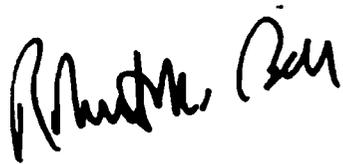


This book was developed by the Family Services Program  
of the Administrative Office of the Courts • Maryland

Dear Kids:  
I hope you will enjoy using this activity book while you are at court. Maryland's courts are here to help families and children. This book will give you something fun to do and help you learn a little bit about Maryland's court system.



Robert M. Bell  
*Chief Judge,  
Court of Appeals  
of Maryland*

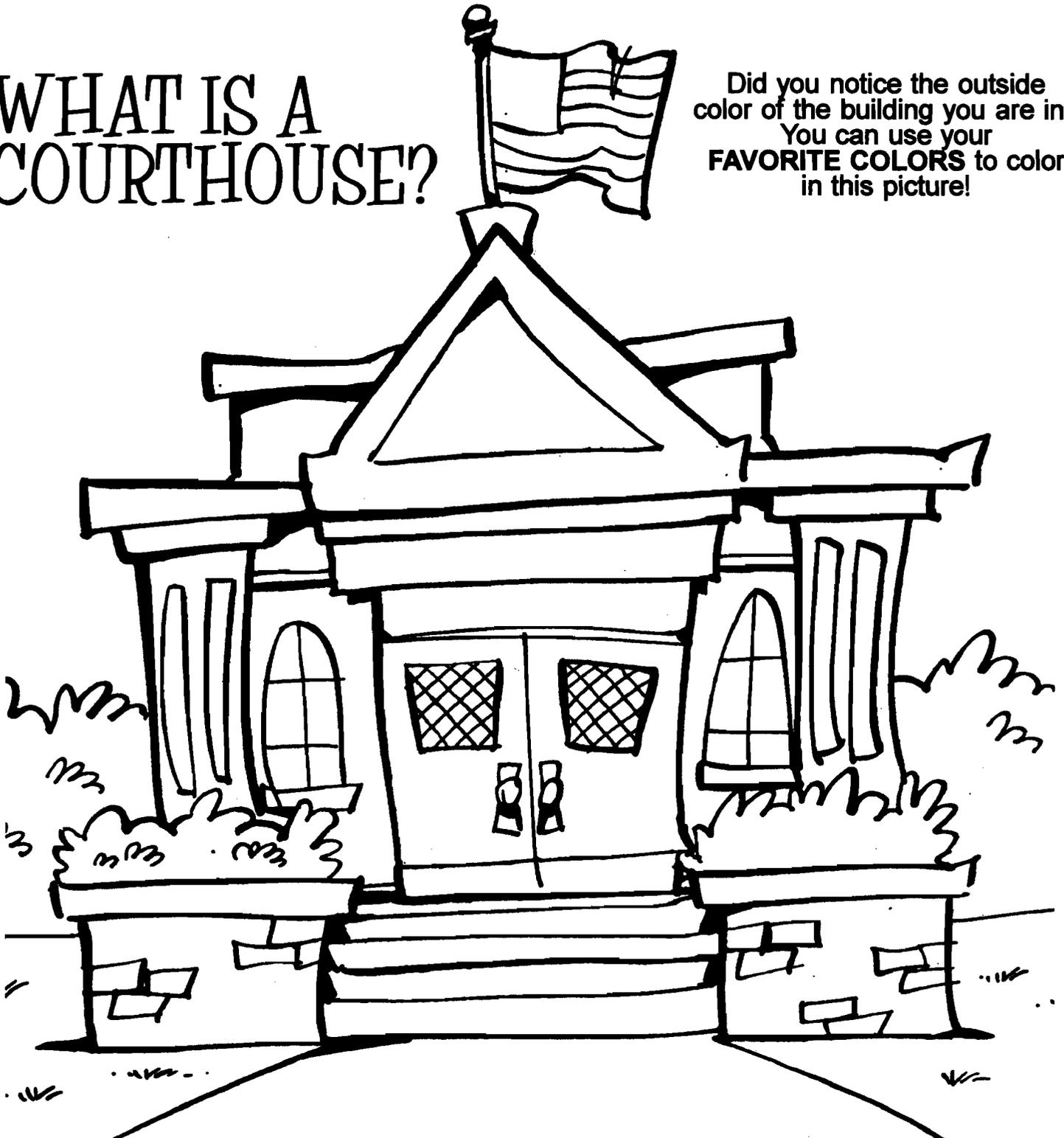


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# WHAT IS A COURTHOUSE?

Did you notice the outside color of the building you are in?  
You can use your  
**FAVORITE COLORS** to color  
in this picture!



**Although some people go to court because they broke the law, the Courthouse is also a place where families can go when they can not solve a problem and need some help. Sometimes it is necessary for children to go to Court too.**

**The Courthouse may seem like a scary place, but the people in the Courthouse are there to help you.**

Wavy scribbles at the top of the page, possibly representing wind or sound.



# **The Court Helps Families...**

... when Moms and Dads decide to live apart.

... when parents need help deciding where kids will live or how much time kids will spend with each parent.

... when Moms and Dads need to decide how much parents will pay for the things kids need.

... when kids or grown-ups have been hurt.

... when grown-ups are not able to take good care of kids.

... when kids need help controlling their behavior

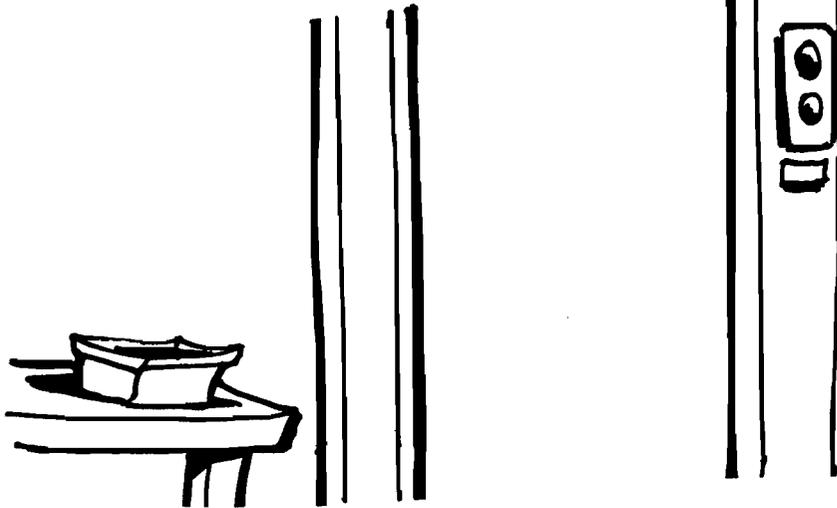
... when kids need a new home and a new family wants to adopt them.

# Inside the Courthouse!

When you walk into the Courthouse, you may see people who look like police officers.

These people are called **SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES**

and their job is to make sure that everyone in the Courthouse is safe.



You also may have to walk through a **METAL DETECTOR**, just like at the airport.

This machine is also there for safety reasons.

