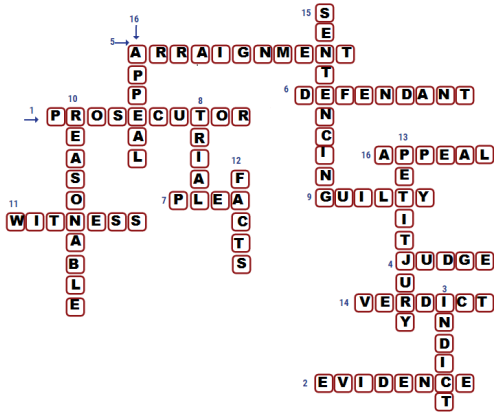
VERDICT
BRIEF
DEPOSITION
PAROLE
TESTIMONY

CHAMBERS
PLEA
DOCKET
CONTRACT
JURY

WITNESS
WARRANT
TRANSCRIPT
APPEAL
INDICTMENT

ANSWER KEY

SOLVE THE CASE



A federal criminal case begins when the **PROSECUTOR** presents **EVIDENCE** to a grand jury. After reviewing the evidence, the grand jury decides if there is sufficient proof to **INDICT** the accused party. The accused is then brought before a **JUDGE** for **ARRAIGNMENT** on the charge. A **DEFENDANT** can choose to plead guilty or not guilty. If a not guilty **PLEA** is entered, the case is scheduled for **TRIAL** at a later date. If a **GUILTY** plea is entered, the court sets a sentencing date.

If a case goes to trial, the prosecution must establish the defendant's guilt beyond a **REASONABLE** doubt. A **WITNESS** may testify and evidence will be presented. Based on all of the **FACTS** of the case, a **JURY** of 12 citizens will decide whether or not the defendant is guilty. If the **VERDICT** is not guilty, the defendant is free to go. If found guilty, the accused will return at a later date for **SENTENCING**. After the judge sentences a defendant, the individual may choose to **APPEAL** the conviction to a higher court.

VOCABULARY QUIZ

- b) 3
- a) JURORS
- c) SARAH EVANS BARKER
- a) MAGISTRATE JUDGE
- c) COURT REPORTER
- b) 7th
- a) COURTROOM DEPUTY
- b) A VERDICT OF NOT GUILTY
- c) MUNCIE
- b) SUPREME COURT
- c) THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
- a) FEDERAL
- a) FEDERAL
b) STATE
c) BOTH

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK

A **BENCH WARRANT** is an order to have a person arrested and brought to court.

If a jury is unable to decide a case, they are called a **HUNG JURY**.

A case involving patent or copyright law is said to be within **FEDERAL** jurisdiction.

In a **CROSS-EXAMINATION**, questions are posed to a witness who testified for the other side.

A person charged with committing a crime is known as a **DEFENDANT**.

A **LAW CLERK** is responsible for assisting a judge with research, drafting opinions, and related tasks.

A District Judge is appointed by the **PRESIDENT** and confirmed by the **SENATE**.

A trial without a jury in which the judge decides which party prevails is known as a **BENCH TRIAL**.

A judge's private office is known as a **CHAMBERS**.

A list of cases to be heard by a court is known as the **DOCKET**.

When the police have **PROBABLE CAUSE**, they have proven sufficient legal basis for allowing the search and seizure of evidence.

The official record of all testimony and exhibits presented during a court proceeding is known as a **TRANSCRIPT**.

ANSWER KEY

WORD SEARCH!



LEGAL LETTERS

1. PAROLE
2. JUDGE
3. CHAMBERS
4. WARRANT
5. ACQUITTAL
6. INDICTMENT
7. DEPOSITION
8. TRANSCRIPT
9. BENCH
10. DAMAGES
11. JURY
12. VERDICT
13. APPEAL
14. PLEA
15. TESTIMONY
16. CONTRACT
17. WITNESS
18. CLERK
19. DOCKET
20. BRIEF



**United States District Court for the
Southern District of Indiana**
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For more information about tours, field trips, and educational
resources, please visit
<https://www.insd.uscourts.gov/educational-resources>
or email tours@insd.uscourts.gov

Thanks to New York State's Unified Court System for the idea to create this student workbook