

**Teachers' Guide**  
for  
**Michigan's Judicial  
Branch of Government**  
**Online Game**



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## **Introduction**

The decisions of the judicial branch of government have a profound affect on everyday life, and it is vital that citizens understand how the court system works. In addition, topics related to the judicial branch are an important part of the Social Studies Standards in the Michigan Curriculum Framework. Therefore, the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center has created an online game to help students learn more about the responsibilities, organization, and procedures of the Michigan court system. This teachers' guide complements the online game that is available through the Learning Center's web site at <http://courts.mi.gov/education/learning-center/>.

Although the game can be used as a separate teaching unit, it is recommended that it be coupled with a visit to the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center, a hands-on gallery space in the Michigan Hall of Justice in Lansing. To reserve a tour of the Learning Center, call 517-373-7171. For more information about the Learning Center, see the web site at <http://courts.mi.gov/education/learning-center/>.

## **Grade Level & Curriculum**

The online game is designed for use by students in later elementary. It addresses numerous Social Studies Grade Level Content Expectations, including 3 – C1.0.1, 3 – C2.0.1, 3 – C3.0.1, 3 – C3.0.3, 3 – C3.0.4, 3 – C3.0.5, 3 – C5.0.1, 4 – C2.0.1, 4 – C2.0.2, 4 – C3.0.1, 4 – C3.0.2, 4 – C3.0.4, 4 – C3.0.5, 4 – C5.0.1, 4 – C5.0.2, 5 – U3.3.8.

## **Synopsis of the Game**

### **Storyline**

Lady Justice, the international symbol for justice, watches over the judicial branch of government from the Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center. She is assisted by her daughter Kid Justice, who has a friend named Kid Liberty, the son of Lady Liberty.

One evening, three mysterious visitors come to the Michigan Hall of Justice and make a mess in the Learning Center. They intend to create mischief for the court system.

Saddened and dismayed, Lady Justice, Kid Justice, and Kid Liberty work to find out who is responsible. Lady Justice and Kid Liberty monitor news coverage from the Justices' home while Kid Justice returns to the Hall of Justice to find clues. In her search, Kid Justice encounters several characters who offer pieces of evidence to solve the mystery. Kid Justice receives the evidence after questions are answered correctly by the person playing the game.

In the end, the evidence shows that Lady Justice's evil twin, Lady Anarchy, and her children, Kid Anarchy and Kid Chaos, are responsible for the mess in the Learning Center. The security guards turn the three culprits over to the authorities so the judicial process may begin.

## Navigation of the Game

1. Watch the opening scene to learn the main storyline.
2. To begin playing, click on one of the following:
  - **Play Main Game**—To play the game in the predetermined order.
  - **Teachers' Entrance**—To play the game in a different order. Password: justice.
3. Explore each room with the cursor to find highlighted areas (outlined in red) and click to activate. Highlighted areas serve three functions:
  - **Characters**—Ask questions related to a theme and offer pieces of evidence.
  - **Information Sources**—Provide definitions and facts so players can answer the themed questions correctly. If a player answers fewer than three questions correctly, the character suggests searching for more information.
  - **Doors**—Take the players to the next room if they have answered the questions correctly. Doors will not allow players to proceed if they have not answered the questions.
4. Read and answer multiple choice and matching questions posed by characters. To move on, players must answer five questions and select at least three correct answers. More information can be found in highlighted information sources and in the glossary, accessible through the menu on the lower right of the game window.
5. After finding all the evidence, the player has the opportunity to play a fun mini-game as a reward.

## Navigation Tools

- **Back/Next**—Allow players to move back and forth in the game. They are especially helpful in returning to information sources.
- **Cursor**—Changes from an arrow to a hand over highlighted areas.
- **Evidence buttons**—Are located along the bottom of the screen. They show which pieces of evidence the player has earned. Placing the cursor over a dark button reveals what the player needs to earn to complete the game.
- **Menu**—Is located in the lower-right and includes access to the glossary, an explanation of finding evidence, and the main menu.

## Themed Questions

To advance, players must answer questions based on five different themes. Each theme contains a total of 9–11 questions of which players answer five randomly selected questions. The game requires that players answer at least three questions correctly in order to proceed. A complete list of questions and answers are listed in this teachers' guide. A glossary and further information about each theme is included in this guide and is accessible online.

Characters and themes:

- Tourist—Roles in the courtroom.
- Security guards—Civil and criminal cases.
- Elk—Organization of the Michigan court system.
- Visitor—Three branches of government.
- Robotic spiders—Jurisdiction of the courts.

## **Mini-Game**

Once players have successfully completed the entire game, they can access a mini-game in which they protect the court system from an invasion of robotic spiders. Note: The mini-game includes sound. Depending upon the setting, you may wish to ask students to turn off the sound on their computers at this point.

## **Playing Out of Order**

Generally, players must follow a predetermined path through the game. If you wish to play only a portion of the game or go in a different order, click on Teachers' Entrance and type the password: justice.

## Activities

### Before Playing the Game

Although the game assumes no prior knowledge and the answers to all questions can be found in the information sources and glossary, students should be familiar with the following themes:

- Basic organization of the state government.
- Responsibilities of the three branches of government: making, enforcing, and interpreting laws.
- State courts resolve conflicts.

In addition, you may wish to review glossary words listed in this packet. The glossary is also available through the game menu.

### Playing the Game

#### Objectives

Students will learn about:

- The responsibilities of the three branches of government.
- The organization of the Michigan court system.
- The roles in the courtroom.
- Differences between civil and criminal cases.
- The jurisdiction of particular courts.

#### Instructional Resources

- Computers with internet access and sound

#### Sequence of Activities

1. Instruct students about how to play the game. For more information, see Navigation of the Game on page 3.
  - If students will play the entire game, they can proceed at their own pace, answering questions and collecting evidence.
  - If you wish to enter particular areas individually, the students must use the Teachers' Entrance. The password is: justice.
2. After completing the main game successfully, students have the opportunity to play a mini-game in which they protect the court system from an invasion of robotic spiders. Note: The mini-game includes sound effects. You may wish to turn off the sound at this point.

## After Playing the Game

To assess what students have learned through playing the game, complete one or more of the following activities.

1. Make a paper model of the Michigan court system, indicating the three levels (Trial Courts, Court of Appeals, and Supreme Court) and their responsibilities. A blackline master with instructions is included on page 7 of this packet.

### Instructional Resources

- Model of the Court System worksheet copied onto cardstock
- Scissors
- Pencils
- Gluesticks

2. Make a poster of the three branches of government. A blackline master is included on page 8 of this packet, or students may create their own diagram using a flow chart, circular diagram, tree diagram, etc. This activity can be structured as an individual or group project.

### Instructional Resources

- Worksheet or posterboard
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils

3. Review terms and concepts by involving the entire class in “Who Has . . . ?” questions and answers. An answer key with 27 questions and answers is included in this packet. Before class, prepare index cards with a question at the top and answer at the bottom. Distribute the cards and ask the first person to read, “Who Has . . . ?” The person with the answer responds, “I have . . .” Students continue reading until all questions have been shared.

### Instructional Resources

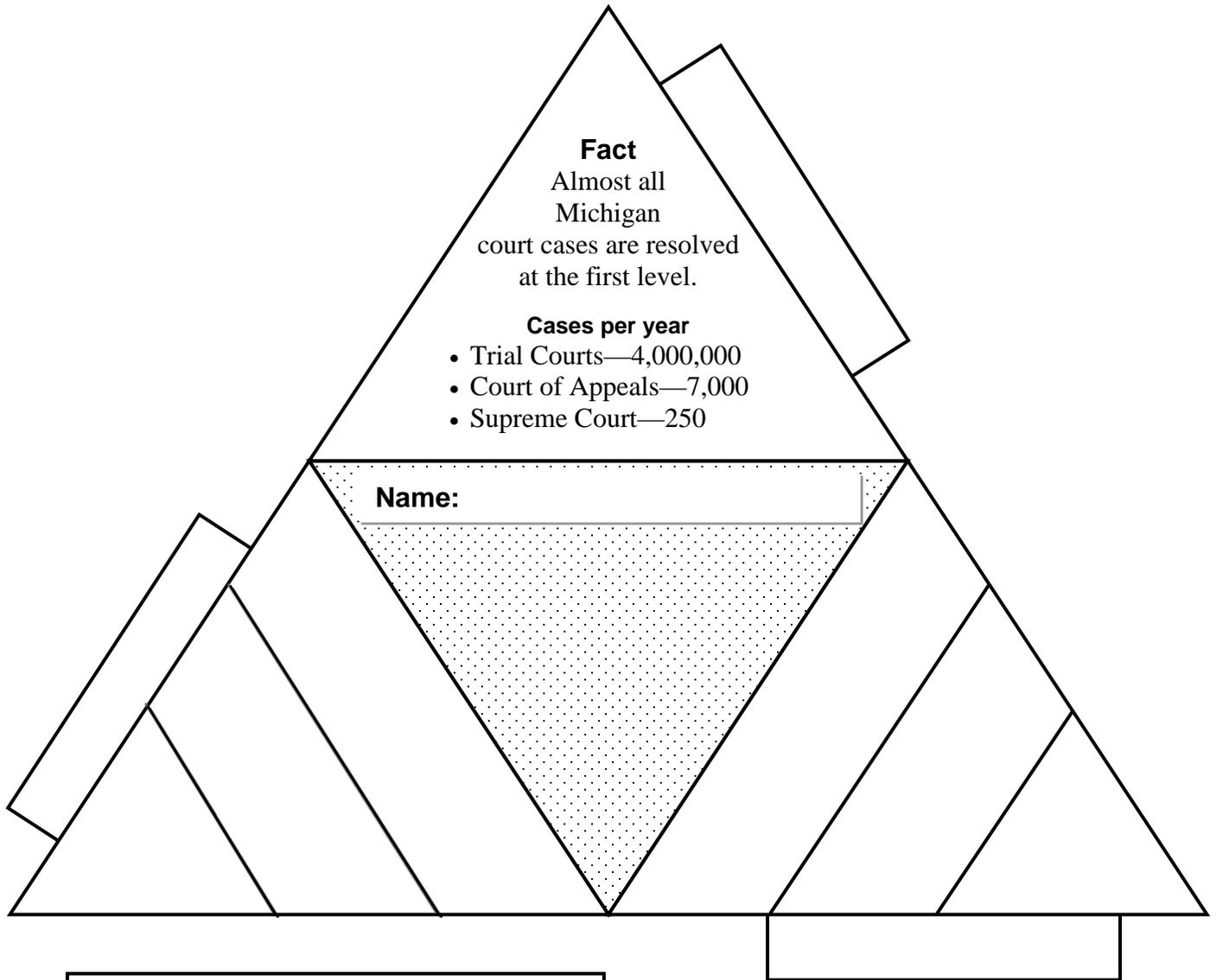
- Index cards prepared with questions and answers

