



An Attorney's Guide to

Bringing the Law to Life

In Elementary, Middle & High School
Classrooms

Citizenship Law Related Education Program for the Schools of Maryland
Maryland State Bar Association

A NOTE TO THE READER

This guide book was created by the Citizenship Law-Related Education Program for the Schools of Maryland especially for attorneys, judges and legal professionals who contribute their time, insight and expertise to students and teachers each year. We appreciate your service and hope you will find this resource helpful.

CITIZENSHIP LAW RELATED EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR THE SCHOOLS OF MARYLAND

Since 1975, CLREP has strived to bring the law to life for the young people of Maryland through meaningful, experiential programs. CLREP manages the Maryland State Bar Association Statewide High School Mock Trial Competition, Law Links Student Internship, and Baltimore City Teen Court programs. In recent years, CLREP has been involved in important initiatives such as implementation of school court programs, development of publications aligned with Maryland educational standards, and statewide conferences for educators, students and legal professionals.

CLREP is available as a training consultant to schools throughout the state of Maryland. We offer workshops on law-related methodologies, the law and legal system, violence prevention, and conflict resolution. CLREP is managed by the Professional Development Training Center, Inc., a 501-c3 educational corporation.



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rights- the five that get the most votes from all citizens of the United States. You are to number the following rights in order with 1 being the right you are least willing to give up, and 10 being the right you would give up first. After you have completed your ranking, you will receive further instructions.

___ Right to bear arms.

___ Right to freedom of speech.

___ Right to legal counsel.

___ Right to protection from cruel and unusual punishment.

___ Right to freedom of press.

___ Right to trial by jury.

___ Right to freedom of religion.

___ Right to peacefully assemble.

___ Right to privacy.

___ Right to protection from self-incrimination

Debrief the activity with the students by asking questions such as: Did you find this activity difficult? Were there specific rights you knew you would keep right away or did you struggle with selection of all of them? What do you think it would be like living in a land where citizens did not have these rights?

Visitor from Outer Space

Grades: 6-12

Read the following scenario to the students. Props work very well with this activity (antennae, e.g.). You might also consider enlisting the help of the teacher, to read either the opening paragraph or to act as the alien being. Having fun yet?)

You are quietly watching television at home with your family when a special news bulletin comes over the TV station. You immediately see that this is not the normal type of news bulletin because there is what looks like a very strange creature on the screen. He tells you that he and his people have gained control over all the communication networks in the United States and that everyone had better pay attention to what he has to say. You change the channel, and, just as he said, there he is on every station. He begins to speak very loudly and you gather your family around because you are beginning to worry about what he is going to do. His speech is as follows:

(In your best alien voice, please read): My name is STHGIR and I am from the Planet of NOITUTITSNOC in another galaxy where the inhabitants are far superior to the beings on this planet EARTH. Just as we have gained control over the communications of the United States, we have the ability to take complete control over every one of your lives. We do not want a war between our planet and yours, but we do want to control some things so that we can live in peace and harmony with you. We have looked at some of your laws and the way government operates and have found the y give too much freedom to the individual. Therefore, we are going to conduct a survey to try and arrive at a decision in which both you and I are happy. As I have said, I do not want to take everything from you-but I can't allow you to live as you have in the past. I am giving you a list of ten rights that you now have according to your Constitution. You are to look over the list and decide which of the ten are most important to you. I will allow you to keep FIVE of the ten

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In Preparation for Your Visit

Before you begin planning your classroom visit, be sure you know the following:

- The age and number of students you'll be addressing;
- The expectations of teacher(s) and student(s);
- Specific topics you need to cover;
- Specific amount of time you will have with the students;
- The location of your presentation (i.e. classroom, library)
- Any AV equipment and training materials you will have at your disposal (chalkboard, whiteboard, etc.)

4. What is the issue?

5. How would you decide? Explain your decision.

Issue: Did the assistant fail to live up to his agreement? If so, what would be the appropriate remedy?

Case Two

1. Plaintiff is a babysitter.

2. Defendant is a parent.

3. The Plaintiff agreed to babysit for the Defendant's two children for \$6.00 per hour. When the babysitter arrived there was a third child (a cousin), present. Plaintiff said nothing about an increased rate but demanded \$9.00 an hour when the Defendant returned home two hours later, claiming the rate of \$3.00 an hour per child. The Defendant refuses to pay the additional \$3.00 per hour. Plaintiff sues.

4. What is the issue?

5. How would you decide? Explain your decision.

Issue: Is the Defendant liable to pay an additional three dollars per hour?