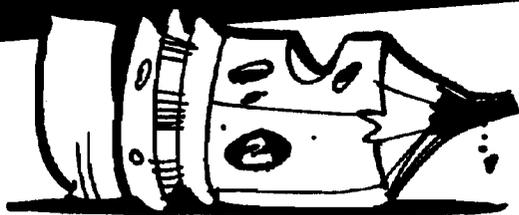
# Word Seek

Look for these words and circle them:

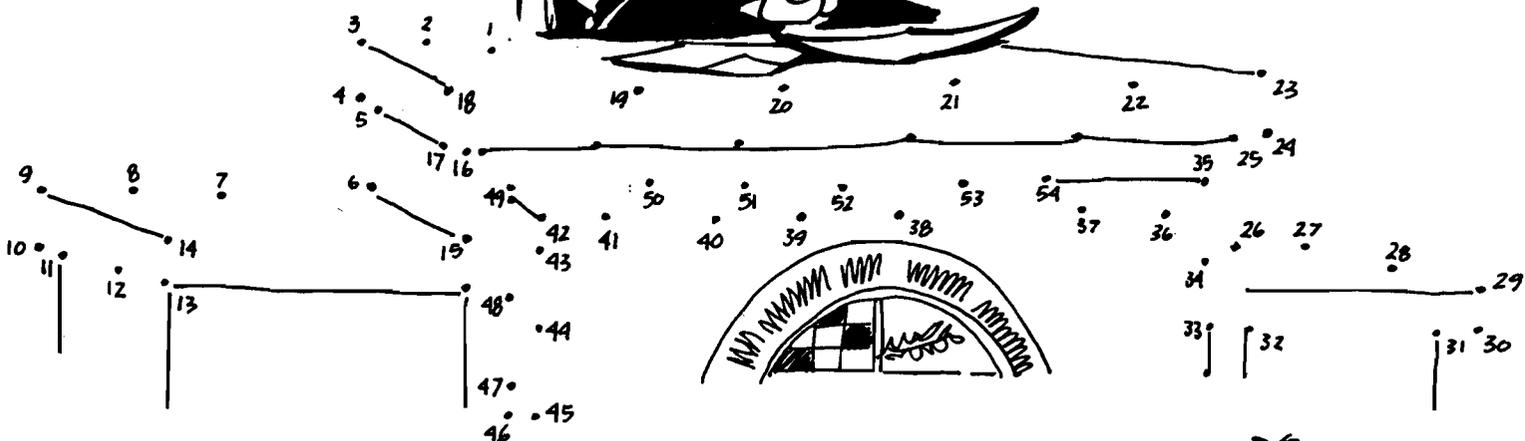
COURTROOM • BAILIFF • SHERIFF • JUDGE

LAWYER • WITNESS • GAVEL • ORDER

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



# CONNECT-THE-DOTS



The Judge speaks to the courtroom from an area called the bench. But she can't begin until you **CONNECT-THE-DOTS** and build the bench for her to sit behind.



JUDGE

A judge makes decisions for families. She wears a special robe. She listens to everyone in the courtroom at a trial. She makes sure everyone follows the rules so that the trial is fair. Then she tries to make a decision that is good for the kids, and fair to the parents.



### COURTROOM CLERK

The **courtroom clerk** usually sits beside the judge or master. The clerk's job is to keep track of all the papers about the case in the court and organize them. The courtroom clerk keeps track of the decisions that the judge or master makes during court. The courtroom clerk may also ask the witness to raise their hand and take an oath to tell the truth.

# WHO ARE THE PEOPLE IN COURT?



JUDGE



LAWYER



WITNESS



MASTER



COURTROOM CLERK



MEDIATOR



BAILIFF



SOCIAL WORKER

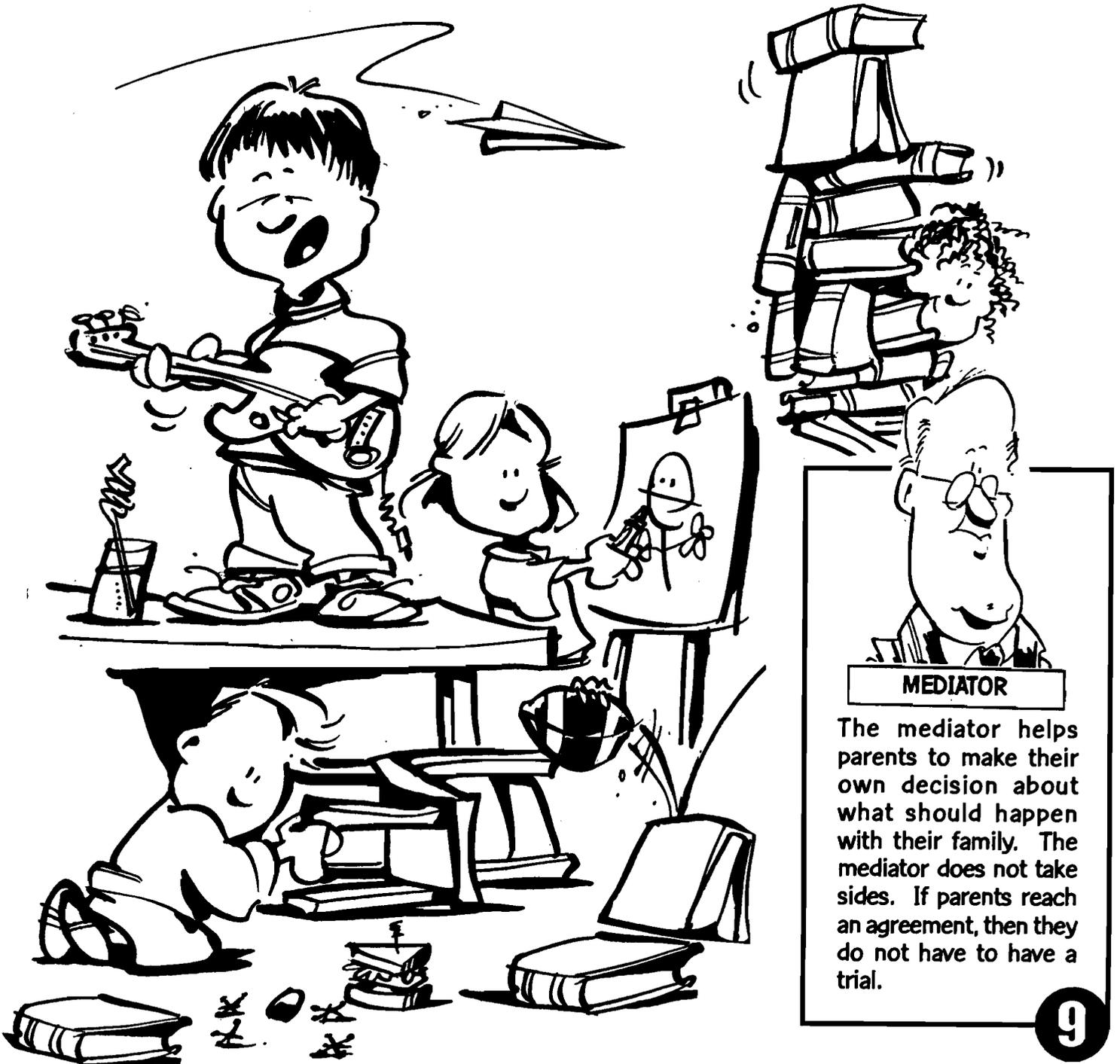
To find out what each of these people do, check out the special boxes located throughout this book.

Be Sure to Play the **MATCHING GAME** on Page 10

# HOW TO BEHAVE IN COURT...

**When you are anywhere in the courthouse  
you are to be polite, quiet and respectful.**

How many things can you spot in this picture that DON'T belong in the courtroom???



# Matching Game



Draw a Line Connecting the Person on the Left with the Job Description on the Right

Hint: Look through the book for clues

**Judge**

- This person makes a decision after a hearing.
- The judge reviews this person's decision afterward to make sure it is okay.

**Master**

- A person who helps families to make sure kids are safe and cared for properly.

**Lawyer**

- A person who keeps track of all the papers in the courtroom.

**Social Worker**

- A person who helps parents make their own decision about what should happen with their family.

**Witness**

- This person wears a special robe.

**Bailiff**

- A person who comes to court and talks about what they have seen and heard.

