

# Courtroom Activity Introduction

**The Courtroom is the HEART of the Courthouse.**

We will explore together the roles people play in a Courtroom during a trial. Each of you will be asked to serve as a character in a civil law case, called a lawsuit for damages, brought by:

MOM A. BEAR  
POP A. BEAR  
and BABE E.  
BEAR

v.

GOLDEN LOCKS a/k/a GOLD E. LOCKS

In this pretend trial, the charge against Golden Locks is that she showed bad manners. Did Goldilocks use bad manners when she visited the Three Bears? Can you guess what the verdict will be?

Read your cards quietly to yourself and then listen carefully for your character to be called:

Role #1) Bailiff

Role #2) Judge

Role #3) Plaintiff's Counsel (Attorney for Bears)

Role #4) Defendant's Counsel (Attorney for Locks)

Role #5) Witnesses for the Plaintiff (Bears)

Role #6) Witnesses for the Defendant (Locks)

Role #7) Jurors

Role #8) Media

What is the difference between a **civil trial** and a **criminal trial**?

[Additional civil case terms: tort, liable/not liable, and judgement]

In a civil case, the plaintiff (a person complaining to the Judge about something wrong that happened) gets what they fairly deserve, which is, being paid back (or not) for the harm done. Payment is usually in the form of money.

[Equivalent criminal case terms: crime, guilty/not guilty, and sentence]

In a criminal case, the defendant may get punished by paying for damages for harm done to others. IF FOUND GUILTY, s/he may be told to: pay a fine of money, ordered to pay money to people harmed; do community service; serve probation and/or jail time; or a combination.

Presumption of Innocence: "innocent" is not a verdict. The defendant is innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt.