Intro to Law — Unit 4

Federal and Texas courts

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.

31. Trial courts develop a factual record

intro-law-l031 | suggested week 7 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply trial courts develop a factual record to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party’s preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

Today’s focus — Trial courts develop a factual record
Trial proceedings establish evidence and apply governing law. A judge determines legal questions and manages proceedings; a jury may determine disputed facts when a jury trial applies. Not every case uses a jury.

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 civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.

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

Two fictional witnesses disagree about when a parcel arrived. At a proper trial, the fact finder evaluates admissible evidence under applicable rules. That is different from asking an appeal court to privately interview new witnesses. A bench trial can assign fact finding to the judge without automatically creating an

error.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Trial courts develop a factual record: 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 civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.

intro-law-l031-q01

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2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Trial courts develop a factual record 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-l031-q02

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3. Apply the original record: A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial. Question: Which level ordinarily develops the evidence first? Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l031-q03

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4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: The parties lawfully use a bench trial.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l031-q04

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5. Source card exercise: For Trial courts develop a factual record, 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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l031-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 Trial courts develop a factual record 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.

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Trial courts develop a factual record:
A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.
Read this principle: Trial proceedings establish evidence and apply governing law. A judge determines legal questions and manages proceedings; a jury may determine disputed facts when a jury trial applies. Not every case uses a jury.
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 Trial courts develop a factual record:
Original: A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.
Changed fact: The parties lawfully use a bench trial.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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 Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit 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: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
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 Courts: Civil Cases

Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas procedural manual.
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.

32. Appeals review decisions and records

intro-law-l032 | suggested week 7 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply appeals review decisions and records to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party’s preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

Today’s focus — Appeals review decisions and records
An appeal ordinarily identifies claimed error using the record and applicable review standard. It is not simply a second chance to present everything omitted at trial. Appellate procedures and preservation requirements differ across systems.

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: After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.

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 party identifies a trial ruling and the preserved objection in the record. That supplies a possible appellate issue, not a promised reversal. The reviewer must identify the rule, standard of review and legal effect of any error. Disappointment alone would not substitute for those steps.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Appeals review decisions and records: 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: After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.

intro-law-l032-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Appeals review decisions and records 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-l032-q02

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3. Apply the original record: After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.
Question: What does a reasoned appellate argument need beyond disappointment? Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l032-q03

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4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: The party identifies a preserved objection and the exact ruling in the record.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l032-q04

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5. Source card exercise: For Appeals review decisions and records, 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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l032-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 Appeals review decisions and records 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-l032-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Appeals review decisions and records:
After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.

Read this principle: An appeal ordinarily identifies claimed error using the record and applicable review standard. It is not simply a second chance to present everything omitted at trial. Appellate procedures and preservation requirements differ across systems.
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 Appeals review decisions and records:
Original: After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.
Changed fact: The party identifies a preserved objection and the exact ruling in the record.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
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Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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Supplied offline source card
Title: Texas Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit 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: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
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 Courts: Civil Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
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Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas procedural manual.
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.

33. Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction

intro-law-l033 | suggested week 7 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party's preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

Today's focus — Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction
Federal courts have limited subject-matter jurisdiction. Federal questions and qualifying diversity cases are examples, not a rule that every important dispute belongs in federal court. State courts handle many ordinary disputes, including issues of state law.

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: Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.

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 local disagreement is described as very important but supplies no federal claim or other jurisdictional basis. Importance is not itself a source of federal judicial power. The proper next analytical step is to identify a recognized jurisdictional basis, not simply choose a federal building or assume state courts lack authority.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction: 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: Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.

intro-law-l033-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction 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-l033-q02

3. Apply the original record: Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.
Question: Does importance alone establish federal jurisdiction? Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l033-q03

4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: A genuine federal statutory claim is added.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l033-q04

5. Source card exercise: For Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction, 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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l033-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 Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction 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-l033-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction:
Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.
Read this principle: Federal courts have limited subject-matter jurisdiction. Federal questions and qualifying diversity cases are examples, not a rule that every important dispute belongs in federal court. State courts handle many ordinary disputes, including issues of state law.
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 Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction:
Original: Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.
Changed fact: A genuine federal statutory claim is added.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
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Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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 Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
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Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit required.
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Supplied offline source card
Title: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
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 Courts: Civil Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas

procedural manual.
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.