**Courtroom clerk**

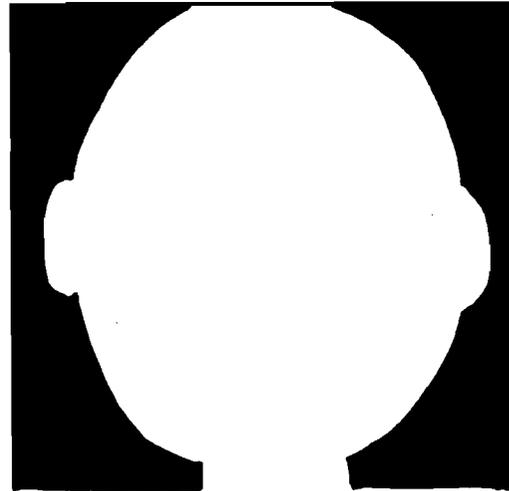
- A person who helps keep order in the courtroom.

**Mediator**

- This person talks to the judge for you or your parents in court.

# HOW DO YOU FEEL?

Circle a face that shows everyone how you REALLY feel



Draw Your Own Face HERE

**Sometimes children are scared or anxious about going to court. That's OK. Even adults feel that way sometimes.**

Why am I Here?

**CHECK THE BOX THAT BEST TELLS WHY YOU ARE AT COURT TODAY!**

0000

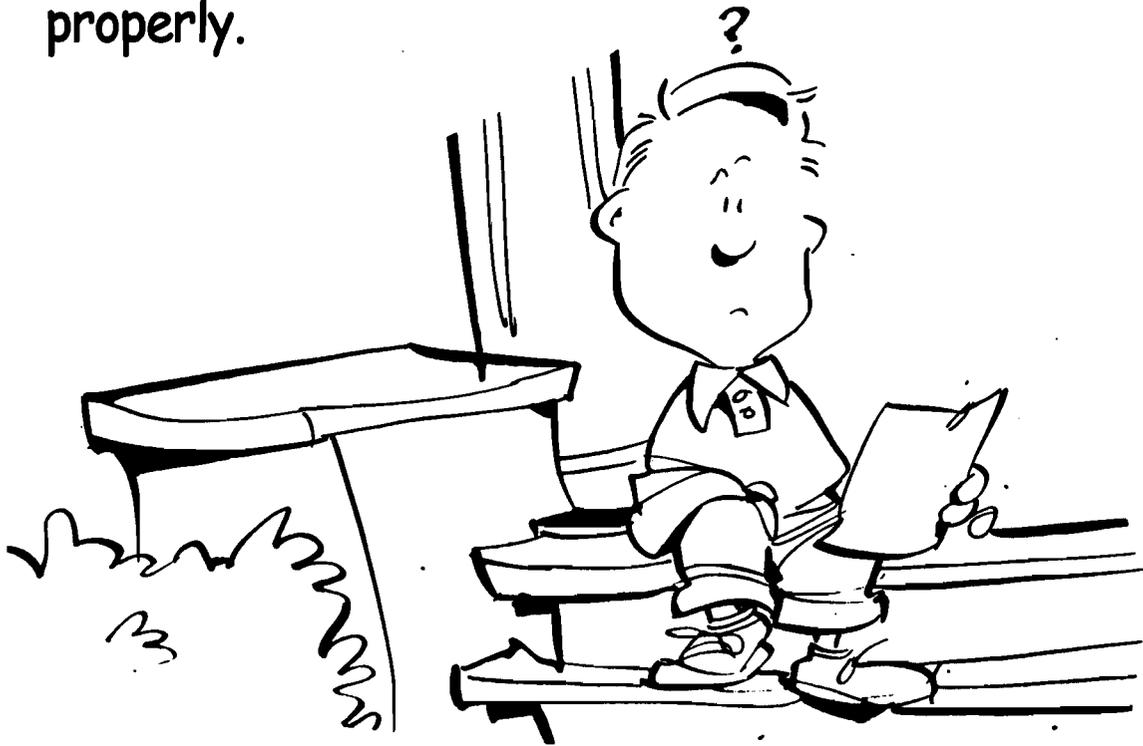
I am in court today because Mommy and Daddy are trying to make decisions about our family.

I am here because I have to tell the Judge something. Maybe its something I saw or heard. Maybe it's something that happened to me.

I am here because I am being adopted. Adoption is the way a child legally becomes part of a new family.

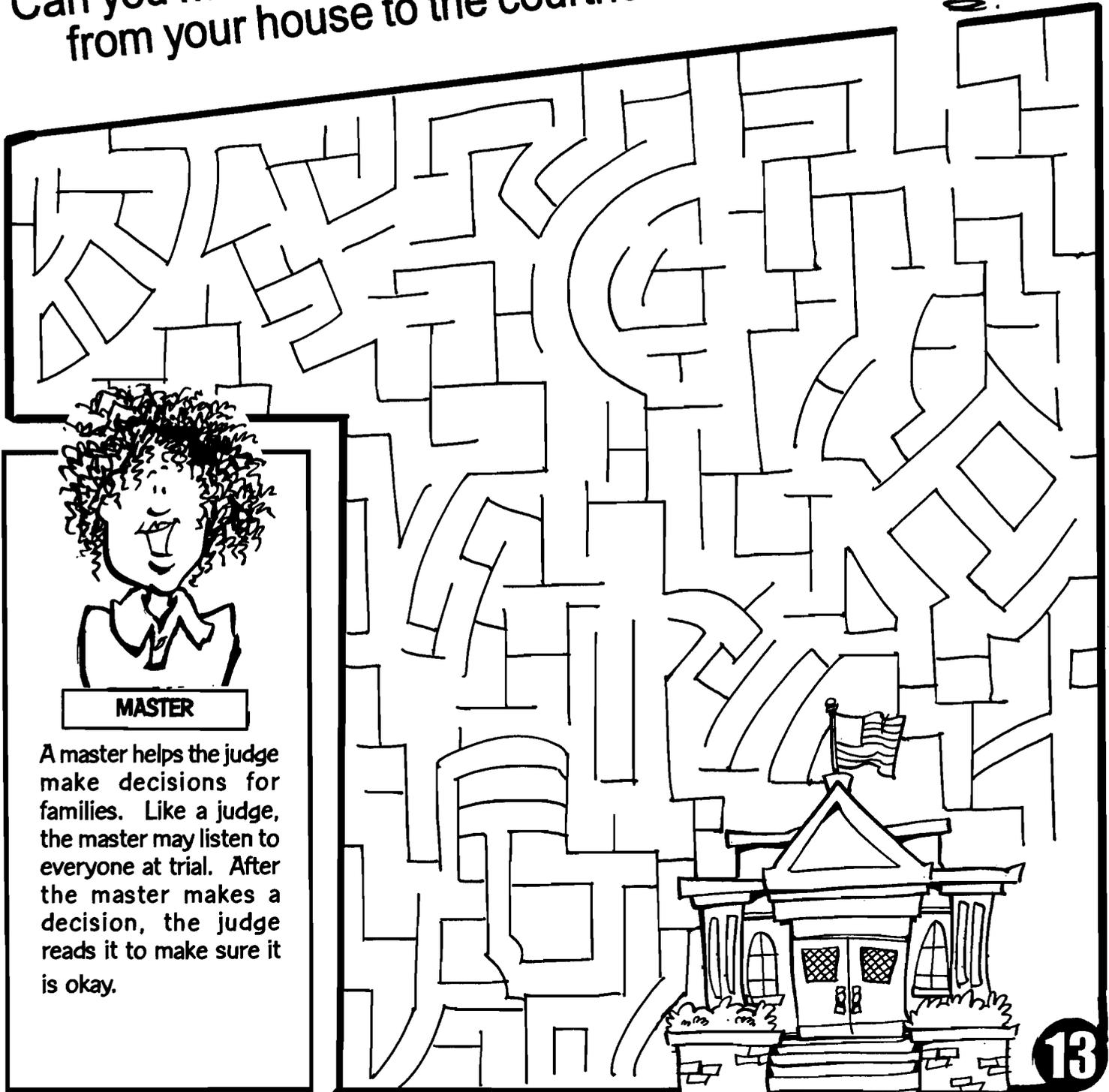
I am here because I need help controlling my behavior.

