

Civics: A Christian Worldview. Which Kind of Law Is This? (20-25 minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Instructions

1. **Objective:** This activity helps student identify common law, statutory law, and natural law, using 20 real-life examples.
2. Print Page 2, and hand out to students; give them 10-12 minutes to complete individually.
3. Discuss together as a class when finished. (Ask for volunteers!)
4. Quickly run through the “Wrap-Up Questions” below.

Answer Key

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. C | 11. S |
| 2. S | 12. N |
| 3. N | 13. C |
| 4. N | 14. S |
| 5. S | 15. N |
| 6. C | 16. N |
| 7. S | 17. C |
| 8. C | 18. S |
| 9. N | 19. C |
| 10. C | 20. N |

Wrap-Up Questions to Ask Students:

1. “Which type of law felt most fair?”
Students will likely say “common law.”
2. “Which type was most frustrating?”
Students will likely say “statutory law.”
3. “Why does common law still need to be guided by natural law?”
Because if judges only follow common-law precedent without asking whether it is right, then an unjust decision can spread from case to case. Natural law (basic right/wrong, life/liberty/property, conscience) is the standard that keeps common law from drifting into injustice.
*Common law asks: “**How have cases like this been handled?**”*
*Natural law asks: “**Is this actually just?**”*

Civics: A Christian Worldview. Which Kind of Law Is This?

Decide whether each scenario is an example of common law, statutory law, or natural law, and write a “C,” “S,” or “N” next to each one:

1. A student parks in a “No Parking” zone because he is rushing his asthmatic little sister into the ER. The officer lets him go with a warning.
2. A student is suspended because the handbook says “no hats,” even though he is wearing one to cover stitches from surgery.
3. A judge refuses to follow an older court ruling because he believes it violated basic fairness.
4. A store owner stops a teen from shoplifting even though there’s no sign posted saying “No Stealing.”
5. A school fines students \$25 automatically for every tardy, no matter the reason.
6. A judge looks at how similar past disputes were handled to help guide today’s decision.
7. A police officer says, “I don’t care what happened—the rule is the rule.”
8. A principal hears both sides of a fight and decides punishment based on who started it and why.
9. A person knows it would be wrong to hack into someone’s account, even if no law mentions it.
10. A civics teacher’s rule says “No food in class.” A student quietly eats crackers because his blood sugar is crashing. The teacher looks at him and says, “Just don’t get peanut butter on your quiz.”
11. A school enforces a rule that says students cannot use phones, even to call home during a family emergency.
12. A judge asks, “What outcome here would be truly just?” before reading the technical rulebook.
13. Two neighbors argue over a fence. The judge listens, considers intent, history, and fairness before ruling.
14. A city fines a homeowner because his grass is ½ inch too tall.
15. A person returns a lost wallet with cash inside, even though nobody saw him pick it up.
16. A judge ignores the fact that one person is wealthy and well-known and treats both sides equally.
17. A referee stops a game to consider whether a rule was technically broken or whether what happened in the game was clearly accidental.
18. A law is enforced even though everyone agrees it hurts innocent people.
19. A judge’s main goal is to prevent injustice rather than punish every small technical violation.
20. Someone says, “Everybody knows it’s wrong to cheat people, even if there’s no rule posted.”