34. Texas’s two high courts

intro-law-l034 | suggested week 7 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply texas’s two high courts to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party’s preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

Today’s focus — Texas’s two high courts
Texas does not use one high court for all ordinary civil and adult criminal appeals. The Supreme Court handles civil matters; the Court of Criminal Appeals handles criminal appellate responsibilities. Intermediate courts and special jurisdictional rules must also be considered.

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 classroom chart sends every adult criminal appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas because it says Supreme.

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 Texas chart labels the Supreme Court of Texas as the civil court of last resort and the Court of Criminal Appeals as the adult criminal counterpart. That distinction is correct at this introductory level. It does not mean every case proceeds directly there or that juvenile routing needs no separate research.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Texas’s two high courts: 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 classroom chart sends every adult criminal appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas because it says Supreme.

intro-law-l034-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Texas’s two high courts 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-l034-q02

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3. Apply the original record: A classroom chart sends every adult criminal appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas because it says Supreme.
Question: Correct the structural misconception. Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l034-q03

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4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: The dispute is an ordinary civil contract appeal.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l034-q04

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5. Source card exercise: For Texas’s two high courts, 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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l034-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 Texas’s two high courts 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-l034-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Texas’s two high courts:
A classroom chart sends every adult criminal appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas because it says Supreme.
Read this principle: Texas does not use one high court for all ordinary civil and adult criminal appeals. The

Supreme Court handles civil matters; the Court of Criminal Appeals handles criminal appellate responsibilities. Intermediate courts and special jurisdictional rules must also be considered.
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 Texas’s two high courts:
Original: A classroom chart sends every adult criminal appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas because it says Supreme.
Changed fact: The dispute is an ordinary civil contract appeal.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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 Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit 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: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
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 Courts: Civil Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas procedural manual.
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.

35. Jurisdiction, venue and practical location

intro-law-l035 | suggested week 7 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply jurisdiction, venue and practical location to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party's preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

Today's focus — Jurisdiction, venue and practical location
Jurisdiction concerns a court's legal power. Venue concerns the proper location within an authorized system. Convenience can matter practically but does not create legal power or override governing venue rules. Separate the concepts before researching details.

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 party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.

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

Two specialized courts share a courthouse address. The shared location does not give them identical power. Jurisdiction asks whether the court may hear the dispute; venue asks the proper location within the authorized system. A convenient address therefore cannot by itself establish either legal requirement.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Jurisdiction, venue and practical location: 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 party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.

intro-law-l035-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Jurisdiction, venue and practical location 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-l035-q02

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3. Apply the original record: A party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.
Question: Which two legal questions are being skipped? Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l035-q03

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4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: The correct court type is selected but the wrong county is named.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l035-q04

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5. Source card exercise: For Jurisdiction, venue and practical location, 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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l035-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 Jurisdiction, venue and practical location 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-l035-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Jurisdiction, venue and practical location:
A party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.
Read this principle: Jurisdiction concerns a court’s legal power. Venue concerns the proper location within an authorized system. Convenience can matter practically but does not create legal power or override

governing venue rules. Separate the concepts before researching details.
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 Jurisdiction, venue and practical location:
Original: A party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.
Changed fact: The correct court type is selected but the wrong county is named.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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 Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit 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: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
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 Courts: Civil Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas procedural manual.
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.

36. Juries, neutrality and access

intro-law-l036 | suggested week 8 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Explain and apply juries, neutrality and access to a fictional original and changed record.

Instruction

Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party’s preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

Today’s focus — Juries, neutrality and access
Jury service requires impartial attention to evidence and law, not a promise to favor a party. Judges, interpreters and court staff have different responsibilities. Accessible communication supports participation without changing the burden of proof.

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 juror promises a friend to vote for one party before hearing evidence.

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 juror says I will wait for evidence and instructions before deciding. That respects neutrality more than a promise to favor a friend. An interpreter’s participation can support communication, but it does not prove credibility or shift the applicable burden. Evaluate testimony through the same lawful process.

