Intro to Law — Unit 15

Research, case reading and civic information

Legal education only, not individualized legal advice. All disputes and records are fictional classroom simulations. Do not file, pay, contact police/courts/parties, visit a courthouse, investigate a real person, or disclose private family/case information. Use supplied facts; personal disclosure is never required. Written or private in-person alternatives replace every recording activity.

Student copy. Parent-paced. No private answer keys. Use extra paper for full explanations. All optional oral tasks have equal written or parent-observed alternatives.

141. Plan the question before searching

intro-law-l141 | suggested week 29 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply plan the question before searching to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion’s holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

Today’s focus — Plan the question before searching
A useful research question states the legal issue, jurisdiction, time and relevant facts. Broad questions invite irrelevant or outdated answers. Research can reveal that more facts are needed; it does not guarantee a single clear answer.

Reasoning practice: Write the legal condition on one line and the supplied fact on the next. Explain the link instead of merely copying both. A different result requires a changed fact, rule or justified interpretation—not a stronger opinion.

Assignment record: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

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Worked teaching example

A research plan asks which supplied federal court structure applies to a stated federal claim at the trial stage. Issue, jurisdiction and procedural stage narrow the search. The plan is more useful than asking whether everything is legal. It still must identify the actual source and any missing jurisdictional

requirements.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Plan the question before searching: From this record, quote or accurately paraphrase two legally significant details. Label each as a supplied/stipulated fact, an allegation or a missing fact as appropriate; explain why the distinction matters.
Record: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.

intro-law-l141-q01

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2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Plan the question before searching in your own words. Identify one limit that prevents treating it as a universal rule. Use the principle printed above, not an unsupported internet summary.

intro-law-l141-q02

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3. Apply the original record: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
Question: Rewrite it as a bounded classroom research question. Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l141-q03

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4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: The task instead concerns a federal evidence rule in a federal mock proceeding.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l141-q04

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5. Source card exercise: For Plan the question before searching, use the complete supplied offline card below. Record its jurisdiction/type and exact URL. Explain what it can contribute, and one reason it cannot by itself guarantee a real person’s outcome. No browsing or separate registry lookup is required.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l141-q05

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6. Neutral explanation: In 80–120 words, or a 60–90 second private explanation with an equivalent script/in-person option, answer the original Plan the question before searching issue for a new reader. Include the governing distinction, two supplied details, and the most important uncertainty or limit. Do not

add an accusation or recommend real action.

intro-law-l141-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Plan the question before searching:
A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
Read this principle: A useful research question states the legal issue, jurisdiction, time and relevant facts. Broad questions invite irrelevant or outdated answers. Research can reveal that more facts are needed; it does not guarantee a single clear answer.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Plan the question before searching:
Original: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
Changed fact: The task instead concerns a federal evidence rule in a federal mock proceeding.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains. Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
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Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Important Case Research Tips
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/case-law-research/important-research-tips
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Check proper jurisdiction and later treatment. Free research alone is not a full citator guarantee.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas Attorney General: Public Information Act Overview
Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/overview-public-information-act
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency explanation
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Access to government records with confidentiality/other exceptions; not everything held by government is releasable.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.

142. Bills, statutes and effective dates

intro-law-l142 | suggested week 29 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply bills, statutes and effective dates to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion’s holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

Today’s focus — Bills, statutes and effective dates
A proposed bill is not automatically law. Enactment and effective date are distinct questions, and amendments can change operative language. An official source’s status labels and dates must be read before treating a provision as currently applicable.

Reasoning practice: Write the legal condition on one line and the supplied fact on the next. Explain the link instead of merely copying both. A different result requires a changed fact, rule or justified interpretation—not a stronger opinion.

Assignment record: Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

Safety: Legal education only, not individualized legal advice. All disputes and records are fictional classroom simulations. Do not file, pay, contact police/courts/parties, visit a courthouse, investigate a real person, or disclose private family/case information. Use supplied facts; personal disclosure is never required. Written or private in-person alternatives replace every recording activity.

Worked teaching example

An enacted fictional rule takes effect in March, but the event occurred in January. Enactment alone does not establish that the March rule governed January. Compare operative dates and any transition/retroactivity provisions. A current publication date is not automatically the event’s applicable-law date.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Bills, statutes and effective dates: From this record, quote or accurately paraphrase two legally significant details. Label each as a supplied/stipulated fact, an allegation or a missing fact as appropriate; explain why the distinction matters.
Record: Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.

intro-law-l142-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Bills, statutes and effective dates in your own words. Identify one limit that prevents treating it as a universal rule. Use the principle printed above, not an unsupported internet summary.

intro-law-l142-q02

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3. Apply the original record: Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.
Question: Why can neither card automatically establish a current operative rule for that event? Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l142-q03

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4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: The event occurs after B’s stated effective date and no transition issue is supplied.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l142-q04

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5. Source card exercise: For Bills, statutes and effective dates, use the complete supplied offline card below. Record its jurisdiction/type and exact URL. Explain what it can contribute, and one reason it cannot by itself guarantee a real person’s outcome. No browsing or separate registry lookup is required.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l142-q05

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6. Neutral explanation: In 80–120 words, or a 60–90 second private explanation with an equivalent script/in-person option, answer the original Bills, statutes and effective dates issue for a new reader. Include the governing distinction, two supplied details, and the most important uncertainty or limit. Do not add an accusation or recommend real action.

intro-law-l142-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Bills, statutes and effective dates:
Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.

