

☐ Review Sheet for "Adjudication in Court" Unit

Instructions:

- Review the main ideas from the unit in the text.
- Test your understanding by completing the questions. If you want help answering the questions, go to exercise 1, "Understanding the U.S. court structure."

U.S. court structure system

The U.S. Constitution created a dual court structure that is divided at federal and state levels. The federal court system rules on federal laws, while the state court system in each state rules on its own state laws. The U.S. Supreme Court is the highest court for both the federal and state court systems. Even though the U.S. Supreme Court operates as a federal court, a court case may go through a state's court process, including an appeal at the state level, and then be taken up for a final appeal by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Federal courts

The federal court system is divided into several branches, and the Supreme Court represents the highest and most influential court in the country. As a result of the historic decision made in the *Marbury v. Madison* case in 1803, the Supreme Court has the power to decide whether a certain law is constitutional or not, in a process called judicial review. By having the power to challenge a law issued from the President or from Congress, the Supreme Court participates in the checks and balances of the U.S. government. For a case to reach the Supreme Court from the lower courts, the Supreme Court will use its *certiorari* powers to approve or reject cases.

State courts

Because states have the power to create their own penal codes, no two states have the same court system. The names and the functions of the courts from one state to another can be very different. But although the names of the courts may be different, the general structure is the same across all states. All state courts, no matter how many levels or functions, are divided into the following categories: courts of limited jurisdiction, general jurisdiction, and court of appeals (appellate).

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CRIMINAL JUSTICE 101

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Describe the function of the following courts.

State courts

- *Probate court:*

- *Municipal court:*

Federal courts

- *U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit:*

- *U.S. Claims court:*