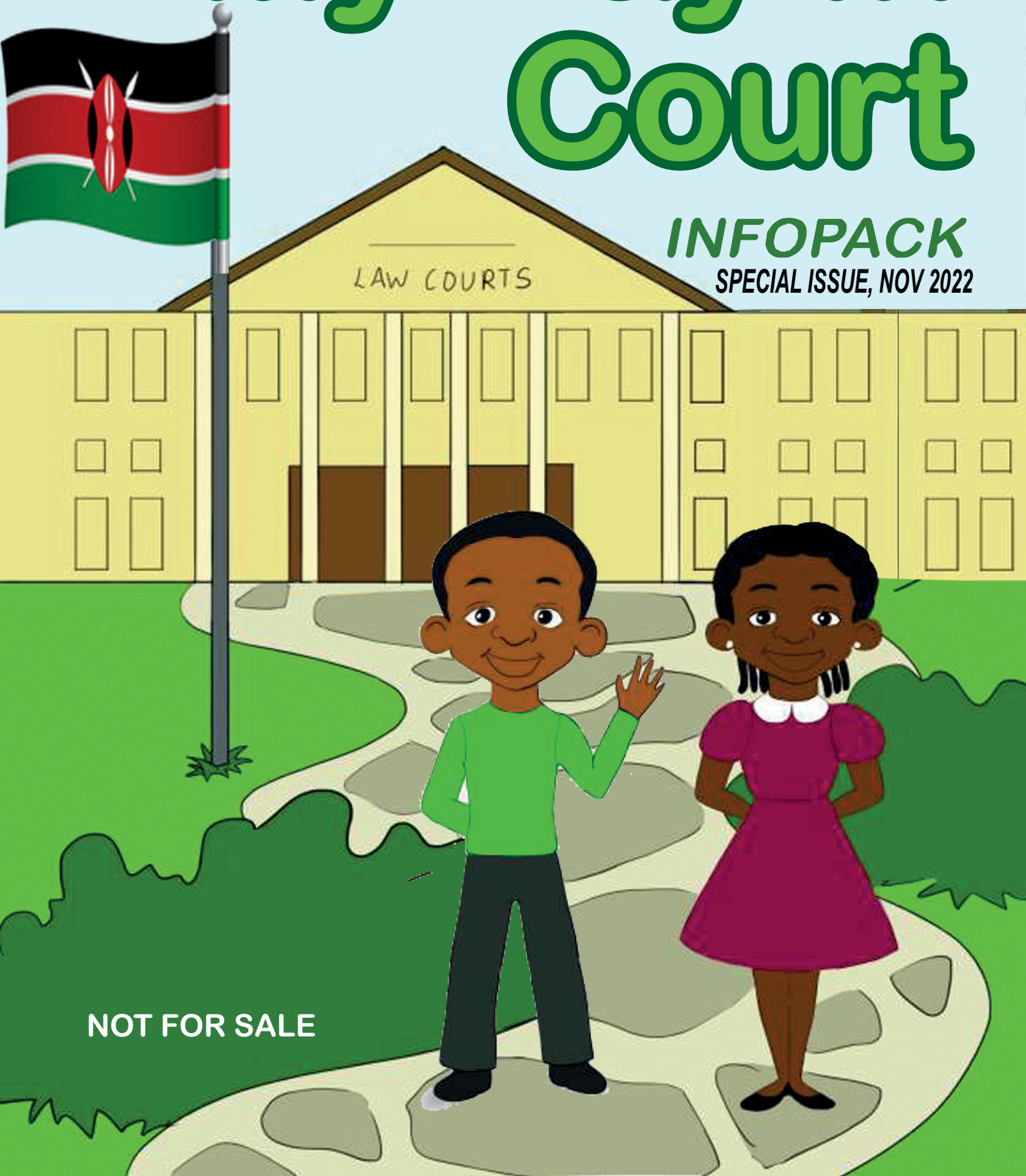




My Day In Court

INFOPACK
SPECIAL ISSUE, NOV 2022



NOT FOR SALE

My Day In Court

Special Issue on Children's Day in court

What are the judge's duties?

What's my duty in Court?

What is a Court?

What is the Defense Lawyers duty?

What does the prosecutor do?

Who is a witness?

Who is an accused Person?

Who is a court clerk?

How am I supposed to dress?

Who is a Children Officer?



Hi, my name is Neema. My friend Baraka and I have an important role to play. Just like you.



We have to go to court and tell the judge about something. Maybe it's something we saw or heard. Maybe it's something that happened to us. Whatever it is, telling the judge makes us witnesses.



By reading this book and doing the activities, we'll learn about being witnesses. Together we'll think of questions to ask that can make our job easier. We'll also find out about court and people who work there.

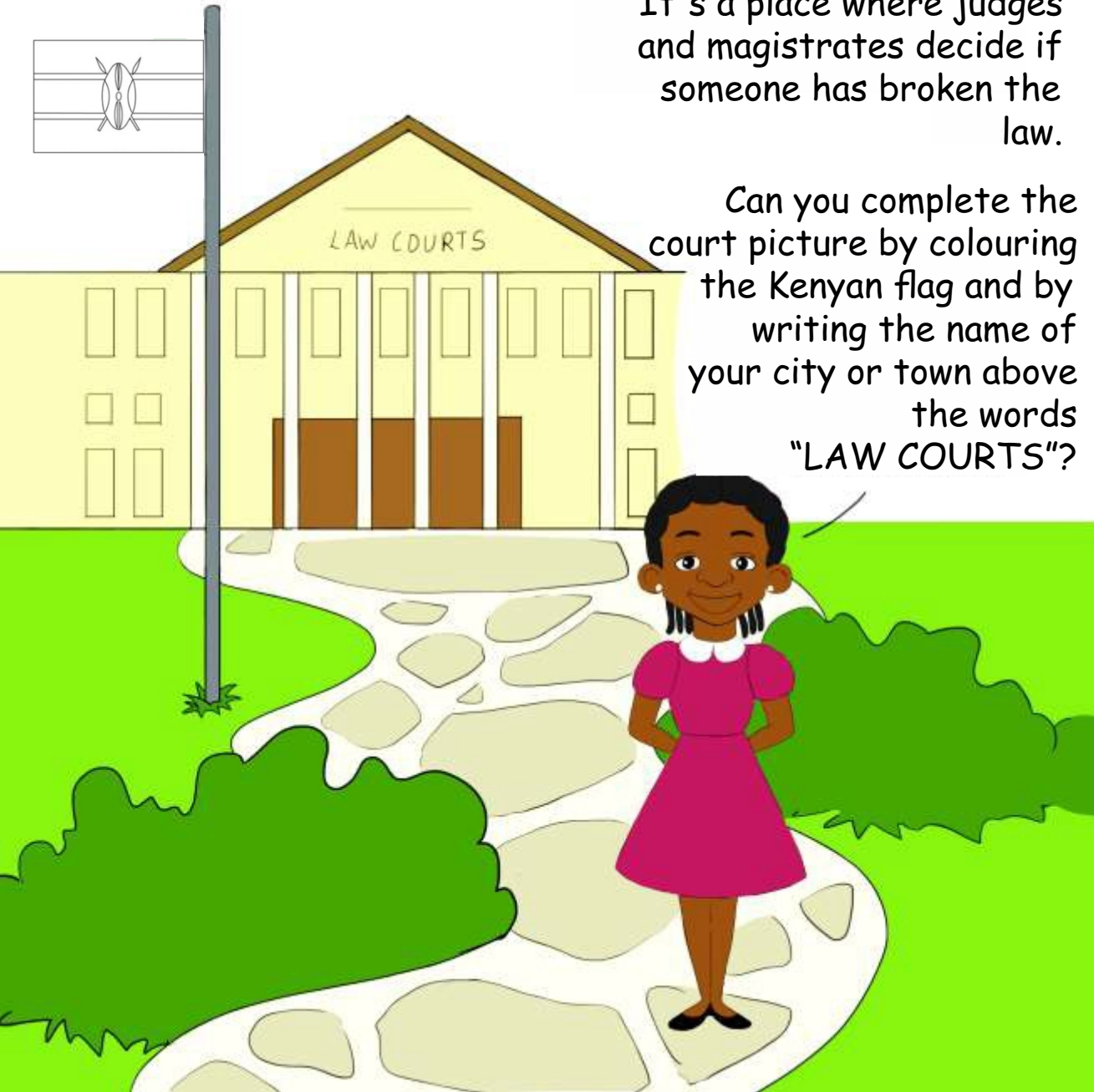
What is a Court?