Read this principle: A proposed bill is not automatically law. Enactment and effective date are distinct questions, and amendments can change operative language. An official source’s status labels and dates must be read before treating a provision as currently applicable.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Bills, statutes and effective dates:
Original: Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.
Changed fact: The event occurs after B’s stated effective date and no transition issue is supplied.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains.
Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
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Supplied offline source card
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Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/case-law-research/important-research-tips
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
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Supplied offline source card
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Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/overview-public-information-act
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency explanation
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
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Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.

143. Read a simulated holding in context

intro-law-l143 | suggested week 29 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply read a simulated holding in context to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion’s holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

Today’s focus — Read a simulated holding in context
A holding is the court’s resolution of an issue necessary to its decision; broader commentary may have a different role. Facts, procedural posture and jurisdiction constrain what a decision supports. A mock opinion teaches structure but is not real authority and receives no fake citation.

Reasoning practice: Write the legal condition on one line and the supplied fact on the next. Explain the link instead of merely copying both. A different result requires a changed fact, rule or justified interpretation—not a stronger opinion.

Assignment record: SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

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Worked teaching example

SIMULATED OPINION: under a model requiring a numbered permit, the court denies an application lacking that number. A comment praising future digital forms does not decide their legal validity. The narrow resolution concerns the missing model condition. This fictional teaching opinion has no reporter citation or authority over actual disputes.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Read a simulated holding in context: From this record, quote or accurately paraphrase two legally significant details. Label each as a supplied/stipulated fact, an allegation or a missing fact as appropriate; explain why the distinction matters.
Record: SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.

intro-law-l143-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Read a simulated holding in context in your own words. Identify one limit that prevents treating it as a universal rule. Use the principle printed above, not an unsupported internet summary.

intro-law-l143-q02

3. Apply the original record: SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.
Question: Identify the narrow decision and the separate comment. Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l143-q03

4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: The issue in a new simulation is whether a specific electronic signature satisfies an expressly supplied rule.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l143-q04

5. Source card exercise: For Read a simulated holding in context, use the complete supplied offline card below. Record its jurisdiction/type and exact URL. Explain what it can contribute, and one reason it cannot by itself guarantee a real person’s outcome. No browsing or separate registry lookup is required.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
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intro-law-l143-q05

6. Neutral explanation: In 80–120 words, or a 60–90 second private explanation with an equivalent script/in-person option, answer the original Read a simulated holding in context issue for a new reader. Include the governing distinction, two supplied details, and the most important uncertainty or limit. Do not add an accusation or recommend real action.

intro-law-l143-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Read a simulated holding in context:
SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.
Read this principle: A holding is the court’s resolution of an issue necessary to its decision; broader commentary may have a different role. Facts, procedural posture and jurisdiction constrain what a decision supports. A mock opinion teaches structure but is not real authority and receives no fake citation.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Read a simulated holding in context:
Original: SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.
Changed fact: The issue in a new simulation is whether a specific electronic signature satisfies an expressly supplied rule.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains.
Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
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Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Important Case Research Tips
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/case-law-research/important-research-tips
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Check proper jurisdiction and later treatment. Free research alone is not a full citator guarantee.
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Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/overview-public-information-act
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency explanation
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Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
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Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.

144. Currentness and later treatment

intro-law-l144 | suggested week 29 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply currentness and later treatment to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion’s holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

Today’s focus — Currentness and later treatment
A source may be amended, reversed, limited or superseded. Check dates, history and later treatment; finding a case is not the final research step. A beginner can record that a currentness check is incomplete rather than imply access to every legal research tool.

Reasoning practice: Write the legal condition on one line and the supplied fact on the next. Explain the link instead of merely copying both. A different result requires a changed fact, rule or justified interpretation—not a stronger opinion.

Assignment record: A fictional memo relies on a 2015 rule, but the supplied 2024 amendment changes the relevant sentence.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

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Worked teaching example

A fictional source log contains an old rule and a later amendment. The reader compares versions, dates and transition language before choosing the operative text. Newest does not automatically govern every historical event, and an older case is not necessarily still good law. Record any incomplete later-treatment check honestly.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Currentness and later treatment: From this record, quote or accurately paraphrase two legally significant details. Label each as a supplied/stipulated fact, an allegation or a missing fact as appropriate; explain why the distinction matters.
Record: A fictional memo relies on a 2015 rule, but the supplied 2024 amendment changes the relevant sentence.

intro-law-l144-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Currentness and later treatment in your own words. Identify one limit that prevents treating it as a universal rule. Use the principle printed above, not an unsupported internet summary.

intro-law-l144-q02

3. Apply the original record: A fictional memo relies on a 2015 rule, but the supplied 2024 amendment changes the relevant sentence.
Question: What must the writer compare before using the older rule? Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l144-q03

4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: The event occurred before the amendment’s effective date.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l144-q04

5. Source card exercise: For Currentness and later treatment, use the complete supplied offline card below. Record its jurisdiction/type and exact URL. Explain what it can contribute, and one reason it cannot by itself guarantee a real person’s outcome. No browsing or separate registry lookup is required.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l144-q05

6. Neutral explanation: In 80–120 words, or a 60–90 second private explanation with an equivalent script/in-person option, answer the original Currentness and later treatment issue for a new reader. Include the governing distinction, two supplied details, and the most important uncertainty or limit. Do not add an accusation or recommend real action.

intro-law-l144-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Currentness and later treatment:
A fictional memo relies on a 2015 rule, but the supplied 2024 amendment changes the relevant sentence.

