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## GENERAL VOCABULARY



***".. The Judiciary is the Safeguard of our Liberty and of our Property under the Constitution."***

a court [kɔ:t] - суд

Ex: the USA

***federal courts; higher courts; intermediate courts; state courts; lower courts; the court of last resort; the Supreme Court; US District court; US Courts of Appeal Common Pleas Court; Court of limited jurisdiction; Court of general trial jurisdiction.***

the UK:

***the High Court of Justice; The Crown Court; the Court of Appeal; County Courts; the Magistrates' court;***

a law [lɔ:] - закон, право

Ex: ***criminal law, civil law;***

***to decide law; to determine law;***

***due process of Law;***

***the full protection of the law;***

to limit ['limit] – ограничивать

Ex: *a law limits...*

to require [ri'kwaɪə] – требовать, приказывать

Ex: *a law requires...*

to violate ['vaɪəleɪt] – нарушать, преступать

Ex: *to violate individual's freedoms;*

to avoid [ə'vɔɪd] – избегать, остерегаться

Ex: *avoid violating an individual's freedoms;*

judicial - судебный

Ex: ***judicial system; judicial body;***

**legal** ['li:gl] – правовой

Ex: *legal system; legal qualifications;*

**evidence** ['evidəns] – доказательство, свидетельство, улика

*to be used as evidence; not favorable evidence;*

**a case** [keis] – (суд) дело

Ex: *criminal case, civil case;*

*to advance the case (of his/her client); to resolve the case; to review the case; to arise the case; to hear the case; to try a case;*

**prosecution** [ˌprɔːsiˈkjuːʃn] – обвинение (сторона в судебном процессе)

Ex: *prosecution case; prosecution evidence;*

**a defendant** [diˈfendənt] – обвиняемый, ответчик

Ex: *a defendant's plea; a defendant's witness; a defendant's story;*

**offence** – правонарушение

Ex: *summary offence;*

**offender** - правонарушитель

**to prove** ['pru:v] – доказывать

Ex: *to prove an accusation against a defendant;*

**to declare somebody (not) guilty** – объявлять (не) виновным

Ex: *to declare the defendant (not) guilty;*

**to run court system** – управлять судебной системой

**to coexist with** – сосуществовать с ....

**Jurisdiction** [ˌdʒʊrɪsˈdɪkʃn] – отправление правосудия, юрисдикция

Ex: *civil/criminal/direct jurisdiction; general jurisdiction; limited/unlimited jurisdiction*  
*to fall under the jurisdiction;*

**to sue** [sju:] (to be sued) – подавать иск, преследовать судом

Ex: *to sue for damage; a sued person;*

**litigation** [ˈlɪtɪˈɡeɪʃn] – тяжба, судебный процесс

Ex: *to initiate/ start litigation;*

**to appeal** [əˈpi:l] - обжаловать

Ex: *to appeal against light; to appeal a decision; to appeal a verdict;*

**to change the decisions** – изменять решения

**Judge (Chief Justice, Associate Justices)** [dʒʌdʒ] – судья (Верховный суд США: председатель верховного суда и члены суда)

Ex: *Judge Advocate General; district judge; administrative judge; lenient judge;*

**jury** [ˈdʒʊəri] – присяжные

*blue-ribbon jury; jury of inquiry; grand jury;*

**attorney** [əˈtɔːni] – адвокат, юрист

Ex: *defense attorney; prosecution attorney;*

**penalty** [ˈpenəlti] – наказание, штраф

Ex: *death penalty; penalty area; light penalty;*

**probate** [ˈprəbeɪt] – специальное утверждение завещания судом

Ex: *probate action; Probate case;*

**domestic relations** – семейные дела

**juvenile matters** – дела несовершеннолетних правонарушителей

**to agree with the Constitution** – соответствовать конституции

**to be constitutional (un constitutional)** – (не) соответствующий конституционным нормам

**to be correctly interpreted and applied** – быть правильно применимым и интерпретированным (о законе)

**sentence** - (n) – приговор; (v) – выносить приговор;

## VOCABULARY WORK

I. *Find the synonyms for the following words:*

- to confine –
- to order (to demand) –
- to encroach –
- to escape –
- proof, testimony –
- to try (test) –
- to claim -
- trial -
- justice -
- lawyer -
- punishment -

II. *Find the antonyms for the following words and word-combinations:*

- to observe-
- defense –
- plaintiff -
- to be unconstitutional
- to find somebody innocent -
- to disagree with Constitution -
- to disprove –

III. *Make up word combinations:*

The court of	attorney
US Court of	a case
Common	the decisions
to decide	Appeal
equal justice under	story
to arise	the law
a defendant's	last resort
to run	constitution
civil	Pleas Court
to change	court system
prosecution	law
to agree with the	jurisdiction

IV. *Translate the sentences below:*

1. The courts are overseers of the law.
2. The trial courts in each state include: common pleas courts, which have general civil and criminal jurisdiction.
3. The Supreme Court watches over two branches: the executive (the President) and the legislative (the Congress).
4. The judges in federal courts are known as generalists.
5. The Supreme Court consists of a chief justice and eight associate justices.
6. A decision of the Supreme Court cannot be appealed to any other court.
7. Each state runs its own court system.
8. These federal courts coexist with the state courts.
9. Individuals fall under the jurisdiction of two different court systems, their state courts and federal courts.
10. The individuals can sue or be sued in either systems.

*V. Fill in the blanks:*

1. .... is the court of general jurisdiction - almost any civil or criminal..., serious or minor, may first be brought there.
2. Felony is a serious crime for which the..... is a penitentiary term or death
3. The ..... division deals with divorce, alimony, child custody.
4. The .... division has jurisdiction over delinquent, unruly or neglected children.
5. The main job of courts of ..... is to review ..... appealed from trial courts to determine if the ..... was correctly interpreted and applied.
6. The..... of each state is primarily a court of appeal and the court of last resort.
7. The Supreme court consists of a chief ..... and eight ....., all of whom are appointed for life by the President with the Advice and Consent of the Senate.
8. The duty of the Supreme Court is to decide whether laws passed by Congress.... with the Constitution.
9. ....violating the laws, observe all of them.
10. You should .....that your .....is favorable.

## PART I

### The Judicial System of the UK

#### TEXT A

##### **Pre-reading activities:**

I. *Read the following international words and give their russian equivalents:*

civil, criminal, jurisdiction, limit, magistrate, period, appeal, specialized, tribunal, instance.