Case Three

1. Plaintiff is the owner of a mountain bike.

2. Defendant was the owner of a bike repair shop.

3. Plaintiff brought a bike into the shop when the gears didn't properly shift. Plaintiff told Defendant/owner to fix the gears as well as possible but not to do anything that cost more than \$25. When the Plaintiff came to pick up the bike the next week, he found that the shop had installed brand new gears and had sold his broken gear shift to a bicycle used parts company. The Defendant told the Plaintiff that he owed \$50. The Plaintiff told the Defendant that he would pay \$25 since that was the amount he has said he would pay. The Defendant said he must pay \$50 to get the bike. Plaintiff sues.

4. What is the issue?

5. How would you decide? Explain your decision.

Issue: Can the Defendant do more than he was authorized to do by the Plaintiff without first making an additional agreement with the Plaintiff?

Pro Se Court

Grades: 8-12

Materials: Copies of cases

Prior to beginning this activity, facilitate a discussion with the students on the roles and responsibilities of the defendant, plaintiff and judge. Discuss the concepts of “adversary approach,” “innocent until proven guilty,” “burden of proof” and “impartiality.”

Divide the class into groups of three. Assign one person the role of the plaintiff, one the role of the defendant and the third the role of the judge. Instruct the students to read the case. The plaintiff and defendant should be thinking of ways to strengthen their argument. The judge should think of questions that would be appropriate to ask of both sides should they not be addressed during the course of each side’s presentation.

Have the judge make a decision based on the arguments/information provided by the plaintiff and defendant. Be prepared to debrief as to how and why you reached your decision. Student judges should be prepared to share their rationale. You may wish to allow debriefing time between the cases to note similarities and differences in the decisions reached. As you do the following cases, students should exchange roles, thus allowing them the opportunity to play each role at least once.

Case 1

1. Plaintiff is the assistant to a newspaper delivery boy.
2. Defendant is the newspaper delivery boy.
3. Defendant became sick and asked his helper, the Plaintiff, to deliver fifty papers. Plaintiff agreed to deliver the papers for \$10.00. The Plaintiff delivered the papers but did not place them in mail boxes or inside halls. Twenty five papers were ruined in the rain and the Defendant refused to pay the \$10.00 to the Plaintiff. Plaintiff sues.

Common Questions by Students

1. What is an attorney? What does an attorney do?
2. How much of your time is spent in court? (Be able to dispel the myth that all lawyers spend all their time arguing cases.)
3. If one is interested in pursuing a legal career, in what subject(s) should s/he major?
4. What are the various areas of law?
5. What is the most interesting case in which you have been involved?

Keep in Mind

1. For most presentations, you’ll be speaking on only one or two topics. Be sure the topics are clearly identified by the teacher.
2. Keep a clock or watch handy. It is easy to be distracted by questions and discussion unrelated to the subject. If appropriate, allow the discussion to flow in an unplanned, but relevant, direction.
3. Be certain the content of your presentation, including activities, prepared questions, etc. are age-appropriate.
4. Do not assume that you can tailor an old presentation for the purpose of this presentation. Select ideas and subject matter that are of interest to the students: i.e. juvenile justice issues, current events, etc.
5. Students who are actively engaged in the learning process learn more. Identify different ways, using a variety of activities (such as those included in this handbook), to enlist the active participation of the students. Activities need not be time-consuming or complex— a simple true/false quiz or opinion poll can be the perfect catalyst for discussion.

Where Does Law Fit Into the School Day?

History Class

History can provide students with a greater understanding of the events and philosophies that have shaped our legal system. Exploring a “timeline” of events that have impacted the American legal system in the past fifty years alone is very telling. Or, explore events and court decisions that have occurred in the lifetime of the students.

Government

Government classes afford lawyers the opportunity to discuss any of the three branches of government in light of the law. Consider moot courts, mock trials, mock legislative hearings as well as the activities on the following pages.

Business

In light of recent events, there are plenty of opportunities to discuss the impact of unethical and illegal activities in the business world.

Social Sciences

Issues surrounding family law, child welfare, sexual assault, and domestic abuse are on the minds of many; consequently, opportunities to collaborate with community agencies and law enforcement to discuss the impact of these issues abound.

Science

Lawyers and law enforcement can work together to put on a mock trial involving basic constitutional principles and forensic science. Demonstrate how evidence is collected at a crime scene and exhibit how it is used in a court of law to convict.

Technology

Lawyers, judges and law enforcement can discuss how technology is used to enhance the presentation of evidence in a court case.

Adapted from the ABA's 2003 Law Day Planning Guide

Narration: My name is _____. This morning, I woke up at 6:00 a.m. to my alarm clock. I took a shower, dressed for work, and ate some breakfast, which included cereal and coffee. My throat felt a little sore so I took some aspirin. I then drove my car to work. Unfortunately, on my way to work, my car was hit from behind when I stopped for a pedestrian. Thankfully, no one involved was injured. Both myself and the driver stopped to exchange contact and insurance information. I got to work just in time to pick up my paycheck and begin my day.

1. Your name is a legal device that cannot be changed without court approval.
2. Time is regulated by law. The official clock in Washington, DC is set in accordance with Greenwich Mean Time.
3. Water for bathing is inspected by city officials and must meet standards regulated by law.
4. Clothing must have the contents listed on the label.
5. Cereal boxes are required by law to list the ingredients on the box. Milk must be pasteurized and meet standards regulated by law. The importation and processing of coffee beans is regulated by law.
6. Medication is regulated by the Federal Drug Administration, and must meet specific standards before being sold to consumers.
7. Cars must have safety and pollution control devices; these devices are regulated by law. Drivers and passengers must wear seatbelts while the car is in motion.
8. Pedestrians have the right of way when walking in a crosswalk and when obeying traffic signs.
9. Drivers are required to be licensed and insured.
10. Streets are built and maintained under standards regulated by law.
11. Income taxes and social security taxes are withheld from paychecks by law.

There are two versions of the following activity, both of which lead to the similar outcomes: demonstration, appreciation, and reflection of the many ways and frequency with which laws touch our lives.

World of Law

Grades: 6-9 (Suggested)

Divide the class into groups of four. Instruct each group to make a list of activities they do each day— in school, at home, at a job, etcetera, that have nothing to do with the law.

For the second part of the activity, you will act as a judge. After each group has had sufficient time to complete a list, have the groups challenge each other with the activities noted on their lists. When one group names an activity, it is up to the other groups to challenge them with the ways in which the law impacts that activity.

For each activity that goes unchallenged, award points to the team that noted it. At the conclusion of the game, review those activities that went unchallenged (see Mindwalk activity for examples). There are few, if any, that cannot be challenged successfully. At some point during the activity, note that the “laws” to which they are referring are (hopefully) not criminal; rather, they are regulatory, written to protect our communities, country, and environment. You may wish to discuss the roles of attorneys and judges in rules, regulations, law-making and interpretation.

Mindwalk

Grades: 8-12 (or advanced classes)

Tell students you will narrate a story. Their job is to stop you (by raising their hands) when they think you have mentioned something that involves a law.

Stand Up If...

Grades: 1–12+ (should be modified for older students)

Direct students to listen carefully to the statements you are about to read. If the student feels s/he is able to respond to the statement, then the student should stand.

You may use the statements below or create your own. This activity works well as an ice-breaker since you can use each statement as a basis for discussion.

Grades 1-8: It helps, especially with younger children, to begin with simple statements, working your way up to more complex statements: i.e. Stand up if you have brothers and sisters; if you are an only child; if you took a vacation this past summer; if you know what you want to be when you grow up, etc.

1. Stand up if you know a rule here at your school.
2. Stand up if you know a law in your community.
3. Stand up if you know a consequence of breaking a rule or a law.
4. Stand up if you have seen someone break a rule.
5. Stand up if you think you know what lawyers do.
6. Stand up if you think rules and laws are important.
7. Stand up if you can name the 3 branches of government that create, enforce and interpret the law.
8. Stand up if you would like to learn more about the law.

Grades 8-12: (Modify and incorporate some of the statements from above.)

1. Stand up if you have seen a real court case. (Ask for elaboration: what type of case was it? What occurred?)
2. Stand up if you plan to pursue a career in the law.
3. Stand up if you think court is like Law & Order, The Practice, or some other television show.

The Eraser Game

Grades: 1-5

Materials: The name of this activity suggests using an eraser, but any safe object available in an elementary classroom will suffice.

The purpose of this activity is to teach children about the necessity of rules and the steps toward creating purposeful, clear rules.

1. Begin the activity by dividing students into groups of unequal size. Give one student on each team an eraser. Tell students to begin the game. [Students will be confused by the lack of instructions. Students may ask questions or attempt to play the game on their own. Do not respond at this time; simply encourage them to continue playing.]
2. After a moment, tell students to move into a straight line and pass the erasers to the end of the line. Explain to students that the first team to finish wins the game. Start the game again.
3. Tell the students they “forgot” to pass the erasers using only their left hands. [In response, students may complain that this wasn’t explained to them. Do not respond to their frustration or complaints at this time.]
4. Tell students they should pass the eraser to the front of the line. Begin the game again. After a few moments, stop the game and tell them they must pass the erasers using only their left hands, over their right shoulders.
5. You might continue stopping and starting, changing the “rules” as you go. Announce the “winners” of the game. [Students may be frustrated or angry about the way the game was played. Use their frustration as a basis for the following discussion.]



Are You a Good Witness?

Grades: 2-8

Materials: Create a transparency of the crime scene on the page 13.