I am here because someone in my family has been hurt or has not been taken care of properly.



# HOW DID YOU GET TO COURT TODAY?

Can you make it though the maze and go from your house to the courthouse?



**MASTER**

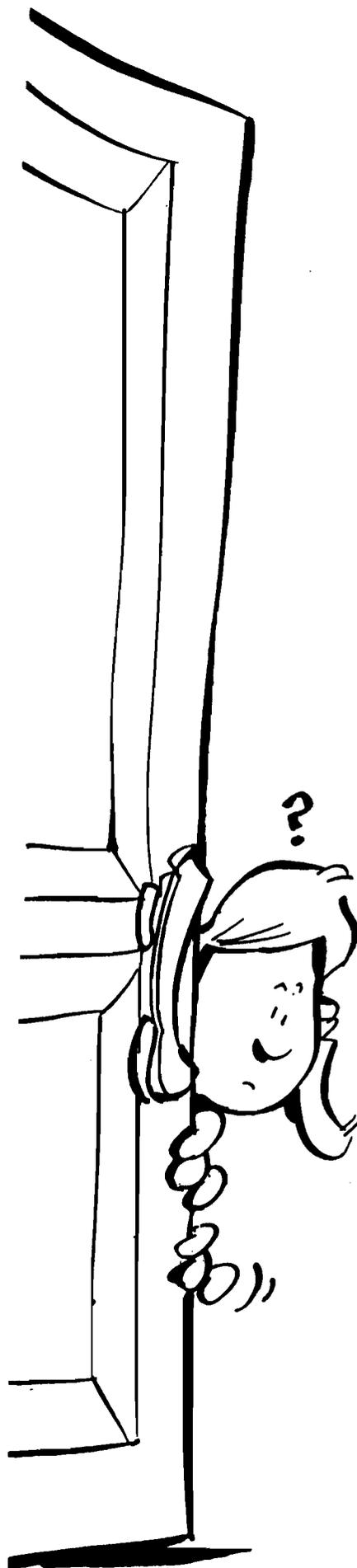
A master helps the judge make decisions for families. Like a judge, the master may listen to everyone at trial. After the master makes a decision, the judge reads it to make sure it is okay.

# What Goes On in the Courtroom?

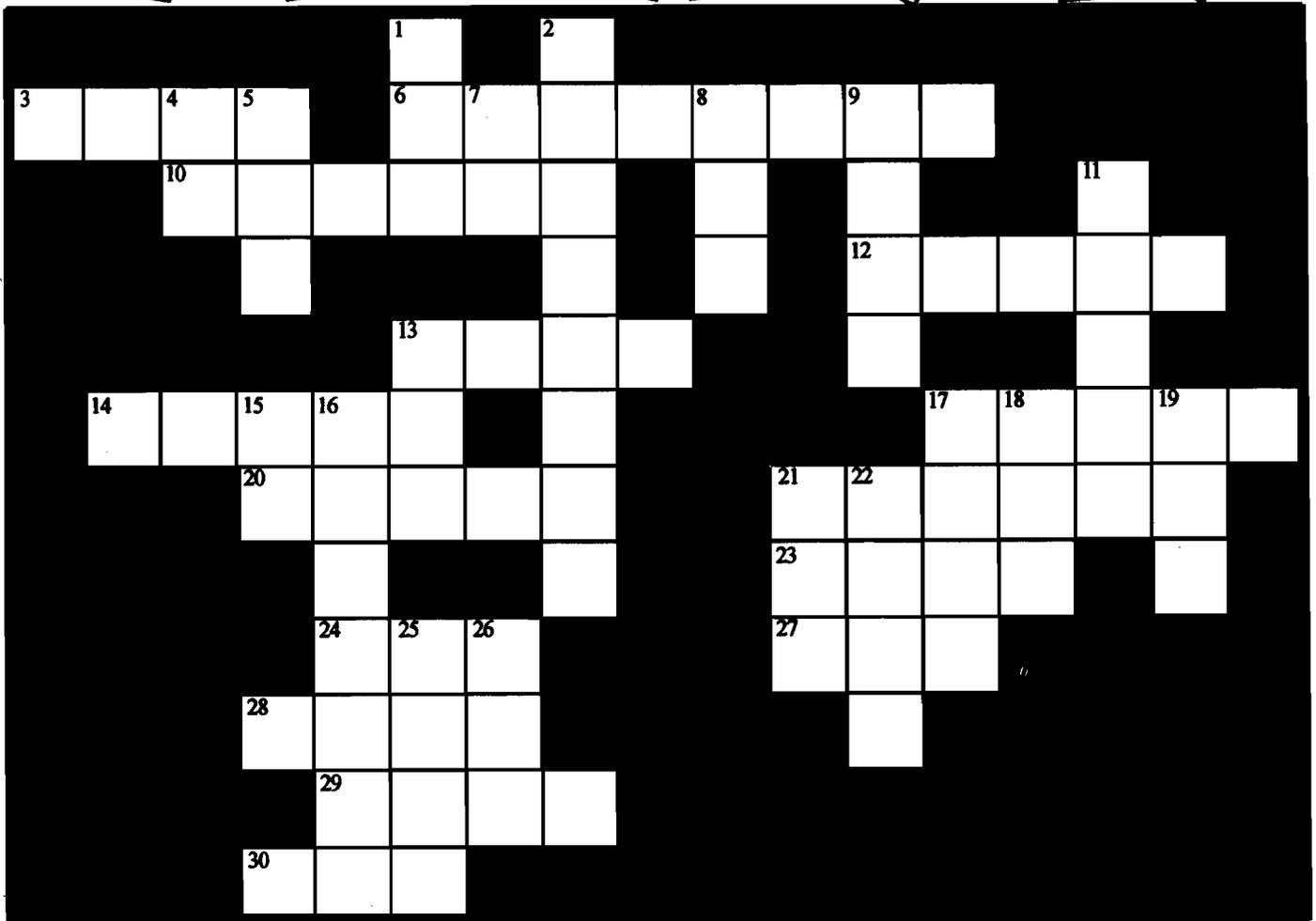
When a case begins and the Judge or the Master enters the courtroom, the bailiff will ask everyone to stand up. The bailiff will probably say "all rise" and then the Judge or the Master will ask that everyone be seated so that the case may begin.

Each person's lawyer will have a chance to tell their side of the story. This may take a long time and it can get boring!

