

Courts, Judges, and the Law

How is the U.S. judicial system organized to ensure justice?

Speaking of Politics

As you complete the Reading Notes, use these terms in your answers:

criminal law	prosecution
civil law	plaintiff
burden of proof	writ of certiorari
defendant	legal brief

PREVIEW



Examine the photograph above. Then answer these questions:

1. Do you recognize this building? What activities do you think take place here?

2. Have you had a personal experience with the court system? If so, what was it like? If not, what are your impressions of the court system from film, television, newspapers, magazines, and books?
3. What is the overall goal of the judicial system?
4. A primary purpose of the U.S. court system is to ensure justice. Do you think it does that?

READING NOTES

Follow these directions to complete your Reading Notes for this lesson.

1. Read the question on Card 1. Locate the answer to the question in Sections 3 to 7.
2. Find the box numbered 1 on Notebook Handout. Label the diagram as directed on Card 1.
3. Repeat the procedure for Cards 2 through 16, completing them in order.
4. Tape the completed diagrams into your notebook. Then answer these questions:
 - What did you learn about the judicial branch that you did not know before?
 - What are some characteristics of the U.S. court system that help ensure justice?

PROCESSING

You have learned about the structure and operation of the judicial branch. Now read the following postings from the fictional Web site “Pursuing Justice.” Then write your own comment in response to one or both of the postings. Include the following in your response:

- your online name
- the date and time of your response
- your position on the topic being discussed
- support for your argument, including two specific courts that you have read about and how their structure or function adds to or detracts from justice being served

