**Court Case Research Handout**

Justice of the Peace/Municipal Court

1. Which of these courts exists in your jurisdiction?
2. Who is the magistrate for this court?
3. How long has the magistrate been in his or her position?
4. What are the requirements to be a magistrate in either of these courts?
5. What are some of the other duties of the magistrate(s)?
6. What is the jurisdiction of these courts?
7. What types of cases are handled in these courts?
8. What is the most common type of case this jurisdiction hears?
9. Are there any special programs offered to person’s coming through these courts such as, Teen Court programs, Deferred Adjudication, or First Offender programs?
10. Is this court a court of record?

County Courts

1. What types of county courts does your county of residence have?
2. If there is more than one type of county court, select the one that most interests you, then answer the following questions:
3. Who is the judge for that court?
4. How long have they been in that position?
5. What are the requirements to be a judge in that court?
6. What are some of the judge’s other duties?
7. What is the jurisdiction of the court?
8. What type of cases does the court handle?
9. What is the most common type of case that this court hears?
10. Is this a Constitutional County Court, a County Court at Law, or Statutory Probate Court?
11. Report on a local case decided in this court to discuss with the class.

State District Courts

1. How many district courts does your county contain? How many are criminal district courts?
2. Who is the judge for the district court(s)?
3. How long have they been in that position?
4. What are the requirements to be a judge in that court?
5. What do some of their duties include?
6. What is the jurisdiction of the court?
7. What type of cases do they handle?
8. What is the most common type of cases they hear?
9. What types of sentencing options are available at the district level?
10. Report on a local case that was decided in this court and discuss it with the class.

State Appellate Court

1. How many courts of appeals exist in your county?
2. Who is the judge for the appellate court?
3. How long have they been in that position?
4. What are the requirements to be a judge at this level?
5. What are some of their duties?
6. What is their jurisdiction?
7. What is the most common type of case?
8. What kind of cases do they hear?
9. What happens if a case is overturned on appeal?
10. Report on a local case that was decided in this court that made headlines.

State Court of Criminal Appeals

1. Who are the nine judges that sit on this court?
2. What are the requirements to be a judge in this court?
3. What are some of their duties?
4. What is their jurisdiction?
5. What happens to a case that is overturned in this court?
6. What is the most common type of case heard in this court?
7. Where is the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals located?
8. Report on a local case that was overturned by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals that greatly impacted your community?

Texas Supreme Court

1. Who is the Chief Justice and the eight other justices?
2. What are the requirements to be a judge in this court?
3. What are some of their duties?
4. What is their jurisdiction?
5. What is the most common type of case this court hears?
6. Where is the Texas Supreme Court located?
7. What happens if a case is overturned in this court?
8. Report on a local case that was overturned by the Texas Supreme Court that greatly impacted your community.