4. Conduct a mock trial using a fairy tale, nursery rhyme, or familiar story. Many scripts are available online for free. Typing “mock trial scripts” into an internet search engine will yield a number of resources. The American Bar Association offers mock trial resources at [http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public\\_education/publications/mock\\_trials.html](http://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/publications/mock_trials.html).

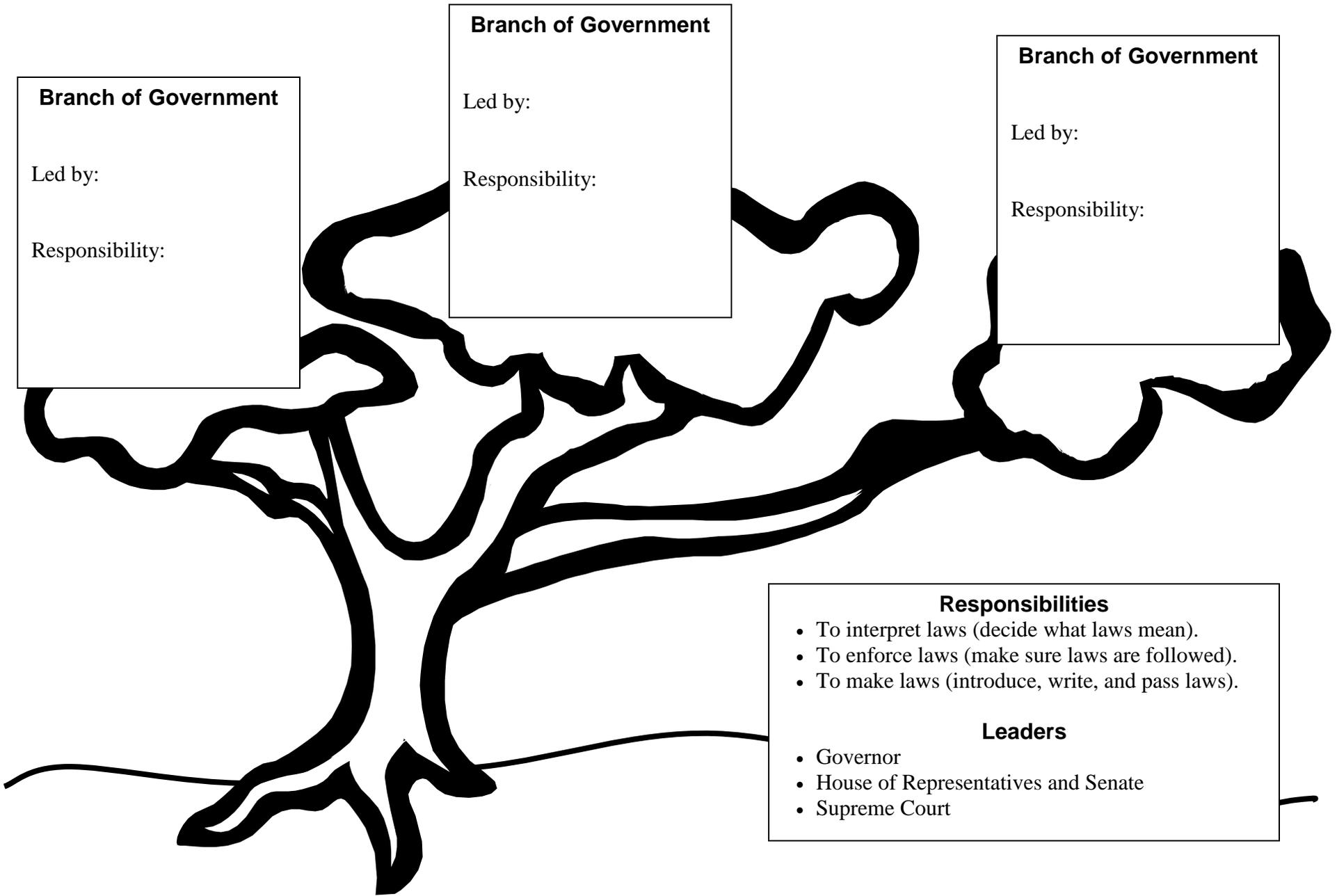
# Model of the Michigan Court System

## Directions

1. Cut along the edges.
2. In one triangle, write the three levels of courts with the lowest courts at the bottom and the highest at the top. In the other triangle, write the responsibility of the court at that level.
3. Fold the three triangles to form a pyramid.
4. Fold the flaps in and glue them into place.



**Courts & Responsibilities**  
**Trial Courts**—Conduct trials.  
**Court of Appeals**—Review trial court cases.  
**Supreme Court**—Final review of cases.



### Three Branches of Government

Each branch of government has its own responsibilities. In the boxes, write the name of the branch of government and its responsibilities.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Who Has . . . ?

Who has the person who must decide the sentence for a person found guilty of a crime? (Judge)  
I have CIRCUIT COURT.

Who has the people on the Supreme Court? (Justices)  
I have DISTRICT COURT.

Who has the person responsible for recording court proceedings? (Court Reporter/Recorder)  
I have JUDGE.

Who has the people who decided guilty or not guilty in a criminal case? (Jury)  
I have SMALL CLAIMS COURT.

Who has the person who swears under oath to tell the truth? (Witness)  
I have JUSTICES.

Who has the person defending him or herself in case? (Defendant)  
I have COURT OF APPEALS.

Who has the person who presents evidence to make the jury doubt the defendant is guilty in a criminal case? (Defense Attorney)  
I have COURT REPORTER/RECORDER.

Who has the person bringing a case to court? (Plaintiff)  
I have the COURT OF CLAIMS.

Who has the person that brings a criminal case to court and must prove the defendant guilty beyond a reasonable doubt? (Prosecutor)  
I have JURY.

Who has the people with the largest number of seats in the courtroom? (Public)  
I have BAILIFF.

Who has the court that deals with wills? (Probate Court)  
I have DEFENDANT.

Who has the court that hears serious crimes and civil cases for more than \$25,000? (Circuit Court)  
I have LADY JUSTICE.

Who has the court that hears less serious crimes, traffic matters, and civil cases up to \$25,000? (District Court)  