*So that's why we filled this book with plenty of pictures to color and activities to do.*

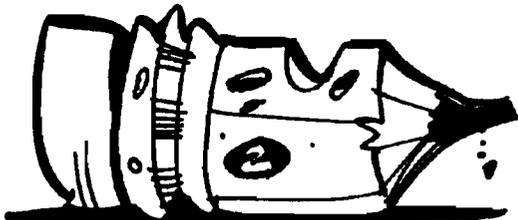


# COURT CROSSWORD



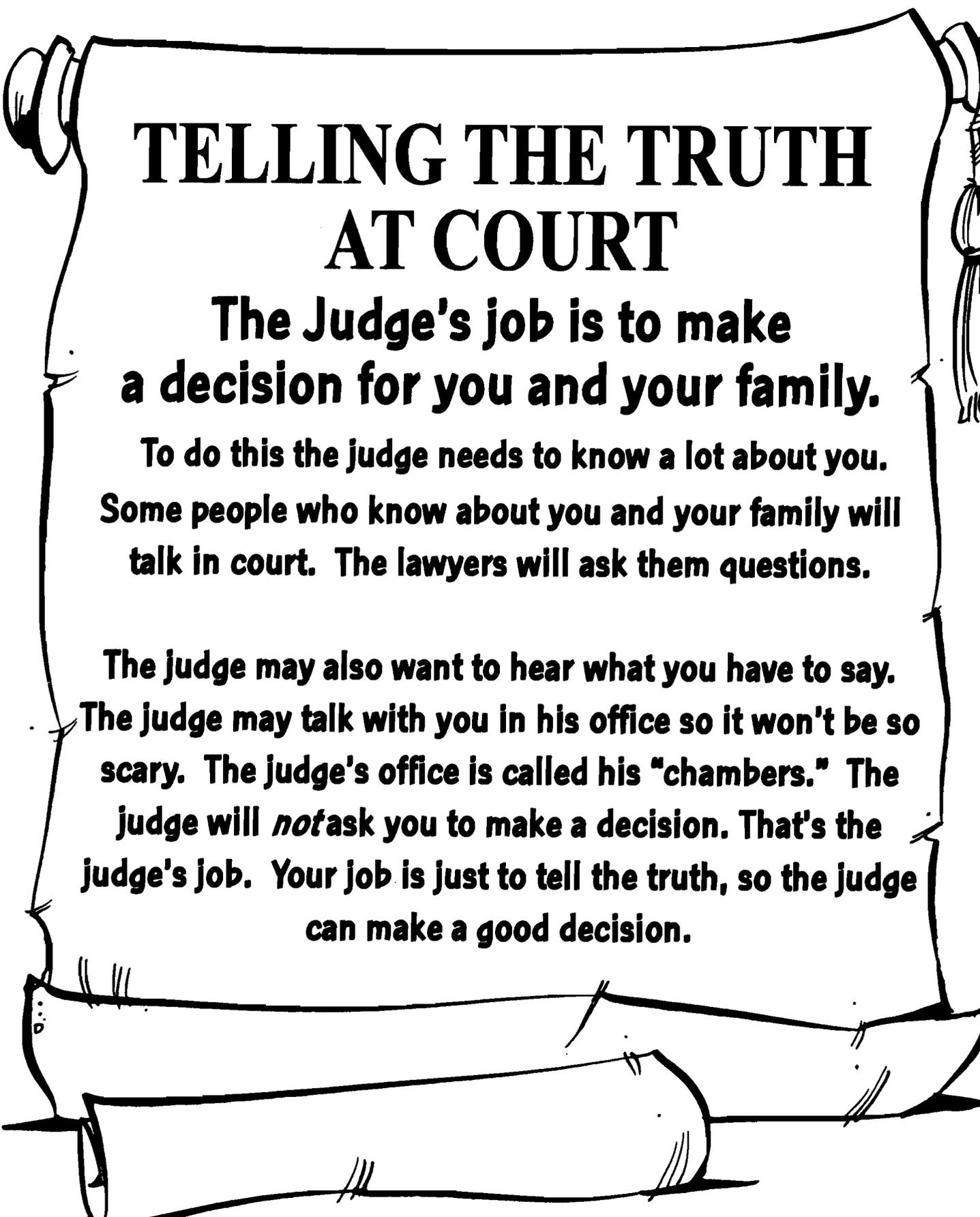
## ACROSS

3. It has claws and lives in the Chesapeake Bay
6. The judge's Office
10. Someone who makes decisions for families in court, which are then reviewed by a judge
12. The room where a trial takes place
13. Scream
14. Where astronauts travel
17. Large sea creatures with a big tail
20. Maryland's state flower is the Black-Eyed \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
21. Maryland's state bird. Also the name of a baseball team.
23. The opposite of short
24. A spinning toy
27. A pet with a bark
28. What the judge wears in the courtroom
29. Finished
30. What you say when it's time to go.



## DOWN

1. If you work in Hollywood, you have to be able to do this
2. The state whose capital is Annapolis
4. You are. I \_ \_
5. The Chesapeake \_ \_ \_
7. If you are not a SHE, then you are a \_ \_
8. An insect who makes honey
9. Slow and steady wins the \_ \_ \_ \_
11. When families tell the judge in the courtroom what has been happening, and a judge makes some big decisions for the family.
13. The opposite of NO
15. Cute \_ \_ a button
16. The word adults use when they are deciding "who takes care of the kids"
17. What birds use to fly
18. Another word for PIG
19. The part of your body you use to run
21. The opposite of YOUNG
22. When you want to be quiet, you might go to your \_ \_ \_ \_
25. A musical instrument that is long and black and you play with your mouth
26. Something to write with



# TELLING THE TRUTH AT COURT

**The Judge's job is to make a decision for you and your family.**

**To do this the judge needs to know a lot about you. Some people who know about you and your family will talk in court. The lawyers will ask them questions.**

**The judge may also want to hear what you have to say. The judge may talk with you in his office so it won't be so scary. The judge's office is called his "chambers." The judge will *not* ask you to make a decision. That's the judge's job. Your job is just to tell the truth, so the judge can make a good decision.**

# What happens when you talk to the Judge?



**At the beginning, the Judge may ask questions like the ones listed below.**

**Fill in your answers in the space provided!**

- 1. What is your name?** \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. How old are you?** \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Where do you go to school?** \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. What grade are you in?** \_\_\_\_\_

**The Judge may also ask you questions that seem private or embarrassing. She only asks those questions so that she can make a good decision for your family. Try to answer the questions as best as you can.**

**Remember it is natural to feel afraid or confused when you talk to a Judge... Adults feel that way too!**



**SOCIAL WORKER**

Social workers help families to make sure that kids are safe and cared for properly. When families have problems a social worker may visit with the parents and kids. Then he will let the judge know how the family is doing so the judge can make a good decision.