II. *Study the following words:*

the High Court of Justice - Высокий суд правосудия  
County Courts - суды графств  
the Crown Court - суд Короны  
the Magistrates' Court - мировой суд  
the Court of Appeal - Апелляционный суд  
the Lords of Appeal in Ordinary - члены палаты Лордов  
для рассмотрения апелляций

##### ***Read and translate the text:***

#### COURTS IN GREAT BRITAIN

In the English Court system the main distinction is made between **civil and criminal jurisdiction** - some courts have both jurisdictions, some only one.

As for the **civil courts**, there is a trial court for the whole of England, with an unlimited jurisdiction in all civil cases - **the High Court of Justice**. It deals with those matters which are connected with property rights, family relations, business, etc.

Minor civil cases are tried in **the County Courts**. They have nothing to do with counties; the name was selected for historical reasons. These courts are of limited jurisdiction.

The Judges of the Civil Courts try cases alone without the jury, because England abolished the jury in civil cases in 1933.

**The Crown Court**, a court of general jurisdiction, and **the Magistrates' Courts** having only limited jurisdiction are known to be the trial courts for considering criminal cases.

Simple matters are considered by magistrates. The punishment inflicted by them can seldom exceed six months' imprisonment and often consists of fines. The Crown Court has jurisdiction in major criminal cases, those punishable by substantial periods of imprisonment. Criminal cases involve a jury trial.

The intermediate appellate tribunal in England is **the Court of Appeal**. It hears appeals from the High Court and from specialized tribunals. The Criminal Division of the Court of Appeal hears appeals from criminal courts of inferior instance.

The highest court in England is **the House of Lords**. It hears appeals of exceptional public importance from the Court of Appeal, their number being very limited. When the House of Lords acts as a judicial body instead of a legislative one, it is composed only of the Lords of Appeal in Ordinary.

### **Post-reading activities:**

#### *I. Give the Russian for:*

civil jurisdiction, a trial court, property rights, to have nothing to do with, as for, historical reasons, to abolish, fines, a jury trial, to inflict, seldom, to exceed, inferior, instead of .

II. *Find in the text above the English equivalents for:*

общая юрисдикция, ограниченная юрисдикция, неограниченная юрисдикция, имущественные права, превышать шесть месяцев, суд по уголовным делам, суд по гражданским делам, судебный орган, рассматривать апелляции, в большинстве уголовных дел.

III. *Make up word-combinations and translate them into Russian:*

property	importance
family	reasons
historical	periods
simple	trial
substantial	tribunal
jury	instance
specialized	rights
inferior	relations
public	matters

IV. *Say whether these sentences are true or false, if necessary consult the text:*

- 1) All the courts in Great Britain have civil and criminal jurisdictions.
- 2) The High Court of Justice has an unlimited jurisdiction.
- 3) The County Courts are of limited jurisdiction.
- 4) The judges of the Civil Courts hear cases with the help of the jury.
- 5) Criminal cases are heard in the Crown Courts and Magistrates' Courts.
- 6) The punishment imposed by magistrates usually exceeds six months' imprisonment.
- 7) The house of Lords is the intermediate appellate tribunal in England.

V. *Answer the following questions:*

1. What matters does the High Court deal with?
2. Do the County Courts try cases in any particular county of Great Britain?
3. What courts try major criminal cases?
4. Where are appeals from criminal courts considered?
5. What is the highest court in England?

## TEXT B

### **Pre-reading activities:**

I. *Read the following international words and give their russian equivalents:*

bankruptcy, trust, patent, patient, administration, person, personal, license, function, discrimination, sexual, racial.

II. *Study the following words and phrases:*

summary offence – преступление, рассматриваемое судом упрощенно, суммарно, без участия присяжных

preliminary - предварительный

a 'circuit' judge – окружной судья

a part-time recorder – не полностью занятый судебный чиновник

to dispose – решать, рассматривать

indictable – подлежащий рассмотрению в суде

Chancery Division – канцелярское отделение (Высокого суда правосудия в Великобритании)

Queen's Bench Division – отделение королевской скамьи (Высокого суда правосудия в Великобритании)

to bring a criminal action – возбудить уголовное дело

***Read and translate the text:***

## **The English Judicial System**

A feature common to all the systems of law in the UK is that there is *no complete code*. The sources of law include *legislation* (e.g. some 3,000 Acts of Parliament) and *unwritten* or '*common law*'. Major distinctions are between the **criminal law** (wrongs against the community as a whole) and **the civil law** (rights, duties and obligations of individuals between themselves).

**The criminal courts in England and Wales include:**

**1. Magistrates' Courts** . About 98 percent of all criminal cases are disposed of by the magistrates known as Justices of the Peace. These courts try the less serious offences (they hear and determine charges against people accused of summary offences, that is not serious enough to go before higher courts). The examples of summaries are: common assault, drink driving, driving without insurance and criminal damage up to £5,000. The second function of the Magistrates' Courts is to conduct a preliminary hearing. Thirdly, they hear cases involving children (Juvenile Courts). There are about 30000 lay magistrates, sitting in nearly 700 different courts.

**2. Crown Courts.** The Crown Court deals with trials of the more serious cases, the sentencing of offenders committed for sentence by magistrates' courts, and appeals from magistrates' courts. It sits in about 90 centres and is presided over by High Court judges, full-time 'circuit judges' and part-time recorders. All contested trials take place before a jury. The jury consists of 12 persons and try indictable, that is more serious criminal offences, such as murder, rape, serious assault, kidnapping, conspiracy, fraud, armed robbery, etc (10 out of 12 must agree on their verdict).

The most famous Crown Court is "The Old Bailey", otherwise known as the Central Criminal Court.

**The civil courts include:**

**1. County Courts** are presided over by a paid judge. Their jurisdiction covers adoption cases, racial and sexual discrimination, bankruptcy, divorce cases, actions concerning land, trusts and mortgages. Cases outside this limit are heard before High Court Judges, sitting either in the Crown Courts or in the High Court itself.

**2. The High Court** hears the more serious cases, and most appeals from the County Courts. It also hears some appeals from magistrates' courts. The High Court of Justice has three divisions: the Chancery Division, the Family Division and the Queen's Bench Division.

**a) The Family Division.** As its name suggests, this court handles cases involving personal relationships within the family: divorces, adoption, guardianship, maintenance, wardship and probate (the ratification of wills). The head of the Family Division is known as the president who is assisted by approximately 18 judges.