I have DEFENSE ATTORNEY.

Who has the court that hears family cases, such as adoption and divorce? (Family Division of Circuit Court)

I have MICHIGAN SUPREME COURT.

Who has the court that handles civil cases for less than \$3,000? (Small Claims Court)

I have WITNESS.

Who has the court that hears cases against the State of Michigan for more than \$1,000? (Court of Claims)

I have EVIDENCE.

Who has the court that reviews decisions from trial courts? (Court of Appeals)

I have PLAINTIFF.

Who has the highest court in the state? (Michigan Supreme Court)

I have JURISDICTION.

Who has the person who maintains order in the courtroom? (Bailiff)

I have PROSECUTOR.

Who has the international symbol for justice? (Lady Justice)

I have CIVIL CASE.

Who has facts presented at a trial that convince a judge or jury? (Evidence)

I have EXECUTIVE BRANCH.

Who has the power of a court to hear a particular type of case? (Jurisdiction)

I have JUDICIAL BRANCH.

Who has the branch of government that interprets and applies laws? (Judicial Branch)

I have PROBATE COURT.

Who has the type of case in which someone is accused of breaking the law? (Criminal Case)

I have CRIMINAL CASE.

Who has the word that means to ask a higher court for another opinion on a case? (Appeal)

I have LEGISLATIVE BRANCH.

Who has the type of case in which two sides have a disagreement? (Civil Case)

I have APPEAL.

Who has the branch of government that makes laws? (Legislative Branch)

I have PUBLIC.

Who has the branch of government that enforces laws? (Executive Branch)

I have FAMILY DIVISION OF CIRCUIT COURT.

## More Information about the Themes

The following explanations are found at highlighted information sources within the game.

### Three Branches of Government

The state of Michigan has three branches of government: legislative, executive, and judicial. Each branch of government has its own responsibilities.

<b>Executive Branch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Enforces laws, making sure they are followed.</li><li>• Prepares budgets.</li><li>• Led by the governor.</li></ul>
<b>Legislative Branch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Makes laws.</li><li>• Approves budgets for other branches of government.</li><li>• Consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate.</li></ul>
<b>Judicial Branch</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interprets and applies laws.</li><li>• Protects individual rights.</li><li>• Punishes the guilty.</li><li>• Led by the Supreme Court.</li></ul>

### Organization of the Michigan Court System

The Michigan Court System is like a pyramid with three different levels.