In most towns and cities there is a building called a court.

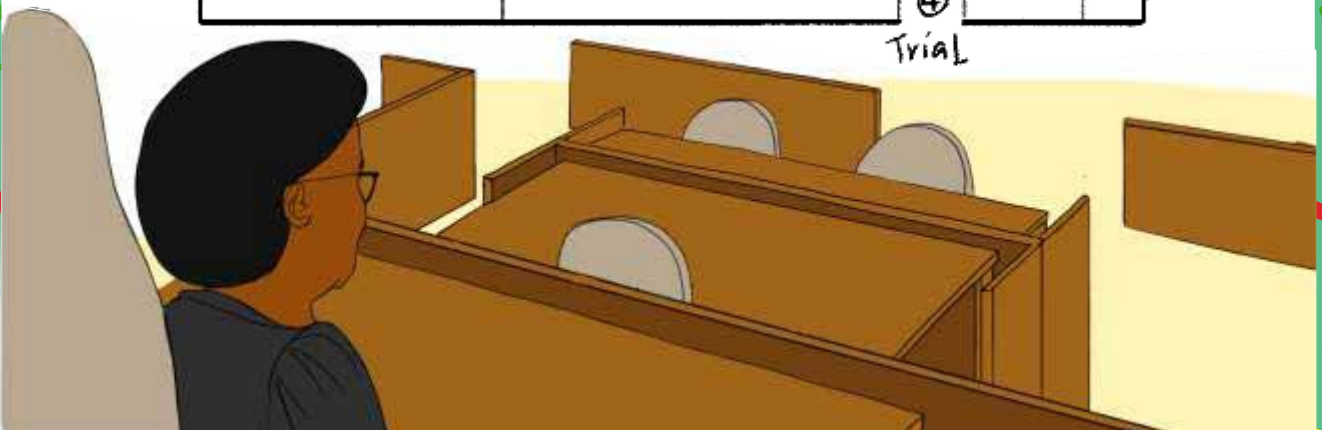
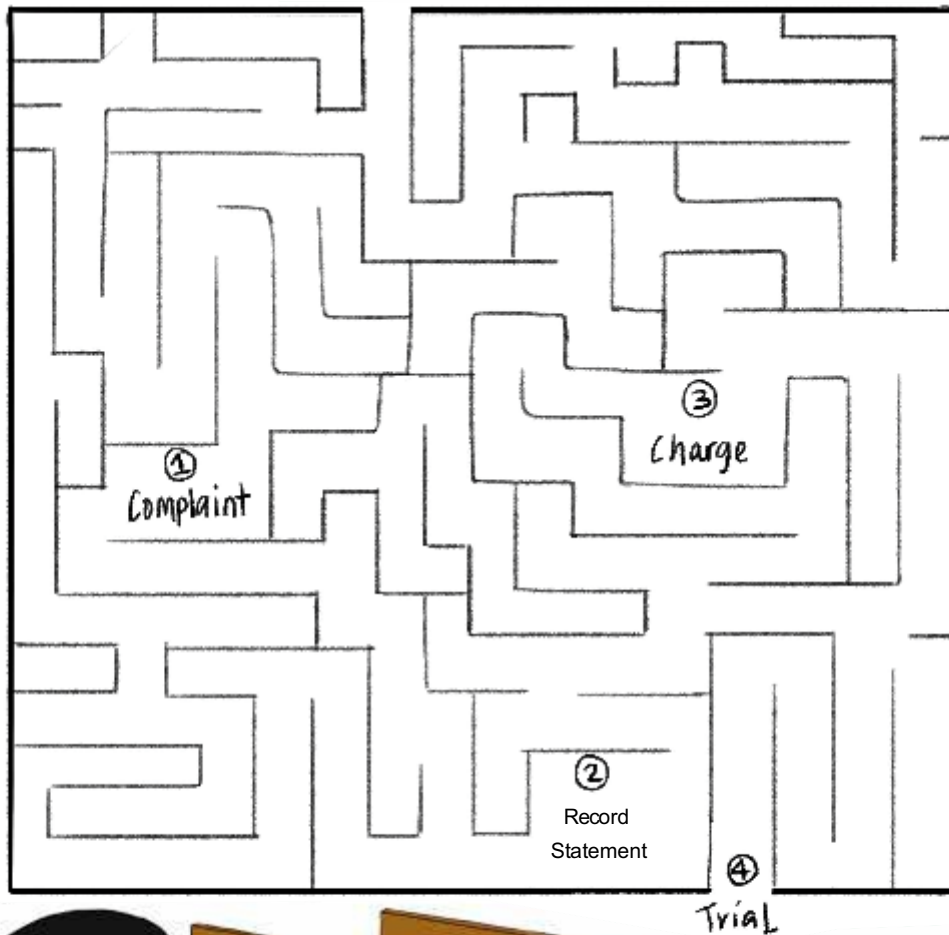
It's a place where judges and magistrates decide if someone has broken the law.

