

## Vocabuilder: The Legal System

### VOCAB LIST: Legal Proceedings

**stand trial** – to go into court and have a judge or jury decide if you are guilty or innocent

*The police caught the suspect, and he will stand trial tomorrow.*

**case** – a single trial; a situation that is decided in court

*Prosecutors often work on several cases at the same time.*

**accuse\* (v.)** – to suggest that a particular person is guilty

*The prosecutor accused the defendant of stealing the victim's car.*

**charge (n.)** – the official crime that a suspect is accused of

**charge (v.)** – to officially accuse a person of committing a crime

*The prosecutor officially charged the suspect with murder yesterday.*

*The suspect is disputing the charges and arguing that he is innocent.*

**indict (v.)** – similar to “charge”, but sounds slightly more formal

*The suspect was officially indicted after he was arrested last week.*

**dispute (n. or v.)** – to fight a charge; to argue something (a price, decision, etc.)

*The suspect has promised to dispute the charges in court.*

**allege\* (v.)** – to claim that someone did something wrong (although there may be no proof)

*The prosecutors allege that the suspect shot the criminal with a stolen gun.*

*The alleged\* murderer will stand trial tomorrow.*

**civil law** – laws that deal with private matters or disagreements

**criminal law** – laws about official crimes and their punishments

*With civil law, the defendant might have to pay a fine, but with criminal law, the defendant may face much more serious punishment, such as jail time.*

**sue (v.)** – in civil law: to bring someone to court because you have a disagreement with them

*My neighbor is suing me because my dog bit her son.*

**justice (n.)** – the determination of right/wrong and suitable punishment in society; fairness

*The legal system is often called the justice system.*

*The victim's parents are seeking justice for their daughter's murder.*

**juvenile (n. or adj.)** – for legal purposes, a person who is under 18 years old; a minor

*Because he is a juvenile, the suspect will stand trial in juvenile court.*

\*Usage note: You say “**accuse someone of committing a crime**”, and “**allege that someone committed a crime**”

\*\*Journalists often use this word to describe someone who has not been found guilty yet

## Vocabuilder: The Legal System

### VOCAB REVIEW: Legal Proceedings

**stand trial**

**case**

**accuse**

**charge**

**dispute**

**allege**

**sue**

**justice**

**juvenile**

**civil law**

*Fill in the blanks below with words from the box above.*

1. John \_\_\_\_\_ me of stealing his pen, but I swear that I didn't do it!
2. The witness \_\_\_\_\_ that he saw the defendant hit the victim on the night of the murder.
3. The car that you sold me is older than you said it was! I'm going to \_\_\_\_\_ you!
4. Prosecutors are seeking \_\_\_\_\_ in the murder of the 21-year old victim.
5. This is a very difficult \_\_\_\_\_ for the prosecutors to win, because there is very little evidence and no witnesses.
6. If you break a \_\_\_\_\_, someone might sue you, and you might have to pay a fine.
7. The defendant is accused of breaking into a house and stealing a computer. Because he is only 17 years old, he is considered a \_\_\_\_\_, so he cannot be sent to prison for this crime.
8. If the judge decides that there is enough evidence, the suspect will have to \_\_\_\_\_ and let a jury decide whether he is guilty or innocent.
9. Prosecutors \_\_\_\_\_ the suspect with murder after the police found a gun in his house.
10. The defendant decided not to \_\_\_\_\_ the charges because there was too much evidence. He admitted he was guilty, and the prosecutors agreed to a shorter prison sentence.