Cases begin in one of the trial courts, the type of courts that most people know. During a trial, each side presents facts, called evidence, to persuade a judge and jury. Trial courts have different names, depending on their responsibilities. Common types of trial courts are: Probate Court, District Court, Family Court, and Circuit Court. Most cases end with a solution at this level.

Some cases move up to the next level. This happens when the losing side asks the Court of Appeals to review the decision of the lower court. At this level, three judges must hear each case and decide if the decision of the lower court was fair according to the law.

Very few cases go all the way to the Supreme Court. Michigan's highest court chooses which cases to accept. It only reviews the most important cases. In general, all seven justices of the Michigan Supreme Court hear and decide each case. Their decision is the final word in interpreting the law. No Michigan court can overrule the Supreme Court.

Justices and judges, who make decisions in Michigan courts, are elected by popular vote. Michigan Court of Appeals and trial court judges serve six-year terms. Justices of the Michigan Supreme Court are elected to eight-year terms. If a judge leaves office before the end of a term, the governor appoints an attorney to fill the position. The appointee must campaign during the next election to keep the position.

## **Civil v Criminal Cases**

There are two types of court cases: civil cases and criminal cases.

In a criminal case, the court must decide if someone broke the law. The government is represented by the prosecutor and asks the court to hear the case. The prosecutor must prove to the jury that the person accused of the crime (defendant) is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. In cases where the punishment could be more than a year in prison, there are 12 jurors. And in cases where the punishment could be up to a year, there are six jurors. In all criminal cases, all the jurors must be convinced beyond a reasonable doubt that the person is guilty. If the jury finds the defendant guilty, then the judge decides a sentence, such as time in jail.

A civil case involves a disagreement over private rights between individuals, corporations or even a governmental unit. The court must decide whether someone has harmed someone else. Sometimes civil cases are about someone who has suffered an injury, but often the harm involves money or people breaking their word. The person bringing the case (plaintiff) wants to show that the preponderance of the evidence proves the case against the defendant. A person wins the case if that side's evidence is the most persuasive, even if it is only a little bit stronger than the other side's evidence. A civil jury includes six people, and only five of the six have to agree. A common result in civil cases usually involves the wrongdoer paying money to the person who suffered harm.

## **Roles in the Courtroom**

It takes many people to conduct a fair trial. The following describes some of their roles:

**Court Reporter/Recorder**—The person responsible for taking down everything that is said during a court proceeding. They record the information through a special kind of shorthand writing or computer or recording device.

**Defendant**—The person responding to a claim (civil) or charge (criminal) defending against himself or herself. In a criminal case, the person is accused of breaking the law. The defendant is always presumed innocent until proven guilty. In a civil case, the defendant is accused of doing something harmful to the plaintiff.

**Defense Attorney**—The job of a defense attorney is to reach the best possible outcome for the defendant. Defense attorneys must match wits with the plaintiff's attorney (civil case) or prosecutor (criminal case). To prepare for trial, they hire and manage investigators, gather information from witnesses, and study similar cases.

**Judge**—Judges interpret how laws apply in a case. Judges rule on issues that arise during jury selection and trial, including questions that occur as the attorneys examine witnesses. In a criminal case, the judge’s most important job is to decide on a sentence if the defendant is found guilty.

**Jury**—Jurors decide the facts of a case. They rely on information presented to them by the attorneys. During the trial, the attorneys present evidence to convince the jurors of the defendant’s guilt or innocence (criminal case) or the person’s responsibility (civil case). Once the jurors hear all the evidence, they decide which side has proven the case. A juror must be a citizen who is at least 18 years old, can speak and understand English, and has not committed a serious crime. Jury service is an important civic duty.

**Plaintiff**—The person bringing the case. In a criminal case, the people of the State of Michigan, represented by the government, are the plaintiff.

**Plaintiff’s Attorney/Prosecutor**—In a criminal case, the prosecutor’s job is to reach the best possible outcome for the people of Michigan, including the victim of the crime. After the police arrest a person, the prosecuting attorney decides what crime the person committed. The prosecuting attorney files a paper in court that tells the person what the charge is, and how long the person might have to be in jail or prison if found guilty. Unless the person agrees that he or she is guilty, the case goes to trial. If that happens, the prosecuting attorney must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the person is guilty.

**Public**—The Sixth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees everyone a public trial. Public trials assure fairness and accuracy because people watch what courts are doing. An open trial allows the community to see justice as it occurs. Victims or their families may feel better after witnessing the trial. In every courtroom, the largest number of seats are reserved for the public.

