

On the Value of System of Trial by Jury

Classroom Learning Activity 1

The system of trial by jury is the cornerstone of our democracy. It delivers great value to our court system and to our community. Do you know why having a jury is important in a trial? Consider this: If you were on trial, wouldn't you want a jury of your peers to hear your side of the story? Only a jury or judge can make the decision about your case.

From the list below, select what you consider to be the 5 most importance reasons to have a system of trial by jury. Share your selections with the class and discuss the reasons why you made those selections.

I believe the system of Trial by Jury is important because it:

- _____ Was intended to be this way by our founders
- _____ Is guaranteed by U.S. and State Constitutions
- _____ Ensures impartial justice
- _____ Helps to evaluate and make sense of the evidence
- _____ Helps citizens feel protected
- _____ Brings closure to difficult cases
- _____ Decides guilt or innocence
- _____ Enables participation in our legal system
- _____ Uncovers the truth
- _____ Establishes the facts of a case
- _____ Fights corruption in the legal system
- _____ Improves efficiency in the administration of justice
- _____ Protects individual rights
- _____ Saves taxpayers money
- _____ Teaches others the value of democracy
- _____ Protects the rights of the accused
- _____ Provides a way to keep government in check
- _____ Makes the legal process faster
- _____ Other _____
- _____ Other _____



After your discussion with your classmates, answer the following: If you were on trial, wouldn't you want a jury of your peers to hear your side of the story?

Yes or No? Explain your answer:
