

## JUDGES IN THE CLASSROOM - LESSON PLANS

This lesson helps judges explain their work and can be used by judges on school career days. Students will share their perceptions of judges, and then participate in a scripted mock trial.

### Grade Level:

Grades 3-6

### Objectives:

- Students will share and clarify their understanding of judges and their work.
- Students will experience a trial court setting.

### Materials:

Handout 1 — Who’s Who in the Courtroom  
Mock trial scripts—Chicken Theft, Dog Bite, Hungry Horse  
Judge’s robe (from King Kamehameha V—Judiciary History Center)  
Gavel (from King Kamehameha V—Judiciary History Center)

Students should review the handouts prior to the judge’s visit. Teachers can download the handouts or can request them through the King Kamehameha V—Judiciary History Center.

### Procedure:

Before the visit, instruct teacher to arrange part of the classroom as a courtroom for this lesson. The teacher may follow the diagram on **Handout 1**.

1. Introduce yourself and offer students a brief personal history. Where did you grow up? What school did you go to? What did you like to do when you were a student? Remember to adapt your

language for the appropriate school age audience and to repeat key points. Before answering a student’s question, repeat the question loudly so that all of the students can hear it.

2. Ask students what they know about judges and record answers on the board. What do judges do? What are judges like? Have you seen judges on TV? Do you know any judges? Repeat students’ answers so that all of the students can hear them. You may ask the teacher or a student volunteer to record the answers.
3. Describe your job as simply as you can. Explain vocabulary like “preside, interpret, jurisdiction, etc.” Tell students that judges have to pay very close attention to the law. The decisions they make about court cases are based on the law. Ask students to define law, or come up with a meaning for the word law. Record, or have teacher/student record appropriate responses on the board.
4. Ask students to think of laws that they like. If this is difficult, have students tell you what they enjoy doing after school or during the summer, for example; playing basketball, riding bikes, going to the beach, skateboarding, watching TV, etc. After several responses, ask students if they can think of laws that help them do these things, or laws that support their right to do things they enjoy. You may provide examples by noting that laws requiring

## Career as a Judge

public access to beach areas help us enjoy our beaches.

Repeat Procedures 7 and 8 with the other mock trials, as time allows.

5. Ask students what happens when people break the law. Repeat their answers so that all of the students can hear, and offer feedback as appropriate. Ask students if they have ever seen a trial in court. What happens in court?
6. Explain the trial process as simply as possible. Pass out **Handout 1** if students do not already have it and explain the different roles in the courtroom, concluding with the judge. Tell students that today they will experience a trial.
7. If the teacher has not already done so, arrange desks or chairs into a courtroom setting (plaintiff, defendant, and judge). Tell students that these court cases are real cases that happened in Hawai‘i over one hundred years ago. Appoint characters for the first mock trial and give each character a **mock trial script** if they do not already have one. Instruct students who are not in the mock trial to listen carefully or to read along if they have their own scripts. Begin the mock trial.
8. When the trial is over, ask the student playing the judge what it was like being a judge. If the student is reticent, ask the class what they thought about the judge in this case. Would you enjoy making this type of decision? What do you think was fair? Who did you feel sorry for? Do you think the verdict and sentence was helpful? Did the judge make everybody feel better? If not, who did not feel better and why? Would you get tired or mad if you had to listen to people’s problems when you went to work?
9. Conclude by asking students what they have learned about a judge’s job. What is it like being a judge? What do you have to be like to be a good judge? What things from school can help you be a good judge? Add your own comments as appropriate.

## **Handout 1 – Who’s Who in the Courtroom**

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### **Judge**

A public officer appointed to preside over the court and administer the law. In a jury trial, it is the judge’s responsibility to instruct the jury about the laws that apply to the case.

### **Court Clerk**

A court officer who files pleadings, motions, judgements, and keeps records of evidence and court proceedings.

### **Bailiff**

A court officer who maintains order in the courtroom and has custody of the jury and the prisoners. The bailiff announces the opening and closing of court, calls witnesses, takes charge of the jury, and maintains security for the judge and court staff.

### **Court Reporter**

A person who documents all testimony during court proceedings, or at trial related proceedings such as pre-motions and depositions.

### **Plaintiff**

A person or party who brings a legal action, or files a complaint, for the purpose of obtaining a legal remedy. In a criminal case, the plaintiff is the government.

### **Defendant**

A person or party being sued or accused of a crime. The defendant is presumed to be innocent unless the evidence proves that she or he is guilty.

### **Plaintiff’s Attorney**

An attorney who represents the party who complains or brings suit in a legal action. In a criminal case, the plaintiff’s attorney is the government prosecutor.

### **Defense Attorney**

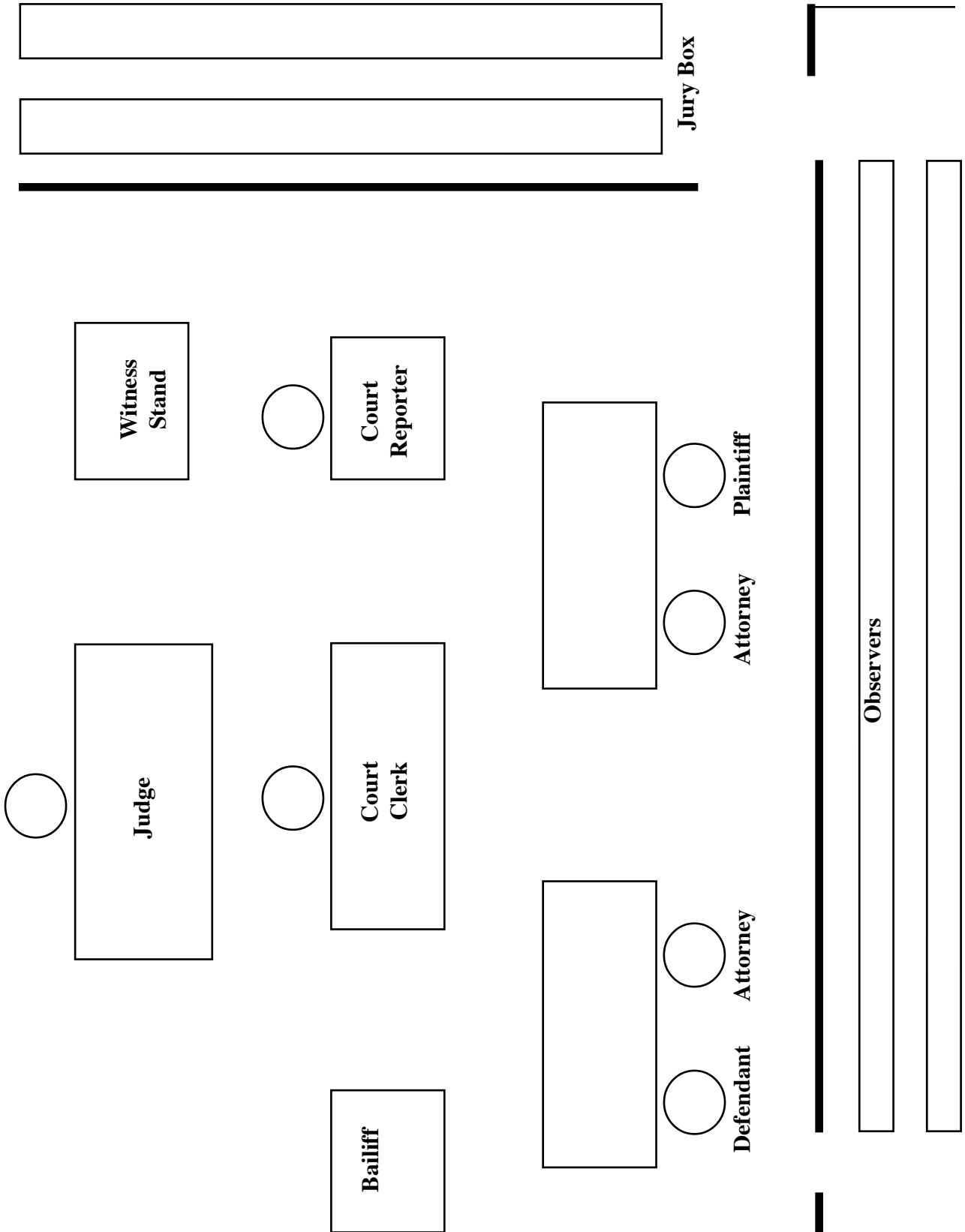
An attorney who represents and acts in the defendant’s best legal interest. In criminal cases, persons or parties may have the right to a public defender.

### **Witness**

A person who promises to tell the truth and then answers questions about the case; what she or he saw, heard, or knows. Witnesses might also identify pictures or other exhibits entered in the trial.

### **Jury**

A group of citizens eighteen years of age or older representing a cross section of the community. The jury listens to the case, follows the judge’s instructions about the law, and renders a fair decision based on the facts of the case.



## **Mock trial script—Chicken Theft**

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Characters: Judge, Justin, Keola, Bryson

**Judge (Hits the gavel three times)**

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! This court is now in session. I call the first case.

**Justin**

I am Justin. I accuse Keola and Bryson.

**Judge**

What are the charges?

**Justin**

I accuse Keola and Bryson of eating my chicken.

**Judge**

Justin, you must come to the witness stand. Tell us, did you see Keola and Bryson steal and eat your chicken?

**Justin**

I saw them take my chicken and run away. I looked for them. I found them by a fire. There were chicken bones all around. They had been eating. I think they were eating my chicken.

**Judge**

Thank you, Justin. You may return to your seat. Keola and Bryson, you must come to the witness stand. Did you two steal and eat Justin's chicken?

**Keola**

Yes, we thought it was our chicken.

**Bryson**

It looked like ours.

## Mock trial script—Chicken Theft

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**Keola**

It had black feathers on the tail.

**Bryson**

And red feathers by the wings.

**Keola**

It looked just like ours.

**Bryson**

Exactly!

**Keola**

Maybe, we made a mistake.

**Judge**

Here is my decision. Keola and Bryson, you two are guilty of stealing and eating the chicken. You two will go and buy a new chicken for Justin. **(Hits the gavel)** This court is now adjourned.

## Mock trial Script—Dog Bite

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Characters: Judge, Allyson, Scott

**Judge (Hits the gavel three times)**

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! This court is now in session. I call the first case.

**Allyson**

My name is Allyson. I accuse Scott.

**Judge**

What are the charges?

**Allyson**

He has a bad dog. His dog bit me.

**Judge**

Allyson, you must come to the witness stand. When did the dog bite you?

**Allyson**

I went to Scott's house. The dog chased me down the path. Then the dog bit me.

**Judge**

Thank you, Allyson, you may go back to your seat. Scott, you must come to the witness stand. Scott, did your dog bite Allyson?

**Scott**

Yes, the dog bit her. Allyson came to my door. She saw the dog. She got scared. She began to run around and wave her hands. The dog saw her run. The dog got scared too, and the dog chased her.

**Allyson**

He bit me!

## Mock trial Script—Dog Bite

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**Judge (Hits the gavel)**

Allyson, you must be quiet, it is Scott's turn to speak. Go on, Scott.

**Scott**

The dog bit her because she ran around. The dog is not a bad dog.

**Judge**

Thank you Scott, you may return to your seat. Allyson, you must come back to the witness stand. Allyson, why did you start to run?

**Allyson**

I am afraid of dogs, so I ran away.

**Judge**

Here is what I have decided. Scott, you must pay Allyson \$1.00 because your dog bit her. Allyson, here is some advice. Try not to act so nervous around animals. **(Hits the gavel)** This court is now adjourned.



## **Mock trial script—Hungry as a Horse**

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Characters: Judge, Hipolito, Jane, Lorraine

**Judge (Hits the gavel three times)**

Hear Ye! Hear Ye! This court is now in session. I call the first case.

**Hipolito**

I am Hipolito. I accuse Lorraine.

**Jane**

I am Jane. I accuse Lorraine also.

**Judge**

What are the charges?

**Hipolito**

Lorraine's horse ate our gardens.

**Jane**

Yes, the horse ate many of our plants.

**Judge**

Hipolito, you will come to the witness stand first. Did Lorraine's horse eat your plants?

**Hipolito**

Yes. The horse came into my garden. It ate five of my watermelons and five sugar cane plants.

**Judge**

What did the horse look like?

**Hipolito**

It was a brown horse with a white spot on its chest.

## Mock trial script—Hungry as a Horse

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**Judge**

Thank you, Hipolito. You may go back to your seat. Jane, you must now come to the witness stand. You say Lorraine's horse ate in your garden too?

**Jane**

Yes. The horse ate all the corn and all the gourds. Then, the horse stepped on all the plants. Now, I have no vegetable plants.

**Judge**

What did the horse look like?

**Jane**

It was a brown horse with a white spot on its chest. It was Lorraine's horse.

**Judge**

Thank you, Jane. You may go back to your seat. Now, Lorraine, you must come to the witness stand. Lorraine, do you have a brown horse with a white spot on the chest?

**Lorraine**

Yes. That is what my horse, Apple, looks like.

**Judge**

Did Apple eat the food in Hipolito's garden?

**Lorraine**

Maybe.

**Judge**

Did Apple eat the food in Jane's garden?

## Mock trial script—Hungry as a Horse

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**Lorraine**

Maybe.

**Judge**

Why do you keep saying maybe?

**Lorraine**

Apple likes to eat. I feed her everyday, but she goes away to look for more food. Apple is getting very fat. I did not see her eat their plants, but maybe she did. I will give her more food so she won't go looking for food.

**Judge**

Here is my decision. Lorraine, you must tie Apple up and keep her at home. You will pay \$1.00 to Hipolito and \$1.00 to Jane because Apple ate their food. **(Hits the gavel)** This court is now adjourned.