Numbered assignment

1. Fact discipline — Juries, neutrality and access: 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 juror promises a friend to vote for one party before hearing evidence.

intro-law-l036-q01

2. Principle check: Restate the distinction taught in Juries, neutrality and access 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-l036-q02

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3. Apply the original record: A fictional juror promises a friend to vote for one party before hearing evidence. Question: Why is this inconsistent with impartial adjudication? Give a reasoned answer with a specific fact-to-rule link.

intro-law-l036-q03

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4. Counterfactual: Begin with the original record above, then change only this fact: An interpreter is supplied for a participant.
Explain how the analysis changes and what remains unresolved.

intro-law-l036-q04

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5. Source card exercise: For Juries, neutrality and access, 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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
Outside browsing is supplemental. Use this printed metadata and the lesson’s original principle to complete the exercise offline.

intro-law-l036-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 Juries, neutrality and access 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-l036-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Juries, neutrality and access:
A fictional juror promises a friend to vote for one party before hearing evidence.
Read this principle: Jury service requires impartial attention to evidence and law, not a promise to favor a party. Judges, interpreters and court staff have different responsibilities. Accessible communication supports participation without changing the burden of proof.

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 Juries, neutrality and access:
Original: A fictional juror promises a friend to vote for one party before hearing evidence.
Changed fact: An interpreter is supplied for a participant.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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 Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit 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: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
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 Courts: Civil Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas procedural manual.
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.

37. Project 4: Federal and Texas courts

intro-law-l037 | suggested week 8 | about 65 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

Create a complete, privacy-safe federal and texas courts project using six specified deliverables.

Instruction

Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party’s preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

Project brief: Design a fictional court-information kiosk: distinguish trial/appeal, federal/state, Texas civil/criminal high courts and jurisdiction/venue. Include an accessible diagram and a correction of one misleading courthouse headline.

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 — Trial courts develop a factual record
Principle: Trial proceedings establish evidence and apply governing law. A judge determines legal questions and manages proceedings; a jury may determine disputed facts when a jury trial applies. Not every case uses a jury.
Original record: A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.
Changed record: The parties lawfully use a bench trial.

Case 2 — Appeals review decisions and records
Principle: An appeal ordinarily identifies claimed error using the record and applicable review standard. It is not simply a second chance to present everything omitted at trial. Appellate procedures and preservation requirements differ across systems.
Original record: After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.
Changed record: The party identifies a preserved objection and the exact ruling in the record.

Case 3 — Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction
Principle: Federal courts have limited subject-matter jurisdiction. Federal questions and qualifying diversity cases are examples, not a rule that every important dispute belongs in federal court. State courts handle many ordinary disputes, including issues of state law.
Original record: Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.
Changed record: A genuine federal statutory claim is added.

Case 4 — Texas’s two high courts
Principle: Texas does not use one high court for all ordinary civil and adult criminal appeals. The Supreme Court handles civil matters; the Court of Criminal Appeals handles criminal appellate responsibilities. Intermediate courts and special jurisdictional rules must also be considered.
Original record: A classroom chart sends every adult criminal appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas

because it says Supreme.
Changed record: The dispute is an ordinary civil contract appeal.

Case 5 — Jurisdiction, venue and practical location
Principle: Jurisdiction concerns a court’s legal power. Venue concerns the proper location within an authorized system. Convenience can matter practically but does not create legal power or override governing venue rules. Separate the concepts before researching details.
Original record: A party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.
Changed record: The correct court type is selected but the wrong county is named.

Case 6 — Juries, neutrality and access
Principle: Jury service requires impartial attention to evidence and law, not a promise to favor a party. Judges, interpreters and court staff have different responsibilities. Accessible communication supports participation without changing the burden of proof.
Original record: A fictional juror promises a friend to vote for one party before hearing evidence.
Changed record: An interpreter is supplied for a participant.

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

Two fictional witnesses disagree about when a parcel arrived. At a proper trial, the fact finder evaluates admissible evidence under applicable rules. That is different from asking an appeal court to privately interview new witnesses. A bench trial can assign fact finding to the judge without automatically creating an error.

Numbered assignment

1. Draw a trial-to-appeal diagram with an evidence-record label.

intro-law-l037-q01

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2. Add federal/state branches and label limited federal jurisdiction.

intro-law-l037-q02

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3. Correct the Texas high-court chart for adult criminal and civil matters.

intro-law-l037-q03

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4. Create a jurisdiction-versus-venue legend for the nearest-building example.

intro-law-l037-q04

5. Write an impartial-jury warning for the promised-vote vignette.

intro-law-l037-q05

6. Design an accessible text alternative to your diagram.

intro-law-l037-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Project 4: Federal and Texas courts:
A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.
Read this principle: Trial proceedings establish evidence and apply governing law. A judge determines legal questions and manages proceedings; a jury may determine disputed facts when a jury trial applies. Not every case uses a jury.
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 4: Federal and Texas courts:
Original: A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.
Changed fact: The parties lawfully use a bench trial.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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 Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit 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: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
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 Courts: Civil Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas procedural manual.
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.

