The Jury's Job

How citizens help make court decisions fair

5.C.6.5.D "that service on a trial jury promotes fair justice for all citizens"

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two details that show how jurors work to make a fair decision. Circle a phrase that shows why their work matters to the whole community.

A Day at the Courthouse

1. A court sends Maya a letter asking her to report for jury duty. At the courthouse, people from the community may be selected to hear a criminal case about a missing bicycle. The judge explains the law, but jurors decide what the facts show. Jury service gives ordinary citizens a part in making decisions that can affect someone else's life.

2. Before the trial, the judge asks possible jurors whether they know the people involved or have already formed an opinion. Someone who cannot be fair may be excused. Selected jurors listen to witnesses and examine evidence presented in court. They must not decide the case using rumors from friends or posts online. These rules help keep personal feelings from taking the place of facts.

3. In a criminal trial, the person accused is presumed innocent unless the evidence proves guilt beyond a reasonable doubt. Jurors discuss what they heard and follow the judge's instructions before reaching a verdict. Their careful work helps protect the accused from an unfair decision and helps the community trust that the same rules apply to everyone. Serving when called is one way citizens support fair justice.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How does jury service give citizens a role in making a fair court decision?

2. Why might the court excuse someone who has already formed an opinion about the case?

3. Why must jurors use evidence presented in court instead of rumors or online posts?

4. How does the rule about proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt help protect the accused?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

A neighbor says, "Skip jury duty. I saw an online post saying the accused is guilty." Write three or four sentences explaining how you would respond, what you would do to avoid bias, and how your service could help others.

ANSWER KEY

The Jury's Job

GRADE 5 · 5.C.6.5.D

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two details that show how jurors work to make a fair decision. Circle a phrase that shows why their work matters to the whole community. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How does jury service give citizens a role in making a fair court decision?	**The judge explains the law, while citizens serving as jurors decide what the facts show.**
2	Why might the court excuse someone who has already formed an opinion about the case?	**That person may not be able to judge the evidence fairly.**
3	Why must jurors use evidence presented in court instead of rumors or online posts?	**Using evidence helps jurors base their decision on facts rather than rumors or personal feelings.**
4	How does the rule about proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt help protect the accused?	**Jurors must presume the accused is innocent unless the evidence proves guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would report for jury duty because citizens help decide what the facts show. I would tell the court if the post had already shaped my opinion. If selected, I would listen to evidence presented in court and follow the judge's instructions. That helps protect the accused from an unfair verdict and helps the community trust the process.

Accept responses that connect citizens' jury service to decisions based on evidence and fair treatment. Students may describe avoiding bias by disclosing an opinion, setting aside rumors, or listening to evidence in court.