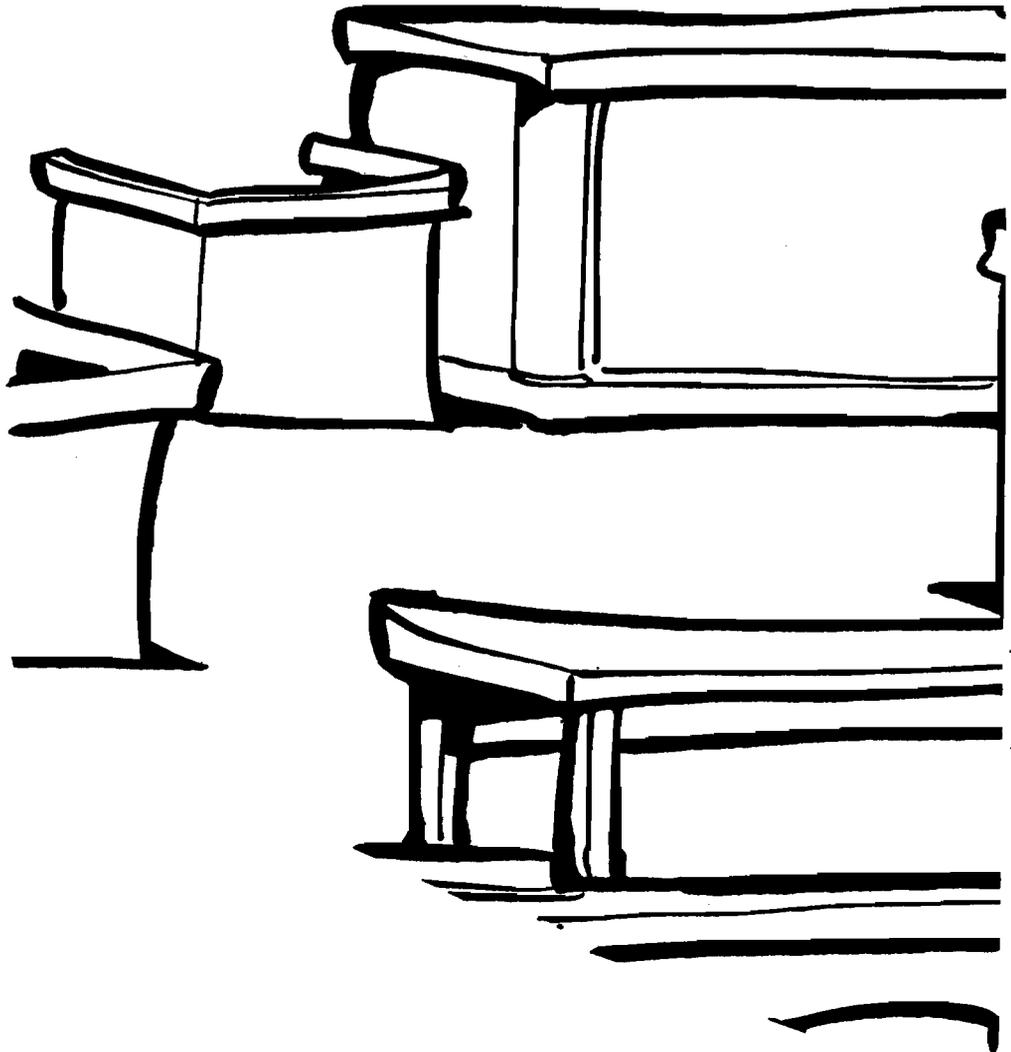


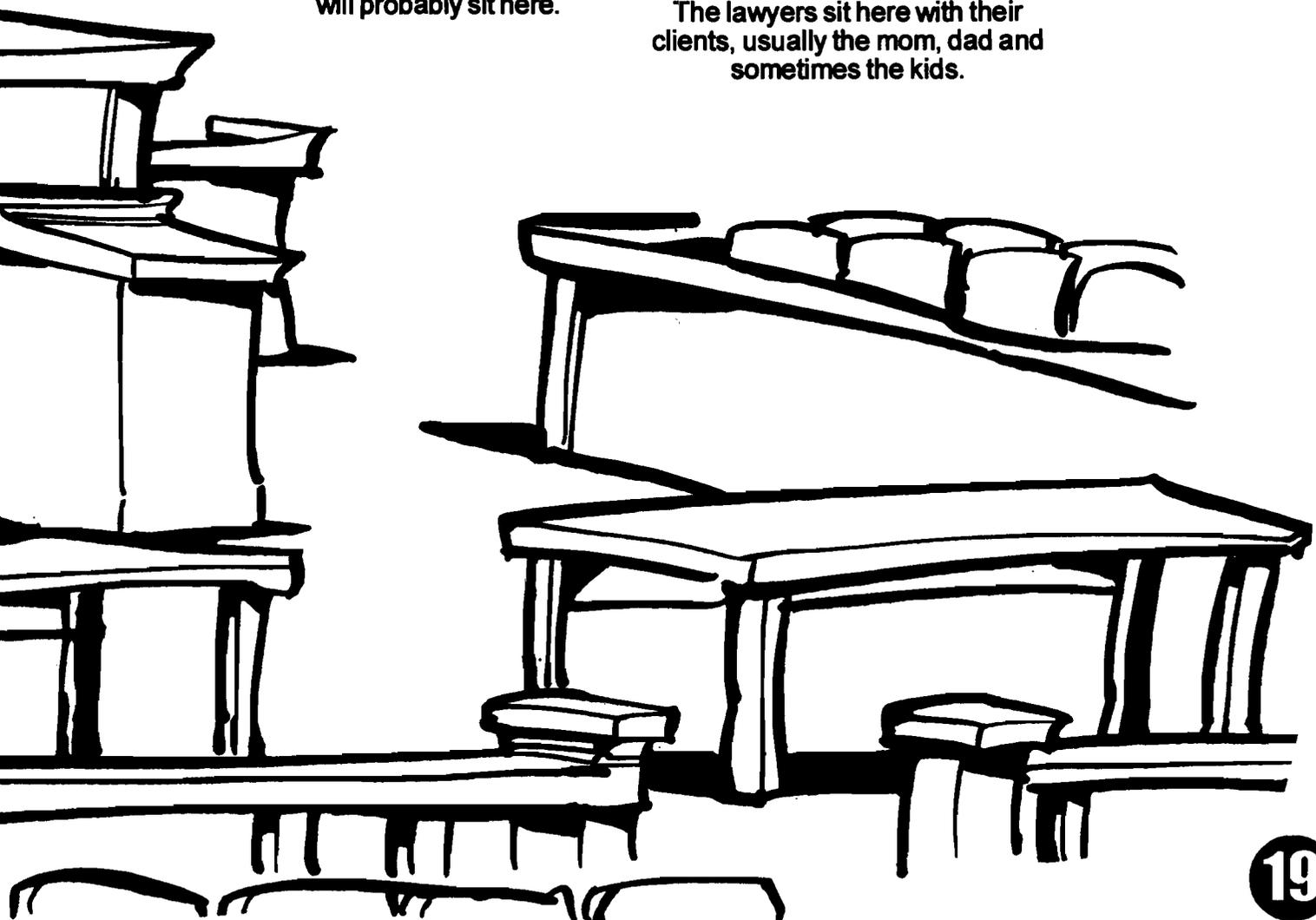
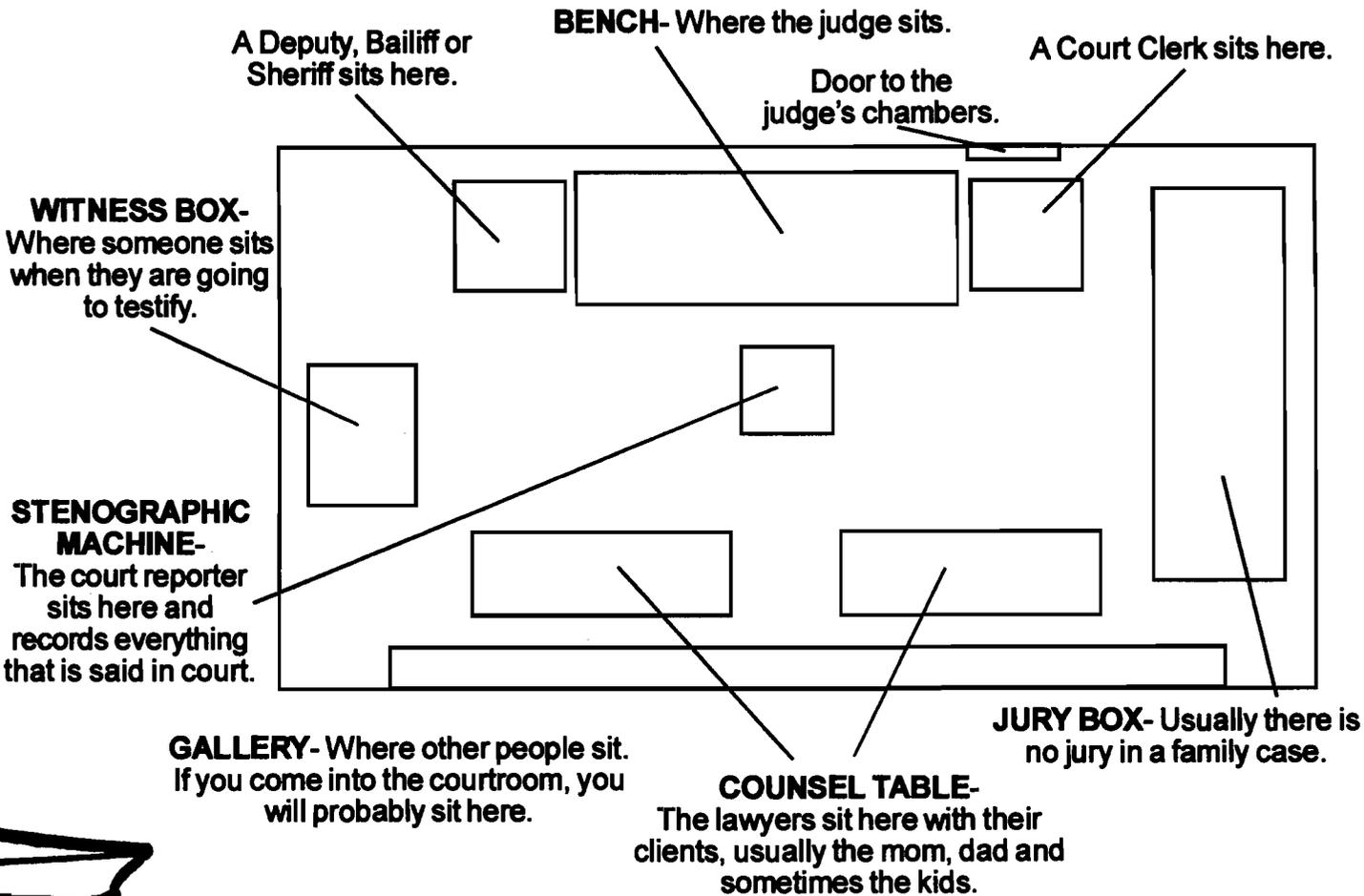
**LAWYER**