Read this principle: A source may be amended, reversed, limited or superseded. Check dates, history and later treatment; finding a case is not the final research step. A beginner can record that a currentness check is incomplete rather than imply access to every legal research tool.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Currentness and later treatment:
Original: A fictional memo relies on a 2015 rule, but the supplied 2024 amendment changes the relevant sentence.
Changed fact: The event occurred before the amendment’s effective date.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains.
Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
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Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/case-law-research/important-research-tips
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Check proper jurisdiction and later treatment. Free research alone is not a full citator guarantee.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas Attorney General: Public Information Act Overview
Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/overview-public-information-act
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency explanation
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Access to government records with confidentiality/other exceptions; not everything held by government is releasable.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.

145. Public information has access rules and exceptions

intro-law-l145 | suggested week 29 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply public information has access rules and exceptions to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion's holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

Today's focus — Public information has access rules and exceptions
Texas public-information law concerns access to government records under legal procedures, with exceptions and confidentiality rules. Public agency possession does not mean every record is freely disclosable. A class can study categories without making requests or seeking anyone's identifying records.

Reasoning practice: Write the legal condition on one line and the supplied fact on the next. Explain the link instead of merely copying both. A different result requires a changed fact, rule or justified interpretation—not a stronger opinion.

Assignment record: A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be released on demand.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

Safety: Legal education only, not individualized legal advice. All disputes and records are fictional classroom simulations. Do not file, pay, contact police/courts/parties, visit a courthouse, investigate a real person, or disclose private family/case information. Use supplied facts; personal disclosure is never required. Written or private in-person alternatives replace every recording activity.

Worked teaching example

An agency publishes an organizational chart. A student can analyze that already public document without requesting private personnel files. Government possession of other records does not make them all disclosable. Access law includes procedures and confidentiality exceptions; the course requires no actual request or agency contact.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Public information has access rules and exceptions: From this record, quote or accurately paraphrase two legally significant details. Label each as a supplied/stipulated fact, an allegation or a missing fact as appropriate; explain why the distinction matters.
Record: A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be released on demand.

intro-law-l145-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Public information has access rules and exceptions in your own words. Identify one limit that prevents treating it as a universal rule. Use the principle printed above, not an unsupported internet summary.

intro-law-l145-q02

3. Apply the original record: A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be released on demand.
Question: What distinction is missing? Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l145-q03

4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: The task uses an already published agency organizational chart.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l145-q04

5. Source card exercise: For Public information has access rules and exceptions, use the complete supplied offline card below. Record its jurisdiction/type and exact URL. Explain what it can contribute, and one reason it cannot by itself guarantee a real person’s outcome. No browsing or separate registry lookup is required.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l145-q05

6. Neutral explanation: In 80–120 words, or a 60–90 second private explanation with an equivalent script/in-person option, answer the original Public information has access rules and exceptions issue for a new reader. Include the governing distinction, two supplied details, and the most important uncertainty or limit. Do not add an accusation or recommend real action.

intro-law-l145-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Public information has access rules and exceptions:
A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be

released on demand.
Read this principle: Texas public-information law concerns access to government records under legal procedures, with exceptions and confidentiality rules. Public agency possession does not mean every record is freely disclosable. A class can study categories without making requests or seeking anyone’s identifying records.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Public information has access rules and exceptions:
Original: A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be released on demand.
Changed fact: The task uses an already published agency organizational chart.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains. Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
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Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Important Case Research Tips
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/case-law-research/important-research-tips
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Check proper jurisdiction and later treatment. Free research alone is not a full citator guarantee.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

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Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/overview-public-information-act
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency explanation
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Access to government records with confidentiality/other exceptions; not everything held by government is releasable.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.

146. Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought

intro-law-l146 | suggested week 30 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply neutral policy analysis separates is from ought to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion’s holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

Today’s focus — Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought
Describe current law accurately before proposing change. A policy argument can compare consequences, rights, administrability and alternatives without misrepresenting opposing views or demanding partisan agreement. Distinguish evidence-based predictions from values and uncertainties.

Reasoning practice: Write the legal condition on one line and the supplied fact on the next. Explain the link instead of merely copying both. A different result requires a changed fact, rule or justified interpretation—not a stronger opinion.

Assignment record: A fictional council debate asks whether a public study room should require reservations. One memo calls its preferred policy existing law despite no enacted rule.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

Safety: Legal education only, not individualized legal advice. All disputes and records are fictional classroom simulations. Do not file, pay, contact police/courts/parties, visit a courthouse, investigate a real person, or disclose private family/case information. Use supplied facts; personal disclosure is never required. Written or private in-person alternatives replace every recording activity.

