

JURISDICTION GAME

1. **Announce to the class** that you will now play a game. Divide the class into the following eight groups (or modify the groups for your area). Give each group a group number and ask each group to make a sign identifying its court by name and number.
 - o Local Trial Courts (Municipal, Traffic, Small Claims, Juvenile)
 - o General/Circuit Courts
 - o Missouri Intermediate Appellate Court
 - o Missouri State Supreme Court
 - o U.S. District Court
 - o U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals
 - o U.S. Supreme Court
2. Give each group a dry erase board or have them take out a piece of paper. They should write their court on the board (or both sides of the paper) and the words "Claim" and "Do Not Claim"
3. **Explain that you** will describe a number of cases. Each group will caucus and decide whether their court has jurisdiction to hear that case. After one minute, ask the groups to hold up their signs either claiming or not claiming jurisdiction of the case. Teams get three points for correctly claiming jurisdiction, one point for correctly not claiming jurisdiction, and a minus three points for incorrectly claiming or not claiming jurisdiction.
4. **The teacher** or student should keep track of the score on the board, using a grid:

SCORE				
Case	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Etc.
a.				
b.				
c.				
d.				

5. Use most of the rest of the class period on this activity.

CASES AND ANSWERS

- a. Martha shoots and kills her husband in Washington State. The state prosecutor bring charges in which court?

Answer: General Trial Courts

- b. Larry's landlord refuses to return his damage deposit of \$450 when Larry moves out of his apartment, even though the apartment is in excellent condition. Larry wants to sue his landlord, but doesn't want to hire a lawyer. In which court can Larry file suit?

Answer: Local Trial Courts

- c. Frank has been convicted of murder in the General Trial Court and his sentence is the death penalty. He appeals his case to which court?

Answer: Missouri State Supreme Court

- d. Charlene is being tried for burning the American flag in front of the Post Office. The U.S. Attorney files charges against her.

Answer: U.S. District Court

- e. Charlene appeals her conviction of defacing an American flag to which court?

Answer: U.S. Court of Appeals or U.S. Supreme Court

The usual route of appeal from the U.S. District Court is to the U.S. Court of Appeals. In certain cases, such as the flag burning case, where a speedy resolution of an issue by the U.S. Supreme Court is warranted, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear the appeal directly. This is what happened in the Seattle flag burning case.

- f. Martha appeals her conviction in General Trial Court for murder in the second degree to which court?

Answer: Missouri State Court of Appeals

- g. Alice Singer sues a famous band for stealing her song and violating her copyright in which court?

Answer: U.S. District Court

- h. Kelly is cited for her disruptive behavior on a city bus. Which court will hear her case?

Answer: Local Trial Court

- i. Yolanda was in a car accident in which she injured her neck. She sues the driver of the other car for \$60,000 in which court?

Answer: Missouri General Trial Courts

- j. Regina is charged with a misdemeanor of fourth degree assault in which court?

Answer: General Trial Courts

- k. Arnold was convicted of burglary in the first degree by a jury in Superior Court. He appeals his conviction to which court?

Answer: Missouri State Court of Appeals

- l. The U.S. District Court for the Western District of Missouri rules that the state initiative to terminate mandatory busing violates the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution. The state of Washington appeals to which court?

Answer: U.S. Court of Appeals

- m. The U.S. Court of Appeals upholds the U.S. District Court's ruling that the state initiative to terminate mandatory busing is unconstitutional. The state appeals to which court?

Answer: U.S. Supreme Court

- n. A General Trial Court judge rules that the state law against cross burning is unconstitutional. The prosecutor appeals this decision to which court?

Answer: Missouri State Supreme Court or Missouri Court of Appeals,
The usual route of appeal from the Superior Court is to the state court of appeals. In certain cases where a speedy resolution is warranted, the state Supreme Court will hear the appeal directly.

- o. Jesse is arrested for driving under the influence within the city limits of a large city. In which court is he charged?

Answer: Local Trial courts (Municipal Court/Traffic Violations)

- p. Elizabeth, who lives in Joplin, crashes her car into John's SUV, causing injuries and damages of \$120,000. John, who is from Oregon, files a lawsuit in which court?

Answer: U.S. District Court

- q. Disabled individuals appeal a jury verdict that a movie theater had not violated their rights under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act. In which court is the appeal filed?

Answer: U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals

- r. Inmates asks this court to review their case from the state's supreme court, claiming that the jail failed to provide them with basic human needs.

Answer: U.S. Supreme Court

- s. The State Court of Appeals overturns Austin's conviction for selling drugs, based on an illegal search and seizure. The state asks which court to review the decision?

Answer: Missouri State Supreme Court

- t. Maria is cited for sitting on the sidewalk in violation of a local ordinance. In which court will her case be tried?

Answer: Local Trial