Lawyers talk to the judge in court. Their job is to make sure the judge knows what happened. This helps the judge make a good decision.

# THE COURTROOM

Use the Stickers  
to Fill in the  
Courtroom Scene!





# Why Families Come to Court

There are lots of reasons why families come to court. Can you find the reason(s) why your family is here today?

**DIVORCE-** Sometimes moms and dads decide to live apart and no longer be married. They need the court's help to get a divorce.



**CUSTODY-** Custody means "Who takes care of the kids." The judge can help parents decide with whom kids should live when the parents no longer live together.

**ADOPTION-** Sometimes kids who do not have a parent who can care for them are placed with a new family. They come to court to be adopted so they can officially become a part of that new family.



**VISITATION-** When parents do not live together, they need to decide how much time kids will spend with each parent. That's called visitation.



**C.I.N.A.-** A Child in Need of Assistance (CINA) case happens when parents have not been able to take care of their kids, or when a child has been hurt. Then social workers may step in to help protect the child.

**CHILD SUPPORT-** When a family has to decide how much each parent will provide to pay for the things kids need... they are deciding child support.

**JUVENILE DELINQUENCY-** When kids do something that would be a crime if they were an adult, they can be brought to court. They need help to control their behavior.



# ***MORE*** **Who Are the People in Court**



**BAILIFF**

Some courts have bailiffs. Bailiffs help keep order in the courtroom.



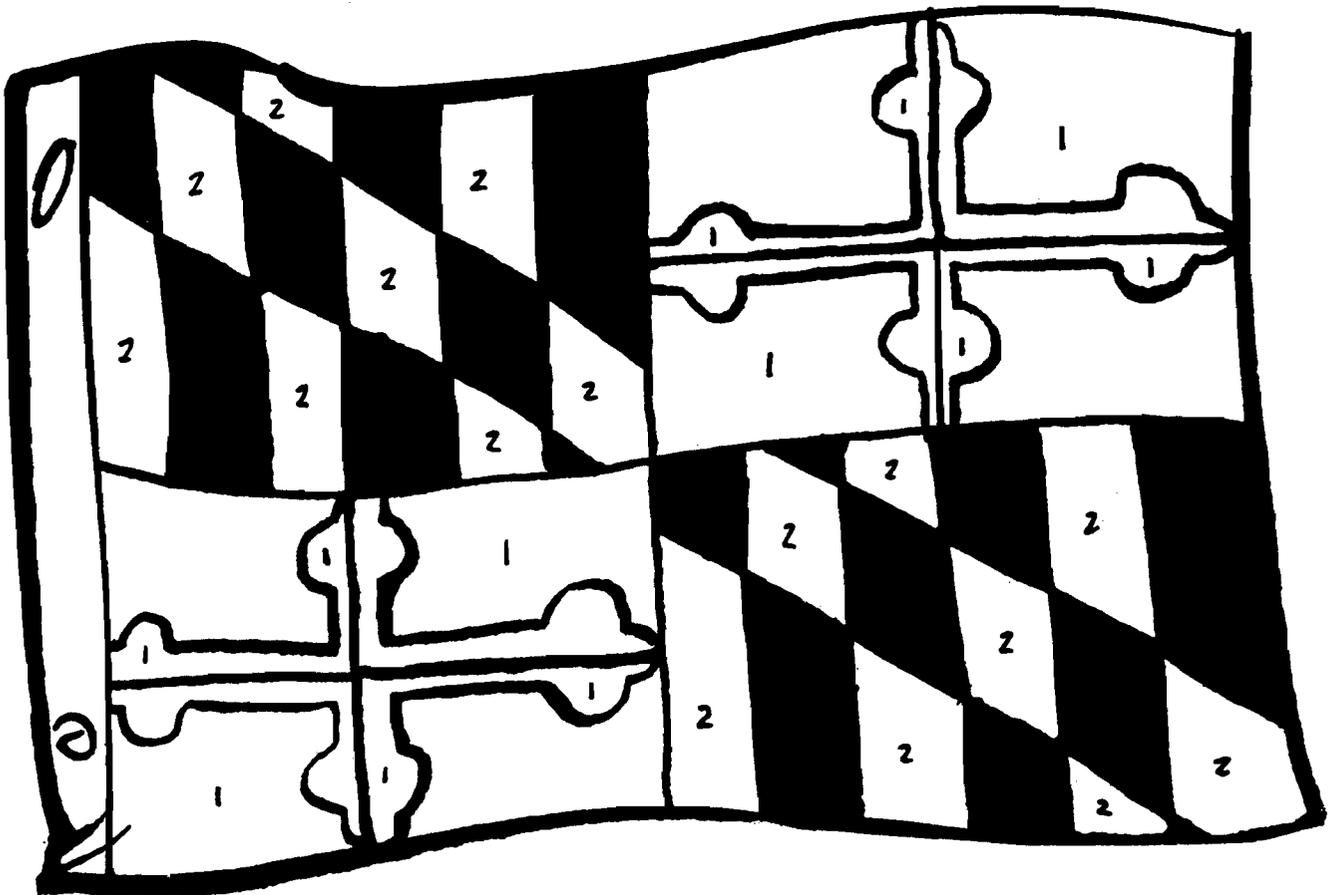
**WITNESS**

A witness is someone who comes to court to talk about what they have seen or heard. Witnesses have to be sure to tell the truth in court.



# COLOR BY NUMBER

FOLLOW THE COLOR KEY TO FILL IN THE FLAG... 1=RED 2=YELLOW



About the  
**Maryland  
State Flag**

One of the oldest and most distinctive state flags in America, Maryland's brightly colored standard was adopted in 1904. The design is taken from the "escutcheon" or "shield" in the first Lord Baltimore's seal, dating back from the 1630's.

# Who Makes Decisions About Kids?

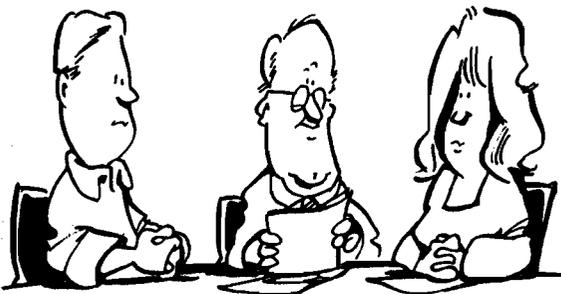
## Mom and Dad

Sometimes parents can sit down together and plan how they will take care of you. Sometimes Moms and Dads need help making decisions about their children.



