

## 15 and 16 Vocabulary

1. Appellate Courts- Courts that review decisions made by lower courts, such as trial courts. Also known as courts of appeals.
2. Attorney General- The chief law officer of a state; also, the chief law officer of the nation.
3. Attorney-Client Privilege- A rule of evidence requiring that communications between a client and his or her attorney be kept confidential, unless the client consents to disclosure.
4. Concurring Opinions- Separate opinions prepared by judges who support the decision of the majority of the court but who want to make or clarify a particular point or to voice disapproval of the grounds on which the decision was made.
5. Courtroom Work Group- The social organization consisting of the judge, prosecutor, defense attorney, and other court workers. The relationships among these persons have a far-reaching impact on the day-to-day operations of any court.
6. Defense Attorney- The lawyer representing the defendant.
7. Dissenting Opinions- Separate opinions in which judges disagree with the conclusion reached by the majority of the court and expand on their own views about the case.
8. Docket- The list of cases entered on a court's calendar and thus scheduled to be heard by the court.
9. Dual Court System- The separate but interrelated court system of the United States, made up of the courts on the national level and the courts on the state level.
10. Judicial Misconduct- A general term describing behavior by a judge that diminishes public confidence in the judiciary. This behavior includes obviously illegal acts, such as bribery, and conduct that gives the appearance of impropriety, such as consorting with known felons.
11. Jurisdiction. The authority of a court to hear and decide cases within an area of the law or a geographical territory.
12. Magistrate- A public civil officer or official with limited judicial authority within a particular geographical area, such as the authority to issue an arrest warrant.
13. Nonpartisan Elections- Elections in which candidates are presented on the ballot without any party affiliation.
14. Opinion- A statement by the court expressing the reasons for its decision in a case.
15. Oral Arguments. The verbal arguments presented in person by attorneys to an appellate court. Each attorney presents reasons why the court should rule in his or her client's favor.
16. Partisan Elections- Elections in which candidates are affiliated with and receive support from political parties; the candidates are listed in conjunction with their party on the ballot.
17. Public Defenders- Court-appointed attorneys who are paid by the state to represent defendants who are unable to hire private counsel.
18. Public Prosecutors- Individuals, acting as trial lawyers, who initiate and conduct cases in the government's name and on behalf of the people.

19. Rule of Four- A rule of the United States Supreme Court that the Court will not issue a writ of certiorari unless at least four justices approve of the decision to hear the case.
20. Trial Courts- Courts in which most cases usually begin and in which questions of fact are examined.
21. Writ of Certiorari- A request from a higher court asking a lower court for the record of a case. In essence, the request signals the higher court's willingness to review the case.