Worked teaching example

A fictional memo says a reservation policy might reduce waits. That is a policy prediction needing reasons, not a statement that the policy is already enacted. A balanced analysis also considers access, costs and alternatives. Describing existing law accurately does not require supporting it or opposing it politically.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought: From this record, quote or accurately paraphrase two legally significant details. Label each as a supplied/stipulated fact, an allegation or a missing fact as appropriate; explain why the distinction matters.
Record: A fictional council debate asks whether a public study room should require reservations. One memo calls its preferred policy existing law despite no enacted rule.

intro-law-l146-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought in your own words. Identify one limit that prevents treating it as a universal rule. Use the principle printed above, not an unsupported internet summary.

intro-law-l146-q02

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3. Apply the original record: A fictional council debate asks whether a public study room should require reservations. One memo calls its preferred policy existing law despite no enacted rule.
Question: Correct the descriptive and normative categories. Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l146-q03

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4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: A lawful reservation rule is later supplied as adopted and effective.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l146-q04

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5. Source card exercise: For Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought, use the complete supplied offline card below. Record its jurisdiction/type and exact URL. Explain what it can contribute, and one reason it cannot by itself guarantee a real person’s outcome. No browsing or separate registry lookup is required.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l146-q05

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6. Neutral explanation: In 80–120 words, or a 60–90 second private explanation with an equivalent script/in-person option, answer the original Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought issue for a new reader. Include the governing distinction, two supplied details, and the most important uncertainty or limit. Do not add an accusation or recommend real action.

intro-law-l146-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought:
A fictional council debate asks whether a public study room should require reservations. One memo calls its

preferred policy existing law despite no enacted rule.
Read this principle: Describe current law accurately before proposing change. A policy argument can compare consequences, rights, administrability and alternatives without misrepresenting opposing views or demanding partisan agreement. Distinguish evidence-based predictions from values and uncertainties.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought:
Original: A fictional council debate asks whether a public study room should require reservations. One memo calls its preferred policy existing law despite no enacted rule.
Changed fact: A lawful reservation rule is later supplied as adopted and effective.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains.
Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Important Case Research Tips
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/case-law-research/important-research-tips
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Check proper jurisdiction and later treatment. Free research alone is not a full citator guarantee.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas Attorney General: Public Information Act Overview
Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/overview-public-information-act
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency explanation
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Access to government records with confidentiality/other exceptions; not everything held by government is releasable.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.

147. Project 15: Research, case reading and civic information

intro-law-l147 | suggested week 30 | about 65 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Create a complete, privacy-safe research, case reading and civic information project using six specified deliverables.

Instruction

Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion’s holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

Project brief: Build a fictional civic-research binder with a question plan, a source hierarchy card, a mock-opinion brief, a version comparison and a balanced reservation-policy memo. Identify unknowns and cite exact source URLs; do not file an information request or contact officials.

Build an educational artifact by organizing facts before recommending anything. A chart should label its columns; a map should explain its symbols; a memo should separate issue, rule, application and conclusion. If a fact is absent, write unknown rather than fill it in. A polished appearance never substitutes for accurate reasoning.

Complete fictional fact bank:
Case 1 — Plan the question before searching
Principle: A useful research question states the legal issue, jurisdiction, time and relevant facts. Broad questions invite irrelevant or outdated answers. Research can reveal that more facts are needed; it does not guarantee a single clear answer.
Original record: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
Changed record: The task instead concerns a federal evidence rule in a federal mock proceeding.

Case 2 — Bills, statutes and effective dates
Principle: A proposed bill is not automatically law. Enactment and effective date are distinct questions, and amendments can change operative language. An official source’s status labels and dates must be read before treating a provision as currently applicable.
Original record: Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.
Changed record: The event occurs after B’s stated effective date and no transition issue is supplied.

Case 3 — Read a simulated holding in context
Principle: A holding is the court’s resolution of an issue necessary to its decision; broader commentary may have a different role. Facts, procedural posture and jurisdiction constrain what a decision supports. A mock opinion teaches structure but is not real authority and receives no fake citation.
Original record: SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.
Changed record: The issue in a new simulation is whether a specific electronic signature satisfies an expressly supplied rule.

Case 4 — Currentness and later treatment

Principle: A source may be amended, reversed, limited or superseded. Check dates, history and later treatment; finding a case is not the final research step. A beginner can record that a currentness check is incomplete rather than imply access to every legal research tool.
Original record: A fictional memo relies on a 2015 rule, but the supplied 2024 amendment changes the relevant sentence.
Changed record: The event occurred before the amendment’s effective date.

Case 5 — Public information has access rules and exceptions
Principle: Texas public-information law concerns access to government records under legal procedures, with exceptions and confidentiality rules. Public agency possession does not mean every record is freely disclosable. A class can study categories without making requests or seeking anyone’s identifying records.
Original record: A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be released on demand.
Changed record: The task uses an already published agency organizational chart.

Case 6 — Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought
Principle: Describe current law accurately before proposing change. A policy argument can compare consequences, rights, administrability and alternatives without misrepresenting opposing views or demanding partisan agreement. Distinguish evidence-based predictions from values and uncertainties.
Original record: A fictional council debate asks whether a public study room should require reservations. One memo calls its preferred policy existing law despite no enacted rule.
Changed record: A lawful reservation rule is later supplied as adopted and effective.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

Safety: Legal education only, not individualized legal advice. All disputes and records are fictional classroom simulations. Do not file, pay, contact police/courts/parties, visit a courthouse, investigate a real person, or disclose private family/case information. Use supplied facts; personal disclosure is never required. Written or private in-person alternatives replace every recording activity.