Can you complete the court picture by colouring the Kenyan flag and by writing the name of your city or town above the words "LAW COURTS"?



Things to do

A lot happens before people get to court. Let's trace some of the steps.

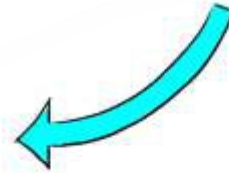


before court

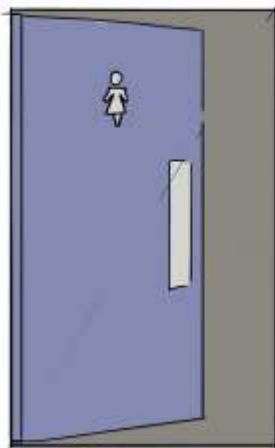
Can you
Colour them?



Dress to
be neat
and
comfortable.



Eat a snack.



Go to the
washroom



What is the judge's job?



It's the judge's or the magistrate's job to listen to evidence given in court

It's also the judge's job to know the law and to decide whether the law has been broken or not.

You can call the judge "Your honour" when its your turn to talk.

Who acts 'like a judge at school?

At the beginning, the Judge or the Magistrate may ask us some questions like these:



1. How old are you?
2. What grade are you in?
3. Do you know what an oath is?
4. What does it mean when you "swear to tell the truth"?
5. What do you think might happen if people do not tell the truth in court?

If we need some help in finding answers to some of these questions before we go to court, we can ask the prosecutor:

What does the prosecutor do?

The prosecutor helps us to play our role as witnesses.

The prosecutor does this by asking us questions so that the judge can listen to answers.

Can you answer these questions and show your answers to the prosecutor?

Do you think it will be hard to talk to the prosecutor about what happened?

What questions do you want to ask the prosecutor?

Do you know someone you would like to come to court with you?

Is there anything that scares you?



What is the defense lawyer's job?

The defense lawyer's job is to help the accused. The accused is the person charged with breaking the law.



Can you give an example of breaking the law?



To do a good job, the defense lawyer tries to find out if we've made a mistake, or if we can't remember something, or if we've made something up. That's why the defense lawyer gets a chance to ask us questions after the prosecutor has finished asking us questions.

We've got to listen to everyone's questions carefully and understand them before we answer.

Sometimes when we are talking in court, the defense lawyer may stand up and interrupt us to talk to the judge. Don't worry. We haven't done or said anything wrong. No one is angry at us. All we have to do is stop talking until the judge or the prosecutor asks us to go on.

Who's the Accused?

The person whom the police have charged with breaking the law is called the accused.

Maybe we know the accused, maybe we don't. Maybe we've seen the accused before, maybe we haven't.