38. Spiral lab 4: facts,rules and changed conditions

intro-law-l038 | suggested week 8 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

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

Instruction

Spaced practice 4 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: Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party’s preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

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

A local disagreement is described as very important but supplies no federal claim or other jurisdictional basis. Importance is not itself a source of federal judicial power. The proper next analytical step is to identify a recognized jurisdictional basis, not simply choose a federal building or assume state courts lack authority.

Numbered assignment

1. Retrieval connection from unit 4, Trial courts develop a factual record:
Principle: Trial proceedings establish evidence and apply governing law. A judge determines legal questions and manages proceedings; a jury may determine disputed facts when a jury trial applies. Not every case uses a jury.
Record: A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.
Change: The parties lawfully use a bench trial.
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-l038-q01

2. Retrieval connection from unit 4, Texas’s two high courts:
Principle: Texas does not use one high court for all ordinary civil and adult criminal appeals. The Supreme Court handles civil matters; the Court of Criminal Appeals handles criminal appellate responsibilities. Intermediate courts and special jurisdictional rules must also be considered.
Record: A classroom chart sends every adult criminal appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas because it says Supreme.
Change: The dispute is an ordinary civil contract appeal.
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-l038-q02

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3. Retrieval connection from unit 3, Speech and time, place and manner:
Principle: Government speech restrictions require context: content, forum, purpose, scope and applicable standards matter. A neutral scheduling rule differs from suppressing a viewpoint, but neutrality alone does not prove validity. Rights analysis is not simply whether someone was inconvenienced.
Record: A model public meeting gives each speaker two minutes under an evenly applied rule. One critic is instead stopped after ten seconds solely for criticizing the chair.
Change: The critic receives the same time as everyone and the rule is consistently applied.
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-l038-q03

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4. Retrieval connection from unit 3, Equal protection and justified distinctions:
Principle: Equal protection does not mean all people must receive identical treatment in every circumstance. Government classifications are examined under different standards depending on the classification and right. Identify who is compared, the stated reason and the applicable legal test before concluding.
Record: A model public library gives large-print books to readers who need them. A student says every accommodation is unequal and therefore unconstitutional.
Change: A policy instead excludes a group from service without a stated lawful reason.
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-l038-q04

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5. Retrieval connection from unit 1, Legal questions versus policy preferences:
Principle: A legal question asks how an identified rule applies. A policy question asks whether a rule should change. Both deserve reasons, but a preferred policy is not evidence of the present rule.
Record: A classroom model permits two library renewals. Jae wants three because a book is long.
Change: The policy is formally amended to allow three beginning next month.
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-l038-q05

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6. Retrieval connection from unit 1, IRAC: organize without pretending certainty:
Principle: IRAC means issue, rule, application and conclusion. The application explains why specific facts satisfy or fail parts of a rule. A conclusion can be conditional when facts or authority are missing; the

acronym is an organizer, not a guarantee of a correct answer.
Record: Classroom rule: only signed equipment requests reserve a camera. Mina emails an unsigned request and says the camera is reserved.
Change: The equipment manager provides a written model exception accepting verified emails.
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-l038-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Spiral lab 4: facts,rules and changed conditions:
Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.
Read this principle: Federal courts have limited subject-matter jurisdiction. Federal questions and qualifying diversity cases are examples, not a rule that every important dispute belongs in federal court. State courts handle many ordinary disputes, including issues of state law.
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 4: facts,rules and changed conditions:
Original: Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.
Changed fact: A genuine federal statutory claim is added.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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 Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit 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: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
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 Courts: Civil Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas procedural manual.
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: Bill of Rights
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/bill-of-rights-transcript
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary constitutional text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: First ten amendments; ratified 1791. Scope and later interpretation matter.
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: Amendments 11–27
Exact URL: https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/amendments-11-27
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal primary constitutional text
Source type: official-primary-constitutional-text
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Includes 14th Amendment due process/equal protection and later amendments superseding earlier provisions.
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 Courts: Criminal Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/criminal-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Government prosecution; burden beyond reasonable doubt; counsel and adjudication stages. No real reporting activity is assigned.
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: 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 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.

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.

39. Unit 4 review: Federal and Texas courts

intro-law-l039 | suggested week 8 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

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

Instruction

Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party’s preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

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

Two specialized courts share a courthouse address. The shared location does not give them identical power. Jurisdiction asks whether the court may hear the dispute; venue asks the proper location within the authorized system. A convenient address therefore cannot by itself establish either legal requirement.