**Witness**—Witnesses swear under oath to tell the truth about what they know. Both sides use witnesses to present evidence. Important witnesses in a trial can include the defendant, the plaintiff, people who saw the events, officers who investigated a crime, and other experts such as scientists, doctors, or engineers.

According to the Fifth Amendment, the defendant is not required to be a witness in a criminal case. Silence is not evidence of guilt and cannot be used against the criminal defendant.

## **Which Court?**

Michigan courts work together as “One Court of Justice,” but each type of court has its own jurisdiction. This means that different courts deal with different kinds of problems. Each type of court has the power to hear and decide particular types of cases.

## Glossary

The following words and definitions are accessible in the game through the menu.

**Appeal**—To ask a higher court for another opinion on a decision by a lower court. The losing side in a case asks for an appeal if it appears that something was not fair according to the law.

**Beyond a Reasonable Doubt**—The burden of proof in a criminal case. The prosecutor must prove the case against the defendant so well that all the jurors are totally convinced that the person is guilty.

**Burden of Proof**—The duty to prove a fact or facts in dispute. In criminal cases, the prosecution must prove its case “beyond a reasonable doubt.” In most civil cases, the plaintiff must prove its case by a “preponderance of the evidence” (more likely than not).

**Circuit Court**—The Michigan trial court that hears cases involving serious crimes with a possible sentence of more than one year in prison, civil cases involving disputes for more than \$25,000, and appeals from lower courts.

**Civil Case**—A court case about a disagreement about private rights between two parties.

**Criminal Case**—A court case in which the court must decide if someone broke the law by committing a crime.

**District Court**—The Michigan trial court that hears traffic cases, criminal cases with a possible sentence of less than a year in jail, and civil cases involving disputes for \$25,000 or less.

**Elect**—To select by popular vote for an office. In Michigan, judges and justices are elected.

**Evidence**—Facts presented at a trial to convince a judge or jury. Witnesses, objects, documents, photos, charts, and other materials can be used as evidence.

**Executive Branch**—The branch of government that enforces the laws and prepares budgets. In Michigan, the governor heads the executive branch.

**Family Division of Circuit Court**—The Michigan trial court that hears cases about family matters, such as adoption, divorce, paternity, personal protection orders, and delinquency.

**Interpret**—To decide what a law means according to what the words say. This is the responsibility of the judicial branch of government.

**Judge/Justice**—A judge or justice of the Michigan court system is an elected public official who has the authority to make decisions in civil and criminal court proceedings. To be qualified to serve as a judge or justice, a person must be licensed to practice law in Michigan and have practiced for at least five years. Judges of the Michigan Court of Appeals and trial courts are elected to six-year terms. Justices of the Michigan Supreme Court serve eight-year terms.

**Judicial Branch**—The branch of government that interprets and applies laws, protects individual rights, and punishes the guilty. In Michigan, the Supreme Court leads the judicial branch.

**Jurisdiction**—The power of a court to hear and decide a particular type of case.

**Legislative Branch**—The branch of government that makes the laws and approves budgets. In Michigan, the Senate and House of Representatives lead the legislative branch.

**Michigan Court of Appeals**—The Michigan intermediate appellate court that hears appeals of decisions by Michigan trial courts. Only Michigan’s Supreme Court can overrule decisions of the Court of Appeals.

**Michigan Supreme Court**—Michigan’s highest court, which reviews decisions of the Michigan Court of Appeals. No Michigan court can overrule a Supreme Court decision.

**Preponderance of the Evidence**—The burden of proof in a civil case. The side that presents the most persuasive evidence wins, even if it is only a little bit stronger than the other side’s evidence.

**Sentence**—The consequences for a person found guilty of a crime. A sentence may include punishment, such as spending time in jail or prison.

**Probate Court**—The Michigan trial court that handles wills and estates, orders treatment for the mentally ill, and appoints guardians.

**Prosecutor**—The attorney who represents the people of the state in a criminal case. After the police arrest a person, the prosecutor decides what crime the person committed and brings the case to court. Unless the defendant agrees that he or she is guilty, the case goes to trial. If that happens, the prosecuting attorney must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the person is guilty.

**Term**—The amount of time an official is elected to office. For example, in Michigan most judges, including those who serve in trial courts and the Court of Appeals are elected to a six-year term. Justices of the Michigan Supreme Court are elected to eight-year terms.

**Trial Court**—A court on the first level of the court system. Almost all cases start at this level, and this is the type of court familiar to most people. Trials occur with one judge and a jury. In Michigan, trial courts include Probate Court, District Court, Family Court, and Circuit Court.

