The letter of the law

VOCABULARY PRACTICE
INTERMEDIATE | B1-B2

Name: _____ Date: _____

1 Tick the correct category for each law word.

Word | Process | Person | Outcome | Concept

1 prosecutor [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
2 appeal [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
3 sentence [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
4 testimony [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
5 acquit [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
6 jurisdiction [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
7 plaintiff [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]
8 legislation [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]

2 Correct the mistake in each sentence.

1 The prosecutor argue the case. _____
2 They filed appeal of the decision. _____
3 He received sentence of five years. _____
4 She gave testimony of in court. _____
5 The jury decided to acquit of him. _____
6 This falls outside the jurisdiction of of the court. _____
7 The plaintiff bring the case. _____
8 New legislation was pass last year. _____

3 Choose the more suitable description.

1 For the lawyer arguing a case against the accused: prosecutor / defence lawyer.
2 For asking a higher court to review a decision: appeal / accept the ruling.
3 For the punishment given after conviction: sentence / acquittal.
4 For a formal statement given as evidence: testimony / casual comment.
5 For declaring someone not guilty: acquit / convict.
6 For the official authority of a court to hear a case: jurisdiction / personal opinion.

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4 Complete the reports with words from the box.

acquit | appeal | jurisdiction | legislation | plaintiff | prosecutor | sentence | testimony

Report A: The 1 _____ presented strong evidence, but the jury voted to 2 _____ the defendant after hearing conflicting 3 _____.
Report B: The 4 _____ decided to file an 5 _____ after losing the initial case.
Report C: The judge handed down a lengthy 6 _____ following the conviction.
Report D: New 7 _____ was introduced to close the legal loophole, though the matter fell outside the court's 8 _____.

5 Read the text and answer the questions briefly.

The purpose of the appeals process

Legal systems generally allow for appeal, since even carefully conducted trials can produce mistaken verdicts due to procedural errors, misapplied law or newly discovered evidence. The appeals process does not typically re-examine the facts of a case from scratch; instead, higher courts usually focus on whether the original trial followed correct legal procedure, ensuring consistent application of legislation across similar cases. Critics note that this system inevitably favours defendants with resources to pursue lengthy appeals, raising ongoing questions about equal access to justice regardless of a defendant's financial circumstances.

1 Why do legal systems generally allow for appeal? _____

2 Does the appeals process typically re-examine the facts from scratch? _____

3 What do higher courts usually focus on instead? _____

4 What does this help ensure? _____

5 What do critics note about this system? _____

6 What ongoing questions does this raise? _____

6 Rewrite each phrase using the word in capitals.

1 The lawyer argued the case against him. PROSECUTOR _____

2 They asked a higher court to review the decision. APPEAL _____

3 The jury declared him not guilty. ACQUIT _____

4 She gave a formal statement in court. TESTIMONY _____

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OVER TO YOU

Write a 100-120 word account of how the legal system ensures fairness in a trial. Include specific safeguards and possible weaknesses.

[ ] Use at least ten target expressions. [ ] Include polite, precise wording. [ ] Organise the account clearly.

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ANSWER KEY

1 Categories

1 Person 2 Process 3 Outcome 4 Process 5 Outcome 6 Concept 7 Person 8 Concept

2 Corrections

1 argues the case 2 filed an appeal 3 received a five-year sentence 4 gave testimony
5 decided to acquit him 6 outside the jurisdiction of the court 7 brought the case 8 was passed

3 Suitable descriptions

1 prosecutor 2 appeal 3 sentence 4 testimony 5 acquit 6 jurisdiction

4 Reports

1 prosecutor 2 acquit 3 testimony 4 plaintiff 5 appeal 6 sentence 7 legislation 8 jurisdiction

5 Reading - suggested answers

1 Because even carefully conducted trials can produce mistaken verdicts due to procedural errors, misapplied law or newly discovered evidence.
2 No.
3 Whether the original trial followed correct legal procedure.
4 Consistent application of legislation across similar cases.
5 That it inevitably favours defendants with resources to pursue lengthy appeals.
6 Equal access to justice regardless of a defendant's financial circumstances.

6 Rewriting - possible answers

1 The prosecutor argued the case. 2 They filed an appeal.
3 The jury voted to acquit him. 4 She gave testimony.

Over to you

Answers will vary. Check range, respectful register and clear organisation.