

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview.
Fourth Amendment Investigator (15–20 Minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

Goal

Students decide whether investigators have enough evidence to obtain a warrant.

Instructions

1. Students work individually or in pairs; allow 10–12 minutes.
2. Discuss as a class.

Key

1. Probable cause: Yes; Warrant: Yes
2. Probable cause: No; Warrant: No
3. Probable cause: No; Warrant: No
4. Probable cause: Yes; Warrant: Yes
5. Probable cause: No; Warrant: No
6. Probable cause: Yes; Warrant: Yes
7. Probable cause: Yes; Warrant: Yes
8. Probable cause: No; Warrant: No

Debrief/Wrap-Up Questions

Ask students: Which is more dangerous:

- Allowing government searches without sufficient evidence?
- Making it harder for investigators to search suspected criminals?

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For each situation, determine:

- Is there probable cause?
- Should a judge issue a warrant?
- What specific place or item should be listed on the warrant?

Investigation Files:

File 1 – Three witnesses identify the same person as the thief who stole electronics. One witness saw the items carried into the suspect’s garage yesterday.



File 2 – A neighbor says, “I don’t like that guy. He seems suspicious.”



File 3 – An anonymous internet post claims a teacher has illegal items in her home.



File 4 – Security footage shows a suspect placing counterfeit money-making equipment into a storage unit.

File 5 – An officer says, “I have a feeling this person is hiding something.”

File 6 – Bank records and surveillance footage connect a suspect to a fraud operation, and investigators know which office is being used.

File 7 – Several victims identify the same online scammer, and investigators trace activity to a specific computer.

File 8 – A citizen reports hearing rumors that a businessman is probably breaking the law.