Worked teaching example

A research plan asks which supplied federal court structure applies to a stated federal claim at the trial stage. Issue, jurisdiction and procedural stage narrow the search. The plan is more useful than asking whether everything is legal. It still must identify the actual source and any missing jurisdictional requirements.

Numbered assignment

1. Write a bounded question naming issue, jurisdiction and event date.

intro-law-l147-q01

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2. Sort the proposed and future-effective source cards.

intro-law-l147-q02

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3. Brief the mock written-consent opinion and label it SIMULATED.

intro-law-l147-q03

4. Compare 2015 and 2024 versions with the event date.

intro-law-l147-q04

5. Distinguish public organizational chart from confidential child records.

intro-law-l147-q05

6. Write a balanced reservation-policy memo separating current rule and proposal.

intro-law-l147-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Project 15: Research, case reading and civic information:
A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
Read this principle: A useful research question states the legal issue, jurisdiction, time and relevant facts. Broad questions invite irrelevant or outdated answers. Research can reveal that more facts are needed; it does not guarantee a single clear answer.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Project 15: Research, case reading and civic information:
Original: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
Changed fact: The task instead concerns a federal evidence rule in a federal mock proceeding.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains. Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Important Case Research Tips
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Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
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Reading purpose and limits: Check proper jurisdiction and later treatment. Free research alone is not a full citator guarantee.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

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Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
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Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
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Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.

148. Spiral lab 15: facts,rules and changed conditions

intro-law-l148 | suggested week 30 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Retrieve and compare six supplied scenarios from current and earlier units.

Instruction

Spaced practice 15 connects current concepts with earlier reasoning. Try recalling the distinction before rereading the printed principle; then revise using it. Retrieval is practice, not a memory contest. Explain why the changed fact matters rather than only changing the answer.

Current unit context: Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion’s holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

For each task, the complete principle, original record and changed fact appear in the question. No earlier assignment or outside website is needed.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

Safety: Legal education only, not individualized legal advice. All disputes and records are fictional classroom simulations. Do not file, pay, contact police/courts/parties, visit a courthouse, investigate a real person, or disclose private family/case information. Use supplied facts; personal disclosure is never required. Written or private in-person alternatives replace every recording activity.

Worked teaching example

SIMULATED OPINION: under a model requiring a numbered permit, the court denies an application lacking that number. A comment praising future digital forms does not decide their legal validity. The narrow resolution concerns the missing model condition. This fictional teaching opinion has no reporter citation or authority over actual disputes.

Numbered assignment

1. Retrieval connection from unit 15, Plan the question before searching:
Principle: A useful research question states the legal issue, jurisdiction, time and relevant facts. Broad questions invite irrelevant or outdated answers. Research can reveal that more facts are needed; it does not guarantee a single clear answer.
Record: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
Change: The task instead concerns a federal evidence rule in a federal mock proceeding.
Without inventing facts, name the central distinction, and explain one before/after difference. Then explain why an unsupported universal conclusion would be unsafe.

intro-law-l148-q01

2. Retrieval connection from unit 15, Currentness and later treatment:
Principle: A source may be amended, reversed, limited or superseded. Check dates, history and later treatment; finding a case is not the final research step. A beginner can record that a currentness check is incomplete rather than imply access to every legal research tool.
Record: A fictional memo relies on a 2015 rule, but the supplied 2024 amendment changes the relevant sentence.
Change: The event occurred before the amendment’s effective date.
Without inventing facts, name the central distinction, and explain one before/after difference. Then explain why an unsupported universal conclusion would be unsafe.

intro-law-l148-q02

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3. Retrieval connection from unit 14, Data minimization protects learning:
Principle: Collect only information necessary for a legitimate educational task. Birth dates, addresses, account identifiers and private experiences are rarely needed to analyze a fictional legal problem. De-identification can fail if details still identify a person; use genuinely invented records instead.
Record: A mock legal-research sheet asks for a learner’s home address and a family case number even though the task is to classify source types.
Change: The sheet uses Fictional Record A and no identifying facts.
Without inventing facts, name the central distinction, and explain one before/after difference. Then explain why an unsupported universal conclusion would be unsafe.

intro-law-l148-q03

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4. Retrieval connection from unit 14, Fair use requires four-factor reasoning:
Principle: The federal fair-use analysis considers purpose and character, nature of the copyrighted work, amount and substantiality, and effect on the potential market. No fixed word count, percentage or educational label guarantees the outcome. Courts evaluate the facts, and reasonable uncertainty should be stated.
Record: A learner proposes copying an entire current commercial workbook for distribution because the class is educational.
Change: The learner instead quotes a short necessary passage for specific criticism with attribution and no market substitution supplied.
Without inventing facts, name the central distinction, and explain one before/after difference. Then explain why an unsupported universal conclusion would be unsafe.

intro-law-l148-q04

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5. Retrieval connection from unit 12, Pay records and transparent calculations:
Principle: A pay stub can record hours, rate and deductions, but actual wage rights require applicable law, coverage and facts. Calculate a supplied model accurately without declaring a real wage violation or assuming every deduction is lawful or unlawful.
Record: Model payroll: five hours at 12 per hour, no deductions or overtime issues. The fictional record shows gross pay 50.
Change: A correction records 60 gross and separately identifies a stipulated lawful 5 deduction.
Without inventing facts, name the central distinction, and explain one before/after difference. Then explain why an unsupported universal conclusion would be unsafe.