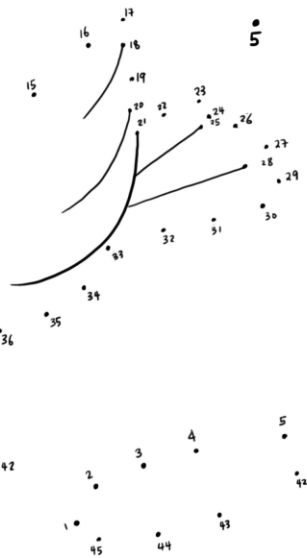
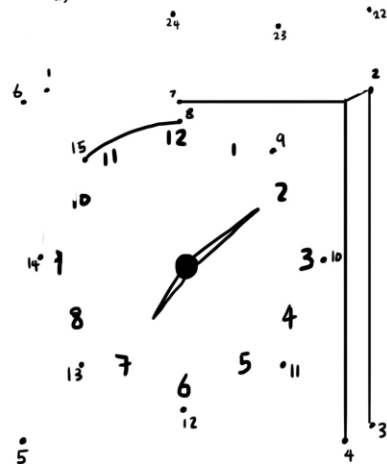
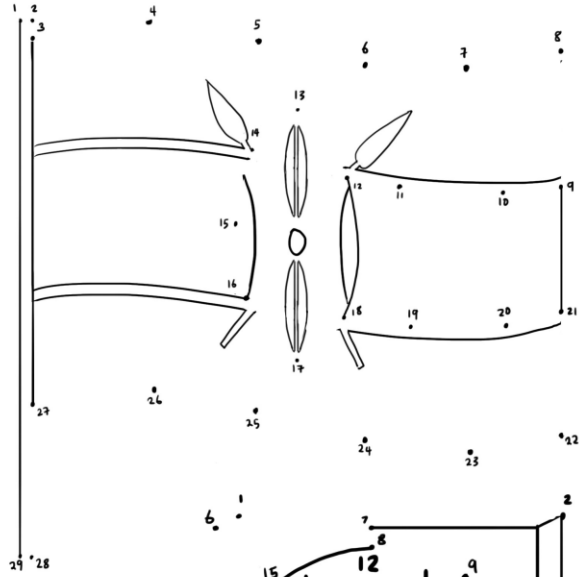
Most times when we do our job as witnesses we end up talking about the accused. The judge or the prosecutor may ask us if we see the person that we are talking about in court.



If we do, we should point to the person and tell the judge what the person is wearing.

Connect the dots

Then circle the things that belong in the courtroom.



Baraka is learning all about court and being a witness.



Can you colour him?

What does a witness do?



A witness is a very important person in court. Our job as witnesses is to listen to questions and to give answers for the judge to hear. This is called giving evidence. The most important thing about being a witness is telling the truth.

What if...

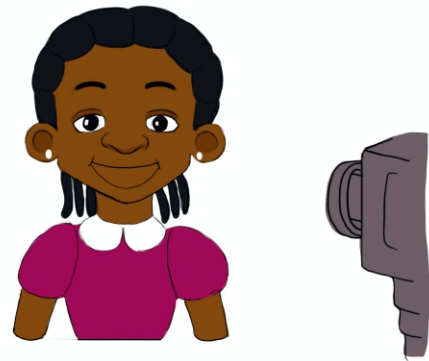
1. You are asked a question and you don't understand it?
2. You are asked a question and you can't remember the answer?
3. You are asked an embarrassing question?
4. You cry in court?
5. You need to go to the washroom?
6. You're asked more than one question at a time?

What does a witness do?

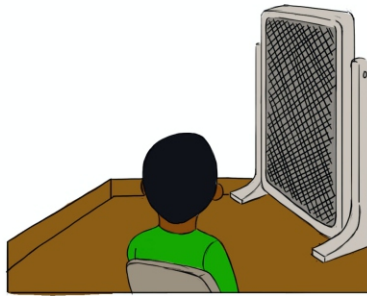


The prosecutor or someone who works with the prosecutor should show us the courtroom before it's time for us to be witnesses. If we have any questions after we see the courtroom, we can always ask the prosecutor.

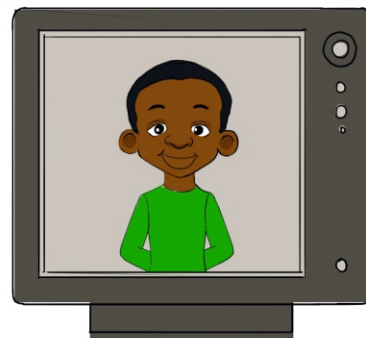
Sometimes when kids talk to the police and the social worker, a videotape is made. Do you know if a videotape was made of you? If there was, the prosecutor might show it to you. Kids sometimes end up watching it in court with the judge.



Some kids are scared about going to court. If we're scared, we should tell the prosecutor why. Sometimes the prosecutor can talk to the judge about letting us sit behind a screen while we do our job as witnesses. The judge decides if a screen should be used. Anyone who wants to see what a screen looks like can ask the prosecutor if there's one in the courthouse.



Some courthouses have a special courtroom tv. If the judge decides that it's best for us to stay outside the courtroom, we can do our job as witnesses in another room. The judge stays in the courtroom and listens to us tell about what happened on tv.



