



The Legal System: SS.7.CG.2.5
The Trial Process and Juries
VIDEO #3 SCRIPT



Juries

1. In the other videos in this series, we've learned about the trial process. One of the most important parts of the trial process and who decides who is guilty or not guilty is the jury.

2. After watching this video, you will be able to
- Examine the significance of juries in the American legal system.
 - Explain how juries are selected and why jury trials are important.

But be sure to watch the other videos for 2.5 in this module to be able to:

- Describe the processes of a civil and a criminal trial.

Watch those two videos to make sure that you understand the system.

3. Remember that juries play a big role in the trial process. They consist of a group of people who are selected to listen to the facts and evidence of a case in a criminal (and sometimes civil) trial. After they hear the evidence presented during the trial, they deliberate to make a decision, or come to a verdict. After they deliberate and think about the evidence, juries will find a defendant in a criminal trial guilty or not guilty. And if they're in a civil trial, they'll find for the defendant or the plaintiff. All based on the evidence.

4. But why do we have juries? Well, the Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution protects the right of every citizen to have a trial by jury in criminal cases, and this is so very important. To provide this right means that citizens must give up their time to serve on a jury. Adult U.S. citizens who are called for "jury duty" will receive a jury summons in the mail and must report to the court on the date and at the time listed on the summons. Persons called for jury duty can be fined or jailed for not showing up. Serving on a jury is one of the most important things a citizen can do for themselves and their fellow citizens.

5. Let's check in. Try to answer the following in your own words.

6. Why are juries an important part of the trial process?

7. ANSWER TO QUESTION

8. So let's recap what we've learned. The right to a jury in a criminal trial is an important constitutional right guaranteed by the 6th Amendment. You are called to jury duty with a jury summons, and not attending jury duty can result in fines or jail. And remember, jury duty is one of the most important ways a citizen can contribute to their community.

9. Our justice system relies on citizens like you serving on juries. It is one of the most important ways we can help our fellow citizens in our justice system. So when you get that jury summons, don't be afraid to go!

10. You can learn more about the state and federal court system in other module on Civics360. And remember, be sure to watch the videos on the criminal trial process and the civil trial process, if you haven't already! And one other thing: jury duty is not only a legal obligation. It is a responsibility of all citizens who care about our rights and liberties. So when you get the summons, be sure to keep that in mind!