

Courtroom Rule Check

See how courts interpret laws and settle disagreements.

SS.5.CG.3.3 "Explain the role of the court system in interpreting law and settling conflicts."

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline the words that tell how the judge interpreted the rule. Circle the evidence the judge used to settle the conflict.

Maya's Park Ticket

- ① When people disagree about what a law means or whether it was followed, they may bring the conflict to court. A judge listens to each side and examines evidence, such as a written rule, photos, records, or witness statements. The court does not write a new law. Instead, it interprets the words of an existing law and applies them fairly to the facts of the case.
- ② In one town, a rule said dogs must be on leashes on public park paths, except inside the fenced dog-run area. Maya's dog left the fenced area and ran onto a park path without a leash. A park worker gave Maya a ticket. Maya said the rule was unfair because her dog had been in the dog run just moments before. She asked a court to review the ticket.
- ③ At the hearing, the judge read the rule carefully. The exception named only the fenced dog-run area, not nearby paths. Photos showed Maya's dog on the path outside the fence. The judge ruled that the ticket was valid because the leash rule applied there. By deciding what the exception covered and using evidence, the court settled the conflict between Maya and the town. Maya could follow the court's decision or use an allowed appeal process.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What conflict did Maya bring to court?

2 How did the judge interpret the exception in the park rule?

3 What evidence showed that Maya's dog was outside the dog-run area?

4 Why did the judge rule that the ticket was valid?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

A town rule says bicycles may be ridden on paved trails, but not on playgrounds. Sam rode a bicycle across a playground and received a ticket. Write exactly three sentences as a judge: explain what the rule means, name evidence you would use, and state your ruling.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline the words that tell how the judge interpreted the rule. Circle the evidence the judge used to settle the conflict. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What conflict did Maya bring to court?	Maya challenged the ticket she received after her unleashed dog ran onto a park path.
2	How did the judge interpret the exception in the park rule?	The judge decided that the exception applied only inside the fenced dog-run area, not on nearby park paths.
3	What evidence showed that Maya's dog was outside the dog-run area?	Photos showed the dog on a park path outside the fence.
4	Why did the judge rule that the ticket was valid?	Maya's dog was on a public park path without a leash, and the leash rule applied to that path.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The rule allows bicycles on paved trails, but it does not allow them on playgrounds. A park worker's statement that Sam rode across the playground supports the ticket. I would rule that the ticket is valid because Sam rode where the rule did not allow bicycles.

Accept answers that identify the court's role in reading the law's words, considering evidence, and making a decision that settles the disagreement. For the open task, the ruling should find the ticket valid when it is supported by the stated rule and facts.