

## 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**