**b) The Chancery Division.** This division covers such matters as the sale of property, the administration of estates of deceased persons and mental patients, deeds, trusts, company law, bankruptcy, partnership and patents.

**c) The Queen's Bench Division.** This division hears the most serious contract and tort actions. It also deals with judicial review which concerns actions brought by individuals against public authorities who exceed, abuse or fail to use their powers. This applies to local authorities, government ministers, magistrates' courts and tribunals. This court is headed by the Lord Chief Justice who is assisted by approximately 53 judges.

### **Post-reading activities:**

I. *Find in the text the English for:*

кодекс, источник права (закона), уголовное право, гражданское право, обвиняемый в, страховка, проводить

слушание, предварительное слушание, суд по делам несовершеннолетних, правонарушитель.

II. *Match the following:*

1) mental patient	a) усыновление
2) deceased person	b) сотрудничество
3) estate	c) умерший
4) partnership	d) опекунство
5) adoption	e) психически больной
6) divorce	f) банкротство
7) guardianship	g) имущество
8) maintenance	h) попечительство, опека
9) wardship	i) развод
10) bankruptcy	j) содержание(детей, семьи)

III. *Read the text once again and fill in the table given below with the examples of offences which are heard in this or that court depending on its seriousness:*

**What is tried where?**

Criminal Courts		Civil Courts			
The Magistrates' Court	The Crown Court	The County Court	The High Court		
			The Chancery Division	The Family Division	The Q.B.D.

IV. *Answer the following questions:*

- 1) What are the sources of law in the UK?
- 2) What are the two types of courts criminal cases can be heard in?

- 3) What are the three main functions of the Magistrates' Court?
- 4) How many magistrates' courts are there in England?
- 5) What cases does the Crown Court deal with?
- 6) What is the "Old Bailey"?
- 7) What cases do the County Courts try?
- 8) How many divisions does the High Court of Justice have? What are they? What cases does each of them handle?

V. *Fill in the gaps with the given words:*

a jury	a judge	the defendant	circumstances
indictment	category	murder	summary offences

### **Classification of Criminal Offences**

Criminal offences may be grouped into three (1) ..... . Offences triable only on (2) ..... — the very serious offences such as manslaughter, (3) ..... rape and robbery — are tried only by the Crown Court presided over by (4) ..... sitting with a jury. (5) ..... — the least serious offences and the vast majority of criminal cases — are tried by unpaid lay magistrates sitting without (6) ..... . A third category of offences (such as theft, burglary, or malicious wounding) are known as 'either way' offences and can be tried either by magistrates or by the Crown Court depending on (7) ..... of each case and the wishes of (8) .....

VI. *Choose the correct words to complete the text and guess what court is described here?*

witnesses	trial	sentence
prosecution	jury	defence
evidence	judge	crime
defendant		

Anyone accused of a serious (1).....has the right to a (2).....by (3)....., a group of men and women (usually twelve) chosen by chance. A (4).....lawyer tries to convince the court that the (5).....is guilty. A (6).....lawyer sets out to prove the accused person's innocence. (7).....tell the court what they know about the crime. After listening to all the facts or (8).....the jury must decide whether the prosecution has proved guilt. The (9).....helps the jury understand the laws relating to the trial and pass (10).....if there is a guilty verdict.

VII. *Tell about the English Court system using this scheme:*

### the English Court System

HOUSE OF LORDS Highest court of appeal
---

COURT OF APPEAL	
CIVIL DIVISION	CRIMINAL DIVISION

HIGH COURT			CROWN COURT
The Queens Bench Division	The Chancery Division	The Family Division	Serious criminal cases, murder, manslaughter, rape, burglary, grievous bodily harm, fraud, armed robbery etc.
Breaches of contract, personal injury claims, commercial disputes, shipping cases	Trusts, mortgages, wills, company matters, taxation.	Divorce cases, maintenance, custody, adoption, guardianship, etc.	

Lower court

COUNTY COURTS
Civil Matters: local cases and claims of less than 25,000 pounds

MAGISTRATES' COURT
Less serious criminal cases and minor traffic offences

### TEXT C

**Pre-reading activities:**

I. *Read the following words paying attention to the pronunciation of these sounds:*

[a:] – part, clerk, after

[ə:] – heard, verdict, person, to return

[ I ] – criminal, civil, guilty, decision, business, will, witness, innocent

[ i:] – to deal, peace, need, to reach, to plead, between, agree, to appeal, legal, queen

[ɔ:] – court, law, before, ordinary, also, lord, to call

[au] – crown, county, without, found, allow, counsel.

II. *Read and translate the pairs of antonyms:*

Senior – junior, to agree – to disagree, to plead guilty – to plead not guilty, higher courts – lower courts, to appear – to disappear, guilty – innocent, legal – illegal, natural – unnatural, necessary – unnecessary, majority – minority, prosecution – defense.

***Read and translate the text.***

### **The Judicial Personnel.**

**Magistrates.** Less serious criminal and civil cases are dealt with in the Magistrates' Courts, where there is no jury but a case is usually heard by two or three magistrates. Most magistrates, also known as Justices of the Peace (**JPs**), work part-time and are not paid. They are given some training but do not need legal qualifications. A clerk of the court advises them on the law. When they have heard a case, the magistrates reach a verdict and where necessary decide what the punishment should be.

**Judges.** More serious cases are heard by judges in the crown courts (for criminal cases) or the county courts (for civil cases). Judges are appointed by the Queen, on the advice of the Lord Chancellor. They hold office for life. They are selected among senior barristers, especially Q.C.s (Queen's Counsels).

In civil cases, and in cases where the defendant has pleaded guilty, the judge sits alone, without a jury, and after hearing the case, makes a decision, or judgement. If the person accused of a crime pleads not guilty, he or she is tried before a jury.

**The jury** in England and Wales is made up of twelve ordinary people aged between 18 and 65. When they have heard the evidence and the judge's summing-up, they retire to a special room to decide whether to return a verdict of guilty or not guilty. If they all agree, they have reached a unanimous verdict. If no more than two people disagree, the judge may ask for a majority verdict. If the accused is found guilty, he or she has the right to appeal.

**Solicitors** are lawyers who do legal business for individuals and companies (preparing legal documents for buying or selling houses, making wills, etc). They also act as **advocates**, representing clients in court.