intro-law-l148-q05

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6. Retrieval connection from unit 1, Primary and secondary authority:
Principle: Primary sources contain law made by authorized institutions. Secondary sources explain or analyze law and can help locate primary material. A summary’s confidence or popularity does not make it binding, and an introduced bill is not necessarily enacted law.
Record: A blog summarizes a proposed bicycle bill as if it were already a Texas statute. The bill page says introduced.
Change: The blog links to an enacted version with a future effective date.
Without inventing facts, name the central distinction, and explain one before/after difference. Then explain why an unsupported universal conclusion would be unsafe.

intro-law-l148-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Spiral lab 15: facts,rules and changed conditions:
SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.
Read this principle: A holding is the court’s resolution of an issue necessary to its decision; broader commentary may have a different role. Facts, procedural posture and jurisdiction constrain what a decision supports. A mock opinion teaches structure but is not real authority and receives no fake citation.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Spiral lab 15: facts,rules and changed conditions:
Original: SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.
Changed fact: The issue in a new simulation is whether a specific electronic signature satisfies an expressly supplied rule.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains.
Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Important Case Research Tips
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/case-law-research/important-research-tips
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Check proper jurisdiction and later treatment. Free research alone is not a full citator guarantee.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas Attorney General: Public Information Act Overview
Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/overview-public-information-act
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency explanation

Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Access to government records with confidentiality/other exceptions; not everything held by government is releasable.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson's original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson's original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: US Copyright Office: What is Copyright?
Exact URL: https://www.copyright.gov/what-is-copyright/
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal official agency explanation
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Original expression, fixed works, exclusive rights and limitations; ideas are not protected as expression.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson's original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: US Copyright Office: Fair Use Index
Exact URL: https://www.copyright.gov/fair-use/
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal official agency explanation
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Four-factor, case-specific analysis; no guaranteed word/page/percentage safe harbor. Index updatedNovember 2026.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson's original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas Attorney General: Consumer Protection
Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/consumer-protection
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Education, complaints and public-interest civil enforcement; agency information is not private representation.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson's original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas Workforce Commission: Texas Child Labor Law
Exact URL: https://www.twc.texas.gov/programs/wage-and-hour/texas-child-labor-law
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency overview plus federal-law comparisons
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Age, duties, hours, coverage and exceptions matter; when applicable federal and state requirements differ, comply with both.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson's original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: EEOC Youth: What is Employment Discrimination?
Exact URL: https://www.eeoc.gov/youth/what-employment-discrimination
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal official agency guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Protected grounds, harassment, accommodations and retaliation; statutory coverage must be checked.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson's original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: BLS Occupational Outlook Handbook: Legal Occupations
Exact URL: https://www.bls.gov/ooh/legal/home.htm
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal official occupational overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Roles include lawyers, judges, paralegals, mediators, court reporters. Wage/projection numbers are

not required; last modifiedAugust 27,2026.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.

149. Unit 15 review: Research, case reading and civic information

intro-law-l149 | suggested week 30 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Revise six overconfident conclusions using accurate rules, facts and limits.

Instruction

Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion’s holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

Review method: A conclusion is only as strong as its rule and factual support. At each station, identify the editor’s overclaim, replace it with a supported statement, and explain the limit. Revisit any station that mixes an allegation with a finding or a model with actual law. Use source cards to check scope, not to collect personal information. The station records are fully printed below.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

Safety: Legal education only, not individualized legal advice. All disputes and records are fictional classroom simulations. Do not file, pay, contact police/courts/parties, visit a courthouse, investigate a real person, or disclose private family/case information. Use supplied facts; personal disclosure is never required. Written or private in-person alternatives replace every recording activity.

Worked teaching example

An agency publishes an organizational chart. A student can analyze that already public document without requesting private personnel files. Government possession of other records does not make them all disclosable. Access law includes procedures and confidentiality exceptions; the course requires no actual request or agency contact.

Numbered assignment

1. Review station 1 — Plan the question before searching
Principle: A useful research question states the legal issue, jurisdiction, time and relevant facts. Broad questions invite irrelevant or outdated answers. Research can reveal that more facts are needed; it does not guarantee a single clear answer.
Record: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer Rewrite it as a bounded classroom research question. (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l149-q01

2. Review station 2 — Bills, statutes and effective dates
Principle: A proposed bill is not automatically law. Enactment and effective date are distinct questions, and amendments can change operative language. An official source’s status labels and dates must be read before treating a provision as currently applicable.
Record: Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer Why can neither card automatically establish a current operative rule for that event? (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l149-q02

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3. Review station 3 — Read a simulated holding in context
Principle: A holding is the court’s resolution of an issue necessary to its decision; broader commentary may have a different role. Facts, procedural posture and jurisdiction constrain what a decision supports. A mock opinion teaches structure but is not real authority and receives no fake citation.
Record: SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer Identify the narrow decision and the separate comment. (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l149-q03

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4. Review station 4 — Currentness and later treatment
Principle: A source may be amended, reversed, limited or superseded. Check dates, history and later treatment; finding a case is not the final research step. A beginner can record that a currentness check is incomplete rather than imply access to every legal research tool.
Record: A fictional memo relies on a 2015 rule, but the supplied 2024 amendment changes the relevant sentence.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer What must the writer compare before using the older rule? (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l149-q04