## Mom & Dad with the help of a Mediator

A mediator helps your Mom and Dad decide how best to take care of you. Mom and Dad may need to decide when you will spend time with each of your parents.



## A Master or Judge



Judges and Masters also make decisions about children. If parents cannot agree on their own or with the help of a mediator, the Judge or Master will tell them what to do.

# YOU'RE THE REPORTER!

Sometimes the court takes a long time to make a final decision about families and kids. Sometimes families end up making that decision themselves.

They may need some help along the way. Do you know what is supposed to happen in your family after today? How can you find out?

Pretend you are a news reporter and ask a grown up these questions. Then use their answers to write a news story in the space below... Have fun!

1. What happened at court today?
2. Did any decision get made?
3. What were those decisions?  
How will it effect the kids in our family?  
What will be the same?  
What will be different?
4. Who made these decisions? *circle one*  
Mom & Dad      A Master      A Judge
5. Will things change again after today?
6. Do we have to come back to court again?  
When?      What will happen then?



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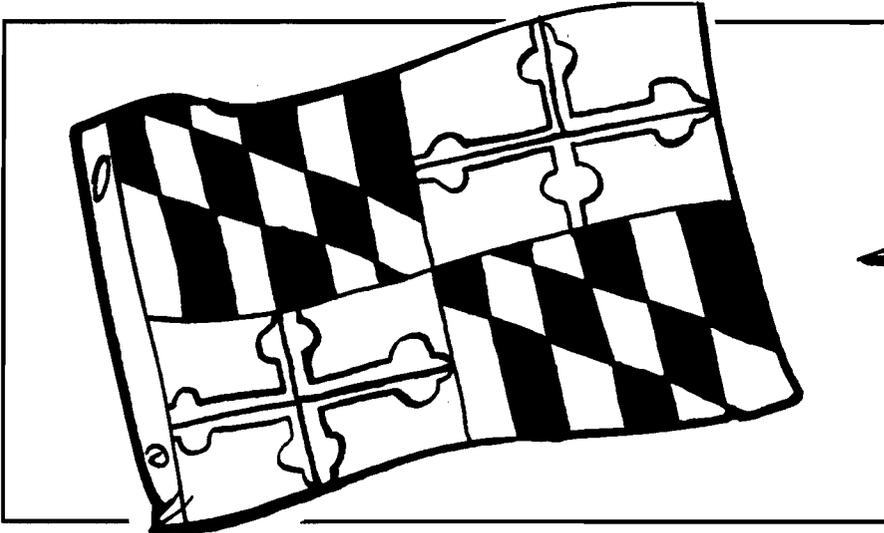
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# Maryland

Did you know that Maryland has a state bird?  
A state flower? How about a state crustacean?  
Check out some of these listed below.  
And don't forget to **COLOR THEM IN!!!**



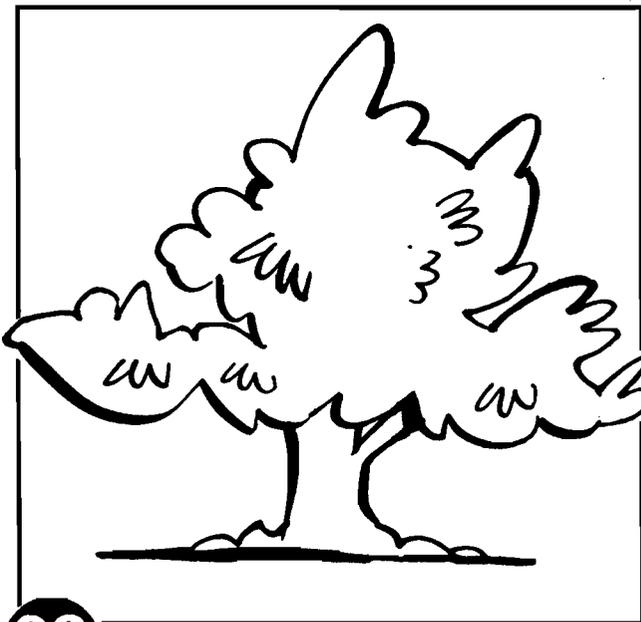
State Flag- Adopted in 1904



State Bird- The Baltimore Oriole



State Crustacean- The Maryland Blue Crab



State Tree- The White Oak

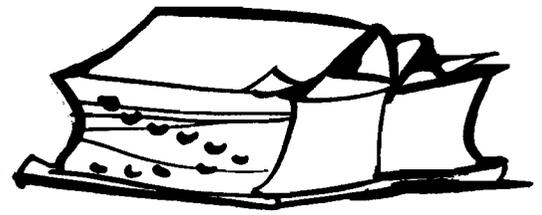
State Dog-  
The Chesapeake Bay Retriever

State Insect-  
The Baltimore Checkerspot Butterfly

State Sport- Jousting  
State Flower- Black-Eyed Susan  
State Boat- The Skipjack

# DEFINITIONS

Here are Some Words You Might Hear Today



**Adjudication** An *adjudication hearing* happens about 30 days after families have a shelter care hearing. The judge or master must decide whether the child has really been hurt ("abused") or not properly taken care of ("neglect").

**Chambers** The judge's office.

**Co-Parenting Education** A class for moms and dads to help them learn how to work together to take care of kids, even if they do not live together. This may also be called a "parenting seminar".

**Custody Evaluation** The judge or master may need help deciding what is best for kids. They may want a social worker or investigator to visit the parents, find out some information about how the parents take care of the kids, and give the judge a report about what the family needs. This is called a *custody evaluation*.

**Disposition** A *disposition hearing* happens about 30 days after families have an adjudication hearing. At the *disposition hearing* the judge or master decides how to help a child who has been hurt or not properly cared for. The judge may ask social workers to help the child and the child's family. The judge may decide it is best for the child to continue living with other family members or with a foster family for awhile. The judge may also decide that the child should return home.

**DJJ Worker** A DJJ Worker is a social worker from the Department of Juvenile Justice who helps kids and their families when a child is having difficulty controlling his or her behavior.

**Home Study** A home study is like a custody evaluation . . . A social worker or investigator visits the home of each parent and tells the judge or master what it is like, how the kids are doing in each home, and how the parents take care of the kids. This helps the court make a good decision for the family.

**Mediator** A person who is fair and does not favor one side over the other, sits down with the grown-ups in the family and helps them make important decisions themselves so the family does not have to have a trial.

**Objections** When lawyers ask the judge to decide if the witness should answer the question.

**PL Hearing** Families come to court and tell the judge or master what has been happening and what the family needs. The judge or master decides how things should be until the case is over. The judge decides where the kids will live while the family is waiting for their trial. This is also called a *pendente lite hearing*.

**Pretrial Conference** Grown-ups and their lawyers come to court and meet with a judge or master. The judge or master will encourage them to make some decisions so the family does not have to have a trial. If they do have to have a trial, the judge and grown-ups talk about what they need to do to get ready for trial.

**Scheduling Conference** A meeting in court to help the judge or master understand what your family needs and to give the grown-ups a chance to make some decisions early on in the case.

**Shelter Care Hearing** When a social worker believes children have been hurt or not properly taken care of, they may have children live with another family member or a foster family. The next day the child and her parents come to court for a shelter care hearing so a judge or master can decide if that is the best plan for the child right now or if it is OK for the child to return home.

**Trial** Families come to court and tell the judge what has been happening and what the family needs. The judge makes some big decisions for the family.

# **This book was developed by the Family Services Program of the Administrative Office of the Courts**

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