



The Judicial Branch and Legal System: SS.7.CG.3.10
Sources and Types of Law
READING #3

Name: _____

Date: _____



SS.7.CG.3.10 Benchmark Clarification 3: Students will compare civil, criminal, constitutional and/or military types of law.

There are different types of law in the United States. One type is **constitutional law**, which focuses on interpreting the U.S. Constitution. Constitutional law defines the powers between states, the national government and the states, and the government and citizens.

Another type is **civil law**, which deals with relationships between people (rather than relationships between people and the government). For example, Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution secures the right for authors and inventors to claim their writings and discoveries as their own work for a limited time. During that period, if another person copies and claims the author or inventor's work as their own, they may be sued.

Criminal law deals with crimes and the punishments for those crimes. People who break state **statutes** are tried in state courts. People who break federal laws are tried in federal courts. Civil and criminal law have the most effect on citizens. **Juvenile law** deals with people under the age of 18 who commit crimes.

Military law only applies to people in the military. Congress created a set of criminal laws called the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) for everyone who serves in the military. The military has courts to try cases involving people in the military who commit crimes.

civil law - law that deals with relationships between people (rather than relationships between people and the government)

constitutional law - law that focuses on interpreting the U.S. Constitution

criminal law - law that deals with crimes and the punishments for those crimes

juvenile law - law that deals with people who are under the age of 18

military law - laws that apply only to people in the military

statute - a law passed at the state level