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5. Review station 5 — Public information has access rules and exceptions
Principle: Texas public-information law concerns access to government records under legal procedures, with exceptions and confidentiality rules. Public agency possession does not mean every record is freely disclosable. A class can study categories without making requests or seeking anyone’s identifying records.
Record: A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be released on demand.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer What distinction is missing? (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l149-q05

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6. Review station 6 — Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought
Principle: Describe current law accurately before proposing change. A policy argument can compare

consequences, rights, administrability and alternatives without misrepresenting opposing views or demanding partisan agreement. Distinguish evidence-based predictions from values and uncertainties.
Record: A fictional council debate asks whether a public study room should require reservations. One memo calls its preferred policy existing law despite no enacted rule.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer Correct the descriptive and normative categories. (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l149-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Unit 15 review: Research, case reading and civic information:
A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be released on demand.
Read this principle: Texas public-information law concerns access to government records under legal procedures, with exceptions and confidentiality rules. Public agency possession does not mean every record is freely disclosable. A class can study categories without making requests or seeking anyone’s identifying records.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Unit 15 review: Research, case reading and civic information:
Original: A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be released on demand.
Changed fact: The task uses an already published agency organizational chart.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains.
Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Important Case Research Tips
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/case-law-research/important-research-tips
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Check proper jurisdiction and later treatment. Free research alone is not a full citator guarantee.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas Attorney General: Public Information Act Overview
Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/overview-public-information-act
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency explanation
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Access to government records with confidentiality/other exceptions; not everything held by

government is releasable.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.

150. Unit 15 assessment: Research, case reading and civic information

intro-law-l150 | suggested week 30 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Integrate unit rules, facts, source limits and fair counterarguments.

Instruction

Legal research is a structured inquiry: identify the question, jurisdiction and time; locate primary authority; read its relevant language; check later developments; then explain uncertainty. A statute, a bill, a regulation, a judicial opinion and a commentary have different roles. A real opinion’s holding depends on the issue, facts and procedural setting, not a sentence lifted out of context. This unit uses explicitly simulated opinions with no invented reporter citations. Public-information access has exceptions and procedures; learning about it never requires submitting a request or contacting an agency.

Assessment directions: This is an open-resource application assessment. The principles and fictional records are supplied in the questions so that access to a website or earlier paperwork is unnecessary. Work independently at first if appropriate; then a parent may discuss reasoning and invite a correction. Label any assistance. Use IRAC where requested, show units in calculations, and distinguish a supplied rule from an actual legal claim. There is no assigned pass threshold or fixed deadline. The parent may split a longer assessment across sessions.

Reasoning example below is separate from the assessment records; use its method, not an unsupported outcome.

Method: First identify the actor and issue. Read the supplied principle as a limited model or overview, not a universal rule. Mark agreed facts, allegations and unknowns. Link a fact to each relevant condition. Consider a different interpretation and state a conditional conclusion when authority or facts are incomplete. Your reasons matter more than choosing a side. Use only the fictional record; no real case, private document or external contact is needed.

Safety: Legal education only, not individualized legal advice. All disputes and records are fictional classroom simulations. Do not file, pay, contact police/courts/parties, visit a courthouse, investigate a real person, or disclose private family/case information. Use supplied facts; personal disclosure is never required. Written or private in-person alternatives replace every recording activity.

Worked teaching example

An enacted fictional rule takes effect in March, but the event occurred in January. Enactment alone does not establish that the March rule governed January. Compare operative dates and any transition/retroactivity provisions. A current publication date is not automatically the event’s applicable-law date.

Numbered assignment

1. Assessment record — unit 15, Plan the question before searching
Supplied principle: A useful research question states the legal issue, jurisdiction, time and relevant facts. Broad questions invite irrelevant or outdated answers. Research can reveal that more facts are needed; it does not guarantee a single clear answer.
Original facts: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
Assessment change: The task instead concerns a federal evidence rule in a federal mock proceeding.
Analyze the changed record in four labeled parts: issue, relevant rule, application and a qualified conclusion. Identify the original inference that must be revised or explain why the same limit remains. No real legal outcome is requested.

intro-law-l150-q01

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2. Assessment record — unit 15, Bills, statutes and effective dates
Supplied principle: A proposed bill is not automatically law. Enactment and effective date are distinct questions, and amendments can change operative language. An official source’s status labels and dates must be read before treating a provision as currently applicable.
Original facts: Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.
Assessment change: The event occurs after B’s stated effective date and no transition issue is supplied.
Analyze the changed record in four labeled parts: issue, relevant rule, application and a qualified conclusion. Identify the original inference that must be revised or explain why the same limit remains. No real legal outcome is requested.

intro-law-l150-q02

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3. Assessment record — unit 15, Read a simulated holding in context
Supplied principle: A holding is the court’s resolution of an issue necessary to its decision; broader commentary may have a different role. Facts, procedural posture and jurisdiction constrain what a decision supports. A mock opinion teaches structure but is not real authority and receives no fake citation.
Original facts: SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.
Assessment change: The issue in a new simulation is whether a specific electronic signature satisfies an expressly supplied rule.
Analyze the changed record in four labeled parts: issue, relevant rule, application and a qualified conclusion. Identify the original inference that must be revised or explain why the same limit remains. No real legal outcome is requested.