**Barristers** used to be the only lawyers allowed to appear as advocates in the higher courts. One advocate (the Counsel for the Prosecution) tries to prove in court that the accused committed the crime. The advocate representing the defendant (the Counsel for the Defence) tries to show that he or she is innocent. They call witnesses and question them about the facts of the case. The highest level of barristers have the title QC (Queen's Counsel).

**Coroners** have medical or legal training (or both), and inquire into violent or unnatural deaths.

**Clerk of the Court** look after administrative and legal matters in the courtroom.

### **Post-reading activities:**

#### *I. Match the synonyms:*

1. to investigate	a) accused
2. decision	b) to summarize
3. ordinary	c) to inquire
4. violent	d) unusual

5. to deal with	e) to choose
6. defendant	f) permanent
7. to sum up	g) forcible
8. unnatural	h) judgement
9. hearing	i) to handle
10. to select	j) trial

II. *Translate into Russian:*

to reach a verdict, to plead guilty, ordinary, to commit a crime, to call witnesses, to have the right to appeal, to work part-time, for life.

III. *Find in the text the English equivalents for:*

квалификация в области юриспруденции, консультировать, по совету кого-либо, занимать пост (должность), удаляться на совещание, выносить приговор, единогласное решение, решение большинства, составлять завещание, представлять клиента в суде, насильственная смерть.

IV. *Find the explanation of each type of legal profession:*

1. a judge	a) an officer who has no formal legal qualifications and acts as a judge in the lower courts;
2. a coroner	b) a group of people who swear to give a true decision on issues in a law court;
3. a magistrate	c) an official who investigates the cause of any death thought to be violent or unnatural causes;
4. a jury	d) a lawyer who has the right to speak and argue in higher law courts;
5. a clerk of the court	e) a public officer with authority to hear and decide more serious cases in a law court;
6. a barrister	g) a lawyer who prepares legal documents, advises clients on legal and speaks for them in lower law courts;
7. a solicitor	f) an official in charge of the records of a court.

V. Retell the text using words and phrases from ex.5, 6 and definitions from ex.7.

VI. Fill in the gaps with the given words:

prepare your defense , probably, a barrister,  
a Magistrates' Court, trouble, legal, to advise, argue

One of the most important figures in the British (1) ..... system is the solicitor. It is his job (2) ..... you on legal matters of all kinds. If you get into (3) ..... with the police you will (4) ..... ask a solicitor to help (5)..... and, if the offence is to be heard in (6) ..... , you can ask a solicitor to appear for you and (7) ..... your case. If the case goes to a higher Court, the solicitor still advises you, but you must get (8) ..... to appear for you.

**For FUN and PROFIT**



What are a lawyer's tools of trade.

Lord Denning. British judge and Master of the Rolls

A jury consists of twelve persons chosen to decide who has the better lawyer.

Robert Frost, American poet

A lawyer is someone who makes sure he gets what's coming to you.

Anonymous (USA)

Four things belong to a judge: to hear courteously, to answer wisely, to consider soberly, and to decide impartially.

Socrates, Greek philosopher

If your lawyers tell you that you have a very good case, you should settle immediately.

Richard Ingrams, journalist and editor of “Private Eye”

If you want to know who your friends are, get yourself a jail sentence.

Charles Bukowski, American poet and novelist

“I only borrowed a motor-car while the owners were at lunch; they had no need of it at the time. I didn’t mean to steal it, really; but people – especially magistrates – take such harsh views of thoughtless and high-spirited actions.”

Mr Toad in Wind in the Willows by Kenneth Grahame

### ***Quiz: Standards of Court Behaviour***



1. How are Magistrates referred to:
  - a) Sir or Madam
  - b) your worships
2. When does the opening speech usually take place?
  - a) after calling the first witness
  - b) before calling the first witness
3. Who has the right to begin the trial?
  - a) the plaintiff's advocate
  - b) the defendant's advocate
4. Most judges prefer that evidence be given
  - a) orally
  - b) in written form
5. If a witness is declared hostile he may be asked:
  - a) harmless questions
  - b) leading questions
6. What is known as real evidence?
  - a) evidence: article of clothing, equipment, etc.
  - b) oral and written statements
7. If in civil cases a document is disputed:
  - a) a witness must be called
  - b) the document may not be admitted as evidence

8. At what age is a child considered competent to give evidence under oath?

- a) there is no rule for that
- b) from the age of 14

9. Where should witnesses remain during court proceedings:

- a) out of court
- b) in court

10. When should a witness be released at trial?

- a) after all witnesses have given their testimony
- b) after he has completed his testimony.

**PART II**  
**The US Court System**

**TEXT A**

**Pre-reading activities:**

**I. Examine the chart:**

**US COURT SYSTEM**

<b>FEDERAL COURT SYSTEM</b>	<b>STATE COURT SYSTEM</b>
<p><b>The US Supreme Court</b> - (consists of a Chief Justice and eight Associate Justices appointed for life). <i>-the highest court of the nation and the court of last resort decides whether laws passed by the Congress agree with the Constitution.</i></p>	<p><b>State Supreme Courts</b> - <i>courts of appeal and the courts of last resort of the cases arising under the state law.</i></p>
<p><b>Us Courts of Appeal</b> - intermediate courts of appeal between the District Courts and the US Supreme Court. <i>(decide if the law was correctly determined and applied by the US District Court).</i></p>	<p><b>State Courts of Appeal</b> - <i>decide if the law was correctly determined and applied by the state Common Pleas Courts.</i></p>
<p><b>United States District Courts</b> - <i>Trial courts for the cases arising under the federal law. These courts include civil jurisdiction (probate, domestic, juvenile) and criminal jurisdiction (criminal cases.)</i></p>	<p><b>Common Pleas Courts</b> - <i>Trial courts for the cases arising under the state Law. These courts include civil jurisdiction (probate, domestic, juvenile) and criminal jurisdiction (criminal cases.)</i></p>

## ***Read the text***

### **The US Court System**

The courts are **overseers of the law**. They **administer it**, they resolve disputes under it, and they ensure that it is and remain equal to and impartial for everyone.

In the United States each state is served by the separate court systems, state and federal. Both systems **are organized into three basic levels of courts** -trial courts, intermediate courts of appeal and a high court, or Supreme Court. The state courts **are concerned essentially** with cases arising under federal law.

Trial courts **bear the main burden** in the administration of justice. Cases begin there and **in most instances** are finally resolved there.