Numbered assignment

1. Review station 1 — Trial courts develop a factual record
Principle: Trial proceedings establish evidence and apply governing law. A judge determines legal questions and manages proceedings; a jury may determine disputed facts when a jury trial applies. Not every case uses a jury.
Record: A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer Which level ordinarily develops the evidence first? (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l039-q01

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2. Review station 2 — Appeals review decisions and records
Principle: An appeal ordinarily identifies claimed error using the record and applicable review standard. It is not simply a second chance to present everything omitted at trial. Appellate procedures and preservation

requirements differ across systems.
Record: After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer What does a reasoned appellate argument need beyond disappointment? (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l039-q02

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3. Review station 3 — Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction
Principle: Federal courts have limited subject-matter jurisdiction. Federal questions and qualifying diversity cases are examples, not a rule that every important dispute belongs in federal court. State courts handle many ordinary disputes, including issues of state law.
Record: Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer Does importance alone establish federal jurisdiction? (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l039-q03

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4. Review station 4 — Texas’s two high courts
Principle: Texas does not use one high court for all ordinary civil and adult criminal appeals. The Supreme Court handles civil matters; the Court of Criminal Appeals handles criminal appellate responsibilities. Intermediate courts and special jurisdictional rules must also be considered.
Record: A classroom chart sends every adult criminal appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas because it says Supreme.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer Correct the structural misconception. (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l039-q04

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5. Review station 5 — Jurisdiction, venue and practical location
Principle: Jurisdiction concerns a court’s legal power. Venue concerns the proper location within an authorized system. Convenience can matter practically but does not create legal power or override governing venue rules. Separate the concepts before researching details.
Record: A party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part correction:(a)answer Which two legal questions are being skipped? (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l039-q05

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6. Review station 6 — Juries, neutrality and access
Principle: Jury service requires impartial attention to evidence and law, not a promise to favor a party. Judges, interpreters and court staff have different responsibilities. Accessible communication supports participation without changing the burden of proof.
Record: A fictional juror promises a friend to vote for one party before hearing evidence.
An editor says: The short story proves every legal issue and no qualification is needed. Write a three-part

correction:(a)answer Why is this inconsistent with impartial adjudication? (b)name the key supporting detail;(c)state the remaining limit. Use the printed principle.

intro-law-l039-q06

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Unit 4 review: Federal and Texas courts:
A party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.
Read this principle: Jurisdiction concerns a court’s legal power. Venue concerns the proper location within an authorized system. Convenience can matter practically but does not create legal power or override governing venue rules. Separate the concepts before researching details.
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 4 review: Federal and Texas courts:
Original: A party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.
Changed fact: The correct court type is selected but the wrong county is named.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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 Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit 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: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.

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 Courts: Civil Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas procedural manual.
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.

40. Unit 4 assessment: Federal and Texas courts

intro-law-l040 | suggested week 8 | about 40 minutes;split sessions as needed

Objective

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

Instruction

Court systems have different jurisdictions and functions. Federal trial courts are district courts; federal courts of appeals review decisions, generally on a record rather than a completely new trial. Texas has varied trial courts and intermediate appellate courts. The Supreme Court of Texas is the civil court of last resort; the Court of Criminal Appeals has the corresponding role for adult criminal matters, with special rules and routes. Juvenile and other specialized proceedings require separate research. Court names, geographic location and a party’s preference do not by themselves establish jurisdiction.

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

A party identifies a trial ruling and the preserved objection in the record. That supplies a possible appellate issue, not a promised reversal. The reviewer must identify the rule, standard of review and legal effect of any error. Disappointment alone would not substitute for those steps.