intro-law-l150-q03

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4. Assessment record — unit 15, Currentness and later treatment
Supplied principle: A source may be amended, reversed, limited or superseded. Check dates, history and later treatment; finding a case is not the final research step. A beginner can record that a currentness check is incomplete rather than imply access to every legal research tool.
Original facts: A fictional memo relies on a 2015 rule, but the supplied 2024 amendment changes the relevant sentence.
Assessment change: The event occurred before the amendment’s effective date.
Analyze the changed record in four labeled parts: issue, relevant rule, application and a qualified conclusion. Identify the original inference that must be revised or explain why the same limit remains. No real legal outcome is requested.

intro-law-l150-q04

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5. Assessment record — unit 15, Public information has access rules and exceptions
Supplied principle: Texas public-information law concerns access to government records under legal procedures, with exceptions and confidentiality rules. Public agency possession does not mean every record is freely disclosable. A class can study categories without making requests or seeking anyone’s identifying records.
Original facts: A fictional student claims that every government-held file, including confidential child information, must be released on demand.

Assessment change: The task uses an already published agency organizational chart.
Analyze the changed record in four labeled parts: issue, relevant rule, application and a qualified conclusion. Identify the original inference that must be revised or explain why the same limit remains. No real legal outcome is requested.

intro-law-l150-q05

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6. Assessment record — unit 15, Neutral policy analysis separates is from ought
Supplied principle: Describe current law accurately before proposing change. A policy argument can compare consequences, rights, administrability and alternatives without misrepresenting opposing views or demanding partisan agreement. Distinguish evidence-based predictions from values and uncertainties.
Original facts: A fictional council debate asks whether a public study room should require reservations. One memo calls its preferred policy existing law despite no enacted rule.
Assessment change: A lawful reservation rule is later supplied as adopted and effective.
Analyze the changed record in four labeled parts: issue, relevant rule, application and a qualified conclusion. Identify the original inference that must be revised or explain why the same limit remains. No real legal outcome is requested.

intro-law-l150-q06

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7. Comparison task: Use these two records.
A: A fictional student searches Is this legal? without identifying the act, the state or date.
A principle: A useful research question states the legal issue, jurisdiction, time and relevant facts. Broad questions invite irrelevant or outdated answers. Research can reveal that more facts are needed; it does not guarantee a single clear answer.
B: A fictional council debate asks whether a public study room should require reservations. One memo calls its preferred policy existing law despite no enacted rule.
B principle: Describe current law accurately before proposing change. A policy argument can compare consequences, rights, administrability and alternatives without misrepresenting opposing views or demanding partisan agreement. Distinguish evidence-based predictions from values and uncertainties.
Name one distinct issue in each and explain why the rule for A cannot simply replace the rule for B.

intro-law-l150-q07

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8. Research-limits task: For the changed record in Read a simulated holding in context, identify the relevant jurisdiction/source type from the printed cards and two checks needed before any actual-case conclusion.
Record: SIMULATED OPINION: Under the supplied rule requiring written consent, the court denies this license because the record has no writing. It adds that electronic signatures might be useful someday.
Change: The issue in a new simulation is whether a specific electronic signature satisfies an expressly supplied rule.

intro-law-l150-q08

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Unit 15 assessment: Research, case reading and civic information:
Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.
Read this principle: A proposed bill is not automatically law. Enactment and effective date are distinct

questions, and amendments can change operative language. An official source’s status labels and dates must be read before treating a provision as currently applicable.
Make two boxes:one supplied fact and one legal condition. Draw an arrow explaining their connection. State one thing the record does not establish.

Optional extension

Optional transfer challenge for Unit 15 assessment: Research, case reading and civic information:
Original: Source Card A says proposed; Card B says enacted but effective next January. The fictional event occurred last October.
Changed fact: The event occurs after B’s stated effective date and no transition issue is supplied.
Write a two-column before/after analysis. Identify exactly what changed and what legal question remains.
Suggest one fictional additional record that could clarify a genuinely missing fact,or explain why no additional fact is needed under a stipulated model. Do not create a real record,contact anyone or invent authority.

Supplemental sources (not required)

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Legal Research for Beginners
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/legal-research-for-beginners
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Distinguishes primary law from explanatory secondary sources. Free public guide; account-only databases/books not required.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas State Law Library: Important Case Research Tips
Exact URL: https://guides.sll.texas.gov/case-law-research/important-research-tips
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official public-library guidance
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Check proper jurisdiction and later treatment. Free research alone is not a full citator guarantee.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
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Exact URL: https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/members-public/overview-public-information-act
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official agency explanation
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Access to government records with confidentiality/other exceptions; not everything held by government is releasable.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Supplied offline source card
Title: National Archives: Constitution transcript
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary historical text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Read with subsequent amendments, not as an unchanged 1787 statement.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

Submit typed numbered responses; or handwritten photo; or a printed page scanned as image/PDF; or a parent-paper completion log with the actual paper retained. Optional private audio/video may replace written explanation if each numbered task is identified. Each image/PDF/audio/video file must be at most 4 MiB and pass the app’s type/signature checks; use short clips or an equally detailed written script instead of a large file. An HTTPS reference may be stored as text only: it is not opened or evaluated automatically. Do not submit ZIP/code files or private records.