

A CONVERSATION ABOUT THE COURTS:



Judges Compare State and Federal Judicial Systems

VIDEO GUIDE (*Grades 6-12*):

INSTRUCTIONS: While watching the video, complete the graphic organizer and make note each time one of the vocabulary words is used. Answer the reflection questions.

	STATE COURT	FEDERAL COURT
Judge's name, title, and location		
How are judges selected?		
How long is the term?		
Jurisdiction?	General or limited?	General or limited?
Examples of criminal cases (this appears more than once)		
Who charges the criminal cases? What branch of government is this?		
Examples of civil cases (this appears more than once)		

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Caseload. Number of cases, trials per year. Which is larger?		
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VOCABULARY WORDS: Make note each time a word or phrase is used.

Checks and Balances

Civil Case

Class Action Lawsuit

Criminal Case

Executive Branch

Federalism

Felony

Judicial Branch

Jurisdiction

Lawsuit

Legislative Branch

Missouri Constitution

Nonpartisan

Nonpartisan Court Plan

Prosecutor

U.S. Constitution

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

1. Why are judges supposed to be independent from politics? What safeguards are in place in the selection process, both state and federal, to ensure this independence?
2. How is the role of the judicial branch different from the roles of the executive and legislative branches?
3. Why do we have both federal and state governments in this country? Why are most things left up to the states to decide in our system of government?
4. Rewatch the video and list all of the Amendments to the U.S. Constitution that are mentioned. For each, explain the Amendment's relevance to this discussion on state and federal courts.
5. If you were given the opportunity to speak to a Judge, what question(s) would you want to ask?