Give students the following scenario: You are a witness to a crime scene and the police wish to question you. Study this crime scene carefully for one minute. After the minute is up, you will write down details to tell the police.

Before the class discusses the picture, they should be instructed to listen to each other's comments carefully, so as not to report something twice. Each student should report only one detail at a time. As they report details, record only those that are correct on a chalkboard.

Debrief and discuss: Why did you find this activity difficult or easy? What skills must you have in order to do well with this activity (good memory for details, observant, good listener, etc.)? Of those skills, which do you think a police officer, who enforces the law, or a judge, who interprets the law, needs to do their job effectively? Why would a regular citizen want to have these same abilities? Discuss with students why these skills might be important for an attorney. Elicit from students a list of skills that an effective attorney should have.

- The City Bank clock reads: 12:57
- The criminal is a dog.
- The criminal is wearing a shirt with the number 25.
- The criminal is wearing a bandana around his neck.
- The criminal has a gun in one hand.
- The criminal has a bag in one hand and the bag reads, "Bahamas".
- There is an arrow sign in the background that reads "Newville" and it points toward the building from where the criminal ran.
- A four door car was driving by and it had the following details:
 - A license plate that reads: Ohio AB124
 - A broken headlight; A broken passenger side window
 - A flower on the antenna; A black driver's side door
 - A driver wearing a cowboy hat.



6. Ask the following questions: What are your thoughts about the game? Was it fair? Why or why not? What would make the game more fair? What rules would you make before playing the game again?
7. What kinds of things do you have to keep in mind when creating a rule? [You must write the rule clearly; you must inform people of the rule, etc.]
8. Ask the following: what are some of the places that have rules? What are some examples of the rules in these places? What is the purpose of rules?
9. Using the places mentioned above, ask students to name some examples of laws. What is the purpose of laws?
10. Brainstorm with students the difference between a rule and a law. [A rule is a guideline for behavior or actions and is often limited to a specific place, such as the mall or school. A law is a rule made and enforced by government that applies to everyone.]
11. What happens if you break a rule? [You might lose privileges. You might also face consequences depending upon where you break a rule; i.e. if you talk during class, you might have to stay after school to make up missed work.] What happens if you break a law? [Depending upon the severity of the crime, you might lose privileges, pay fines or damages, or go to jail or prison.]
12. Discuss the roles of attorneys, judges and the courts in interpreting rules, regulations and laws.

Voting With Your Feet

Grades: This activity can be adapted for all grade levels. Talk with the teacher beforehand to determine appropriate declarative statements for the students or use the ones listed below and modify if necessary. This is a wonderful lead-in to a discussion of a current event or controversial issue.

Materials Needed: Signs that read “Agree,” “Neutral/ It Depends,” “Disagree” and masking tape to hang signs on wall. The classroom must be conducive to having students move around.

Students stand for this activity. Students are directed to listen and react to each statement and to move to one of three areas that are designated as follows: agree, neutral/ it depends, disagree—by doing this, they are “voting with their feet.” They should be able to explain reasons for their choices to their classmates. Follow each discussion with, “Based upon what you have heard from your peers, has anyone changed their initial opinion?”

Grades 2-5

- 1) It is absolutely necessary to have rules and laws.
- 2) The law should always be followed.
- 3) The main purpose of the law is to punish criminals.
- 4) Minors—kids younger than 18 in Maryland—should be treated differently than adults under the law.
- 5) People charged with breaking rules or laws should be able to tell their side of the story.

Grades 6-12

- 1) It is absolutely necessary to have rules and laws.
- 2) The law should be open to interpretation.
- 3) The main purpose of the law is to punish criminals.
- 4) Minors—kids younger than 18 in Maryland—should be treated differently than adults under the law.
- 5) People charged with breaking rules or laws should be given the opportunity to tell their side of the story.

Debrief & Wrap-Up: Use the following questions to debrief the activity. What did you observe during this activity? Considering that you all are in the same class and the same age, why do you think there were so many opinions on these issues?

Did any of you, in listening to others, change your opinion on an issue? Does this happen in the “real world”? What governmental processes enable the different interpretation of matters such as these?

Poster Time

Grades: 1-5

You may do this as a culminating activity or request that students complete their posters ahead of time to present during your class visit. Have students work in groups to create posters depicting the need for rules and laws, and the responsibilities of lawyers. They might use crayons, markers, photos, or clippings from magazines, newspapers or the internet to complete their poster.

Collage of Law

Grades: 3-8

Materials: Magazines, Newspapers, Computers/ Printers (if possible)

Students may work on this activity individually or in small groups. Students should be directed to identify and cut out various pictures, articles, and other media elements that depict or discuss the law. If computers and printers are available, students may wish to create artwork or find appropriate clipart to add to the collage. Students should be prepared to provide explanation— either orally or in writing— of their collages.