Court Clerk



An accused person may be punished because of what witnesses say. That is why it is so important to tell the truth in court. How would you tell the truth in court? How would you tell the judge in your own words that you will tell the truth?

The court clerk's job is to help the judge. When the judge comes in, the clerk says, "All rise". That means everybody stand up. The lawyers sometimes bow to the judge. Other people in the court don't have to.

The clerk reads out the charge at the beginning of the trial. The clerk may ask us to take an oath. If this happens the clerk tells us to hold a Holy book in your right hand and asks,

Do you swear that the evidence which you are about to give the court in this case shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

An oath is a promise to God. If you agree to tell the truth, say "I do". Some kids like to nod, that's called affirming. If you want to affirm instead of using a Bible, the clerk tells you to raise your right hand and asks,

"Do you solemnly affirm that the evidence which you are about to give the court in this case shall be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?"

If you agree to tell the whole truth this way, say "I do".

Neema is having a snack while she waits for her friend in court.



Can
you
colour
her meal?



Rules for witnesses

Tell the truth.

If you can't remember something or don't understand what someone says, say so.

If you don't know the answer to a question, say you don't know, don't guess.

If you don't agree with what someone asks you, tell them that you don't agree.

If you are sure about the answer to a question, you can say so. If you are not sure, you can tell the judge what parts of your evidence you are less sure of.

Talk to the judge if something is bothering you or if you have a question while you are being a witness.

The court



There are a lot of things wrong in this Courtroom. How many can you find?



Words are hidden in this puzzle, across, up and down, and diagonally. These words are sometimes used in court. When you find a word, circle it and cross it off the list. The first one is done for you. (Check after finishing)



Find the word

B	C	H	A	R	G	E	S	P	L	E	A	Z	M
A	Q	R	D	E	F	E	N	S	E	E	J	P	L
I	P	B	O	A	T	H	S	C	T	R	U	T	H
L	R	S	L	W	E	E	E	T	O	M	R	T	R
S	E	N	T	E	N	C	E	P	M	U	O	A	E
T	L	A	I	T	S	A	B	J	O	T	R	N	P
A	I	L	I	O	V	A	T	U	T	L	E	T	O
T	M	W	N	B	B	C	E	T	I	D	I	E	R
E	I	C	Q	J	P	C	S	L	O	Y	Y	C	T
M	N	L	U	E	O	U	T	C	N	R	O	E	E
E	A	E	I	C	E	S	I	Z	U	I	N	R	R
N	R	R	R	T	N	E	F	J	U	D	G	E	K
T	Y	K	Y	Y	A	D	Y	G	U	I	L	T	Y
A	L	L	E	G	E	E	V	I	D	E	N	C	E

~~ACCUSED~~
ALLEGE
DEFENSE
POLICE
PRELIMINARY

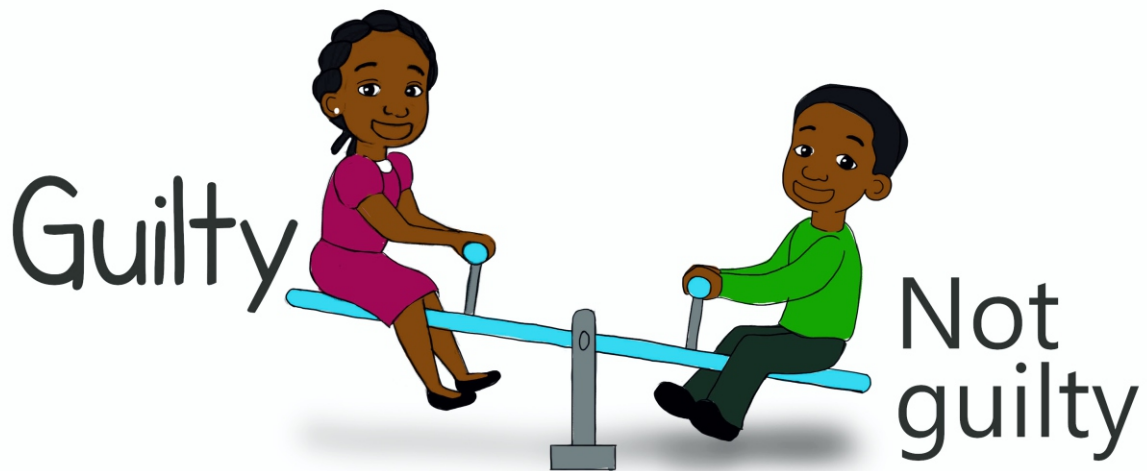
COURT
JUDGE
PLEA
TESTIFY
CODE

INQUIRY
OBJECT
TRUTH
GUILTY

OATH
STATEMENT
CHARGE
CLERK
REPORTER

SENTENCE
BAIL
EVIDENCE
MOTION
WITNESS

Have you ever had to make an important decision about what to believe?