The trial courts in each state include: common pleas courts, which have general civil and criminal jurisdiction and smaller in importance **municipal courts, county courts and mayor's courts**.

The common pleas court is the most important of the trial courts. It is the court of general jurisdiction - almost any civil or criminal case, serious or minor, **may first be brought there**. In criminal matters, the common pleas courts have **exclusive jurisdiction** over felonies (a felony is a serious crime for which the penalty is **a penitentiary term** or death). In civil matters it has exclusive jurisdiction in probate, domestic relations and juvenile matters. The probate division deals with wills and the administration of estates, adoptions, guardianships. It grants marriage licenses to perform marriages. The domestic division deals with divorce, alimony, child custody.

The juvenile division has jurisdiction over delinquent, unruly or neglected children and over adults, who neglect, abuse or contribute to the delinquency of children. When a juvenile (any person under 18) **is accused of an offence**, whether serious, or minor, the juvenile division has exclusive jurisdiction over the case.

The main job of courts of appeal is to review cases appealed from trial courts to determine if the law was correctly interpreted and applied.

The supreme court of each state is primarily a court of appeal and the court of last resort.

The federal court structure is similar to the structure of the state court system. The trial courts in the federal system are the United States district courts. The United States courts of appeal are intermediate courts of appeal between the district courts and the United States Supreme Court.

The US Supreme Court is the court in the nation and the court of last resort. It consists of a chief justice and eight associate justices, all of whom are appointed for life by the President with the Advice and Consent of the Senate. The duty of the Supreme Court is to decide whether laws passed by Congress agree with the Constitution. The **great legal issues** facing the Supreme Court at present are Government involvement with religion, abortion and privacy rights, race and sex discrimination.

### **Post-reading activities:**

I. *Write down the Russian equivalents for the words and expressions given in bold type:*

II. *As you read the text, look for the answers to these questions:*

1. What is the dual court system existing in the USA?  
What three levels of courts does it consist of?
2. What is the jurisdiction of the trial court? Define the jurisdiction of the common pleas court.
3. What kind of civil matters are brought to common pleas courts? Elaborate on probate, domestic relation and juvenile matters.

4. Speak about the jurisdiction of state and federal courts of appeals and state supreme courts.

5. What is the duty of the US Supreme Court?

III. *Speak about the US COURT SYSTEM according to the following topics:*

1. the dual system of the US courts;
2. trial courts - courts of general jurisdiction;
3. the US Supreme Court - the court judging the most explosive issues in American life.

## **TEXT B**

### **Pre-reading activities:**

I. *Look up these words in a dictionary, transcribe them if necessary:*

complex, to function, identical, in addition, individuals, either, majority, pyramid, bottom, exception, array, generalists.

### ***Read the text***

#### **The Organization of the Federal Courts today**

The American court system is complex. It functions as a part of the federal system of government. Each state runs its own court system, and no two are identical. In addition, we have a system of courts for the national government. These federal courts coexist with the state courts.

Individuals fall under the jurisdiction of two different court systems, their state courts and federal courts. They can sue or be sued in either system, depending mostly on what their case is about. The vast majority of cases are resolved in the state courts.

The federal courts are organized in three tiers, like a pyramid. At the bottom of the pyramid are the US district courts, where litigation begins. In the middle are the US

courts of appeal. At the top is the US Supreme Court. To appeal means to take a case to a higher court. The courts of appeals and the Supreme Court are appellate courts, with few exceptions, they review cases that have been decided in lower courts. Most federal courts hear and decide a wide array of cases; the judges in these courts are known as generalists.

### **Post-reading activities:**

I. *Find in the text the English equivalents for the words below:*

сосуществовать, частные лица, суды штатов, подать иск, подавляющее большинство, попадать под юрисдикцию, разрешить дело в судебном порядке, ярус, Верховный суд, судебное разбирательство, окружные суды, высшие суды, апелляционные суды, исключение, низшие суды, суд последней инстанции, рассматривать дело.

II. *Answer the questions:*

1. Who is responsible for making laws in the US?
2. Name American courts in the descending order.
3. In what way are the federal courts organized?
4. Where does the litigation begin?
5. What does the word "to appeal" mean?

III. *Fill in the blanks:*

#### **The Federal and State Court system**

The federal courts have three tiers: (a).....courts, courts of (b)..... and the..... (c) Court. The..... (d) Court was created by the Constitution; all other..... (e) courts were created by Congress. Most litigation occurs in (f)..... courts. The structure of (g) .....courts varies from state to state; usually there are (h)..... for less serious cases, (i)..... for more serious cases, intermediate

(j)..... courts, and courts of last (k)..... . State courts were created by state constitutions.

## TEXT C

### Pre-reading activities:

I. *Study the following information:*

#### ***Jurisdiction***

1) *отправление правосудия*

(over) under, within a jurisdiction — в ведении правосудия to have jurisdiction (over) — обладать властью (над кем-л.);

2) *подсудность, юрисдикция Syn: cognizance;*

3) *власть, полномочия, сила ( тж. перен. ) the jurisdiction of the laws of material nature — сила законов природы, сила законов материального мира Syn: administration; б) подведомственная область; сфера полномочий Syn: authority, dominion, power, sovereignty, sway;*

4) *судебный орган, правоохранительный орган Syn: judicature , court;*

II. *Match the columns:*

limited(special) jurisdiction	исключительная юрисдикция
general jurisdiction	уголовная юрисдикция
civil jurisdiction	первичная юрисдикция
criminal jurisdiction	ограниченная юрисдикция
Original(primary) jurisdiction	общая юрисдикция
exclusive jurisdiction	гражданская юрисдикция

### ***Read the text:***

#### **State Court System**

The structure of most state court systems, despite name variations, follows a four-tiered pattern:

1. *Court of limited jurisdiction* are profusely spread across the country, most often in municipalities. They are restricted in types of cases they can hear – usually the least serious

cases and the least serious claims. Many of these courts also of limited jurisdiction deal only with specific matters, such as traffic, family and juvenile. These are sometimes called *court of special jurisdiction*.

2. *Court of general trial jurisdiction* handle the bulk of major litigation under state law. These courts have jurisdiction over all kinds of criminal offences, including felonies, and in some states handle appeals from courts of limited jurisdiction.