## Questions & Answers from the Game

### Three Branches of Government

- Q1. Which branch of government makes the laws?  
a. Legislative branch.  
b. Executive branch.  
c. Judicial branch.  
A1. a.
- Q2. Which branch of government interprets the laws?  
a. Legislative branch.  
b. Executive branch.  
c. Judicial branch.  
A2. c.
- Q3. Which branch of government enforces the laws?  
a. Legislative branch.  
b. Executive branch.  
c. Judicial branch.  
A3. b.
- Q4. Who leads the executive branch of government in Michigan?  
a. Governor.  
b. House of Representatives and Senate.  
c. Supreme Court.  
A4. a.
- Q5. Who makes up the legislative branch of government in Michigan?  
a. Governor.  
b. House of Representatives and Senate.  
c. Supreme Court.  
A5. b.
- Q6. Who leads the judicial branch of government in Michigan?  
a. Governor.  
b. House of Representatives and Senate.  
c. Supreme Court.  
A6. c.
- Q7. What does it mean to “interpret” a law?  
a. To make sure the law is followed.  
b. To decide what the law means according to what the words say.  
c. To introduce, write, and pass the law.  
A7. b.

- Q8. What does it mean to “enforce” a law?
- a. To make sure the law is followed.
  - b. To decide what the law means according to what the words say.
  - c. To introduce, write, and pass the law.
- A8. a.
- Q9. What does it mean to “make” a law?
- a. To make sure the law is followed.
  - b. To decide what the law means according to what the words say.
  - c. To introduce, write, and pass the law.
- A9. c.
- Q10. When a judge decides what a law means, does he or she have to like the law?
- a. Yes.
  - b. No.
- A10. b.

### **Organization of the Michigan Court System**

- Q1. There are three levels in the Michigan court system. Where do most court cases in Michigan start?
- a. Supreme Court.
  - b. Court of Appeals.
  - c. A trial court, such as District Court, Probate Court, or Circuit Court.
- A1. c.
- Q2. In a court case, what does it mean to “appeal?”
- a. To ask a judge if he liked the decision that he made in a case.
  - b. To ask a higher court to review the decision of a lower court.
  - c. To ask the same court for another trial.
- A2. b.
- Q3. There are three levels in the Michigan court system. If a case goes to the second level, which court hears the appeal?
- a. Supreme Court.
  - b. Court of Appeals.
  - c. A trial court, such as District Court, Probate Court, or Circuit Court.
- A3. b.
- Q4. Which court is the highest court in Michigan?
- a. Supreme Court.
  - b. Court of Appeals.
  - c. A trial court, such as District Court, Probate Court, or Circuit Court.
- A4. a.

- Q5. Michigan citizens serve on juries, deciding on the facts of a case. Which courts use juries?
- a. Supreme Court.
  - b. Court of Appeals.
  - c. Trial Courts, such as District Court, Probate Court, or Circuit Court.
  - d. All of the above.
- A5. c.
- Q6. Which court is allowed to choose to hear only the most important cases?
- a. District Court.
  - b. Circuit Court.
  - c. Court of Appeals.
  - d. Supreme Court.
- A6. d.
- Q7. Which court(s) use more than one judge to make a decision?
- a. Supreme Court.
  - b. Court of Appeals.
  - c. Trial Courts, such as District Court, Circuit Court, or Probate Court.
  - d. a. and b.
  - e. None of the above.
- A7. d.
- Q8. How are judges and justices usually chosen to serve in Michigan courts?
- a. Judges are usually elected by popular vote. The governor only makes an appointment when a judge leaves office during the term.
  - b. Judges are appointed by the governor for life.
  - c. Judges are appointed by the President for life.
- A8. a.
- Q9. Justices of the Michigan Supreme Court serve \_\_\_\_-year terms.
- a. Six.
  - b. Eight.
  - c. Four.
- A9. b.
- Q10. Judges of Michigan trial courts and the Court of Appeals serve \_\_\_\_-year terms.
- a. Six.
  - b. Eight.
  - c. Four.
- A10. a.

## Civil v Criminal Cases

- Q1. In a criminal case, the court must decide if someone broke the law.
- True.
  - False.
- A1. a.
- Q2. Who may bring a criminal case to court?
- The government, represented by the prosecutor.
  - A private individual.
  - Either a. or b.
- A2. a.
- Q3. In a civil case, the person bringing the case (plaintiff) must prove:
- The evidence supports the case beyond a reasonable doubt.
  - A preponderance (majority) of the evidence supports the case.
  - The other person is bad.
- A3. b.
- Q4. In a criminal case, the prosecutor must prove the case:
- Beyond a reasonable doubt.
  - With a preponderance (majority) of the evidence.
  - Without any evidence.
- A4. a.
- Q5. In a civil case, the person who loses can be sent to jail as a punishment.
- True.
  - False.
- A5. b.
- Q6. If a defendant is found guilty in a criminal case, the judge must decide a sentence, such as jail time or paying fines.
- True.
  - False.
- A6. a.
- Q7. Juries decide the facts in a case to reach a decision. In a civil case in Michigan, the jurors must all agree.
- True.
  - False.
- A7. b.
- Q8. Juries decide the facts in a case to reach a decision. In a criminal case in Michigan, jurors must all agree.
- True.
  - False.
- A8. a.