The judge has to listen to all the witnesses and try to make a decision about what happened. This part of the judge's job is like putting the pieces of a puzzle together. Sometimes the judge, may be confused because some of the pieces are missing and other pieces are not clear.

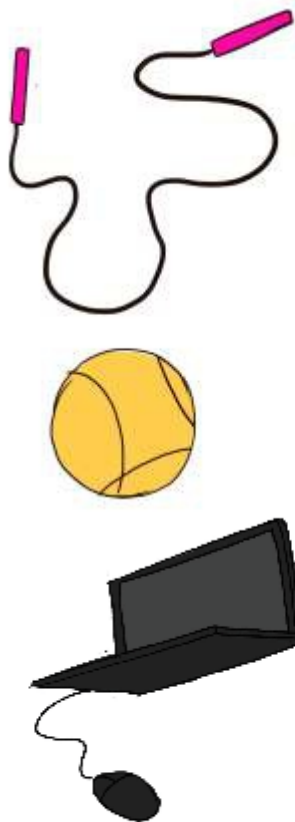




What happens when my job is over?



Some children don't want to know what happens in court after they have finished being a witness. Other children want to come back and find out what the judge decides about the case. We can always talk to the prosecutor about what we would like to do.



If the judge finds the accused not guilty of breaking the law, the accused is free to go. If the accused is found guilty, one of the things the judge must decide is how to keep the accused from breaking the law again. To do this, sometimes the judge sets rules about what the accused can and can't do, sometimes the judge makes the accused pay money and sometimes the judge sends the accused to jail.

If we have any questions about what the judge decides in the case, we can ask the prosecutor. After it is all over, some kids feel sad or upset. We should talk to someone we trust about how we feel.

Whatever happens, we will have done an important job by being witnesses and we'll have learned a lot about court and what goes on there.

What does that mean?

In court people use a lot of words that we may never have heard before. Here is a list of some of them.



Adjourn:

Put off a hearing until another time

Allegation:

Something that someone says has happened

Charge:

The law that the police believe the accused has broken

Complaint:

A statement to the police accusing someone of breaking the law.

Cross-examine:

Questioning of a witness by the lawyer for the other side

Evidence:

Things that witnesses say in court and things (such as photographs, clothes or drawings) that are brought to the court to show what happened.

Interview:

A meeting with the police or attorney

Objection:

A reason that a lawyer interrupts a witness to talk to the judge.

Plea:

The answer the accused gives (guilty or not guilty) to the charge that is read out loud at the beginning of the trial.

Preliminary Inquiry:

A hearing where the Judge decides whether there is enough evidence to hold trial in another court.

Sentence:

The punishment the judge gives to someone found guilty of breaking the law.

Summons:

A piece of paper that tells a witness when and where to come to court.

Testify:

Answer questions in court.

Testimony:

What a witness says in court.

Transcript:

A typewritten record that is made by the court reporter of what is said in court.

Trial:

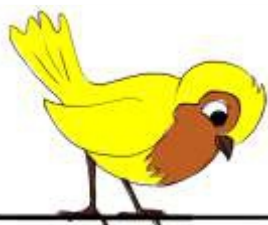
A hearing that takes place when the accused pleads "not guilty" and witnesses are required to come to court to give evidence.

Subordinate:

Lower in rank or position.



You may want to remember some dates and places. Here is a place to write some of them down. You may also show the prosecutor so they may know a bit about you.



My name is _____

My date of birth is _____

I'm in grade _____

The name of my school is _____

My teacher's name is _____

My favourite subject is _____

My hobbies are _____

The people in my family are _____

I met the prosecutor on _____

The prosecutor's name is _____

Their telephone number _____

The police officer is _____

Their telephone number _____

My court date is _____

Court room number _____



you again in the next series:
A justice system fit for children!



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