3. *Intermediate appellate courts*: In an adversarial system of justice, losers have the right to appeal the decision, but most do not. In state with small populations, appeals go directly from the courts of general jurisdiction to the state supreme court – the highest court in the state judicial system. States with larger populations have intermediate appellate courts that provide the first round of appeals. Appellate courts do not conduct a new hearing – they review the trial record of the lower court for judicial error.

4. *Courts of last resort (state supreme courts)* are appellate courts which serve as the final authority in cases involving issues of state law. A supreme court has discretionary power decide which cases it will hear. The court can issue a writ of *certiorari* which instructs the lower court to send up the record for review.

*Notes:*

- *Certiorari* – [ˌsɜːʃiːəˈrɛəri] - истребование дела вышестоящим судом из производства нижестоящего суда ( в том случае, когда нижестоящий суд не может обеспечить объективного, непредвзятого рассмотрения дела);
- *writ* [rit] - 1) писание; 2) предписание, повестка; исковое заявление, судебный приказ;
- *profusely* [prəˈfjuːsli] - обильно, щедро; богато; чрезмерно; *to bleed profusely* — сильно кровоточить; Syn: abundantly , generously;

- *discretionary* - 1) дискреционный ( действующий по своему усмотрению); 2) предоставленный на собственное усмотрение;

**Post-reading activities:**

I. *Read the text again and complete the sentences:*

1. Mostly the structure of state court systems follows a..... .
  - a) two-tiered pattern;
  - b) four-tiered pattern;
  - c) five-tiered pattern;
2. Courts of limited jurisdiction can only hear the .....
  - a) least serious cases;
  - b) most serious cases;
  - c) felonies;
3. Courts of general trial jurisdiction deal with all kinds of ..... offences.
  - a) civil;
  - b) administrative;
  - c) criminal;
4. In states with small populations, appeals go directly to the ..... .
  - a) intermediate appellate courts;
  - b) courts of general jurisdiction;
  - c) Supreme court;
5. The Supreme courts are the .....courts which serve as the final authority in cases involving issues of state law.
  - a) intermediate;
  - b) appellate;
  - c) trial;

II. *Summarize all the material you've learnt about the US federal and state court systems and find differences between them, use the following table:*

Federal court system	State court system

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## TEXT D

### **Pre-reading activities:**

#### *I. Recollect what the words and word-combinations mean:*

Legislative, executive, the Supreme Court, to determine law, a judge, a chief justice, associate justice, to appeal, to change the decisions, a direct jurisdiction, to hear a case, to declare laws, unconstitutional.

#### ***Read the following text:***

### **The Supreme Court**

The third branch of government, in addition to the legislative (Congress) and executive (President) branches, is the federal judiciary. Its main instrument is the Supreme Court, which watches over the other two branches. It determines whether or not their laws and acts are in accordance with the Constitution. Congress has the power to fix the number of judges sitting on the Court, but it cannot change the powers given to the Supreme Court by The Constitution itself. The Supreme Court consists of a chief justice and eight associate justices. They are nominated by the President but must be approved by the Senate. Once approved, they hold office as Supreme Court Justice for life. A decision of the Supreme Court cannot be appealed to any other court. Neither the President nor Congress can change their decisions. In addition to the Supreme Court, Congress has established 11 federal courts of appeal and, below them, 91 federal district courts.

The Supreme Court has direct jurisdiction in only two kinds of cases, those involving foreign diplomats and those in which a state is a party. All other cases which reach the Court are appeals from the lower courts. The Supreme Court chooses which of these it will hear. Most of the cases involve the interpretation of the Constitution. The Supreme Court also has the "power of judicial review, that is, it has

the right to declare laws and actions of the federal, state, and local governments unconstitutional.

**Post-reading activities:**

I. *Match the following expressions from the text with the definitions and make the sentences with each of them:*

Chief Justice	a court for the cases arising under the federal law; a trial court of the federal system;
Associate Justice	a high court judge;
federal court	contrary to the rules of a political system or organisation;
district court	a court dealing with not so important cases;
direct jurisdiction	the official power to make legal decisions and judgements about smth;
lower court	
to be unconstitutional	the person with the highest rank in a Supreme Court;

II. *Do the following statements agree with the information given in the text: write T – if the statement is true; F – if not; NG – if the information is not given in the text;*

1. The Supreme Justices serve only 5 years and then retire. \_\_\_\_
2. The Supreme Court consists of a Chief Justice and 8 Associate Justices. \_\_\_\_
3. The Supreme Court Justices are elected. \_\_\_\_
4. The President or sometimes the Congress can change the decisions of the Supreme Court. \_\_\_\_

5. Supreme Court Judges can only be removed from office by impeachment. \_\_\_\_
6. Lower courts, besides the SC, are federal courts of appeal, federal district courts in the USA. \_\_\_\_
7. The Judges are trained at special law schools. \_\_\_\_
8. The Supreme Court watches over the legislative (the Congress) and executive (the President) branches. \_\_\_\_

III. Discuss these questions in the class or with your partner and try to retell the text:

1. What are the functions of the Supreme Court of the USA?
2. Who does the Supreme Court consist of?
3. How long do the Supreme Court Justices serve?
4. Are the Supreme Court Justices elected?
5. Who can change the decisions of the Supreme Court?
6. What lower courts, besides the Supreme Court, are there in the USA?
7. In what kinds of cases does the Supreme Court have direct jurisdiction?
8. What is the "power of judicial review"?

**FOR FUN AND PROFIT**



I. *Solve the crossword, try to find no less than 20 words:*

C	O	U	R	T	W	R	Z	X	U	J	J	E	G	J	L	F	X	K	A	O	V	L	Q	N
V	T	E	P	E	N	A	L	T	Y	B	U	Y	Q	S	U	E	Q	R	J	U	D	G	E	F
Z	D	Q	S	F	G	Q	L	D	H	S	S	P	T	G	H	F	S	T	U	N	S	R	L	S
O	E	D	V	L	C	N	G	M	N	M	T	R	R	G	C	J	Y	S	F	L	A	T	J	O
D	F	L	N	P	O	M	U	E	S	J	I	O	W	B	N	M	L	S	V	I	T	Y	G	D
A	E	X	U	R	N	E	I	W	E	W	C	B	U	E	C	V	I	O	L	A	T	E	F	J
T	N	H	I	E	S	P	L	L	K	D	E	A	J	V	H	J	M	T	K	O	O	M	D	S
N	D	J	O	S	T	O	T	C	L	V	N	T	B	I	E	N	I	B	M	P	R	N	S	V