Numbered assignment

1. Assessment record — unit 4, Trial courts develop a factual record
Supplied principle: Trial proceedings establish evidence and apply governing law. A judge determines legal questions and manages proceedings; a jury may determine disputed facts when a jury trial applies. Not every case uses a jury.
Original facts: A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.
Assessment change: The parties lawfully use a bench trial.
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-l040-q01

2. Assessment record — unit 4, Appeals review decisions and records
Supplied principle: An appeal ordinarily identifies claimed error using the record and applicable review standard. It is not simply a second chance to present everything omitted at trial. Appellate procedures and preservation requirements differ across systems.
Original facts: After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.
Assessment change: The party identifies a preserved objection and the exact ruling in the record.
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-l040-q02

3. Assessment record — unit 4, Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction
Supplied principle: Federal courts have limited subject-matter jurisdiction. Federal questions and qualifying diversity cases are examples, not a rule that every important dispute belongs in federal court. State courts handle many ordinary disputes, including issues of state law.
Original facts: Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.
Assessment change: A genuine federal statutory claim is added.
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-l040-q03

4. Assessment record — unit 4, Texas’s two high courts
Supplied principle: Texas does not use one high court for all ordinary civil and adult criminal appeals. The Supreme Court handles civil matters; the Court of Criminal Appeals handles criminal appellate responsibilities. Intermediate courts and special jurisdictional rules must also be considered.
Original facts: A classroom chart sends every adult criminal appeal to the Supreme Court of Texas because it says Supreme.
Assessment change: The dispute is an ordinary civil contract appeal.
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-l040-q04

5. Assessment record — unit 4, Jurisdiction, venue and practical location
Supplied principle: Jurisdiction concerns a court’s legal power. Venue concerns the proper location within an authorized system. Convenience can matter practically but does not create legal power or override governing venue rules. Separate the concepts before researching details.
Original facts: A party chooses the nearest building and assumes its court can decide any case.
Assessment change: The correct court type is selected but the wrong county is named.
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-l040-q05

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6. Assessment record — unit 4, Juries, neutrality and access
Supplied principle: Jury service requires impartial attention to evidence and law, not a promise to favor a party. Judges, interpreters and court staff have different responsibilities. Accessible communication supports participation without changing the burden of proof.
Original facts: A fictional juror promises a friend to vote for one party before hearing evidence.
Assessment change: An interpreter is supplied for a participant.
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-l040-q06

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7. Comparison task: Use these two records.
A: A fictional civil dispute has conflicting delivery testimony and no prior trial.
A principle: Trial proceedings establish evidence and apply governing law. A judge determines legal questions and manages proceedings; a jury may determine disputed facts when a jury trial applies. Not every case uses a jury.
B: A fictional juror promises a friend to vote for one party before hearing evidence.
B principle: Jury service requires impartial attention to evidence and law, not a promise to favor a party. Judges, interpreters and court staff have different responsibilities. Accessible communication supports participation without changing the burden of proof.
Name one distinct issue in each and explain why the rule for A cannot simply replace the rule for B.

intro-law-l040-q07

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8. Research-limits task: For the changed record in Federal questions and limited federal jurisdiction, identify the relevant jurisdiction/source type from the printed cards and two checks needed before any actual-case conclusion.
Record: Two neighbors have a local fence dispute and state-law claims only. One calls it federal because it feels important.
Change: A genuine federal statutory claim is added.

intro-law-l040-q08

Optional guided retry

Optional guided retry for Unit 4 assessment: Federal and Texas courts:
After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.
Read this principle: An appeal ordinarily identifies claimed error using the record and applicable review standard. It is not simply a second chance to present everything omitted at trial. Appellate procedures and preservation requirements differ across systems.
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 4 assessment: Federal and Texas courts:
Original: After a fictional trial, a party wants an appeal solely because the result was disappointing, with no identified error.
Changed fact: The party identifies a preserved objection and the exact ruling in the record.
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: US Courts: Court role and structure
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/court-role-and-structure
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: District courts determine facts/apply law; appellate courts review legal application; federal and state systems differ.
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 Judicial Branch: About Texas Courts
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/about-texas-courts/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court structure/jurisdiction resources datedOctober 2026 are listed; no courthouse visit 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: Supreme Court of Texas: Official home
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/supreme/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Court of last resort for civil matters; do not treat as the ordinary adult criminal court of last resort.
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 Court of Criminal Appeals: About
Exact URL: https://www.txcourts.gov/cca/about-the-court/
Jurisdiction/scope: Texas official judiciary
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Explains criminal appellate routing and special direct appeals; course avoids death-penalty roleplay.
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 Courts: Civil Cases
Exact URL: https://www.uscourts.gov/about-federal-courts/types-cases/civil-cases
Jurisdiction/scope: US federal judiciary official overview
Source type: official-government-explanatory-overview
Verified: 2026-11-07 (America/Chicago CST; dated reading, not an ongoing guarantee)
Reading purpose and limits: Complaint, service, discovery, settlement, trial and typical preponderance standard; not a Texas procedural manual.
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.