

## Vocabuilder: The Legal System

### VOCAB LIST: The Verdict

**verdict (n.)** – the decision in a trial (usually “guilty” or “not guilty”)

*Everyone is curious to hear what the jury’s verdict will be in this case.*

**convicted** – “found guilty”; when a judge or jury decides someone is guilty

**acquitted** – “found not guilty”; when a judge or jury decides someone is *not* guilty

*After he was convicted of murder, the criminal went to jail.*

*When the jury acquitted him, John began crying tears of joy.*

**felony (n.)** – a very serious crime

**misdemeanor (n.)** – a crime that is not as serious as a felony

*If you steal more than \$1,000, it is considered a felony and you can be sent to jail. However, if the amount stolen is less than \$1,000, it is a misdemeanor and you will probably just have to pay a fine.*

**plea (n.)** – the defendant’s statement of whether he/she is guilty or innocent

**plead (v.)** – to officially state whether you are guilty or innocent

*“What’s your plea?” asked the judge. The defendant replied, “Not guilty, your honor.”*

*If you plead guilty, sometimes the prosecutor will agree to a reduced sentence. This is called a “plea bargain”.*

**sentence (n., v.)** – the punishment; to punish a person who has been convicted

*After he was convicted, the man was sentenced to 20 years in prison. He was very upset because he didn’t expect such a long sentence.*

**fine (n.)** – money paid to a victim as punishment

*The judge ordered the thief to pay a \$200 fine.*

**compensate (v.)** – to pay money to someone because you have done something wrong

*Because I accidentally hit Rita’s car, the judge ordered me to compensate her for the full amount of repairs..*

**probation (n.)** – instead of going to jail, a person may go on “probation” and meet with a “probation officer regularly for a certain period of time

*The thief was lucky to avoid jail; the judge sentenced him to five years’ probation instead.*

**parole (n., v.)** – an agreement that lets a criminal leave prison early – the criminal must meet with a “parole officer” regularly and stay out of trouble

*It can often be hard for people on parole to get a job, because many employers are unwilling to trust them.*

*Prosecutors are arguing that the convicted murderer is still dangerous and should not be granted parole.*

**death penalty (n.)** – a sentence of “death” for a serious crime (such as murder)

*Many people are opposed to the death penalty because they argue that it is too cruel.*

## Vocabuilder: The Legal System

### VOCAB REVIEW: Legal Proceedings

<b>verdict</b>	<b>convicted</b>	<b>felony</b>	<b>sentence</b>
<b>compensate</b>	<b>acquitted</b>	<b>misdemeanor</b>	<b>fine</b>
<b>plead</b>	<b>probation</b>	<b>death penalty</b>	<b>parole</b>

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

1. Rich people often hire expensive lawyers, so they are more likely to be \_\_\_\_\_ of crimes. On the other hand, for poor people who cannot afford expensive lawyers, they are more likely to be \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The defendant was convicted of murder yesterday. He has to return to court in one month to find out what how long his prison \_\_\_\_\_ will be.
3. The prosecutors told the defendant that if he \_\_\_\_\_ guilty, they will not seek the death penalty.
4. When I was 17, I got caught stealing a car. Because I was a juvenile, the judge sentenced me to \_\_\_\_\_ instead of prison. However, I also had to \_\_\_\_\_ the victim, which was difficult because I didn't have much money.
5. In many states, if you are convicted of a \_\_\_\_\_, you are not allowed to vote in elections.
6. Because his crime was only a \_\_\_\_\_, Jason only had to pay a \$200 \_\_\_\_\_.
7. The jury was unable to reach a \_\_\_\_\_, so the judge told them to deliberate for one more day and try their best to reach a decision.
8. Prosecutors usually only seek the \_\_\_\_\_ for people who are accused of very violent murders.
9. After serving seven years in prison, the woman is hoping to get out on \_\_\_\_\_ so she can see her family again and return to a normal life.