C	O	U	R	T	W	R	Z	X	U	J	J	E	G	J	L	F	X	K	A	O	V	L	Q	N
S	A	K	P	U	I	M	Y	L	A	W	S	E	C	D	I	D	T	S	F	M	N	B	A	K
A	N	A	D	M	T	B	P	N	F	K	F	R	E	E	D	O	M	I	D	V	E	V	Z	A
X	T	Y	C	P	U	C	I	H	A	G	V	A	S	N	G	H	D	B	Y	D	Y	C	J	F
P	L	E	Z	T	T	X	U	K	P	R	O	S	E	C	U	T	I	O	N	S	F	H	U	Z
M	W	O	A	I	I	Z	Y	S	G	A	M	F	D	E	C	I	D	E	F	Y	I	P	R	X
C	B	C	P	O	O	A	L	I	T	I	G	A	T	I	O	N	Y	A	T	Y	U	I	Y	G
H	J	K	Y	N	N	Q	R	T	E	H	V	A	P	P	E	A	L	E	X	U	L	S	A	B

## **PART III**

### **Supplementary Reading**

#### **TEXT 1**

#### **Becoming a Magistrate**

If you have free time on your hands and want to give something back to your community, then you might consider becoming a magistrate. This is a responsible and rewarding role, which will allow you to play a vital part in the workings of the judicial system.

Lay magistrates are not paid for carrying out their duties, but may claim allowances for travelling, subsistence and financial loss.

In order to become a magistrate, you must have lived in the geographical area in which you plan to serve for a minimum of 12 months, and you must have a reasonable knowledge of the area. Each application is considered on its own merits, although you must have adequate sight and hearing.

The key qualities the selection board will be looking for are good character, understanding and communication, social awareness, maturity and sound judgment, and commitment and reliability. You must be able to understand documents, comprehend facts and follow arguments.

While the stereotype of a magistrate is of a middle-class, middle-aged person, the government is keen to broaden the pool of experience from which magistrates are drawn, and wants to recruit people from more diverse backgrounds. The government's goal is that the bench will reflect the community it serves, in terms of gender, ethnic origin, geographical location, occupation and political affiliation.

## TEXT 2

### **From the History of the High Court**

In 1999, the biggest change to the civil justice system this century came into place, when the "Access to Justice" reforms took force. These rules, created by Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, aimed "to speed up the court system by allowing judges to penalise lawyers if they deliberately caused delay, and encouraging people to resolve their grievances by alternative methods, such as mediation.

The High Court has a complex history, because the form it takes today is the result of many amalgamations and reincarnations. It was created in 1875 and effectively combined the previously separate courts of the High Court of Chancery, Court of Queen's Bench, Court of Common Pleas, Court of Exchequer, High Court of Admiralty, Court of Probate, Court for Divorce and Matrimonial Causes, and the London Court of Bankruptcy. An extensive list which reflects the broad role the High Court has.

In 1971, the Family Division was created from the former Probate, Divorce and Admiralty Divisions. Originally, probate and divorce matters were handled by the various courts of the Church of England, such as the bishop's courts. Seafarers took their disputes to the High Court of Admiralty, which was set up under King Edward III in the 14th century.

## TEXT 3

### **From the History of the Magistrates' Court**

The office of magistrate dates back to the 12th century when Richard I appointed "keepers of the peace". They have performed judicial functions since the 13th century, and the term, justice of the peace, was being used as far back as 1361. They began to meet quarterly for the more serious offences and less frequently for the less serious cases, and

these meetings came to be known as the "Courts of Quarter Sessions and Petty Sessions".

From the 14th century, magistrates took on administrative duties for their communities, such as the regulation of the highways and poor relief. In the 19th century, local authorities took over most of these duties. However, the magistrate's responsibility for liquor licensing is a remnant of their former administrative functions.

Magistrates were in charge of the police up until 1839. Paid magistrates have existed since the late 18th century and they have had to be legally qualified since the mid 19th century, when it was decided they must be barristers. Solicitors became eligible to apply for the role in 1949.

#### TEXT 4

### **How does the Coroners' Court fight crime?**

A GP, or hospital doctor, deals with most deaths, as they can certify the medical cause of death, and register it with the Registrar of Births and Deaths. However, in certain circumstances the registrar must also report deaths to the Coroner if, for example, the death occurred during an operation, if the death was due to industrial disease, or if the death was under unusual circumstances.

If a sudden death is due to natural causes a coroner may order a post-mortem examination to determine the cause of the death. A coroner must hold an inquest if the person died in a violent or unnatural way, or died in prison or in other unusual circumstances. This can include bodies brought into jurisdiction for burial or cremation from abroad. If the coroner suspects murder, manslaughter or infanticide, then he or she must summon a jury. The same applies if the death was caused by a road accident.

To open an inquest, someone who can identify the body of the deceased is asked to do so, and then the body will usually be released directly after the post-mortem so that funeral arrangements can be made. The coroner will then

investigate the death, gathering statements from relevant parties and involving the police if necessary. Once sufficient information has been gathered, the inquest proper is held, and the '*who, when, where and how*' the person met their death are determined. A Coroner's inquest does not apportion blame on any individual.

During an inquest, the Coroner can call upon all witnesses that he/she thinks have relevant information pertaining to the inquiry. The Coroner is the first to question the witnesses, then other questions can be asked by the parents or children of the deceased, the legal representatives of the family and other parties involved. As all inquests must be held in public, a member of the press is usually present, but they don't always report the case.

## TEXT 5

### **Crown Courts**

In a Crown Court cases are heard by a judge and a jury of twelve adults whose names are taken from the electoral register. As in a Magistrates' Court the prosecution case is followed by the defence case. In each witnesses may be called, examined, cross-examined, and re-examined. After the two sides have been presented, each advocate has a chance to speak to the jury, reiterating the main features of the case. The judge then sums up the facts of the case and explains the relevant law to the jurors. The jury then retires to consider its verdict. This should be unanimous but, if that proves impossible, the judge may allow a majority verdict, with which at least ten of the twelve must agree. If even that proves impossible, then the jury are dismissed and a fresh trial becomes necessary.