- Q9. Which is a civil case?
- a. A man is accused of shoplifting.
  - b. A woman slips on a patch of ice in front of a store. She sues the store responsible for clearing the sidewalk.
  - c. A woman is accused of setting a fire in a building.
- A9. b.
- Q10. How many people serve on a jury in a criminal case where the punishment could be more than a year in prison?
- a. Five.
  - b. Six.
  - c. Twelve.
- A10. c.
- Q11. How many people serve on a jury in a civil case?
- a. Five.
  - b. Six.
  - c. Twelve.
- A11. b.

### **Roles in the Courtroom**

- Q1. In Michigan courts, the judge:
- a. Interprets the laws related to a case.
  - b. Gives testimony.
  - c. Chooses a sentence (consequence) in criminal cases.
  - d. a. and c.
- A1. d.
- Q2. Why are the most seats in a courtroom always reserved for the public?
- a. The U.S. Constitution guarantees a public trial.
  - b. When trials are public, they are more likely to be fair.
  - c. The community sees that justice is served.
  - d. All of the above.
- A2. d.
- Q3. In a criminal case, what does the prosecuting attorney do?
- a. Brings the case to court.
  - b. Presents evidence to prove the case beyond a reasonable doubt.
  - c. Interprets the laws related to the case.
  - d. a. and b.
- A3. d.

- Q4. In a criminal case, what does the defense attorney do?
- Presents evidence to make the jury doubt the prosecutor's case.
  - Interprets the laws related to the case.
  - Chooses a sentence.
- A4. a.
- Q5. In Michigan courts, the jury:
- Interprets the laws related to a case.
  - Decides the facts of the case.
  - Chooses a sentence (consequence) in criminal cases.
  - a. and c.
- A5. b.
- Q6. In court, who can be a witness?
- The person accused of a crime.
  - The person bringing a law suit.
  - Someone who saw an event.
  - A police officer.
- I and III.
  - II only.
  - I, II, and III.
  - All of the above.
- A6. d.
- Q7. In the United States, a person accused of a crime is presumed innocent until proven guilty.
- True.
  - False.
- A7. a.
- Q8. What does a court reporter do?
- Sends information about a case to the newspaper.
  - Takes notes for the jury.
  - Uses a computer or special machine to record court proceedings.
- A8. c.
- Q9. Who can serve on a jury?
- Anyone 18 or over.
  - Any citizen 18 or over who speaks and understands English and has not committed a serious crime.
  - Anyone 21 or over who speaks and understands English and has not committed a serious crime.
- A9. b.

- Q10. Why should a person serve on a jury?
- a. Serving on a jury is an important duty of citizens.
  - b. Jurors can learn more about the judicial branch of government.
  - c. Courts cannot function without jurors.
  - d. All of the above.
- A10. d.

## Which Court?

- Q1. Tries lawsuits for more than \$1,000 against the State of Michigan.  
A1. The Court of Claims hears lawsuits for more than \$1,000 against the State of Michigan.
- Q2. Hears appeals from trial courts, such as Circuit Court.  
A2. The Court of Appeals hears appeals from trial courts. Its decisions can be reviewed by the Supreme Court.
- Q3. Handles traffic violations, civil cases up to \$25,000, and less serious criminal cases.  
A3. District Court hears less serious criminal cases, civil cases up to \$25,000, and traffic matters.
- Q4. Hears family cases, such as such as adoption, personal protection orders, and divorce.  
A4. The Family Division of Circuit Court hears cases about family matters.
- Q5. Considers issues of parenting time, custody, and child support as part the Family Division of Circuit Court.  
A5. The Friend of the Court Office handles custody, parenting time, and child support matters.
- Q6. The highest court in the state.  
A6. The Michigan Supreme Court is the highest court. No state court can overrule its decisions.
- Q7. Tries serious criminal cases and civil cases for more than \$25,000.  
A7. Circuit Court hears civil cases for more than \$25,000 and serious criminal cases.
- Q8. Handles civil cases for less than \$3,000.  
A8. Small Claims Court, a division of District Court, hears civil cases for less than \$3,000.
- Q9. Deals with wills, estates, treatment of the mentally ill, and guardianships.  
A9. Probate Court handles estates, wills, guardianships, and treatment of the mentally ill.

## Further Resources

### Michigan Supreme Court Learning Center

- Learning Center, <http://courts.mi.gov/education/learning-center/>
- Gallery of Exhibits, <http://courts.mi.gov/education/learning-center/pages/gallery.aspx>
- Curriculum Resources, <http://courts.mi.gov/education/learning-center/curriculum-resources/pages/default.aspx>

### Michigan Judicial Institute

- Your Guide to Accessing the Michigan Courts, [www.accessingmicourts.net/](http://www.accessingmicourts.net/)

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