

Vocabulary

***Constitution-** The **Constitution of the United States** is the supreme law of the United States of America.

***Judicial Branch of Government** – The branch of government that interprets and applies the laws of the constitution when conflicts arise or a crime has been committed.

***Rule of Law** – Decisions in court must be based on the law, must apply to everyone fairly; judges and jury must be **impartial**.

***Due Process** – Legal rights for all persons, and the steps that must be taken when there is a conflict.

***Burden of Proof** – the defendant is “innocent” until proven guilty. The Plaintiff has the “burden” to prove the guilt of the defendant with clear evidence.

***Beyond a reasonable doubt** – After hearing all of the evidence in a trial, and using common sense, jurors must be practically positive of the guilt of a defendant before deciding on the verdict.

***Impartial** – Judges and juries must make their decisions based on the laws from the Constitution, not from personal opinions.

Judges – Referees and guides who are in charge in the courtroom to see that all rules are followed fairly.

Jury – Twelve citizens like you who must work together to decide on the case.

Court Clerk – Handles the judges papers and assists the judge.

Court Reporter – Types every word said in court during the trial



Bailiff – A policeman who makes sure that everyone remains safe.

Defendant- The person who is accused of a crime and is “defending” him or herself.

Plaintiff – The one who brings the “complaint” to the court.

Lawyer/Attorney/Counsel – Represents and guides people with legal issues. The defendant (defense attorney) and/or plaintiff (prosecuting attorney).

Witness - Answers questions that the attorneys ask about what he or she saw heard, felt and touched when he or she witnessed the crime.

Guilty- The defendant *did* commit the crime.

Innocent – The defendant *did not* commit the crime.

Verdict - The final decision in a case.

Exhibit- Evidence presented in the trial, for example: a gun, emails, or a picture.

Objection – The attorney “objects” or questions whether the admission of an “exhibit” can be used in a trial, or if the way the other attorney is questioning someone is within the rules.

OVERRULED – The judge does not think a rule has been broken.

Sustained – The judge agrees that a rule has been broken.

* **Vocabulary based on concepts to be understood in this unit**