## TEXT 6

### **Appeals**

A person convicted by a magistrates' court may appeal to the Crown Court against the sentence imposed if he has pleaded guilty; or against the conviction or sentence imposed if he has not pleaded guilty. Where the appeal is on a point or procedure of law, either the prosecutor or the defendant may appeal from the magistrates' court to the High Court. Appeals from the Crown Court, either against conviction or against sentence, are made to the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division). The House of Lords is the final appeal court for all cases, from either the High Court or the Court of Appeal. Before a case can go to the Lords, the court hearing the previous appeal must certify that it involves a point of law of general public importance and either that court or the Lords must grant leave for the appeal to be heard. The nine Lords of Appeal in Ordinary are the judges who deal with Lords appeals.

The Attorney-General may seek the opinion of the Court of Appeal on a point of law which has arisen in a case where a person tried on indictment is acquitted; the court has power to refer the point to the House of Lords if necessary. The acquittal in the original case is not affected, nor is the identity of the acquitted person revealed without his or her consent. Under a provision in the Criminal Justice Act 1988, which has not yet been implemented, the Attorney General would be empowered, where he considered that a sentence passed by the Crown Court was over-lenient, to refer the case to the Court of Appeal, which would be able, if it thought fit, to increase the sentence within the statutory maximum laid down by Parliament for the offence.

## TEXT 7

**Read the following text for obtaining the information. Dwell on the four principles the US court system is based on. Do you think the four principles serve justice?**

### **Legal System Principles**

Four basic principles underline the operation of both federal and state courts and the actions of the thousands of men and women who serve in the American legal system. These principles include equal justice under the law, due process of law, the adversary system of justice, and the presumption of innocence.

**1. *Equal Justice under the Law.*** The phrase *equal justice under the law* refers to the goal of the American court system to treat all persons alike. It means that every person, regardless of wealth, social status, ethnic group, gender, or age is entitled to the full protection of the law. The equal justice principle grants all Americans rights, such as the right to a trial by a jury of one's peers. The Fifth through the Eighth Amendments to the Constitution spell out these specific guaranties.

**2. *Due Process of Law.*** Closely related to the principle of equal justice is the principle of *due process of law*. Due process is difficult to define precisely, but in general it means that a law must be applied in a fair manner. The Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments contain the due process principle. If a court decides a law is unreasonable, it rules that the law violates *substantive, due process*. Examples of laws that the Supreme Court has found to violate substantive due process include: 1) a law that limits dwellings to single families, thus preventing grandparents from living with their grandchildren; 2) a school board regulation that prevents a female teacher from returning to work sooner than 3 months after the birth of her child; and 3) a law that requires all children to attend public schools and does not permit them to attend private

schools. Cases about the way a law is administered involve *procedural due process*. Procedural due process requires the authorities to avoid violating an individual's basic freedoms when enforcing laws. For example, the police must warn an individual who is arrested that anything he or she says may be used as evidence.

**3. *The Adversary System***- American courts operate according to the adversary system of justice. Under the *adversary system*, the court room is a kind of arena in which lawyers for the opposing sides try to present their strongest cases. The lawyer for each side feels compelled to do all that is legally permissible to advance the case of his or her client. The judge in the court has an important role and should be as fair to both sides as possible. Some observers of the judicial system have attacked the adversary system. They have claimed that it encourages lawyers to ignore evidence not favorable to their side and to be more concerned about victory than justice. Supporters of the adversary system, on the other hand, maintain that it is the best way to bring out the facts of a case.

**4. *Presumption of Innocence***. In the US system of justice, the government's police power is balanced against the presumption that a person is innocent until proven guilty. The notion of presumed innocence is not mentioned in the Constitution, but it is deeply rooted in the English legal heritage. The burden of proving an accusation against a defendant falls on the prosecution. Unless the prosecution succeeds in proving the accusation, the court must declare the defendant not guilty.

## TEXT 8

**Read the text:**

### **The Federal court system**

The third branch of the federal government, the judiciary consists of a system of courts spread throughout the country, headed by the Supreme Court of the United States.

A system of state courts existed before the constitution was drafted. There was considerable controversy among the delegates of the Constitutional Convention as to whether a federal court system was needed and whether it should supplant the state courts. As in other matters under debate, a compromise was reached in which the state courts were continued while the Constitution mandated a federal judiciary with limited power. Article III of the Constitution states the basis for the federal court system: *The judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish.*

With this guide, the first Congress divided the nation into districts and created federal courts for each district. From that beginning has evolved the present structure: the Supreme Court, 11 courts of appeals, 91 district courts, and 3 courts of special jurisdiction. Congress today retains the power to create and abolish federal courts, as well as to determine the number of judges in the federal judiciary system. It cannot, however, abolish the Supreme Court.

The judicial power extends to cases arising under the Constitution; laws and treaties of the United States; admiralty and maritime cases; cases affecting ambassadors, ministers and consuls of foreign countries in the United States; controversies in which the U.S. government is a party; and controversies between states (or their citizens) and foreign nations (or their citizens or subjects). The 11<sup>th</sup> Amendment removed from federal jurisdiction cases in which citizens of one state were the plaintiffs and the government of another state was the defendant. It didn't disturb federal jurisdiction in cases in which a state government is a plaintiff and a citizen of another state is the defendant.

The power of the federal courts extends both to civil actions for damages and other redress, and to criminal cases arising under federal law. Article III has resulted in a complex set of relationships between state and federal courts. Ordinarily, federal

courts do not hear cases arising under the laws of individual states. However, some cases over which federal courts have jurisdiction may also be heard and decided by state courts. Both court systems thus have exclusive jurisdiction in some areas and concurrent jurisdiction in others.

The Constitution safeguards judicial independence by providing that federal judges should hold office "during good behavior" - in practice, until they die, retire or resign, although a judge who commits an offense while in office may be impeached in the same way as the president or other officials of the federal government. U.S. judges are appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate. Congress also determines the pay scale of judged.

## TEXT 9

**Read the text:**

### **Special Courts.**

In addition to the federal courts of general jurisdiction, it has been necessary from time to time to set up courts for special purposes. These are known as "legislative" courts because they were created by congressional action. Judges in these courts, like their peers in other federal courts, are appointed for life terms by the president, with Senate approval.

Perhaps the most important of these special courts is the Court of Claims, established in 1855 to render judgment on monetary claims against the United States. Other special courts include the Customs Court, which has exclusive jurisdiction over civil actions involving taxes or quotas on imported goods, and the Court, of Customs and Patent Appeals which hears appellate motions from decisions of the Customs Court and the U.S. Patent office.

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