Justice: Fairness in our society. Our system of laws and courts is called the justice system and seeks to make sure everyone is treated fairly.

Charge: A formal accusation made by the government that a person has committed a crime.

Premeditated homicide (first-degree murder): A murder that was planned ahead of time. This type of murder is usually more harshly punished. In some states, premeditated murder carries a death penalty sentence.

Defendant: A person accused of committing a crime who must defend themself in court.

Prosecution: A person or organization accusing the defendant of a crime.

Impartial Jury: A group of people chosen to decide a case because they do not hold any biases or prejudices against the defendant.

Reasonable Doubt: A doubt about the guilt of a defendant that remains despite the evidence presented by the prosecution. In order to convict a defendant, the prosecution must prove that the defendant is “guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.” If there is any doubt whether the defendant committed the crime, he or she must be found not guilty.

Testimony: A statement given by a witness. In a criminal trial, witnesses are questioned by lawyers and must swear under oath that they are telling the truth.

Deliberate: To consider issues and make a decision carefully. Jurors debate what they hear and see in a trial and then deliberate and reach an agreement.

Verdict: The jury’s final decision of guilty or not guilty.

Unanimous Verdict: A verdict in which everyone agrees. The law requires that each member of a jury must agree to the verdict.

Hung jury: A group of jurors that cannot all agree to a verdict. When a jury is hung, the defendant must be retried.

Convict: To declare someone guilty of a crime.

Sentence: The punishment given to a person convicted of a crime. The sentence is determined by a judge and can include a prison term or the death penalty, if necessary.